

# *The* **Aréopagus**

## Seminar Catalogue

### Seminars and Workshops in

- Biblical studies
- Christian history
  - Apologetics
- Contemporary cultural studies
  - Christian spirituality
- Science and Christian faith
  - Literature and the arts



# Areopagus Seminar Catalogue



The Areopagus\* is a Christian education ministry organization that provides seminars, workshops and forums on topics relevant to contemporary Christian life and education.

The mission of The Areopagus is to educate and equip Christians to understand their faith in more depth so they can engage others more effectively with the life-transforming truth and love of Jesus Christ. To this end, we offer a substantive curriculum that broadens and deepens their knowledge base, stimulates critical thinking, and challenges them to live faithfully and consistently in accord with the principles and practices of a Biblical Christian worldview.

Areopagus seminars and workshops are seminary-level courses that are offered at a nominal cost, and include a wide variety of topics in Biblical studies, Christian history, apologetics, comparative worldviews and religions, contemporary cultural issues, Christian spirituality, and literature and the arts. Most seminars are one-semester (20-hour) courses, but we also offer many short-term classes and lectures on various topics.

Through our seminars, forums, and other special events, The Areopagus provides a unique opportunity for Christians to come together in an interdenominational learning environment that is intellectually stimulating, socially engaging, and spiritually edifying.

*Jeffrey D. Breshears*

Founder and President, The Areopagus



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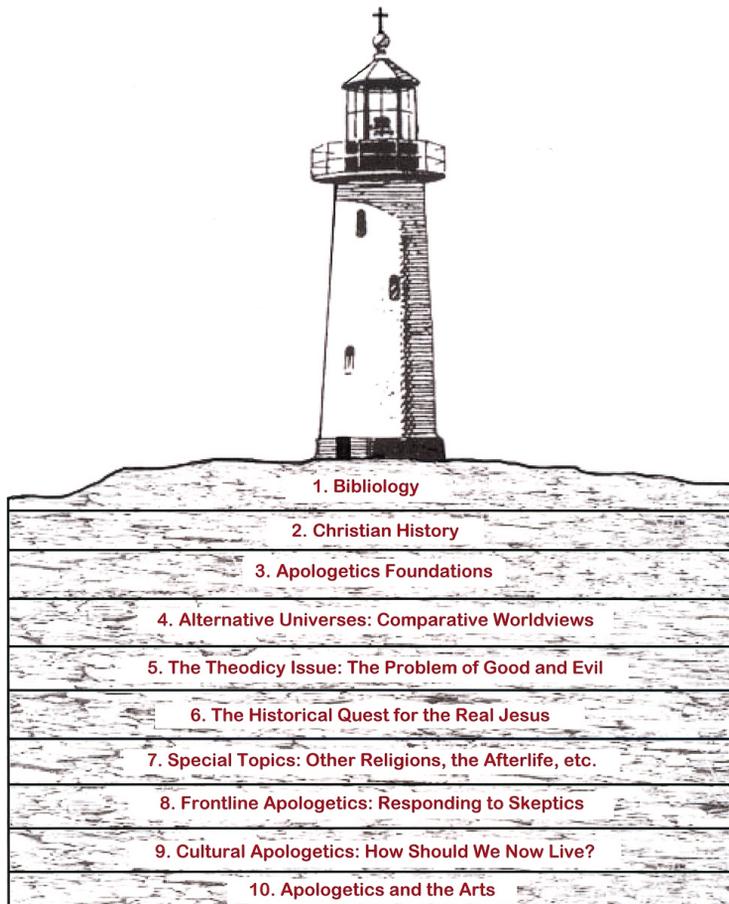
\* In Christian history the name '**Areopagus**' has often been used to represent the intersection of Christian faith and culture. In first century Athens the Areopagus functioned as a philosophical and cultural forum for the exchange of ideas, and it was there that the apostle Paul brought the gospel of Jesus Christ to Europe (ref. Acts 17:16ff).

# Seminar Curriculum

The Areopagus provides a systematic curriculum designed to broaden and deepen one's understanding of the historic Christian faith. Although our courses are "seminary-level" in terms of content, they are taught in an interactive and engaging manner that serious Christians find stimulating, motivating, and practical.

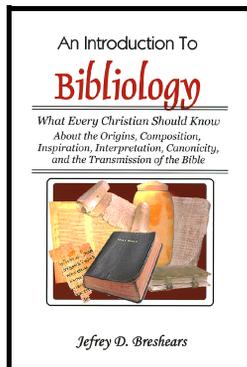
As the graphic below illustrates, the Areopagus seminar curriculum builds on a foundation of Biblical literacy with the goal of educating and equipping Christians to understand their faith in more depth and share it more effectively with non-Christians. Most of our core courses are semester-length (12-weeks, 18-hours), and each includes supplementary readings and detailed outline notes.

Although there is a systematic and sequential order to these seminars, in most cases we offer these courses according to the priorities and preferences of our audience and host group. However, taken as a whole, this curriculum provides an in-depth treatment of Christian history and apologetics that equals anything that most seminaries offer.



## BIBLIOLOGY

### An Introduction To Bibliology: What Every Christian Should Know About the Origins, Composition, Inspiration, Interpretation, Canonicity, and the Transmission of the Bible



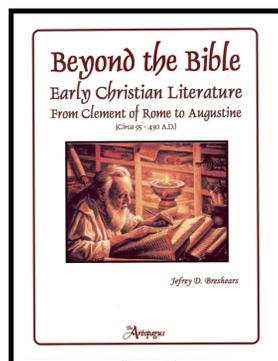
Virtually everything Christians believe about metaphysical truth is derived directly or inferentially from the Bible. But over the past 250 years the Bible has been subjected to intense criticism – not only by nonbelievers but often by Bible scholars, theologians and ministers who profess to be Christians. This is why it is imperative that Christians understand not only *what* the Bible teaches but *why* we should trust it as an infallible guide for what we believe and how we live.

Based on Jeffrey Breshears' book, *An Introduction To Bibliology*, the Aeropagus seminar in Bibliology is an interactive study built around directed readings and focused discussions of 7 key topics related to the development of an informed and thoughtful philosophy of the Bible.

1. What Is the Bible?
2. The Philosophy of the Bible: Components of a Biblical Worldview.
3. Biblical Inspiration and Revelation.
4. Biblical Hermeneutics: Basic Principles of Interpretation.
5. Composition of the Bible and the Earliest Extant Manuscripts.
6. Biblical Canonicity: Why Were Certain Books Included and Excluded from the Biblical Canon?
7. Biblical Textual Criticism: Has the Bible Been Accurately Transmitted Through the Centuries?

### Beyond the Bible: A Study of Early Christian Literature

A study of the writings of the Church Fathers and other early Christian literature from the late-1st century to Augustine, including...



- *I Clement*
- *The Didache*
- *The Epistle of Barnabas*
- *The Shepherd of Hermas*
- The epistles of Ignatius
- *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*
- Athenagoras' *Supplication for the Christians*
- Excerpts from Irenaeus' *Against Heresies*
- Excerpts from the writings of Tertullian and Origen
- Excerpts from Augustine's *Confessions* and *City of God*
- ... and many others

# CHRISTIAN HISTORY

## A Survey of Christian History

A comprehensive 5-semester series that covers the most significant people, issues, and events in Christian history from the founding of the early church through the Reformation era. This curriculum is ideal for Christians who want to broaden and deepen their understanding of the origins, expansion, development, and the influence of Christianity through the ages.

### Semester 1: Christian History: The Cultural Context

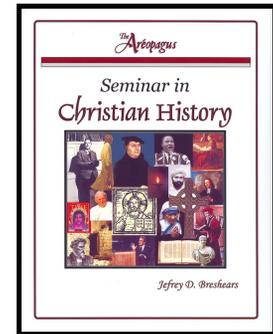
The history, culture and religion of classical Greco-Roman (Hellenistic) civilization from 500 B.C. to the time of Christ and Hebrew/Jewish civilization from Abraham to the time of Christ.

### Semester 2: Jesus and the Apostolic Age (c. 1-100 A.D.)

### Semester 3: The Post-Apostolic and Constantinian Eras (c. 100-430)

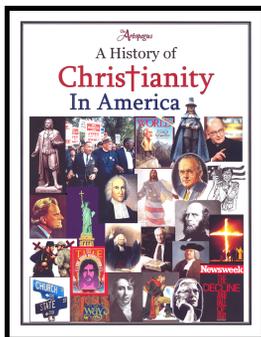
### Semester 4: Medieval Christendom (c. 400-1517)

### Semester 5: The Reformation Era (c. 1517-1650)



## Women In the Early Church: A Biblical and Historical Study

## A History of Christianity In America



A comprehensive 4-semester series of courses that covers the most significant people, issues and events in American Christian history from colonial times to the present.

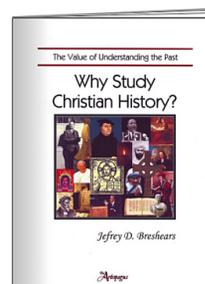
### Semester 1: From the Colonial Era Through the American Revolution (1607-1783)

### Semester 2: From the Founding of the American Republic To the Civil War (1787-1860)

### Semester 3: From the Civil War To the Emergence of Modern Evangelicalism (1860-1940)

### Semester 4: From 1940 To the Present

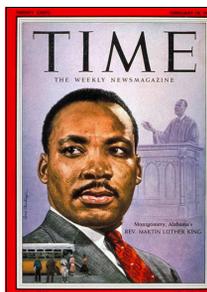
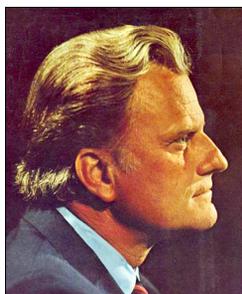
## Why Study Christian History? The Value of Understanding the Past



## Lights of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

The life and works of significant and influential 20<sup>th</sup> century Christians, including:

- **Watchman Nee**
- **Sadhu Sunder Singh**
- **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**
- **C. S. Lewis**
- **Martin Luther King Jr.**
- **Aleksander Solzhenitsyn**
- **Malcolm Muggeridge**
- **Francis Schaeffer**
- **Billy Graham**
- **Henry Nouwen**



## WORLD HISTORY & RELIGIONS

**Ancient and Classical Greece** (c. 1500-323 B.C.)

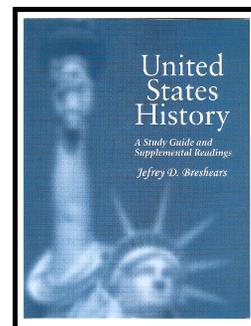
**Ancient and Classical Rome** (c. 753 B.C. - 476 A.D.)

**A Survey of United States History**

**Semester 1: Colonization To the Civil War** (1492-1860)

**Semester 2: The Civil War To World War II** (1861-1941)

**Semester 3: World War II To the Present** (1932-2012)



**A History of Israel and the Jews**

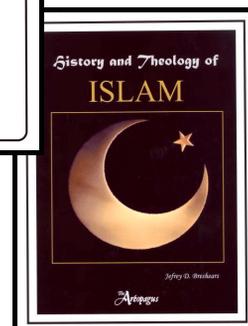
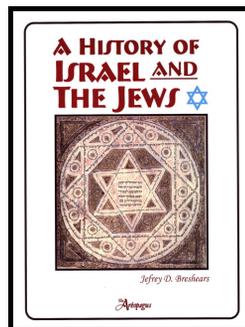
**A History of Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust**

**The History and Theology of Islam**

**The Vedic Tradition and Hinduism**

**History and Philosophy of Buddhism**

**China's Religious and Philosophical Tradition**

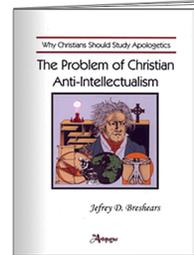


## CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

### Apologetics Foundations

Apologetics Foundations is Part 1 in our Areopagus apologetics curriculum, designed to help Christians understand the Christian faith in more depth and equip them to share their faith more effectively with non-believers. In particular, this course focuses on 4 foundational apologetics topics:

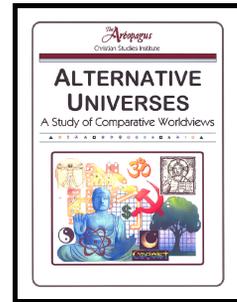
1. Why Christians Should Study Apologetics: The Problem of Christian Anti-Intellectualism
2. The Absolute Truth About Relativism
3. Science, Reason, and the Christian Faith
4. The God Who Is: Classical and Contemporary Arguments for the Existence of God



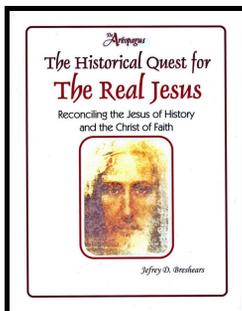
### Alternative Universes: A Study of Comparative Worldviews

An in-depth comparison of Biblically-based Christian Theism with alternative worldviews including...

- Deism
- Atheistic Naturalism
- Nihilism
- Existentialism
- Secular humanism
- Eastern Pantheism
- Postmodernism
- The New Age



### The Historical Quest for the Real Jesus: Reconciling the 'Jesus of History' and the 'Christ of Faith'



The question, “Who is Jesus?” is the central issue of the Christian faith. Until a couple of hundred years ago virtually no one challenged the historicity of Jesus, and few imagined any disjunction between the “Jesus of history” as presented in the New Testament and the “Christ of faith” that Christians worship as their spiritual Savior. But since then, these issues have become topics of major debates among Bible scholars, philosophers and theologians.

Much is at stake in this controversy, including the historical reliability of the Bible, the validity of Christian preaching, teaching, and evangelism, and the inherent credibility of the Christian faith.

This makes it imperative that we understand why Christians have traditionally believed that Jesus Christ was the divine Savior of humanity – and why these claims are historically credible.

## The Theodicy Issue: Reconciling the Problem of God and Evil

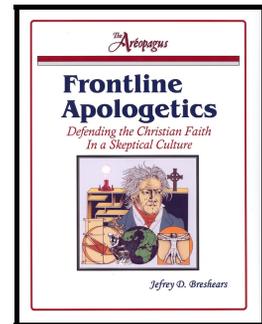
Christians believe that God is great and God is good, and yet evil and suffering are pervasive realities in this world. This is troubling because we assume that if God were truly great he would have the *power* to destroy evil and suffering in this world, and if God were truly good he would *want* to eradicate evil and suffering. So how do we reconcile the coexistence of God and evil?

This course examines the theodicy issue through 3 mediums – Biblical theology, philosophy, and the arts – and in the process we address issues including...

- What are the sources of suffering?
- Is the problem of God and evil a good argument for atheism?
- Why does God allow evil and suffering?
- Why does God allow natural disasters that kill and injure innocent people?
- Suffering as a pathway to grace and redemption.

## Frontline Apologetics: How To Explain and Defend the Christian Faith To Spiritual Seekers, Religious Skeptics, and Argumentative Contrarians

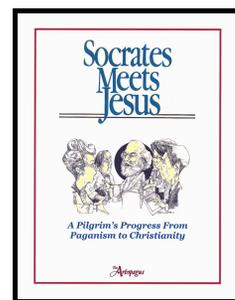
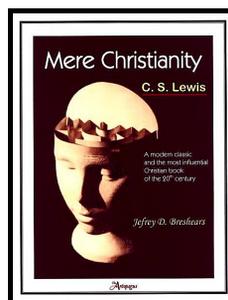
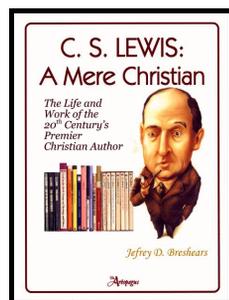
A major reason why many Christians are hesitant to share their faith is because they feel unprepared to handle tough questions and challenges from spiritual seekers and religious skeptics (not to mention, questions by children and grandchildren!). This course covers a wide range of contemporary questions and issues that non-Christians raise (both legitimate and fallacious), and equips Christians to handle these objections clearly, thoughtfully and effectively in a Christ-like spirit.

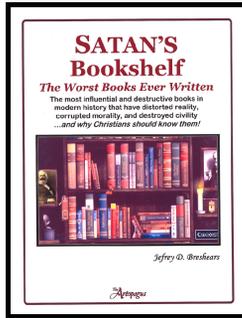


## A Mere Christian: The Life and Works of C. S. Lewis

### C. S. Lewis' "Mere Christianity"

### Socrates Meets Jesus: A Pilgrim's Progress From Paganism to Christianity





## Satan's Bookshelf: The Worst Books Ever Written... and Why Christians Should Know Them!

A review and critique of 30 books in modern history that have distorted reality, corrupted morality, and undermined the Christian faith – including Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1513), Joseph Smith's *Book of Mormon* (1827), Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto* (1848), Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), Sigmund Freud's *The Future of and Illusion* (1927), Saul Alinsky's *Rules for Radicals* (1971), Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* (2006), and many others.

## Ten Myths Related to Science and Christianity

True Christianity and true science are complementary, not contradictory. This course explores 10 popular myths, including...

- “Science is the only true path to knowledge.”
- “Historically, Christianity has been an impediment to the advancement of science.”
- “The Genesis account of creation and modern cosmology are irreconcilable.”
- “The Scopes ‘Monkey Trial’ destroyed the arguments against evolution.”
- “Intelligent Design is merely a ‘God of the gaps’ argument against evolution.”
- “Theistic evolution resolves the conflict between evolution and Christianity.”

## [SEMINARS IN CULTURAL APOLOGETICS]

### Part 1: Secular Humanism and Political Correctness in ‘Post-Christian’ America

A study of the philosophical, historical and religious factors that undermined America's Judeo/Christian social and cultural values and led to the emergence of secular humanism, radical leftwing ideology, and ‘political correctness’. As a result of these insidious influences, virtually every aspect of American life has been adversely affected.

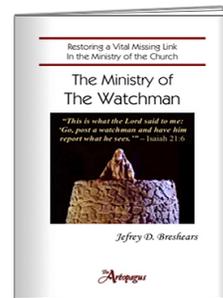
What were the origins of this social revolution, how did this transformation occur, and what has been the legacy of this cultural shift? This course provides the essential background information to make sense of the issues that threaten our society and culture today.

### Part 2: How Should We NOW Live? The Challenges and Opportunities of Living in a ‘Post-Christian’ Society and Culture

A critical assessment of the current state of American culture, and how Christians can live faithfully and responsibly in the midst of a society that is becoming increasingly hostile toward Biblical beliefs and values. Ours is a society that celebrates materialism, hedonism, and self-indulgent narcissism, and one in which the forces of secularism are waging an aggressive culture war against morality in general and the Christian faith in particular.

Based in part on Jeffrey Breshears' book, *The Ministry of the Watchman*, and other readings, this seminar focuses on two seminal issues:

- The problem: The challenges of living in a ‘post-Christian’ society and culture that is increasingly hostile toward Christian faith and values; and
- The solution: The opportunities the current situation affords in terms of rethinking our role and mission in society as a true spiritual counterculture.



## CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

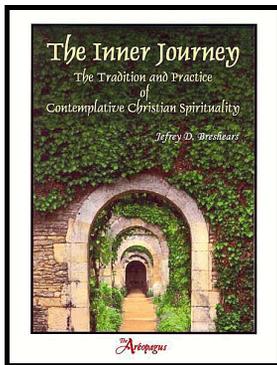
### Writing Your Spiritual Autobiography

Socrates taught that “The unexamined life is not worth living.” Likewise, the apostle Paul exhorted the Corinthian Christians to “Examine yourself to see whether you are in the faith.” This workshop is designed for just that purpose: to provide practical guidance in helping you assess the meaning of your life in light of your Christian faith – and to reflect upon *who* you are, *what* you are, *where* you’re at spiritually, *why* you believe what you do, *why* you live as you do, and *how* you got to this point.

Many people who have written their spiritual autobiography consider it to be a revelation in self-awareness and one of the most meaningful experiences of their life. Furthermore, a thoughtful spiritual autobiography can serve as a catalyst for a comprehensive autobiography, which is one of the most significant contributions we can offer to our spouse, our children, our grandchildren, and others who have been affected by our life.



### The Inner Journey: Readings in Contemplative Spirituality



A series of reading and discussion-based seminars that explore some of the best, most incisive and profound writings in Christian spirituality and spiritual psychology, including modern classics such as...

- **Henri Nouwen**, *The Way of the Heart*
- **Richard Foster**, *Celebration of Discipline*
- **Dallas Willard**, *The Renovation of the Heart*
- **Viktor Frankle**, *Man’s Search for Meaning*
- **Philip Rieff**, *The Triumph of the Therapeutic*
- **Paul Vitz**, *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship*
- **Scott Peck**, *The Road Less Traveled*



## GOD & THE ARTS

The Areopagus is a unique Christian ministry in that we address not only topics and issues related to Bibliology, history, apologetics, and Christian spirituality, but also the arts. In particular, our seminars on “God & the Arts” focus on how the arts can supplement and inspire our spiritual growth and development. Therefore, the following presentations are designed not only to entertain and inform but also to stimulate critical thinking in the context of a wholistic Christian worldview.

### **The Jesus Movement Revisited: A Musical Retrospective**

The history and music of the Jesus Movement of the late 1960s and early ‘70s, the last widespread spiritual renewal movement in American history that impacted the lives of hundreds of thousands of young adults.

### **Fallen Angel: The Life and Music of Larry Norman**

Larry Norman was the originator of Christian rock and the prime driving force behind the Jesus Music of the early-to-mid 1970s. A gifted songwriter and a charismatic performer, he was also a troubled soul whose career and personal life were marred by controversy. With an intense desire for acceptance both as a Christian social prophet and a rock star, his fall from grace exemplified the pitfalls of aspiring Christian celebrities who struggle to be “in the world but not of it.”

### **The Spiritual Odyssey of Pete Maravich**

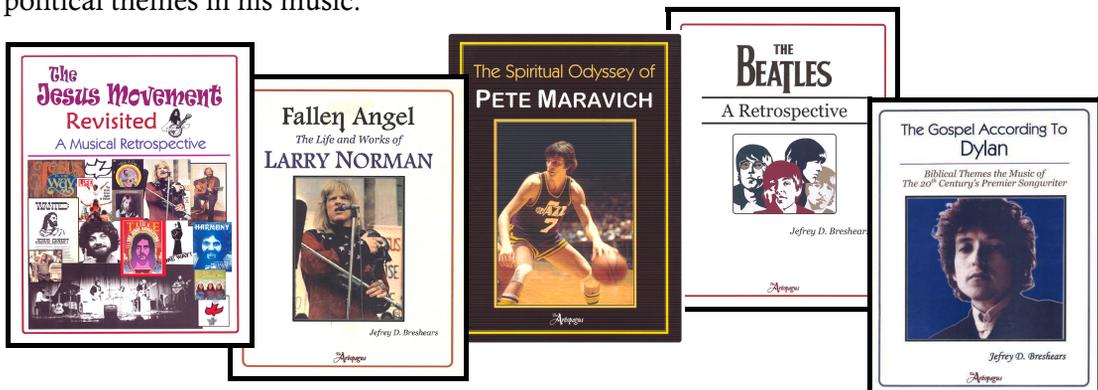
The life and times of “Pistol Pete” Maravich from his phenomenal basketball career to alcohol addiction, mental depression, and an intense spiritual search that culminated in a life-changing conversion to Christianity just a few years prior to his death at age 40.

### **The Beatles: A Retrospective**

The lives, the music and the legacy of the Beatles, including their aesthetic and cultural influence on American society with an emphasis on their spiritual lives.

### **The Gospel According to Dylan**

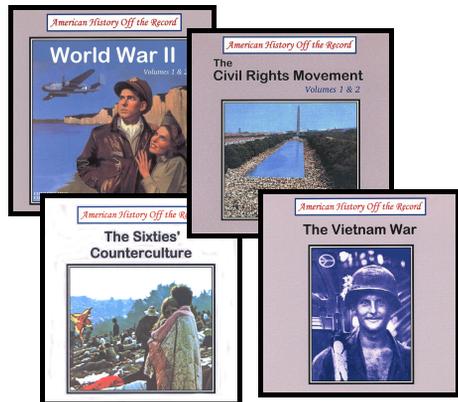
The life and times of Bob Dylan, the most prolific, influential and consequential songwriter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with a special emphasis on Biblical, spiritual, and socio/political themes in his music.



## American History Off the Record

How popular music supplements and enriches our understanding of the major issues and events in American history from World War I through the Sixties era (c. 1914-74). Each session is a 2-hour presentation.

- **Session 1: World War I**
- **Session 2: The Great Depression**
- **Session 3: World War II**
- **Session 4: The Civil Rights Movement**
- **Session 5: Politics and Protest in the '60s**
- **Session 6: The Vietnam War**
- **Session 7: The Sixties Counterculture**
- **Session 8: The Sexual Revolution**

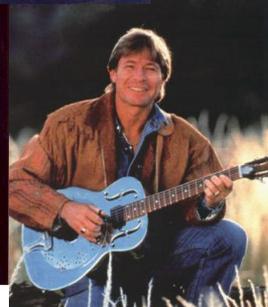
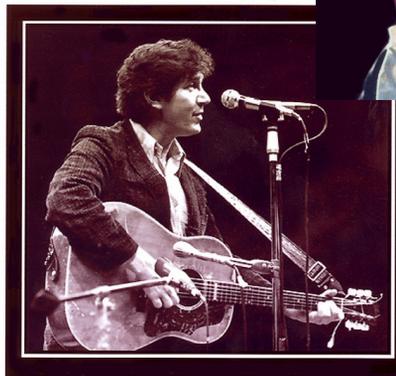
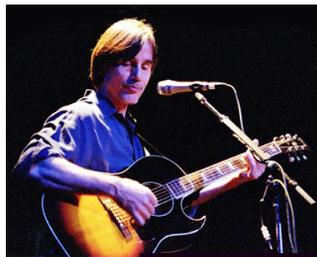


## When the Music Mattered:

### Significant Singer/Songwriters of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

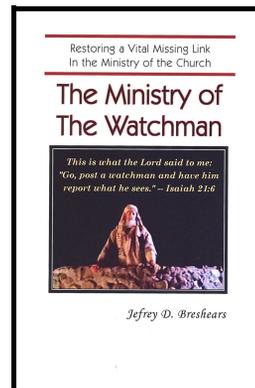
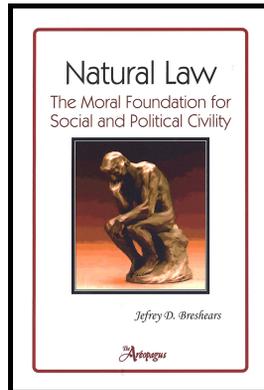
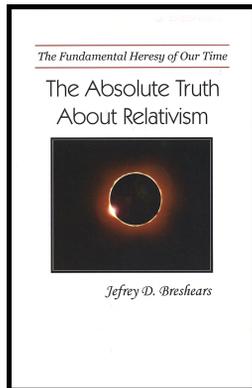
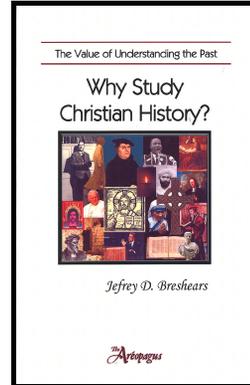
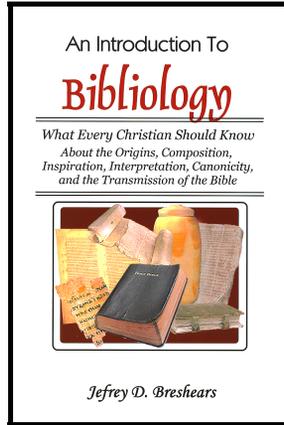
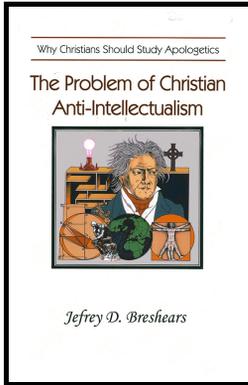
A review and critique of the life and works of significant singer/songwriters whose music defined and influenced 20<sup>th</sup> century American culture. Each session is a 2-hour presentation.

- **Woody Guthrie**
- **Pete Seeger**
- **Tom Lehrer**
- **Bob Dylan**
- **Phil Ochs**
- **Paul Simon**
- **Joni Mitchell**
- **John Denver**
- **Jackson Browne**
- **Bruce Cockburn**
- **Kate Wolf**
- **Mary Chapin Carpenter**



# Areopagus Publications

Books and booklets for group studies and discussion.





# *The Areopagus*



For more information on The Areopagus, please visit our website at  
**[www.TheAreopagus.org](http://www.TheAreopagus.org)**

\$5.00