SWITZERLAND

Confederation of cantons
Ruling classes well to do
Majority poor, often served as mercenaries
Anti-clerical, but not strongly anti-papal
Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531)

• Ulrich Zwingli was born on January 1, 1484, only a few months after the birth of Luther.
• Lived to be just 47!!
• He would hold the office of priest over two parishes in Switzerland before becoming priest of the most influential parish in 1518 in Zurich, the largest of the Swiss states.
• open, warm, and friendly disposition
• embodied a boldly striking attempt to rethink all Christian doctrine in consistently biblical terms.
Zwingli, the Scholar

- At the University of Basel, where he received his degrees (bachelor's in 1504, master's two years later), he heard the theological teachings of Thomas Wyttenbach, whose ideas in some ways anticipated Luther's:
- Zwingli studied from 1499 in Vienna and then from 1502 onwards in Basel, where he sat for his Master’s degree.
- Thomas Wyttenbach became the most important teacher for him in Basel. Following his studies of the “liberal arts” (*liberales artes*),
- Zwingli studied another half year of theology and from the summer of 1506 was pastor.
- *He memorized the entire Pauline writings in the original Greek, and he also had a good familiarity with Hebrew.*
- He also became expert in the Scholastic works and the Church Fathers.
Zwingli’s Latin Margin Notes on NT Greek Text in his own handwriting.
• Zwingli is generally considered to be the most knowledgeable of the main Reformers in the Greek language and the writings of the Church Fathers.
• He had been greatly influenced by humanism and particularly the works of Erasmus.
• One of the casualties of the Reformation in Zurich was the friendship of Zwingli with his old idol Erasmus, who found the movement too radical for his taste.
• An additional source of ill-feeling was the help that Zwingli gave to Ulrich von Hutten in 1523. Hutten, a broken and dying man after his flight from Germany, had been turned away by Erasmus, then living in Basel, while Zwingli received him and gave him what help he could.
Zwingli, the Priest, 1506

- Zwingli was ordained in 1506, and served from that year until 1516 as parish priest at Glarus.
- Committed adultery during this time.
- began to be involved in military matters, and observed firsthand how the Swiss practice of becoming mercenary soldiers for foreign powers (including the pope) was damaging to the nation's morals and a killer of its young men. He began to denounce the practice in his preaching.
Zwingli said of himself that only after 1516 he preached the Gospel.

His Gospel stand provoked hostility at Glarus, and in 1516 he moved to a new charge at Einsiedeln, where he enjoyed both wide opportunities for preaching to the many pilgrims and fine library for study at the convent. Zwingli afterwards dated his evangelical understanding of the Scriptures from the period of transition to Einsiedeln.
Expository Preaching in Zurich, 1519

- In 1518, despite much opposition, he was appointed people's priest at the Grossmünster at Zürich.
- Instead of following the prescribed scriptural readings, he started preaching at the beginning of Matthew and announced his intention to preach straight through the Bible, verse by verse!
• The Catholic Church had regulated mandatory fasts during the season of Lent when one must abstain from any meat.
• In 1522, however, a number of people in Zurich, under the direct influence of Zwingli's preaching, decided to defy the Catholic Church and eat some pork sausages during Lent.
• This act of "rebellion" caused an uproar and it was determined that an open debate be held to settle the growing issues between Zwingli and the Catholics Church once and for all.
• The summary of the gospel is that our Lord Christ, true Son of God, has made known to us the will of his heavenly Father and has redeemed us from death and reconciled us with God by his guiltlessness...Therefore, Christ is the only way to salvation of all who were, are now, or shall be.

• The second and third articles of the 67 articles
• (Cited from Zwingli, Writings, vol. 1, “The Defense of the Reformed Faith,”)
Luther vs. Zwingli On Christian Living

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<td>The law was there to drive us to Christ, and upon doing so, it seemed to have lost any further significance</td>
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<td>The Christian Life</td>
<td>The Christian life was one of freedom in forgiveness and reconciliation to God</td>
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1523 First Zurich Disputation

- Example of Magisterial Reformation!
- The council announced a disputation to be held in January 1523. In the meantime they forbade the breaking of fasts.
- Zwingli defended "67 Conclusions" against the representative of the bishop of Constance.
- *sоль Christus*, Christ alone, and *sola scriptura*, the Bible alone.
- 67 Articles were adopted by Zurich City Council.

The city council decreed after the disputation that Zwingli was to keep preaching the "Gospel and the pure sacred Scriptures, until he is instructed better. Furthermore, all people's priests, curates and preachers in their towns, territories, and dependencies, are to preach nothing but what can be proved by the Gospel and the pure sacred Scriptures . . ."
1523, Second Disputation

• Zwingli’s’ Iconoclasm provoked a second disputation in October, 1523
• , in which Zwingli and his most intimate friend and fellow Reformer Leo Jud carried the day.
• The council abolished relics and images, and also church organs and singing!!
• But the council determined to go slowly and deliberately and waited eight months to remove the images from the churches.
Zwingli, the Biblicist

- He taught that the Bible was the supreme authority and that faith was the key to the remission of sins.
- Opposed practices not supported by Scripture
- Scripture is the only source of rule
- The reform principle that everything should have a biblical sanction— not simply be consistent with scripture as with Lutherans.
- A key part of this program was the reconstitution of the cathedral school as both a grammar school and a theological seminary to train Reformed pastors.
- He accepted the supreme authority of the Scripture,
- he applied it rigorously to all doctrines and practices.

Zürcher Bible appeared in 1529
Zwingli, the Social Reformer

- Dissolved Monasteries
- serfdom abolished
- poor relief was put under the supervision of the civil power.
- criticized mercenary system
- ministers permitted to marry
- Zwingli took a wife secretly in 1522 announced his marriage publicly in 1524.
- priests and nuns had been marrying
- divorce permitted in some instances.
1525, Zwingli vs. Anabaptists

- Disputations were held with the leaders of the Anabaptist group in January and March 1525.
- In 1525, the first adult "rebaptism" took place in Zurich. Conrad Grebel, a former admirer of Zwingli, baptized priest George Blaurock. Glaurock then baptized the rest of the little group.
- A number of Zwingli’s followers saw no biblical support for infant baptism, and saw a union between infant baptism and membership in the State.
- The “Anabaptists” (Swiss Brethren) also desired the abolition of tithes, a severance of the state connection, the creation of a pure or gathered church of true believers).
- In theological refutation of the movement, Zwingli wrote a special work, On Baptism (1525), in which his main emphasis was on the significance of water Baptism as a covenant sign. During the following years he devoted many other tracts to the subject, culminating in his Tricks of the Catabaptists (1527).
- Zwingli, who believed in both infant baptism and a state church, became hopelessly alienated from Anabaptists.
- Zurich council soon imprisoned the leaders and finally, after a further useless disputation in November 1525, brought them under a capital sentence.
- By March, 1526, adult rebaptism was a capital crime in Zurich, and four persons were put to death.
- Parents who did not want their children baptized were banished from the territory.
Spread of Reform, 1525-28

- Zwingli was not satisfied to see the Gospel triumph in Zurich alone, but worked actively to promote its spread throughout the Confederation.
- Zwingli fostered the Reformation not only by his preaching and influence on the council but also by his various writings—e.g., *On Education*, *On Baptism*, *On the Lord's Supper*, and especially the comprehensive *Commentary on True and False Religion* (1525).
- Aided by the learned Roman Catholic theologian Johann Eck, the five forest cantons of Luzern, Zug, Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden resisted the new trend.
- Several areas in Germany also adopted Zwinglian Protestantism instead of Lutheranism.

Spread Of Reform to Bern

- In Bern also the Reformed group steadily gained strength until by 1527 it had a majority in the two governing councils of the city. A public disputation was held in 1528 between Catholics and Reformers, in which one of the participants was Martin Bucer, leader of the Reformed preachers at Strasbourg. The outcome of the Bern Disputation was the adoption by the city of the Reformed religion. It also had effects in Strasbourg, where it helped to bring the final abolition of the Mass.
Another Example of Magisterial Reform

Zwingli himself, assisted by his fellow Swiss Reformer Heinrich Bullinger, took part in a disputation at Bern (1528) that formally introduced the principles of the Reformation to that city.

The main theses he put forth were
  – (1) that the church is born of the Word of God and has Christ alone as its head;
  – (2) that its laws are binding only insofar as they agree with the Scripture;
  – (3) that Christ alone is man's righteousness;
  – (4) that the Holy Scripture does not teach Christ's corporeal presence in the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper;
  – (5) that the mass is a gross affront to the sacrifice and death of Christ;
  – (6) that there is no biblical foundation for the mediation or intercession of the dead, for purgatory, or for images and pictures; and
  – (7) that marriage is lawful to all.
In Basel the chief Reformer was Johannes Oecolampadius (1482-1531).

Oecolampadius was professor for biblical theology from 1523 and then from 1529 pastor in Basel’s Cathedral and spokesman for the clergy.

The city of Basel went over completely to the Protestant side in 1529;

the change was accelerated by popular tumult that drove the city's most distinguished resident, Erasmus, to leave.

Oecolampadius was a friend and fellow worker of Zwingli, whose theology he adopted, especially on the crucial issue of the Lord's Supper.
Marburg Colloquy 1529

• In 1529, in an attempt to bring cohesion to the German and Swiss reformations, the then political leader of the German Lutherans, Philip of Hesse, called a meeting between Luther and Zwingli to see if some alliance could be formed between the two groups.

• Luther wrote with chalk upon the table, “hoc est corpus meum” ("This is my body"

• They appeared to have arrived at a deadlock, but actually they had made substantial gains because Zwingli advanced from his view that the Lord's Supper is only a memorial to the position that Christ is spiritually present.

• Even though the reformers agreed on 14 other articles of faith, no final agreement could be reached.
Consequence of Failure at Marburg 1529

• Zwingli would have welcomed agreement with Luther for political as well as theological reasons.

• Luther was more than ungracious on this matter, accusing Zwingli of having a "different spirit" and teaching doctrines of Satan. The members of both movements would follow suit and look suspiciously on one another from this moment forward.

• The results of division were seen at the Diet of Augsburg (1530), in which the evangelical groups presented three different confessions, including Zwingli's Fidei Ratio.

• "I would rather drink blood with the papists than mere wine with the Zwinglians."
1st Kappel War 1529

• By this time, Zwingli, as the religious leader of much of Switzerland and southern Germany, was at the height of his influence. The Catholic cantons formed a league, which in 1529 made an alliance with Austria.
• Zurich, Bern, and some of the other Reformed cantons formed a league of their own; but, as a result of the Marburg Colloquy, they were less successful in obtaining help.
• The friction between them would become so great that in 1529 war broke out between them. The war only lasted sixteen days.
• The First Peace of Kappel of 1529, were very favorable to Protestants. The Catholics gave up the Austrian alliance, the majority in each canton would decide its religion, and there was to be no persecution.
• Zwingli was not pleased at the outcome, because he recognized that the treaty was only a truce and that a resumption of fighting was inevitable.
The Catholic cantons attacked Zürich in October 1531.

Zurich authorities were taken by surprise. Zurich hastily assembled its troops, but its preparations were inadequate.

Zwingli, who had accompanied the Protestant army in the earlier war, was present this time also as chief pastor or chaplain.

The battle of Kappel was fought on October 11, 1531. The forces of Zurich were badly defeated; but, even more disastrous for their cause, Zwingli was killed.

The Second Peace of Kappel (November 24, 1531) provided that each canton would manage its own religious affairs.
Consequences of Kappel Wars

• Idea of united, protest-ant Switzerland died

• Although Zwingli's place in Zurich was taken by the able Heinrich Bullinger, who became a leading figure in the international Protestant movement, Zurich lost something of its previous position.

• “When peace was concluded, the advance of the new Protestant faith in Switzerland came to a halt. Protestantism did not have to retreat, but it was kept from advancing further, and thus lost its chance of spreading the Reformation throughout the Swiss confederation. Switzerland was divided into two religious camps. This foreshadowed the future, for such a division was to be the fate of Germany, and indeed of Europe.”

• (Hillerbrand, The Reformation, p. 109)
The Basel Confession was a statement of Reformed doctrine composed of 12 articles. It was first drafted by John Oecolampadius, the Reformer of Basel, and was compiled in fuller form in 1532 by his successor at Basel, Oswald Myconius. In 1534 it was adopted by the Basel city authorities and two or three years later by the city of Muhlhausen in Alsace. It was used by the Church of Basel into the 19th century. The Confession of Basel must be distinguished from the First Helvetic Confession, which is sometimes called the Second Confession of Basel.
Questions to Consider

• Was Zwingli’s method of debates in front of city councils the best way to bring about reformation?
• Would that method work today?
• Was “magisterial reformation” wrong or just not ideal.
• Do we think Christians today live under the law? If not, why not? If yes, why and in what way?
• Was Zwingli’s iconoclasm the right thing? How iconoclastic should we be? Should we get rid of all the instruments on the grounds of the Regulative Principle?
• What is the Lord’s Supper? Everyone agrees it’s a memorial, but is it more than a memorial?
• Would you refuse to fellowship with those who have a different view of the Lord’s supper the way the Reformers did? What did they understand about it that made it so crucial?