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## CH 505 The Reformation

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# The Reformation CH 551

Kenneth J. Collins, Professor

## 1. Course Description and Objectives:

The course will explore the theological, cultural and political aspects of the Reformation (Lutheran, Calvinist, Anglican and Anabaptist) of the sixteenth century. Special attention will be paid to the works of Martin Luther and John Calvin as two of the more important representatives of the changes which took place during the sixteenth century. Consideration will also be given to Roman Catholic initiatives and responses as a result of the work of the Reformers. Beyond this, the course will be attentive to the relevance of the Reformation, especially in the area of doctrine and practice, for twentieth-century theology and ministry.

## 2. General Goals

Upon completion of the course successful students will be able to do all of the following:

- 1) Identify the major doctrinal themes of the Reformers and explore their handling, in particular, of the issues of law and grace.
- 2) Evidence an awareness of historiographical concerns in the interpretation of reformation theology, especially in terms of narrow, limited or unfair (biased) perspectives
- 3) Explore the interplay between religion and culture especially in terms of the intellectual developments (philosophical and theological) of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as reflected in the works of Luther, Calvin and Cranmer.
- 4) Display an extensive knowledge of the theological distinctions and nuances employed by the Reformers in their articulation of the meaning of the gospel.
- 5) Demonstrate an understanding of the continuing significance of Reformation theology, especially in the areas of the doctrine of God, Christology, pneumatology, soteriology and ecclesiology.
- 6) Conceive one's calling as a minister of the gospel in light of the history of the Reformation.
- 7) Articulate the relevance of reformation theology for effective pastoral ministry today

## 3. Texts:

Required:

Bainton, Roland, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1950.

Spitz, Lewis W., *The Renaissance and Reformation Movements: Vol 2, The Reformation*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987.

McGrath, Alister E., *Reformation Thought: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1993.

#### 4. Topical Outline

I. The Cry for Reform

II. Luther's Faith and Reform

III. Calvin and the Reformed Church in Switzerland

IV. The Reformation in England to 1559

V. The Radical Reformation: Anabaptism

VI. The Counter Reformation

VII. The Struggle for the Recognition of the Lutheran, Calvinist, and Anglican Faiths

#### 5. Course Procedures

Competency in this course will consist in satisfying the following criteria:

A. Two examinations will be given during the semester: a mid-term and a final. These exams will not only include the designated reading material but will also focus on class discussions. This component will constitute 50% of the grade.

B. In light of (A) it is imperative that students attend class on a regular basis. Absenteeism (missing more than 2 classes) will result in grade reduction. Class participation, attendance, and completion of the assigned readings will constitute 20% of the grade.

C. Students, in consultation with the professor, must prepare a 15-20 page paper on a topic of their choice with respect to the theology or practice of the Reformation. This paper must be coherent, clear, and penetrating in its discussion. It should, therefore, be backed by considerable research and should evidence a competent use of the English language. It will make up 30% of the grade. *The paper is due two weeks before the last day of class.*

D. A reading report which indicates that students have completed all of the assigned readings is due on the day of the final exam. This report will also reveal what reading students have done in support of their research papers.

6 Please note: this syllabus may be changed, as the instructor sees fit, due to academic considerations

7. Office Hours: Will be posted on the first day of class on my office door (AD 405)

8. Bibliography

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