

# SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

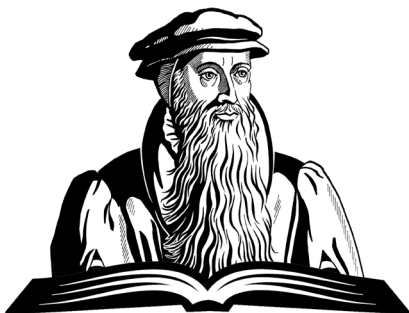
## Video Lecture Series

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

# STUDY GUIDE

*Module 1:*  
**INTRODUCTION and  
THE DOCTRINE OF FIRST PRINCIPLES**

*Lecture 1:*  
**METHODOLOGY**



**The John Knox Institute**  
of Higher Education

**John Knox Institute of Higher Education**

*Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide*

© 2021 by John Knox Institute of Higher Education

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means for profit, except in brief quotations for the purposes of review, comment, or scholarship, without written permission from the publisher, John Knox Institute, P.O. Box 19398, Kalamazoo, MI 49019-19398, USA.

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

Visit our website: [www.johnknoxinstitute.org](http://www.johnknoxinstitute.org)

Rev. Robert D. McCurley is minister of the Gospel at Greenville Presbyterian Church, in Taylors, South Carolina, a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), Presbytery of the United States of America.

[greenvillepresbyterian.com](http://greenvillepresbyterian.com)

# SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

## STUDY GUIDE

Module 1

### *Introduction, and The Doctrine of First Principles*

*Introduction:*

- 1. Methodology**
2. Creeds and Confessions

*The Doctrine of First Principles:*

3. Scripture
4. Revelation
5. The Inspiration of Scripture
6. Properties of Inspired Scripture
7. The Canon of Holy Scripture
8. Preservation and Translation of Scripture
9. Interpretation of Scripture
10. The Continuity of Scripture

# SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

## STUDY GUIDE

### Module 1—Introduction (1)

#### Lecture 1:

## Methodology

### *Introduction*

Systematic Theology is like a jigsaw puzzle. Every piece of the puzzle is important, but your goal is to figure out how the pieces fit together in order to form the whole picture. The Bible provides us with all of the doctrines that we are to believe, and all of the duties that God requires of us. We need the whole of Scripture to have the complete picture of what that includes. As you read each chapter of the Bible, you discover pieces of what we are to believe on a wide range of doctrines. Those pieces all connect and fit together with truths that you read about elsewhere in the Bible.

**Theme:** *The Basis for Methodology*

**Key Terms:** Systematic; Theology.

### *I. Scriptural Basis*

“These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing.”—1 Timothy 6, verses 2–4.

- a. “these things”
- b. “teach and exhort...to the doctrine”
- c. “proud and knowing nothing”
- d. “doctrine which is according to godliness”

### **Questions:**

1. Define each of the following terms:

Systematic \_\_\_\_\_

Theology \_\_\_\_\_

Systematic Theology \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Please give an example to show the necessity for Systematic Theology.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why is it important for the believer to study Systematic Theology?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. How does the passage in 1 Timothy 6:2–4 show four components as the biblical basis for studying Systematic Theology?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **II. Doctrinal Overview**

1. The method we employ in Systematic Theology must be derived from Scripture.
2. Topical categories of Systematic Theology:
  - a. The doctrine of first Principles—the doctrine of Scripture and other matters.
  - b. The doctrine of God.
  - c. The doctrine of man.
  - d. The doctrine of Christ
  - e. The doctrine of salvation
  - f. The doctrine of the church.
  - g. The doctrine of last things.
3. Method—the fourfold exposition.
  - a. The Scriptural exposition
  - b. The doctrinal exposition.
  - c. The polemical exposition.
  - d. The practical exposition.

**Questions:**

1. What is the fundamental and ultimate resource of Systematic Theology? What is the content of Systematic Theology?

---

---

---

2. Why must the biblical foundation and proof for each doctrine be a priority?

---

---

---

3. What are the main tasks in the doctrinal exposition?

---

---

---

4. Why is it necessary for us to have a polemical exposition?

---

---

---

5. Why should the study of theology never end with merely theoretical knowledge? What should it be? How does the Scripture instruct us with regards to studying the Word of God?

---

---

---

---

**III. Polemical Exposition**

1. Objection: *The logical order and presentation of doctrine detracts from or distorts doctrine.*

**Questions:**

1. How can this objection be answered?

---

---

---

---

**IV. Practical Exposition**

1. A deeper and clearer knowledge of the truth leads to spiritual maturity.
2. We should strive to be workers who are “approved” and “not ashamed” in “rightly dividing the word of truth,” which is a benefit also to our own souls.
3. “Buy the truth, and sell it not”—Proverbs 23:23
4. Recommendation of the module series, “Biblical Theology.”

**Questions:**

1. What are the right and biblical aims in the study of Systematic Theology?

---

---

---

---

2. Why is “clarity” needed in our formal or informal teaching and communication?

---

---

---

3. What are the practical implications of Proverbs 23:23, “*Buy the truth, and sell it not*”?

---

---

---

**V. Self-Reflection**

Have you ever studied Systematic Theology before this? Does this lecture correct or guide your focus in the study of theology? What encouragements do you receive from this lecture? What expectations do you have for the remainder of this module? Meditate on the Scripture texts quoted in this lecture, and pray for the blessings of God as you are going through this study journey.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---