

# SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

## Video Lecture Series

by Rev. William Macleod

# STUDY GUIDE

*Module 7:*  
**ESCHATOLOGY—  
THE DOCTRINE OF LAST THINGS**

*Lecture 1:*  
**INTRODUCTION TO  
ESCHATOLOGY**



**The John Knox Institute**  
of Higher Education

## **John Knox Institute of Higher Education**

*Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide*

© 2021 by John Knox Institute of Higher Education

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means for profit, except in brief quotations for the purposes of review, comment, or scholarship, without written permission from the publisher, John Knox Institute, P.O. Box 19398, Kalamazoo, MI 49019-19398, USA.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version.

Visit our website: [www.johnknoxinstitute.org](http://www.johnknoxinstitute.org)

Rev. William Macleod, recently retired minister in the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), serving 45 years at Knightswood Free Church, in Glasgow, Scotland. In addition, he was for many years the editor of the denominational magazine, *The Free Church Witness*, and was Professor of Systematic Theology and Principal of the Free Church (Continuing) Seminary, in Inverness, Scotland.

[www.freechurchcontinuing.org](http://www.freechurchcontinuing.org)

# SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

by Rev. William Macleod

## STUDY GUIDE

### Module 7

## *Eschatology—the Doctrine of Last Things*

1. Introduction to Eschatology
2. The Doctrine of Death
3. Events Leading to the Second Coming
4. Interpreting the Book of Revelation
5. The Jews
6. Dispensational Premillenarianism
7. The Second Coming and the Resurrection
8. The Doctrine of the Judgment
9. The Doctrine of Hell
10. The Doctrine of Heaven

# SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

by Rev. William Macleod

## STUDY GUIDE

*Module 7:*

Eschatology—The Doctrine of Last Things

*Lecture 1:*

## Introduction to Eschatology

### ***Introduction***

Eschatology is the doctrine of Last Things. It looks into the future, and, on the basis of the teaching of Scripture, sets out what will happen in the future. Some people allow their imagination to lead them into fantastical speculation. But theology should always be sober and restrained, and based upon what God has clearly revealed. In trying to interpret prophecy, we must exercise a measure of caution, as it is notoriously difficult to interpret. When Christ came the first time, he took almost everyone by surprise. Although the Jews had the wonderful and detailed prophecies of the Old Testament, and they had a clear idea in their own minds what would happen, it didn't turn out as they expected. As one writer put it, when Christ came the first time, they all got it wrong. So it will be when Christ returns the second time. Even the best works of theology would be found to be somewhat inaccurate.

**Theme:** *Introduction to Eschatology*

### **I. Views of Eschatology**

1. General Eschatology.
  - a. The future of the church, the world, and mankind in general.
  - b. Events that will take place before Christ returns.
  - c. The end of the world, judgment, the eternal state.
2. Individual Eschatology.
  - a. The future from the individual's perspective.
  - b. The individual's death, what happens after death, the intermediate state, the resurrection, the final judgment, heaven and hell.
3. The Theory of Evolution (Charles Darwin) is generally accepted by most today.
  - a. Promotes atheism, and has undermined faith in God.

- b. It says that man came from nowhere and is going nowhere.
- c. Scientific materialism say life expires like a candle, death is the end of everything.
- 4. In the Church, Higher Criticism and Liberal Theology have undermined belief in the afterlife.
  - a. They say that when people die, they live on only in the memory of loved ones.
  - b. Some think that everyone must eventually end up in heaven.
  - c. Some teach conditional immortality, that only true believers live forever.
  - d. There is little preaching in the church today on hell and the wrath to come.

***Questions:***

1. What are the two ways of looking at Eschatology?

---



---



---



---

2. What are some of the popular views today about the beginning and end of the world and of life after death?

---



---



---



---

3. What are the liberal views within the church today about the afterlife? How should we, as Christians, react to these false views within and without the church?

---



---



---



---

**II. The Biblical Teaching**

- 1. God created man in his image, and entered into a covenant of life with him.
  - a. Man was created in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness with an immortal soul.
  - b. Man fell in sin by disobeying God.
  - c. Sin brought spiritual death, natural death, and eternal death.
  - d. The covenant of grace, God promised a Savior.
  - e. Christ is our hiding place.

2. God made a covenant with Noah.
  - a. The rainbow is a sign of God's promise.
  - b. God is actively preserving the world.
3. God made a covenant with Abraham.
  - a. The church will be as numerous as the stars.
  - b. Christians should have an optimistic Eschatology, a bright view of the future.

### ***Questions***

1. What does the Scripture mainly teach about the creation of the world and the fall of man?

---

---

---

---

2. In what three ways did death come upon mankind as the result of man's fall?

---

---

---

---

3. What did God promise man in Genesis 3:15? How did God cover their nakedness in verse 21?

---

---

---

---

4. How does God's covenant with Noah dispel modern fears about climate change?

---

---

---

---

5. How does God's covenant with Abraham give to the church an optimistic Eschatology?

---

---

---

---

### **III. Old Testament Saints Believed in the Afterlife**

1. Enoch walked with God, and God took him to heaven. (Genesis 5:24; Hebrews 11:5)
2. Jude, 14–15 says Enoch told of the judgment day.
3. Hebrews 11:9–10 says Abraham had the expectation of heaven.
4. Hebrews 11:16 says the land of promise meant heaven.
5. By living in tents, Old Testament saints declared this world was not their home.
6. Job 19:25–27, Job shows he believes in a physical resurrection.
7. Many passages in the Psalms witness to a belief in the afterlife.
8. Solomon says “the spirit shall return to God who gave it,” in Ecclesiastes 12:7.
9. The prophets speak many times about the afterlife.
  - a. Isaiah 60:20—he speaks of heaven.
  - b. Isaiah 66:24—he speaks of hell.
  - c. Malachi 4:1—speaks of the resurrection and judgment.
  - d. Daniel 12:2–3—speaks of eternity.

#### ***Questions:***

1. Some say that the Old Testament saints had no clear hope of life after death, or of heaven and hell. How does the Scripture clearly show that to be untrue?

---

---

---

---

2. How do the Psalms prove that Old Testament saints believed in the afterlife?

---

---

---

---

3. How did Solomon write about life after death?

---

---

---

---

---

4. How can we be sure that the prophets spoke with assurance of the afterlife?

---

---

---

#### **IV. Prophecies of the Coming of Christ**

1. *Proto-evangelium*, or the curse of the serpent in Genesis 3:15.
2. Isaiah 9:6–7, “For unto us a child is born...The Prince of Peace.”
3. Isaiah 53:5–6, “The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”
4. Isaiah 53:10, “Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.”
5. The Prophetic Perspective – Christ’s first and second comings seem merged into one.
  - a. Malachi 3:1–3, “The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to this temple.”
  - b. Like seeing two mountain ranges in the distance, they look close from afar.

#### **Questions:**

1. What was the first prophecy of a Savior to be provided for mankind?

---

---

---

---

2. What are some things the book of Isaiah tells us about the coming Messiah and his work?

---

---

---

---

3. How can we best understand the perspective of the Old Testament prophets when both the first and second comings of Christ seem merged into one? How does this help us understand eschatology?

---

---

---

---



## **V. Self-Reflection**

1. Think about the ways in which we are influenced by secular and ungodly views about God and creation, and how this might affect our view of eschatology. Are you rooted in biblical truth? How can you respond to people who say that the study of eschatology is too difficult? What is our responsibility about biblical truth regarding God, the creation, and eschatology?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. This lecture helps us better understand how Old Testament saints thought about the afterlife, about heaven and hell. In what ways does this comfort you, as you consider the eternal state of your own soul?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---