

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

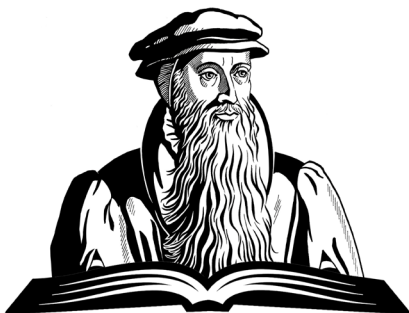
Video Lecture Series

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

STUDY GUIDE

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

Lecture 5:
INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE



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

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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 5:

Inspiration of Scripture

Introduction

Satan has been using the same tactics against God’s people since the beginning of the world, namely, attacking the Word of God. As the Apostle Paul expressed, “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ”—2 Corinthians 11:3. For this reason, it is essential that Christians understand the doctrine of the Inspiration of Scripture, and learn to defend and maintain it with all our hearts.

Theme: *The doctrine of the Inspiration of Scripture.*

I. Scriptural Basis

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”—2 Timothy 3:16–17.

1. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.
2. It is highly profitable. The believer is fully equipped by the Bible for all good works.

Questions:

1. How do we know from 2 Timothy 3:16–17 that the Bible has divine authority?

2. What practical implications do we derive from knowing that the Bible is God’s Word, and that it is highly profitable?

II. Doctrinal Overview

Summarized in *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 1, paragraphs 2 and 4.

1. *Defining some terms:*

- a. Plenary verbal inspiration
- b. Inerrancy
- c. Infallibility

2. The role of human authors employed by God, in writing the Holy Scriptures.

- a. 2 Peter 1:19–21.

Questions:

1. As a companion to this lecture, please read carefully chapter 1, paragraphs 2 and 4, of *The Westminster Confession of Faith*. Does the authority of Scripture depend upon men or upon the church? Please explain your answer.

2. Please define each word in the phrase, “Plenary verbal inspiration,” and try to provide a Bible reference for each one.

3. What does the word “inerrancy” mean? How do the authors of the Bible rely on this doctrinal truth? Please give an example.

4. Please give the meaning of the word “infallibility” in regard to the Bible.

5. What is the role of human authors employed by God, in writing the Holy Scriptures? How does the Bible answer this question? Did God mechanically dictate his messages to them?

III. Polemical Exposition

Objection 1: *The Bible contains the Word of God, but also contains many other errors.*

Objection 2: *The Scriptures are the instrument that God uses to existentially communicate this word, though the Bible itself is a fallible human record.*

Objection 3: *The intent of the Bible is inspired, and the purpose is infallible, though the content or words are not inspired.*

1. Roots of these problems:

- a. Anti-supernaturalism.
- b. Denial of the propositional revelation.

Questions:

1. What does Objection #1 typically come from? What are the errors of this approach? Have you or the congregation you belong to been influenced by this error?

2. What is the Neo-orthodox view of the Bible? What are the problems with this approach? Does our experience make the Bible true?

3. Do you agree with Objection #3? Please explain your answer.

4. Why do we need to hold on to the truth that the Bible is the Word of God? What are the roots of these objections? What is the desire behind them?

IV. Practical Exposition

1. The authority of the Bible is a fundamental article of the Christian faith.
2. Love for God means that we should love our Bibles.
3. The believer must rely on the inspired Scripture for growing in spiritual maturity.
4. Ministers are to preach God's Word by pleading in prayer for the help of the Holy Spirit when preparing sermons and preaching the Word. They should not rely on their own ideas or those of other men.

Questions:

1. Why is it so important that we do not allow any toleration for undermining the authority of the Holy Scriptures?

2. What are the beneficial and practical ways we can love our Bibles? Why is that important?

3. What does it mean when the Lord Jesus prayed, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17)?

4. What are the right ways for a minister to prepare and preach the Word of God? Can he use the Bible to manipulate others according to his own desires? What does Rev. McCurley mean when he says, “It is a sober thing for fallible men to preach the infallible Word of God”?

V. Self-Reflection

1. Are you fully convinced of the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures? How does the doctrine in this lecture guide you in your Christian life?

2. Study the passages in 2 Timothy 4:2 and 2:15, and meditate on the thought of fallible men preaching the infallible Word of God. If you are a pastor, set apart some time to think about these texts and pray for the Spirit’s help in your ministry. If you are not a minister, please set aside time to pray for your pastor.