

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Video Lecture Series

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

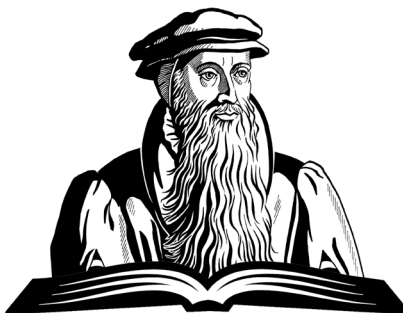
STUDY GUIDE

Module 1:

**INTRODUCTION and
THE DOCTRINE OF FIRST PRINCIPLES**

Lecture 8:

**PRESERVATION AND
TRANSLATION OF SCRIPTURE**



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 8:

Preservation and Translation of Scripture

Introduction

Imagine something that belonged to your family for a couple of generations. How would you treat it? Would you protect it and take care of it? God intended for his written Word to be passed down from generation to generation, century after century, and he also intended for his Word to be taken to every tribe and country all around the world. God not only gave us his inspired Word, but he determined, by his providence, to ensure that it would be preserved and kept pure in all ages, and translated into the languages of people all over the world.

Theme: *The Preservation of the Bible, and its Translation into other Languages.*

I. Scriptural Basis

“The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, Thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.”

—Psalm 12:6–7.

1. God will certainly keep and preserve his Word in its purity.

“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”—1 Corinthians 2:13

2. We need to give attention to safeguarding the details of the inspired texts, when translating them into other languages.

Questions:

1. What two things are required regarding the Lord’s great commission: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations” (Matthew 28:19)?

2. What doctrines or teachings do we draw from Psalm 12:6–7?

II. Doctrinal Overview

Summarized in *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 1, paragraph 8.

1. *The doctrine of preservation.*

- a. The correct manuscripts.
- b. Be aware of heretics who would seek to corrupt the Scriptures.

2. *The translation of Scriptures.*

- a. The important of accuracy of translation.
- b. Faithful teaching.

Questions:

1. In your own words, please summarize the main statements in *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 1, paragraph 8.

2. Why are there so many copies of the Scriptures? How can we be sure that pure copies have been maintained and passed down to us through the ages?

3. How does the doctrine of *verbal plenary inspiration of Scripture* relate to accuracy in the translation of the Scriptures into other languages?

4. Which is more important for accurate translation of Scripture: “*How would the readers understand it?*” or, “*What does the text say?*” Please explain your answer.

III. Polemical Exposition

1. Two schools of thought regarding the manuscripts.
2. The issue of the region from which these manuscripts came.
3. Accuracy or readability?

Questions:

1. What are the two schools of thought regarding the authenticity of manuscripts? How do you answer the claim that older manuscripts are more authentic?

2. How does the issue of the region from which these manuscripts came influence their reliability?

3. What are the two schools of thought regarding translation? Can we view interpretation of Scripture as reliable? Why or why not?

IV. Practical Exposition

1. The believer should know that he has good grounds for complete confidence that he has the very Word of God in a faithful translation of the Scriptures.
2. These doctrines provide biblical conviction about how men handle the Bible, and they fuel the prayers of God's people.
3. We should give careful attention to every word and detail of the Scriptures, and we can do so by way of meditation.
4. Memorization of Scripture.

Questions:

1. How can you know that the Bible version you are using is a reliable and faithful translation?

2. Why is memorization of Scripture always helpful and edifying?

V. Self-Reflection

Try to find good articles and books regarding the theme in this lecture. Investigate the history of Bible translations in your own country. Do you see God’s gracious hand through the provision of his Word translated into your own language? Does this lecture fuel your prayers and support? Do you desire to see faithful translations of the Scriptures produced and taken to every people in every language throughout the whole world?
