

# SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

## Video Lecture Series

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

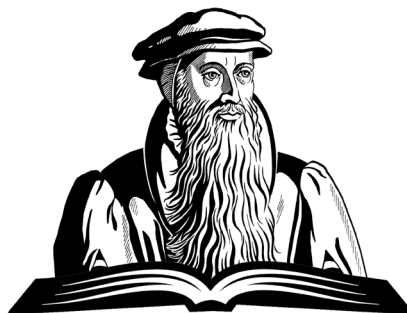
# STUDY GUIDE

*Module 3:*

## THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

*Lecture 10:*

## THE DOCTRINE OF THE LAW OF GOD



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

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## STUDY GUIDE

Module 3

### *The Nature of Sin*

1. Introduction
2. The Nature of Man
3. Man As the Image of God
4. The Freedom of Man's Will
5. The Nature of Sin
6. The Doctrine of Original Sin
7. The Doctrine of Total Depravity
8. The Doctrine of the Covenant of Works
9. The Doctrine of the Covenant of Grace
- 10. The Doctrine of the Law of God**

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## STUDY GUIDE

Module 3:

THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

Lecture 10:

# The Doctrine of the Law of God

### ***Introduction***

God has provided a perfect, infallible standard for measuring man spiritually, that is, for testing man's conformity to God's revealed will. That standard is God's moral law, which is summarized in the Ten Commandments. We're not left to guess or estimate how closely man matches what God requires. Man's whole life and character is tested by the objective rule given in God's law. The standard is unchanging, and it applies to all men, in all ages, in all places.

**Theme:** *The doctrine of the Law of God.*

### **I. Scriptural Basis**

*“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”* (Matthew 5:17–19)

1. Christ states explicitly that his coming did not destroy the law or the prophets.
  - a. The “law” here refers to the moral law summarized in the Ten Commandments.
2. Christ says that the moral law will continue until heaven and earth pass away.
3. The preservation of the moral law applies to every detail.
4. Jesus teaches a more thorough, penetrating application of the law to man's thoughts and heart and motives, not just his outward actions.
5. In order to understand man, we need to understand God's moral standard.

**Questions:**

1. How do we know that Christ has a high regard for the Old Testament and the law?

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2. What does Christ encourage his people to do in Matthew 5:17–19?

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**II. Doctrinal Overview**

In *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 19, paragraph 2, we read:

*“This law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness, and, as such, was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in ten commandments, and written in two table: the four first commandments containing our duty towards God; and the other six our duty to man.”*

1. The moral law is summarized in the Ten Commandments.
2. The law is a transcript and revelation of God’s character, and therefore, an expression of eternal truth, binding on all creatures, from creation to eternity.
  - a. It reveals God’s holiness.
  - b. It reveals God’s love.
  - c. It reveals God’s jealousy.
3. The different categories of law.
  - a. The moral law.
  - b. The judicial law.
  - c. The ceremonial law.
4. The summary of the relationship of law and gospel.
  - a. The law drives us to Christ in the gospel.
  - b. The gospel drives us back to the law.

5. The three uses of the moral law.
  - a. For restraining wickedness, and maintaining order in the world.
  - b. The law reveals sin and drives us to Christ.
  - c. The law instructs believers how to live a life of godliness out of love and gratitude for their redemption.
6. The rules for interpreting the Ten Commandments.
  - a. *The Westminster Larger Catechism*, Question #99.
  - b. The law is perfect and requires full conformity in the whole man.
  - c. The law is spiritual—it reaches every aspect of man.
  - d. The opposite of each command is always binding.
  - e. We are to keep the law and assist others in keeping it.

**Questions:**

1. What is the summary of the moral law? How does the *Westminster Confession of Faith* state that?

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2. How does the law reflect the character of God? Which attributes of God are manifest by the law? Please give Scripture proofs.

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3. What are the three categories of the law? Of what use are the ceremonial law and the judicial law? Are they still binding upon man?

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4. What is the biblical relationship between law and gospel? What are the implications of the balance between law and gospel? Which wrong uses of moral law were rejected by the Lord Jesus and the Apostle Paul?

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5. How are we to understand that “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth” (Romans 10:4), in light of law and gospel?

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6. What are the three uses of the moral law?

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7. What are the biblical rules for interpreting the moral law?

**III. Polemical Exposition**

Error 1: *Dispensationalism*.

Error 2: *Attacks on the 4th Commandment, about the Sabbath*.

**Questions:**

1. What are the problems with Dispensationalism? What does the term, “the law of Christ” refer to in Dispensational theology?

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2. What are the biblical reasons for observing the 4th Commandment?

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3. What are the biblical ways of keeping the Sabbath holy?

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**IV. Practical Exposition**

1. The believer's love for the moral law of God.
2. We are to cultivate a love for God's law.
  - a. We think about what we love, and we speak about what we think about.
3. The law causes us to walk humbly before God and men.
  - a. It pierces the depths of our soul and reveals areas that need growth in sanctification and Christ-likeness.
4. The law gives wisdom for decisions and godly living.
5. The law makes Christ more precious to the believer.

**Questions:**

1. What are the affections of the believer towards the moral law of God? How do we know that from Scripture?

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2. Why does the study of the moral law cause us to walk humbly before God and man?

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3. How can we use God's law in our life in ways that honor and adore him?

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4. How is Christ revealed in the law? How does studying the law of God make Christ more precious to the believer?

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**V. Self-Reflection**

Read and meditate on the whole of Psalm 119. Why does the psalmist have such a deep respect and love for the law of God? What did you learn in this lecture about both the knowledge of God and the knowledge of self?

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