

**Course:** RP445-D&DN Great Christian Thinkers: The Reformers  
**Credit:** 1 Semester Hour  
**Semester:** Fall 2026 (Session 1, Aug 17–Oct 09)  
**Time:** 9:30–10:50 am, Mondays  
**Instructor:** Dr. Michel Dodds. (816) 322-5152 ext. 1348, mike.dodds@calvary.edu, (913) 638-3291 (cell)

*\*About This Course: This course is offered in two formats: in-person and online. Students registered for in-person attend the classes in person, online students attend the classes via the online classroom. For both in-person and online students, assignments and interaction outside of the class period are done in the learning management system.*

*\*About Disabilities: Students with disabilities have the responsibility of informing the Accommodations Support Coordinate (aso@calvary.edu) of any disabling condition that may require support.*

*\*About Assistance for All Course Assignments: The Clark Academic Center (learning@calvary.edu) is dedicated to providing free academic assistance for all Calvary University students. Student tutors aid with all facets of the writing process, tutor in various subject areas, prepare students for exams, and facilitate tests. Please take advantage of this service.*

*\*About Changes to this Syllabus: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time during the course, but any changes made will only be done after clearly communicating the need for the change and the specific change to be made via in-class announcement and Canvas announcement.*

## I. DESCRIPTION:

A reading seminar focusing on the writings of an important Christian thinker that has influenced or continues to influence the church. The writings will be evaluated from the perspective of biblical theology. Students will read and report on selected writings of the thinker. This course may be taken four times for credit as different Christian thinkers are covered. (Prerequisite: Junior class standing or permission of the professor)

## II. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

**A. General competencies to be achieved:** You will be able to . . .

1. Articulate the cultural influences on the thinking of specific Reformers. (PLO- #2) (A- A, B, & C)
2. Summarize the biblical and theological perspectives of specific Reformers. (PLO- #1, 2, & 3) (A- C, D, & E)
3. Critically evaluate selected works of specific Reformers. (PLO- #1, 2, 3, & 4) (A- A, C, D, & E)

*Our Mission: "...to prepare Christians to live and serve in the church and in the world according to the Biblical worldview."*

**B. Specific competencies to be achieved:** You will be able to . . .

1. Articulate the cultural influences which shaped the theology and writings of specific Reformers. (PLO- #1, 3, & 4) (A- A, B, C, & D)
2. Critically evaluate selected works of specific Reformers. (PLO- #1, 2, 3, & 4) (A- C, D, & E)
3. Demonstrate the ability to accurately communicate the theology and thinking of the selected influential Reformers. (PLO- #1, 2, 3, & 4) (A- A, C, D, & E)
4. Critically interact with the in-class presentations concerning the Reformers. (PLO- #3 & 4) (A- A & E)

### **III. REQUIREMENTS**

**\*Note:** Specific instructions for each assignment are posted in Canvas.

**A. Read the course textbook, listen to the class lectures, and make significant observations.**

1. Read the textbook according to the Class Schedule and make significant observations of each chapter's topic.
2. Listen to the in-class lectures on the theology of the Reformers and make significant observations from each lecture.

**B. Create a timeline of the Reformers and their times.**

1. Research the backgrounds and times of the Reformers to discover when they lived and the significant events during their times.
2. Create a timeline chart that presents a chronological listing of the Reformation time to include the following
  - a. When each Reformer lived (those studied in this course only).
  - b. Dates of all significant church Councils and Council statements.
  - c. World events which influenced the Reformers.
3. This timeline may be done in a chart or outline format.

**C. Write a critical paper about the lives, writings, beliefs, and influence of the selected Reformers.**

1. Study the lives, ministries, and influence of the selected Reformers. (Note: Include bibliographic entries in the Bibliography of your Critical Review paper for all of the resources consulted for this research even though you may not interact with all of them in your paper.)
2. Write a 2500-word essay about that Reformers to include the following.
  - a. a brief biography identifying the background influences which shaped those Reformers' beliefs and ministries.
  - b. an analysis of their ministries, describing its development, scope, and influence.
  - c. a discussion and evaluation of their unique theological beliefs.
  - d. an assessment of the impact of their writings/thinking upon Christianity.

**D. Make a presentation of your conclusions concerning the selected Christian thinker.**

1. This presentation is not to be the mere reading of your paper, but it is to be a verbal highlighting of your findings (e.g., envision making this as a presentation to a church group or in a seminar setting).
2. A powerpoint presentation must accompany the presentation.
3. This presentation should be no more than 30 minutes in length.

**E. Following the student presentations and instructor lectures, write questions and respond to questions concerning material in the presentations/lectures.**

1. Following the presentations of the other students concerning their selected Reformers, write questions for them to answer for you.
2. Following your presentation, respond to the questions asked by the other students and the course instructor concerning your Reformers.
3. Following each of the lectures by the Instructor, post a question about the lecture material for further research about the lecture topic.

**IV. METHODS**

**A. Presentation:**

1. **In-class methods:** listening to lectures, participating in class discussions, research, writing, and making presentations.

**\*About Class Attendance:** Research consistently demonstrates that class attendance and active participation correlate to higher performance on course assessments.

**\*About Classroom Use of Media:**

-**Computing devices** are permitted during the lecture and class discussion sessions for the sole purpose of taking notes. Use of these devices to access the Internet, make telephone calls or video calls, text messaging, updating social network services, etc. is not allowed, let alone very distracting to other students.

-**Cellphones / smartphones** may only be used in an emergency, and in those situations the student may take the call but must leave the room and not return until the next break out of courtesy to fellow classmates.

**\*About Note Taking:** Students are expected to take notes during each class. Significant peer reviewed studies continue to demonstrate that notes taken by hand are understood better and remembered longer than those taken with a computer. Computer use which is a distraction to others (i.e., noise, blocking the screen, displaying non-class related material, etc.) is not allowed.

2. **Out-of-class methods:** observation, evaluation, and sermon preparation.

**\*About written assignments:** Unless directed otherwise, all written assignments must follow the Turabian style according to *A Manual for*

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*Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th edition and the  
Calvary Style Guide, 2019 update.

**B. Grading:**

**\*About Late Assignments:** All course assignments must be submitted by the last day of the Cycle.

**\*About Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is defined as copying any content without identifying the source. This also includes taking another person's or AI entity's ideas or constructs and presenting them as your own. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Most assignments at Calvary require the student to produce original work. Therefore, unless specifically permitted by the instructor, the use of AI-generated content is prohibited (even if cited) as it does not represent original work created by the student and is an unreliable aggregate of ideas from other sources. AI, however, may be utilized in cases where the instructor has explicitly permitted its use to accomplish specific tasks. It is only in these cases that AI-generated (or modified) content may be submitted by the student. If there are any questions as to the permissibility of AI use for an assignment, please ask your instructor for clarification. (Note: Turn-It-In.com will be used to verify assignment integrity.)

**\*About course grade:** See the grading scale in the University Catalog for the specific grading scale that will be used for final course grade.

1. General grading criteria:

- A = completed assignment well beyond assignment criteria
- B = completed assignment as specified and very well done
- C = completed assignment with average work
- D = completed assignment but poorly
- F = did not complete assignment and/or unacceptable work

2. Possible points for each specific assignment:

**\*Note:** An assignment-specific rubric will be provided for each assignment.

a. Lecture Observations (5 @ 5).	. . . . .	25	points
b. Timeline Chart (1 @ 100).	. . . . .	75	"
c. Critical Review Paper.	. . . . .	200	"
d. Presentation & PPT.	. . . . .	50	"
e. Questions & Answers (9 @ 5 & 9 @ 5).	. . . . .	<u>90</u>	"
<b>Total</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>"</b>

**V. MATERIALS**

**A. Required:**

1. English Bible (NAS, NASB-U, NKJV, NET, ESV, or other by approval).

-The Bible is a required textbook in every course at Calvary University. To facilitate academic level study, students are required to use for

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assignments and research an English translation or version of the Bible based on formal equivalence (*meaning that the translation is generally word-for-word from the original languages*), including any of the following: New American Standard (NASB, English Standard Version (ESV), New King James (NKJV), or King James (KJV). Other translations and versions based on dynamic equivalence (*paraphrases and thought-for-thought translations like NLT and NIV*) may be used as supplemental sources. Please ask the professor if you have questions about a particular translation or version.

2. Bray, Gerald L. *Doing Theology with the Reformers*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. 2019. Paperback ISBN: 978-0830852512. Retail: \$24.00. 288 pages.

**VI. ABBREVIATED CLASS SCHEDULE**

[**Note:** An expanded schedule will be presented during the first class session.]

<b>Wk</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
1	The Reformers & Authority	--
2	The Reformers & the Trinity & the Person of Christ	--
3	Student Presentation; The Reformers & The Work of Christ	Timeline Chart; Presentation & Paper
4	Student Presentation; The Reformers & Salvation	Presentation & Paper
5	Student Presentations	Presentations & Papers
6	Student Presentations	Presentations & Papers
7	Student Presentations	Presentations & Papers
8	Student Presentation; The Reformers & The Church & End Times	Presentations & Paper