

The Swiss Reformation

**F. W. Mattox, *The Eternal Kingdom: A
History of the Church of Christ*, Delight, AR:
Gospel Light Publishing Company, 1961**

Hulrich Zwingli

- **Zwingli attended Universities of Basel and Bern as well as the University of Vienna**
- **Received B.A. in 1504 and M.A. in 1506**
- **Studied under some outstanding humanists**
- **Became parish priest in Glarus in 1506**
- **Corresponded with Erasmus who encouraged him to study the Greek NT**
- **Developed interest in primitive Christianity and brought attention to the need for reform**

Beginning of Zwingli's Reform

- **Began by criticizing sale of indulgences**
- **Opposed Swiss mercenaries selling services to kings of Western Europe, contending they should give services in defense of papacy**
- **Pope granted annual pension**
- **Became parish priest of Einsiedeln in 1516**
- **Began study of Hebrew**

Zwingli's Change

- **Zwingli was called in 1519 to be priest in Zurich**
- **Began series on books of the Bible**
- **Read everything Luther wrote**
- **By 1520, he could no longer be loyal subject of papacy**
- **He resigned papal pension and began to publicly criticize the Catholic system**
- **Declared tithes paid to pope were not of divine authority**

A Challenge to Debate

- **Christopher Froschaucer, in 1552, fed his workers sausages during Lent “and cited Zwingli’s assertion of the sole authority of the Bible to excuse his actions”**
- **After the Roman system of worship was also modified, civil authorities in Zurich said Zwingli would meet anyone in debate**
- **Afterward, they would determine the faith the city and canton would follow (Cairns 294)**

Results of the Debate

- “Before the debate against Johann Faber in 1523, Zwingli prepared the *Sixty-seven Articles*, which emphasized salvation by faith, the authority of the Bible, the headship of Christ in the church, and the right of clerical marriage”
- “The town council decided that Zwingli had won, and his ideas were rapidly given legal status”
- “Fees for baptisms and burials were eliminated”
- “Monks and nuns were allowed to marry”
- “Images and relics were banned”
- In 1525, the reform was complete when the Mass was abolished (Cairns 294-295)

Zwingli and Luther

- **Zwingli allowed in worship only what the Bible approved, while Luther removed only what the Bible condemned**
- **Views set forth in “A Commentary on True and False Religions” (1525)**
- **Luther’s representatives and Zwingli met in Marburg (1529)**
- **They agreed on 14 points, but could not come to an agreement on the presence of Christ in the Lord’s supper**

Consubstantiation

- **Zwingli contended bread and wine were representative of the body and blood**
- **He also contended that when Jesus said this cup is my blood He did not mean that it was His literal blood, for after having called it blood He said I will drink henceforth no more of this “fruit of the vine,” showing that it was still fruit of the vine—even after He had called it blood**
- **Luther could not agree and said Zwingli was of a different spirit**

War

- **Christian Union of Catholic cantons began a warfare against Zwingli's followers in late 1529**
- **These states in the Alps remained loyal to pope**
- **Peace made at Cappel giving majority in canton the right to choose form of religion**
- **Zwingli's followers continued to expand, even making an effort to gain Geneva, war broke out again in 1531**
- **Zwingli went to war as chaplain and was killed**
- **Each canton was given control of its internal affairs**

Reformed Churches

- **Soon, John Calvin came to the front as leader of the Reformation in Switzerland**
- **The forces of Zwingli merged with the followers of Calvin, creating the Reformed Churches of Switzerland**
- **Zwingli permitted only what Bible approved**
- **He held those who heard the gospel and rejected it were predestined to eternal condemnation**
- **He rejected the doctrine of original sin**
- **He taught infants could be saved without baptism**

John Calvin's Beginnings

- **Entered University of Paris at 14 and studied 5 years**
- **He studied theology and developed skill in logic**
- **Spent 2 years studying law**
- **Spent 2 years studying Greek, Hebrew and the Latin Classics**
- **In 1536, he published his first edition of *Institutes of the Christian Religion***

Beginnings in Geneva

- **Calvin met a preacher named Farel in Geneva who pleaded with him to stay and encourage the Reformation**
- **Calvin was led to believe it was God's will and worked 2 years to turn Geneva to the Reformed faith**
- **He left Geneva in 1538 and was called back in 1541**
- **The town council turned the city over to him and he became dictator of the city**

Calvin's Stern Approach

- **Servetus, a doctor, wrote a treatise on the Trinity with which Calvin disagreed**
- **Calvin had him arrested, tried and burned at the stake in 1553**
- **Religious leaders excommunicated all who refused to follow Calvin's theology**
- **From 1542-46, 57 were executed and 76 were banished from Geneva**

Calvin's Reform

- **Calvin established a college with Theodore Beza as head to spread his Reformation ideas**
- **Students from all over Western Europe came**
- **Calvin believed the Bible was the infallible guide for the church**
- **It could only be properly interpreted by the elect**

Calvin's Views

- **He gave the ten commandments an important place**
- **He believed Christ's reinterpretation contained the heart of Christianity**
- **He taught the purpose of life was to glorify God through holiness of life**
- **He taught Christians should be free of all luxury**

The Five Points of Calvinism Explained (James Meadows)

- **Total depravity**
 - **Everyone is born with the stain of Adam's sin; the doctrine of original sin. From birth man is depraved totally and can do nothing to help himself without a direct operation of the Holy Spirit**
- **Unconditional election**
 - **Before birth, God has determined who will be of the elect. Man has no choice in the matter. If one is not of the elect, he is condemned forever**
- **Limited atonement**
 - **Christ died only for the elect, not for all men**

The Five Points of Calvinism Explained (James Meadows)

- **Irresistible grace**
 - **The elect cannot resist God's grace and must be saved; the non-elect cannot accept God's grace even if they desire it**
- **Perseverance of the saints**
 - **The elect cannot be lost, cannot fall from grace, once saved always saved. The impossibility of apostasy**

Calvin's Reformation

- **Died in 1564 due to strenuous duties**
- **Theodore Beza took leadership of Reformation Movement in Geneva**
- **“Reformed” generally applies to followers of Calvinistic Theology**
- **“Presbyterian” describes the system of government Calvin adopted to guide the church in Switzerland**

Jacob Arminius

- **Jacob Arminius was professor in the University of Leyden**
- **He emphasized man's freedom of choice among the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands**
- **He taught God would not do anything contrary to what is right and His will not restricted by His justice**

Arminius' Teachings

- **Jacob Arminius taught God was able to foresee man would sin of his own free will**
- **He did not believe God predestined man to sin**
- **He emphasized man's freedom standing in contrast to compulsion or necessity**
- **He reasoned freedom exists only where there is a power of alternative choice**
- **He held God's grace is not irresistible, but if a Christian will desire the help of Christ and be active in trying to do His will, Christ will keep him from falling**
- **If a person rejected Christ, he taught Christ would not hold him by irresistible grace**