



— CHRIST & CULTURE —

A Letter (and Warning) to the American Church
Developing Wisdom and Courage in a Time of
Spiritual and Social Degeneration
(Fall 2024)

When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do?
— Psalm 11:3

*Do not conform to the values, the priorities, and the ways of thinking
of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your soul –
your mind, your emotions, and your will. Then you will be able to
discern God’s good and perfect will for your life.*
– Rom. 12:2 (paraphrase)

Instructor: Dr. Jeffrey Breshears (<https://www.theareopagus.org/blog/dr-jefrey-breshears/>)

Date: August 20 - October 29, 2024

Time: 6 PM (Dinner); 7- 8:15 PM (Lecture/Dialogue)

Location: Camps Restaurant (255 Village Parkway NE #310 / Marietta 30067)

(This class is also available on **Zoom**; sign-up at www.TheAreopagus.org)

Recommended Resources (available at Amazon.com):

- Eric Metaxas, *Letter to the American Church*
- Jeffrey D. Breshears, *American Crisis: Cultural Marxism and the Culture War – A Christian Response*

Supplemental articles for discussion

Course Synopsis:

Contemporary America, along with the rest of what remains of “Western civilization,” is often described as “post-Christian,” and the spiritual, moral and cultural consequences of all these secular influences are truly ominous. Serious Christians understand that our society and culture are teetering on the brink of disaster after decades of withering assaults on every area of life – including biblical Christian faith in particular. In the midst of such chaos, how can the church of Jesus Christ function as a true source of strength and stability?

America today faces social, cultural and political challenges that make the great upheavals of the past 50 years seem like the rumblings of distant thunder compared to the looming storm that currently threatens to engulf our nation. Christians must be prepared to stand and fight against the “spiritual forces of evil... in this dark world” and “in the heavenly realms” (Eph. 6:12). It is imperative that we think clearly and act courageously in the midst of these great

threats as we seek to fulfill our mission as a source of Light, Love, Hope and Truth in this increasingly dark and perverse world.

Our first priority should be to understand the great challenges facing us. In that regard, this course focuses on two books that directly address our situation:

- (1) *Letter to the American Church* by Eric Metaxas, in which he uses the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer as an example of the kind of wise and courageous spiritual leadership that America so desperately needs today; and
- (2) Excerpts from my book, *American Crisis*, in which I provide an in-depth analysis of the philosophical and historical roots of the anti-Christian spiritual, moral and cultural influences that have corrupted American values and our major institutions over the past century.

“Christianity and America’s Crisis” is a seminar in cultural apologetics – how we understand and respond to the prevailing forces and trends that influence how we think and live our lives. The Bible provides a comprehensive worldview that should condition and regulate every area of our lives. However, the Christian faith is often presented exclusively as a spiritual and religious belief system disconnected from philosophy, anthropology, history, sociology, psychology, politics, the natural sciences, the arts, and all other aspects of human existence and interaction. This is why, in the words of R. C. Sproul:

“I doubt if there has been a period in all of Christian history when so many Christians are so ineffectual in shaping the culture in which they live as is true right now in the United States.”

Ours is a society and culture that celebrates narcissism, hedonism and materialism. In the process, virtually every area of American life is becoming secularized, socialized, sexualized and racialized under the influence of sinister forces that are waging aggressive and unrelenting attacks on morality in general and the Christian faith in particular. As our spiritual, moral and ethical foundations collapse, so goes our religious and cultural institutions, our economy, our political system, and any remaining standards of civility.

As Bob Dylan sang in the 1960s, “The Times They Are A-changin’,” but no one back then could possibly foresee the tectonic shift that has radically altered American society and culture in the past sixty years, or just how far our nation has strayed from its religious and cultural heritage during that time. We live in a society that increasingly calls evil good and good evil (Isaiah 5:20), and as philosopher J. Budziszewski has written, this is a strange and unprecedented time.

We are passing through an eerie phase of history in which the [moral truths] that everyone really knows are treated as unheard-of doctrines, a time in which the elements of common decency are themselves attacked as indecent. Nothing quite like this has ever happened before. Although our civilization has passed through quite a few troughs of immorality, never before has vice held the high *moral* ground. Our time considers it dirty-minded to treat sexual purity as a virtue... [and] a sign of impious pride to profess humble faith in God. The moral law has become the very emblem of immorality.... [J. Budziszewski, *What We Can't Not Know*, p. 10]

This seminar course focuses on what it means to understand and practice wholistic Christian discipleship in the midst of our current cultural disintegration. Never in American Christian history have the internal forces arrayed against us been more formidable, and never before have American Christians needed to be better informed and engaged in the battle for all that is True, Good and Beautiful for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Course Content:

- Jeffrey Breshears, “On Loving One’s Neighbor as One’s Self: The Political Component”
- Jeffrey Breshears, “Eric Metaxas’ *Letter to the American Church*: A Preface”
- Eric Metaxas, *Letter to the American Church and Religionless Christianity*
- Jeffrey Breshears, Excerpts from *American Crisis*
- Natural law: the moral foundation for social justice and civility
- Was America founded as a “Christian nation”? The historical realities
- Calvin Robinson: “A Crisis of Faith for the Anglican Church?”
- Megan Basham: “The Plot to Queer Evangelical Churches”
- Christian Nationalism: An Assessment
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Jeffrey Breshears, Ph.D., is a former university history professor and the president of The Areopagus, a Christian education ministry in Atlanta, Georgia that sponsors seminars and forums on topics related to Bibliology, Christian apologetics, history, science, literature and the arts, and contemporary cultural issues.

Dr. Breshears is the author of several books, including:

- *American Crisis: Cultural Marxism and the Culture War*
- *C. S. Lewis on Politics, Government, and the Good Society*
- *Francis Schaeffer: A Retrospective on His Life & Legacy*
- *Introduction To Bibliology*
- *The Case for Christian Apologetics*



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