

STUDY GUIDE

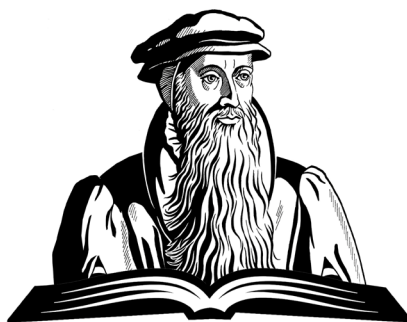
for

HERMENEUTICS

*Principles of
Scriptural Interpretation*

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

Lecture 6 WORDS



The John Knox Institute
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Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide

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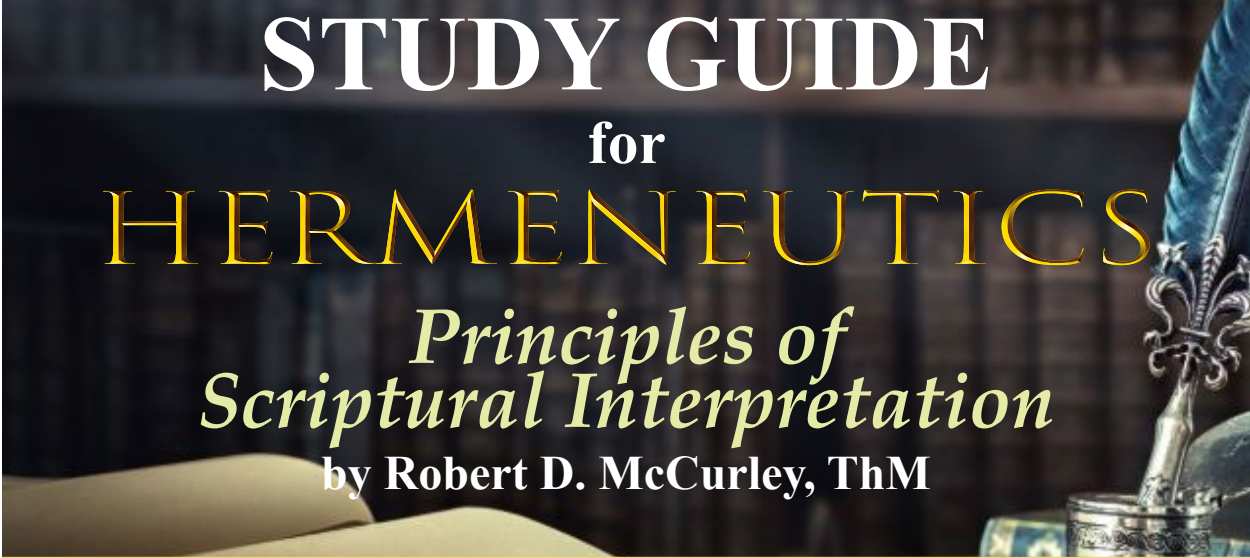
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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version.

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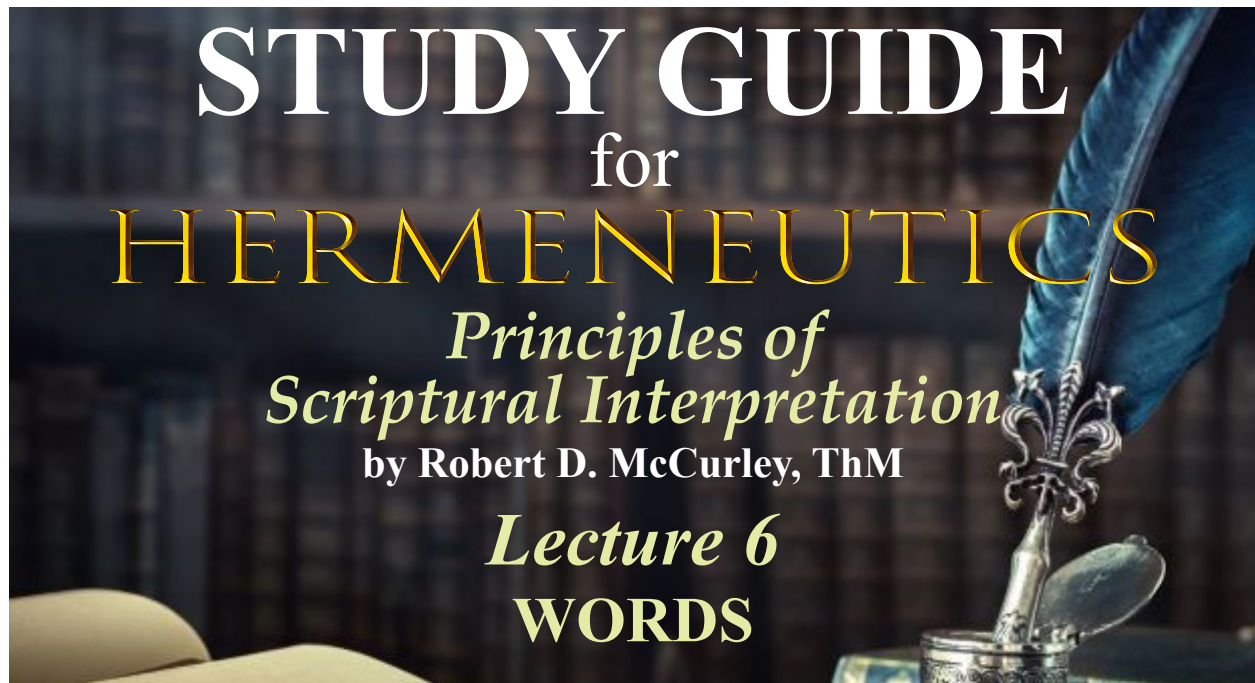


STUDY GUIDE for HERMENEUTICS

Principles of Scriptural Interpretation

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

1. Introduction
2. Foundation
3. Sense
4. Comparing
5. Context
6. Words
7. History
8. Genre
9. Christ
10. Exposition



Scripture Text

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”—Galatians 3, verse 16

Key Points

1. Introduction: In Galatians 3:16, Paul argues that words matter, using a single word, “seed,” to build his case.
2. The fourth principle: *Focus carefully on the specific words and syntax of a word or passage.*
3. Some Study Tools if you have the opportunity to get them.
 - a. Some Bibles have cross-references in the margins; also separate cross-reference books.
 - b. Bible concordances: some Bibles have an abbreviated concordance.
 - c. Bible dictionaries define and describe words, people, and places in the Bible.
 - d. Some languages have Study Bibles, with notes at the bottom of the pages to help in understanding passages. *The Matthew Henry Study Bible.*
 - e. Bible Commentaries can be helpful, but look for those written by godly Reformed writers.
 - f. Hebrew and Greek Lexicons are available for more advanced study.
5. Words—our modern Bibles are translations of the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament. So, we need to understand words.
 - a. Etymology – traces the root meaning of words.
 - b. Study of words forces us to give attention to details that have meaning.
 - c. Some words can have different connotations or shades of meaning.

- d. Sometimes different words can have the same or similar meaning.
- e. The same word can have several meanings, even in the same context.
- f. *Etymological Fallacy*—understand the meaning of a word at the time it was written.
- g. When the Old Testament is quoted in the New Testament, study the Old Testament passage.

God never takes his Word out of context.

6. Syntax—the relation of different words in a sentence or paragraph.

- a. Look for words that get the focus or emphasis in the passage.
- b. Pay close attention to the verbs.

7. The next lecture will consider the *Historical and Cultural Context*, and how it influences our reading of the Bible.

Review Questions

1. Please describe the fourth Principle of Interpretation. What principle of interpretation was Paul using in Galatians 3:16?

2. In what languages were the original Old Testament and New Testament written? What is the study of etymology, and why is it important in interpreting the meanings of Bible passages?

3. What are some of the study tools that Rev. McCurley told us about?

4. Are all Bible Commentaries trustworthy? Why is it important to look for Bible Commentaries that are written by godly Reformed writers?

5. How does the story of John Brown of Haddington give us encouragement if we are unable to obtain some of those tools?

6. Sometimes words have different connotations or several meanings. What are the three meanings in Hebrew for the English word “sin” in the Old Testament?

7. What is the rule to follow when an Old Testament passage is quoted in the New Testament?

8. What is an *Etymological Fallacy*? What rule can you follow to avoid that error?

9. Please define grammatical syntax. What are the different parts of a sentence? How can that practically benefit you in reading the Bible?

10. Why does it benefit to pay close attention to the tense of verbs? Explain the example Rev. McCurley gave us comparing 1 John 1:7–9 and 1 John 3:9.

Personal Applications

1. How many Old Testament passages can you find that are quoted in the New Testament? Have you studied the Old Testament passage first? Did that help you to better understand how it is being used in the New Testament?

2. Which Bible concordances, Bible dictionaries, Study Bibles, or Bible commentaries do you currently use? Not everyone has access to the good resources Rev. McCurley told us about. We encourage you to become acquainted with the tools listed in the lecture and try to gain access to as many of them as possible for yourself.
