The Areopagus Seminar in Christian History

The Reformation Era
1500-1650

PART 2
The Reformation Era

Part 2

Instructor: Dr. Jeffrey Breshears

Times and Locations:
- **Tuesdays**, August 15 - Nov. 14
  7-8:30 PM
  Perimeter Church, The Ministry Center
- or —
- **Wednesdays**, Aug. 16 - Nov. 15
  7-8:30 PM
  Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Room 108

Text:
- There is no official textbook for this course. For a list of recommended readings, see the next page(s).

Supplemental Notes:
- A complete set of detailed outline notes will be provided for this course. A spiral-bound Study Guide of the course is available for $15.

Course Fee: $60 / $100 per couple (not including the Study Guide).

Overview
“The Reformation Era” is an in-depth, two-part series that focuses on the major people, issues and events associated with this momentous period in Christian history.

The Protestant Reformation was one of the most significant events in Christian history as well as one of the great transitional eras in Western civilization. Protestant Christians look back at this period as a kind of Golden Age in which heroic figures such as Martin Luther, William Tyndale, John Calvin, Menno Simons and others emerged to challenge the Roman Catholic Church’s dominance over the religious, social and cultural life of Europe. Understandably, Catholics view it differently. For them, the Reformation ruptured the unity in the Body of Christ that had prevailed for more than a thousand years and led to the unfortunate fragmentation of Western Christianity into innumerable splinter groups.

The Reformation was certainly a momentous era, and there is much about it that is cause for celebration. For the first time in over a thousand years Europeans had an alternative to the imperial Roman Catholic Church. Not only was the Reformation movement a major grassroots reaction to the corruption and immorality in the Church, but it also offered an incisive critique of many
doctrines and practices of Roman Catholicism by restoring the centrality of the Bible as the source of authority for theological and ecclesiastical orthodoxy. As a result, within 20 years after Luther drafted his Ninety-Five Thesis, the Bible was available to most Europeans in their own language.

With 2017 being the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation, it will be discussed and debated extensively throughout the year. In the course of our study we will address issues such as “Was the Reformation necessary?” and “What are the issues that continue to divide Catholic and non-Catholic Christians today?” This seminar will provide you with the necessary knowledge to understand what issues were at stake and why the Reformation was essential.

**Note on the Instructor:**
Dr. Jefrey Breshears is a former university history professor, an author, and the founder and president of The Areopagus, a Christian study center and education ministry in the Atlanta area. Dr. Breshears can be contacted at JBreshears@TheAreopagus.org.

**Suggested Readings**

**Prelude To the Reformation**

**General:**

**John Wycliffe:**

**Erasmus:**

**The Reformation Era: General**


**Reformation Era Biographies**

**Martin Luther:**

**Ulrich Zwingli:**
William Tyndale:
Brian Edwards, God’s Outlaw (Tyndale, 1976).

John Calvin and Calvinism:

The English Reformation
R. T. Kendall, Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649 (Paternoster, 1997).

French Protestantism: The Huguenots
N. M. Sutherland, The Huguenot Struggle for Recognition (Yale University Press, 1980).

The Radical Reformation

Religious Persecution and Martyrdom
Thielman J. Van Braght, Martyr’s Mirror (Herald Press, 1938).

The Reformation: Assessments
Kevin J. Vanhoozer, Biblical Authority After Babel: Retrieving the Solas in the Spirit of Mere Protestant Christianity (Brazos Press, 2016).
Michael Reeves and Tim Chester, Why the Reformation Still Matters (Crossway, 2016).