



America's Mixed Heritage: The Christian and Secular Influences In the Founding of America

(Winter/Spring 2026)

*“America was not founded as a ‘Christian nation,’
but it was founded as a Christian-influenced nation.”*

– Jeffrey Breshears

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

Date: Tuesdays, January 6th to April 7th

Time: 7 - 8:30 PM

Location: Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Room 320/340

Zoom Meeting I.D.: theareopagus.org/zoom

A Synopsis

The summer of 2026 will mark the “semiquincentennial” (the 250th anniversary) of the founding of the United States of America. For many Americans this will be a time of celebration, while for others a time of mourning. On both sides there will be considerable misinformation regarding America’s past. Some Americans – including many Christians – are prone to sanitize our nation’s past, while others regard much of our history as shameful and the product of violence, conquest, racism, exploitation, greed and social injustice.

So what are the facts, and to what extent was America influenced both by biblical/Christian principles but also by secular/Enlightenment social and political ideals? This course will explore those and other similar questions honestly and factually in keeping with the realities of the situation.

Course Content

This seminar is a condensation of an in-depth course that I have taught over a period of nearly seven years in a Sunday morning study entitled “A History of Christianity in America” at Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia. In this study we explore the most significant and influential individuals, issues and events in American Christian history so as to broaden and deepen our understanding

of our nation's past. The United States of America has been the most consequential nation in world history for more than a century, and it has also been a major center for the spread of Christianity worldwide.

Some of the relevant themes that we will explore include:

- ❑ **The Origins of America's Culture War**
- ❑ **Early Christian Influences in Colonial America**
 - Anglicans, Nonconformists, Congregationalists, Baptists, Quakers, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Moravians, Methodists, *et al.*
 - The First Great Awakening: Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, *et al.*
- ❑ **Christianity, Classical Liberalism, and the American Revolution**
 - Natural Law and Natural Rights
 - John Locke, Samuel Rutherford, *Lex/Rex, et al.*
- ❑ **Christian and Enlightenment Influences in the Founding of the American Nation**
 - The Faiths of the "Founding Fathers"
 - Traditional Protestantism, Liberal Protestantism, and Deism
- ❑ **Christianity and Secularism in the 19th and 20th Centuries**
- ❑ **Our Current Crisis:**
 - Secularism, Neo-Marxism, and Liberal Xianity;
 - "Christian Reconstructionism" and "Christian Nationalism;"
 - C. S. Lewis, Francis Schaeffer, R. J. Rushdoony, *et al.*

Join us for what will be a very substantive, relevant and significant course as we deal with many issues and questions that have been much-debated and often misrepresented in American Christian history.

— Jeffrey Breshears

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*



— JBreshears@TheAreopagus.org —