

# SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

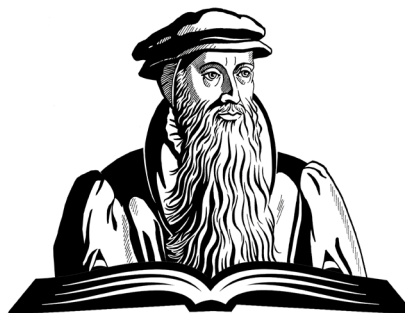
## Video Lecture Series

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

# STUDY GUIDE

*Module 5:*  
**SOTERIOLOGY—  
THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION**

*Lecture 11:*  
**THE ASSURANCE OF GRACE  
AND SALVATION**



**The John Knox Institute**  
of Higher Education

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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 5

## *Soteriology—the Doctrine of Salvation*

1. Introduction to Soteriology
2. The Doctrine of Union with Christ
3. The Doctrines of Effectual Calling & Regeneration
4. The Doctrine of Saving Faith
5. The Doctrine of Repentance
6. The Doctrine of Justification
7. The Doctrine of Adoption
8. The Doctrine of Sanctification
9. The Doctrine of Good Works
10. The Doctrine of Perseverance of the Saints
- 11. The Doctrine of Assurance of Grace & Salvation**

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## STUDY GUIDE

*Module 5:*

SOTERIOLOGY—THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

*Lecture 11:*

# The Doctrine of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation

### ***Introduction***

Think of a newborn child born into a loving, godly home. That infant has so many blessings of which he is not aware. He has life, though he's not conscious of it, even of the concept of life. His parents provide everything he needs—food to nourish him, clothing to warm him, shelter to protect him, and so on. Above all these things, he has a father who dearly loves him, who delights in him, and cherishes him. But will his father be satisfied with this? The answer is, No. He not only loves his child, but he wants his child to come to know and to be blessed by the love of his father, and to see and enjoy the tokens of that love in all the provisions made for him. It delights the father to see his love registering in his son's eyes. This illustrates for us the Doctrine of Assurance of Grace and Salvation.

**Theme:** *The doctrine of Assurance of Grace and Salvation.*

### **I. Scriptural Basis**

*“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”—I John 5:13.*

*“But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”—John 20:31.*

1. John's purpose in both these verses is to assure believers of their salvation in Christ.
2. This means that it is possible for all believers to have assurance of their salvation.
3. Some believers need assurance of salvation, but do not have it.
4. Assurance is the fruit that grows out of the root of faith in Christ.

- a. Some are tempted to bypass faith, thinking they are saved when they are not.
- b. John's 1st epistle provides marks of saving faith.

***Questions:***

1. What are main purposes of the Apostle John in writing his Gospel and his first epistle? In what Scripture passages do we see this?

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2. How is faith in Jesus Christ related to Assurance of Salvation? Is it possible to have Assurance but not have faith in Christ?

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**II. Doctrinal Overview**

1. Defining Assurance of Grace and Salvation.

(per *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 18, paragraph 1)

2. Four categories of people:

- a. Those who are saved by faith, and are assured of their salvation.
- b. Those who are saved by faith, but are not sure of that salvation.
- c. Those who are not saved by faith, but wrongly believe they have salvation.
- d. Those who are not saved by faith, and know they are without salvation.

3. True Assurance of Salvation is founded on three components:

(per *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 18, paragraph 2)

- a. Objective—outside oneself, based on the promises of salvation.
- b. Subjective—inside oneself, based on the Spirit's witness with our spirit.
- c. Demonstrative—evidence of saving faith in one's life:
  - 1) Sorrow for sin;
  - 2) Love for Christ;

- 3) Faith in God's Word;
- 4) All the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians chapter 5, verses 22 to 25.
- d. All three components are needed for Assurance of Salvation to stand.
- 4. Assurance is not the essence of faith.  
(per *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 18, paragraph 3)
  - a. Believers have struggles with assurance.
  - b. The focus must be faith in Christ.

### ***Questions***

1. Please define Assurance of Salvation using *The Westminster Confession of Faith*.

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2. What are the four categories of people, in regard to the study of Assurance of Salvation? What does the Bible tell us about the second and third categories?

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3. What are the three components needed for Assurance of Salvation to stand up? What does it mean that these are the grounds for Assurance?

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4. What does it mean to say that biblical assurance is always Christ-centered?

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5. What two important things must be held together for evidence of grace in the believer? When they are not held together, how does it lead to mysticism and rationalism?

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6. How does Scripture teach that self-examination is necessary for attaining Assurance of Salvation? What marks of grace would we be looking for?

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7. What does it mean when we say that Assurance is not the essence of faith? How does *The Westminster Confession of Faith* explain this?

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8. Why is it important for pastors to deal tenderly with those who are struggling with the Assurance of their salvation? Why is it important to place the emphasis on faith in Christ?

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9. What are some of the struggles that believers have with Assurance? How does *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 18, paragraph 4, address this?

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### **III. Polemical Exposition**

1. *Easy-believism in modern evangelicals.*
  - a. Just say the “sinner’s prayer.”
2. *Roman Catholicism teaches Assurance is impossible.*

### 3. *Problems in Protestantism.*

- a. Focus is on self, rather than on Jesus Christ.
- b. Does not emphasize God's promises.
- c. A distorted view of God.

### ***Questions:***

1. What is "easy-believism"? What are the errors and problems with this teaching?

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2. What does the Roman Catholic church teach about the doctrine of Assurance of Salvation?

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3. What are some wrong tendencies within Protestantism regarding Assurance? What are the faults of this error?

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### **IV. Practical Exposition**

- 1. Assurance of Salvation is one of the great privileges of being a Christian.
  - a. It should be sought by every believer.
  - b. It produces intense spiritual joy.
  - c. It stimulates abiding peace in a turbulent world.
  - d. It quickens our service to God.
  - e. The assured Christian can be a true light to a dark world.
- 2. The Apostle Paul states that Assurance is founded on seeing the entire corpus of redemption of God's people (Romans 8:38–39).



***Questions:***

1. Why do we say that Assurance is one of the great privileges of being a Christian?

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2. How can Assurance of Salvation affect the believer's life and service?

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3. How does the Apostle Paul prove that Assurance is founded on seeing the entire corpus of redemption of God's people? How does he show God's inseparable love for his children?

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***V. Self-Reflection***

If you are a professing believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, are you assured of your salvation? Or do you experience struggles with that assurance? Does your church or congregation show a balanced view of this doctrine with attention focused on faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? Now that you have completed this lecture, how would you reach out and help others who struggle with assurance of their salvation? What motivates you in the pursuit of Assurance?

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