



Reflections on 2015: A Most “Interesting” Year

Jefrey Breshears

An old Chinese curse says, “May you live in interesting times!” We certainly are doing that – although most of what is happening seems to be for the worse. Sure, standards of living continue to rise for many Americans, and we have more material possessions, more entertainment options, and more sophisticated techno-gadgets than ever before. But how does all of this affect what really matters: our spiritual development and the cultivation of our soul? Is a cluttered, frenetic and distracted life really indicative of a quality life? And what about the state of our culture? Many older adults often comment that the pace of life seems to accelerate the closer they near the end. If that’s true for cultures as well as for individuals, the events of 2015 seem to indicate that were hurtling toward an abyss. America today seems (literally) hell-bent on committing cultural suicide.

If you understand what’s going on in our society and culture today, and if you *care*, consider yourself part of the moral minority. Most people, including many professing Christians, are either oblivious to what’s happening (often through willful ignorance), or else they support it. And of course, for liberals and self-styled “progressives,” much of what’s going on is cause for celebration.

This has been an exceedingly turbulent year as much of the world is in utter chaos. Iran is in the process of developing nuclear weapons while Vladimir Putin is aggressively expanding Russian influence in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, yet many astute world observers warn that the greatest threat to world stability continues to be China.

Meanwhile, as ISIS jihadists carry out their sadistic war on civilization, entire communities of Christians in Iraq and Syria have been exterminated. Thousands of Christians have been murdered, thousands more Christian women (and children) have been raped and brutalized, and over a million have fled areas where they and their ancestors have lived for nearly two thousand years.

As a result, Europe has been swamped by refugees from the Middle East. In terms of the level of violence in the world, the Paris attacks on November 13 were merely the tip of the iceberg.

But the most insidious threats facing us today come not from without but from within. American society and culture is rotting at the core, and the cancer that is destroying any last vestiges of Christian influence in our nation is radical secularism – or more specifically, what the Marxist philosopher Herbert Marcuse called “libertarian socialism.”

For example: Twenty years ago the issue of same-sex marriage wasn’t even on the liberal agenda, and until 2012 both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton publicly supported traditional marriage – as did the majority of Americans. But in just a few years a powerful coalition of political and cultural elites, in alliance with the LGBTQ lobby and the liberal mainstream media, have aligned to undermine and alter this very foundation of social and moral stability. The future impact that this and other immoral

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The Areopagus Calendar

Winter Seminars

A SEMINAR IN CULTURAL APOLOGETICS:

Secular Humanism and Political Correctness in ‘Post-Christian’ America

The philosophical, historical and religious factors that undermined America’s traditional social and cultural values and led to the dominance of secular humanism and ‘political correctness’.

Tuesdays, Jan. 12 - April 26
7:00 PM

Perimeter Church
Midtown Auditorium

— and —

Wednesdays, Jan. 13 - April 27
7:00 PM

Johnson Ferry Baptist Church
Room 108

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Christianity Thru the Centuries: From Augustine to the Crusades

An ongoing study, led by Jefrey Breshears, that explores the major people, issues, and events in Christian history.

This course focuses on Augustine, the fall of the Western Roman Empire, and the early medieval period.

Sundays – 11:15 AM
Johnson Ferry Baptist Church
Room 270



2015 RECOMMENDED BOOKS

— APOLOGETICS —

Craig L. Blomberg, *Can We Still Believe the Bible? An Evangelical Engagement with Contemporary Questions* (Brazos Press)

— CULTURAL APOLOGETICS —

Russell Moore, *Onward: Engaging the Culture Without Losing the Gospel* (B&H Publishing)

— CHRISTIAN HISTORY —

Everett Ferguson, *Church History, Vol. 1* (Zondervan)
John Woodbridge and Frank James, *Church History, Vol. 2* (Zondervan)

— CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY —

Greg Peters, *The Story of Monasticism: Retrieving an Ancient Tradition for Contemporary Spirituality* (Baker Academic)

The Areopagus Calendar

Winter Forums

The Current Status of ISLAM in the Middle East, Europe and America



A presentation by
Iraj Ghanouni

Founder and president of the
Christian Center for Islam Awareness

Thursday, February 18th

7:30 PM

Perimeter Church
Fellowship Hall

Reflections on 2015

(continued)

public policies will have on religious liberty can scarcely be imagined.

Political incompetence and corruption, social incivility, an unprecedented heroin and methamphetamine epidemic, an indescribably decadent popular culture, a general disregard for the rule of law, racial polarization, a war on police, unchecked illegal immigration, and infantile campus protests further dramatize the fact that our society is coming unraveled and our culture is breaking down on every front.

In response to all this, our Areopagus seminar for winter 2016 is Part 1 of a two-part series on cultural apologetics, “**Secular Humanism and Political Correctness in ‘Post-Christian’ America,**” in which we will examine the philosophical and historical origins of secularism and how it has managed to undermine, marginalize, neutralize, and eradicate most vestiges of Christian influence in our culture. This is an important course for understanding our times and how Christians should respond, and I hope you will join us for this study.



Three recommended films of 2015 with significant theological, philosophical, and/or socio-cultural themes

