

BIBLICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Post-Reformation Church History

INTRODUCTION

I. Introduction to the Reformation/ Post-Reformation church history course.

The Narrowing Field of Study

The field of study narrows as our concentration moves to the present age. In the earlier periods we could look at the entire church. After Chalcedon our attention moved from the anti-Chalcedonia churches as we concentrated on the signers of the fifth century creed. Following 1054 and the Roman/Grecian division we concentrated on the western church. In the economy of time, not due to malice or prejudice, the movements in the eastern sphere of Christianity and many local groups as well (national in character) were simply overlooked.

I.1 The field of study

This is a necessary development in the study. The other areas are not less important and it is not our intent to purposefully ignore them but only so much material may be consumed in a given program and our choice is to work with what is most immediately relevant to our own setting. Hence the choice of following western Christendom is not due to a feeling that the eastern history is less important but that it is less relevant to our setting.

Coming to the Reformation age our field narrows again. Basically we leave the development of the Roman church and follow the culture and thought of Protestantism. Eventually this will narrow to the Protestant thought of the English speaking world and finally will relate to our own country almost to the exclusion of the rest of the world. In time the study will come to your local church and at that point all aspects of world interest have diminished to the maximum.

While we regret this narrowing of focus, we feel it cannot be avoided unless we make the whole course of study in the Biblical Seminary one giant mass of history courses. No one seems enthused for that! The student must understand that this limitation exists and be prepared to realize its intent and origin. One must not allow the course definition to render one provincial in one's view of the totality of the church and somewhere, in some way, one must seek further information on the areas not discussed in this course.