

Zwingli and the Reformation

Sources

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I. Career of Zwingli

A. Reformer of Zurich

1. 1519 → begins preaching through Matthew instead of assigned sections of liturgy
2. Endures plague
3. By degrees, begins to implement reforms
4. 1531 → Death in Battle of Kappel as a sword-bearing chaplain

B. Reformation in Three Disputes

1. 1523: Public disputation over the Reformation over his 67 Articles
 - a. Persuades the city of Zurich to embrace the Reformation
 - b. Demonstrates reliance on the secular arm
 - c. Reforms: abolish the mass, simplify worship, permission for marriage
2. 1525: Public dispute over baptism and break with Anabaptists (Gebel, Manz)
 - a. Differences between Zwingli and the Anabaptists
 - 1) The speed of the Reformation
 - a) Anabaptists: "Reformation without tarrying for any"
 - b) Zwingli: Bring the whole flock along
 - 2) Role of state: Magisterial Reformation vs. Radical Reformation
 - 3) Difference in baptism (Anabaptist = "re-baptizer") actually a symptom of the difference in the nature of the church (inclusive vs. gathered)
 - b. Zwingli eventually supported forcible repression of Anabaptists
3. 1529: Dispute w/ Luther in Marburg Colloquy
 - a. Meeting between Luther and Zwingli to try to achieve unity
 - b. Point of Contention: Lord's Supper
 - 1) Dispute centered on the words "This is my body" and their meaning
 - 2) Luther: "Consubstantiation"—Christ is present "in, with, and under"
 - c. Debated four days and eventually drew up a statement about what they agreed on (14 points) and disagreed on (1 point—the Lord's Supper).

II. Ideas of Zwingli

A. General Character

1. More "rationalist" than Luther—working out paradoxes and inconsistencies
2. More deeply influenced by the humanist tradition with the love of philosophy

B. Government: Church and State

1. In the magisterial tradition: United church & state ("The Christian man is nothing else but a faithful and good citizen and the Christian city nothing other than the Christian church.")
2. Like most Reformers, he was heir to Middle Ages, 1,000 years of state churches. (For the Reformers, the corruption of the church came w/ the papacy, not Constantine.)

- C. Aesthetics: Worship
 - 1. Plain, austere, eliminating most music, all images (“four bare walls and a sermon”); this despite Zwingli’s own talent as a musician
 - 2. Illustrates **regulative principle of worship** characterizing the Reformed position
 - a. Whatever is not commanded is forbidden, i.e., what is not mandated in Scripture may not be used in worship.
 - b. Luther, **the normative principle**: Whatever is not forbidden is permissible
- D. Salvation
 - 1. Justification by faith alone
 - 2. Thought original sin involved corruption, but not guilt
 - 3. Basis of the Reformers’ view on assurance
- E. Sacraments
 - 1. “Memorial” or “symbolic” view of the sacraments
 - a. Lord’s Supper memorializes the sacrifice of Christ
 - b. Baptism symbolizes one’s union to the church and the cause of Christ
 - c. Probably the most enduring legacy of Zwingli
 - 2. Baptism
 - a. Functions as a “badge” of one’s allegiance
 - b. Equates baptism with circumcision and introduction into the covenant
 - 3. Lord’s Supper
 - a. Equated the Lord’s Supper w/ the OT Passover
 - b. “This *is* my body”
 - 1) It depends on what the meaning of “is” is.
 - 2) For Zwingli, “is” means *signifies*.
 - 3) The Lord’s Supper is, in a sense, a metaphor (like “I am the vine”) that points to a reality behind it: the broken body and shed blood of Christ.
 - 4. His sacramental views the root of “covenant theology”: Equating Israel (Passover & circumcision) w/ Church (Lord’s Supper & baptism)