

# Syllabus for Reformation History and Theology (CH 602)

Front Range Bible Institute  
(Fall 2020)

## Course Description

The course “Reformation History and Theology” is a study of the Reformation as it developed in Germany, Switzerland, England, France, and the Low Countries up to the time of the Westminster Confession. The leading men and issues are examined. The class will focus primarily on the Reformed wing of the Reformation, as opposed to the Lutheran and Anabaptist developments, and special attention will be given to the doctrinal beliefs and practices which drove the Reformation.

The course will have classroom lectures that are primarily based upon the professor’s notes. Students are encouraged to participate by asking and answering questions and taking notes. Notes will be provided, but the student is encouraged to make additions based upon classroom discussions.

The course will include outside reading, quizzes and exams from the classroom lectures, and a research paper. The paper is an important tool for the student to gain first-hand acquaintance with and evaluation of Reformation theology. The paper will be aimed at helping the student to cultivate intellectual skills and an understanding of ideas.

## Course Objectives:

- To give the student a working knowledge of the major figures and the theology of the Reformation
- To equip the student to better understand the current theological landscape of the West by understanding its roots in the time of the Reformation
- To sharpen the student’s biblical and theological skills by studying the theological debates and confessions of the Reformation era
- To inspire the student to be committed to Reformation principles: *sola scriptura, sola fide, sola gratia, solus Christus, soli deo gloria.*
- To challenge the student to preserve and pass on the pure gospel which so many in the Reformation and post-Reformation era struggled to reclaim
- To deepen the student’s delight in the sovereign goodness of our saving Lord.

## Required Course Materials

- Reading materials
  - Professor’s notes
  - *Theology of the Reformers* by Timothy George, Revised edition, Broadman & Holman Publishers (350 pages, omitting chapter 6) – **Required reading**
  - *Heidelberg Catechism* (counts for 50 pages) – **Required reading**
  - *The European Reformations* by Carter Lindberg, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Wiley-Blackwell (recommended resource)
  - *A Reformation Reader*, edited by Denis R. Janz, 2nd ed., Fortress Press (recommended resource)

- *The Creeds of Christendom*, 3 vols., ed. Philip Schaff, reprint edition by Baker (recommended resource)
- *Institutes of the Christian Religion* by John Calvin, translated by Ford Lewis Battles, Westminster John Knox Press (recommended resource, 1521 pages)
- Computer
  - All work submitted electronically should be in Microsoft Word documents (.doc).

### Course Requirements

- Attendance at all classes
  - Take notes and participate in class discussion.
  - If you know in advance that you will miss a class, please notify the professor ahead of time to obtain an excused absence.
  - It may be possible to listen to missed lectures via mp3 or video recordings.
- Reading – **Due November 10**
  - Certificate level – 500 pages from reading materials list
  - B.B.S. – 600 pages from reading materials list
  - M.B.S. – 900 pages from reading materials list
  - M.Div. – 900 pages from reading materials list
- Quizzes/Examinations
  - All students will take periodic quizzes over the material covered in class. These will be unannounced and at the discretion of the professor.
  - There will one mid-term exam and one final exam.
- Research paper – **Due November 10**
  - All bachelors or masters level students will complete a paper of original historical research on a topic of the student’s choosing.
  - The professor must approve the topic.
  - Paper requirements
    - Certificate level – no paper required
    - B.B.S. – 10 page (double spaced)
    - M.B.S. – 20 page (double spaced)
    - M.Div. – 20 page (double spaced)

### Course Grading Criteria

- 15% Attendance and participation
- 30% Reading
- 30% Quizzes/Examinations
- 25% Paper

### Course Schedule

Date:                      Requirements and Lecture Topic:

Sept 8                      Introduction to course

- Medieval Background to the Reformation  
Luther Leads the Charge: *Theologia Crucis, Sola Fide, Sola Scriptura*
- Sept 15 Zwingli and the Swiss Reformation  
Martin Bucer: Pastoral Theologian and Unifier
- Sept 22 John Calvin: The Man and the Double Knowledge of God  
John Calvin: Union with Christ and the Glory of God in Salvation
- Sept 29 Deadline for paper topic selected and approved  
Reformation in France: Huguenots, Gallic Confession, and Persecution  
Reformed Theology Confession in the Netherlands: the Belgic Confession
- Oct 6 Mid-term exam  
Reformation in England: Tyndale, Cranmer, and the Thirty-Nine Articles
- Oct 13 Reformation in England (continued)  
Reformation in Scotland: Knox and the Scots Confession
- Oct 20 Reformed Theology Catechized in Germany: the Heidelberg Catechism  
Roots of Covenant Theology: Calvin, Bullinger, Ursinus, and Olevianus
- Oct 27 Counter-Reformation Council: the Canons of the Council of Trent
- Nov 3 Arminian 5 Points and Calvinist Response: Canons of the Synod of Dort
- Nov 10 Reading Reports and Papers due  
The Westminster Confession
- Nov 17 The Westminster Confession  
Final Examination

#### SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources – Original sources are essential for accurate historical research. The student is highly encouraged to become familiar with these documents, particularly the confessions, which are consensus documents representing more than one individual's theological ideas. For access to many original sources online, see the Early English Books Online, (<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebogroup/>), the Post-Reformation Digital Library (prdl.org), or the Christian Classics Ethereal Library (ccel.org).

Augsburg Confession

Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent

Gallic Confession.

Belgic Confession.

Scots Confession.

The Thirty-Nine Articles.

Heidelberg Catechism.

Second Helvetic Confession.

Canons of the Synod of Dort.

Westminster Confession.

Arminius, James. *The Works of James Arminius, D.D.* 3 volumes. Translated by James Nichols and W. R. Bagnall. Buffalo, NY: Derby, Orton, and Mulligan, 1853.

Bromiley, G. W., ed. *Zwingli and Bullinger*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953.

Bucer, Martin. *Concerning the True Care of Souls*. Translated by Peter Beale. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 2009.

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(See a list of Calvin's works at <http://www.calvin500.com/john-calvin/works-by-calvin/>)

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\_\_\_\_\_. *The Bondage of the Will*. Translated by J. I. Packer and O. R. Johnston. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.

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In 2017, at the “500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation,” there was an avalanche of material on these topics, so in order to help you sort through all the material, here are the recommendations of some leading historians.

Some recommended books from Thomas Kidd:

<https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/evangelical-history/2017/01/24/the-best-books-to-read-for-reformation-2017/>

A bibliography from Carl Trueman:

<https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/evangelical-history/2017/02/16/a-reformation-bibliography/>

The Christian History Institute has posted a number of recommended resources on women in the Reformation: <https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/women-of-the-reformation-resources>