

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

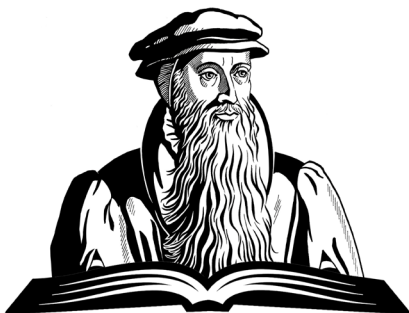
Video Lecture Series

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

STUDY GUIDE

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

Lecture 4:
REVELATION



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

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

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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

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Module 1:

THE DOCTRINE OF FIRST PRINCIPLES

Lecture 4:

Revelation

Introduction

Rev. McCurley uses the illustration of a very large white sheet, with treasures hidden underneath, to teach us the biblical idea of “revelation.” In the Bible, revelation refers to God unveiling, or revealing, and making known his truths to creatures such as ourselves. He takes what would otherwise be hidden from us, and graciously condescends to show it to us. If we want to know him, we must rely on what he tells us about himself. Relying on any other speculation would only lead to greater ignorance.

Theme: *The biblical doctrine of revelation.*

I. Scriptural Basis

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.”—Psalm 19:1–3.

Psalm 19

1. Verses 1 to 6—God reveals himself to us through the created universe.
2. Verses 7 to 9—God reveals himself to us through his written Word.
3. Verses 10 to 14—Practical applications, in our response to God’s Word.

Questions:

1. Please clarify how Psalm 19 shows us that there are two types of revelation?

2. What are the three parallel statements in verses 7 to 9 of Psalm 19? What do they tell us about the nature of God's Word?

3. What are the personal impacts of God's Word, as seen in Psalm 19?

II. Doctrinal Overview

Summarized in *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chapter 1.

A. General Revelation (natural revelation)—provides general knowledge of God to all mankind.

1. The ways in which God reveals himself in general revelation.
2. What it is that God reveals.
3. To whom this is revealed.
4. The limits of general revelation.

B. Special Revelation—God's Word.

1. The ways in which it comes to us.
2. What exactly is revealed in special revelation.
3. To whom this revelation comes.
4. The limits—specific revelation is fully sufficient.

C. Further clarification—how general revelation and special revelation relate to each other.

Questions:

1. As a companion to this lecture, please read all of chapter 1 of *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, then summarize the main truths you find there.

2. Define general revelation, and explain why it is also called natural revelation. What is the nature of general revelation?

3. Please fill in this chart which parallels the four components of general and special revelation, and please provide Scripture references if needed.

General Revelation		Special Revelation	
a. How?		a. How?	
b. What?		b. What?	
c. To whom?		c. To whom?	
d. The limits.		d. The limits.	

4. Why is the relationship between general revelation and special revelation very important for Christian life and church life? How does it relate to evangelism and missions?

III. Polemical Exposition

Objection 1: *“General revelation either does not exist, or it is not inescapably clear, because otherwise there would be no atheists, or so people say.”*

Objection 2: *“A person can rely entirely on natural revelation alone, without special revelation.”*

Questions:

1. Please answer objection #1 in your own words. What were the points that Rev. McCurley made in answering this objection?

2. Please answer objection #2 in your own words. Where do we typically see God’s natural revelation?

IV. Practical Exposition

1. The place of the believer’s study of creation and providence.
2. The chief priority of studying the Holy Scriptures above all else.
3. The indispensable need for evangelism and missions.
4. Worship and communion with God in Christ—the pinnacle of God’s revelation.

Questions:

1. Why did the Lord Jesus use things in nature to teach spiritual truths? Was it by accident, or was he doing that for a reason? What are the spiritual implications for us as we study God’s creation and providence?

2. How did godly saints in the Bible show their esteem for the Holy Scriptures? How do you feel about meditating on God’s Word?

3. How does the relationship between general and special revelation reinforce evangelical and missionary work?

4. How do we know that Christ is the “pinnacle of God’s revelation”? What does the saving knowledge of God, as revealed in the Bible, lead believers to do, and what does it produce in the believer?

V. Self-Reflection

Please sing Psalm 19 and meditate on the Psalm. God graciously reveals himself. Praise God for his creation and the Bible, which are both means of revelation. Do you also see in this Psalm that David communes with God in response to God’s communication with him? There is always a link between God’s Word and prayer. It is a link that we should use daily. While creation should fill us with awe toward God, only the Bible can teach us how to draw near to God as a forgiven and transformed people, and worship him in an acceptable way. How can we use each benefit of Scripture (verses 7 to 11), as a means to guide our prayers?¹

¹ *The Reformation Heritage KJV Study Bible*: Psalm 19, “Thoughts for personal and family worship.