

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Video Lecture Series

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

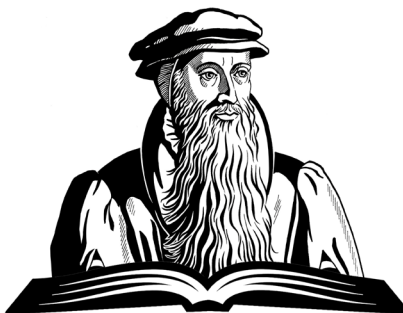
STUDY GUIDE

Module 1:

**INTRODUCTION and
THE DOCTRINE OF FIRST PRINCIPLES**

Lecture 10:

THE CONTINUITY 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 10:

The Continuity of Scripture

Introduction

We cannot restrict ourselves merely to one section or part of God's Word. We need the whole Bible to have the whole revelation of who God is. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible presents one God, one way of salvation, one people of God, all in one glorious story about the one and only Savior, Jesus Christ. The whole Bible, therefore, is the Christian Scriptures. Not only must we maintain the doctrine that the Scriptures alone are God's authoritative standard, but we must also affirm that all of the Scriptures constitute that standard.

Theme: *The continuity of Scripture—the Bible presents a consistent, unified message in one indivisible book.*

I. Scriptural Basis

“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself...And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.”—Luke 24: 27, and 44–45

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”—2 Timothy 3:15

1. All Scriptures are pointing to Christ and speaking of him.
2. This knowledge of Christ inflamed the disciples' hearts and gave them zeal to go and to tell others.
3. Both the Old and New Testaments are necessary to know Christ and salvation.

Questions:

1. Read and meditate on Luke 24, verses 13 to 53. What did the Lord Jesus teach to his disciples concerning the Old Testament? What did he do to their hearts, and what happened afterwards?

2. Why should we read the Old and New Testaments together?

II. Doctrinal Overview

Summarized in *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 1, paragraph 2, and chapter 7, paragraphs 5 & 6.

1. The unfolding progression of God’s revelation.
2. We have to recognize that the New Testament itself teaches us that the Old Testament Scriptures are God’s Word about Christ and the gospel.
3. We see continuity between the Old and New Testaments with regards to the covenant of grace.
4. There are also some points of discontinuity.
 - a. Differences between the administration of the covenant of grace in the Old and the New Testaments.
 - b. The important place of kingdom expansion.
 - c. The greater degrees of blessing in the New Testament, derived from the finished work of Christ.
5. The permanence of the moral law of God.
6. Binding obligations of the moral law.
7. The Book of Psalms.

Questions:

1. Rev. McCurley mentioned “the unfolding progression of God’s revelation.” What is that? and how does it affect us in our Bible reading?

2. How does the New Testament itself teach us that the Old Testament Scriptures are God’s Word about Christ and the gospel? Please give an example.

3. What is the continuity between the Old and New Testaments with regard to the covenant of grace?

4. What are the discontinuities between the Old And New Testaments with regard to the covenant of grace? Please explain those categories from Scripture.

5. Do the Ten Commandments—the moral law—remain the same for all people in all ages, as a revelation of the character of God and of his divine will and standard of right and wrong? Please cite the Scripture references that prove this.

6. What specific aspects of the Book of Psalms evidence continuity between the two Testaments?

III. Polemical Exposition

1. There are arguments which undermine the continuity of the Holy Scripture.
 - a. Some draw a sharp division between the Old and New Testaments, insisting that the Old Testament is no longer relevant for the New Testament, other than perhaps to provide stories that illustrate moral lessons.
 - b. Some wrongfully teach that the moral law—the Ten Commandments—are done away with in the New Testament.
 - c. Some believe that there are two different churches, two people of God—Old Testament Israel, and the New Testament church; or one that is earthly, and one that is heavenly.
2. An argument for continuity with regards to the Fourth Commandment in particular.

Questions:

1. What are the theological consequences, and the pastoral consequences of division between the Old and New Testaments?

2. Why is it an error to think that there are two churches, or two peoples of God? What does Scripture teach us about the church?

3. What is the correct biblical attitude toward the Fourth Commandment, of keeping the Sabbath?

IV. Practical Exposition

1. We must study Christ and the gospel in the Old Testament, as an indispensable part of the whole Bible.
2. Ministers and pastors much preach Christ from the Old Testament.
3. We need to study deeply the Old Testament language, themes, doctrines, images, vocabulary, events, and patterns that are found there, and notice how they are referred to in the New Testament.
4. We should sing and study the Psalms so that the language of the Psalms permeates our hearts and minds.

Questions:

1. What are the encouragements given to us by studying Christ in the Old Testament?

2. Why should ministers preach the whole Christ from the whole Bible? What does that mean?

3. Which parts of the Old Testament should we study? What should we look for when we are studying the Old Testament?

4. Why should we sing the Psalms, both in private worship and in public worship? Why did Martin Luther say that the Book of Psalms is like a miniature Bible?

V. Self-Reflection

Study the Book of the Psalms prayerfully, by reading, meditating, and by singing the Psalms in your worship life. Are you beginning to see the great value of this book to the church? Watch to see how often the Psalms are quoted in the New Testament. Do you and your congregation sing the Psalms in the public worship? Does this lecture encourage you to better study the Old Testament?
