

HULDRYCH ZWINGLI

(1484–1531)

1498–1506 Childhood, schools and universities

1484 born into a wealthy farming family in Wildhaus, some close and distant relatives belong to the clergy

1489–94 attends school in Weesen

1494–97 attends school in Basel

1497/98 (?) attends school in Bern, contact with the Dominicans (?)

1498–1502 studies at the University of Vienna

1502–06 studies at the University of Basel → Magister artium; studies in theology for a short time; probably influenced by Thomas Wytenbach through the *via antiqua* (commentary on sentences by Duns Scotus, Thomas Aquinas) → Scotism; contact with humanism (?) → reading of ancient classics and church fathers (?); encounter with Konrad Pellikan and Leo Jud

1506–18 Pastoral ministry in Glarus and Einsiedeln

1506–16 parish priest in Glarus; supports the papal party against the French and Habsburg party → receives a papal pension; accompanies Glarus troops on campaigns to Italy; reads scholastic and humanist authors; around 1513 studies of Greek NT manuscripts; 1515/16 reading Erasmus and meeting him in person → Zwingli combines Scotist-Thomist views on God and the world with humanist spirituality and morality

1516–18 priest (Leutpriester) at the Benedictine Abbey of Einsiedeln → pastoral care for residents and pilgrims; change in focus from politics to church → preaching (moral instruction); studies of classical, patristic and medieval authors; personal contact with the humanist circle around Erasmus of Rotterdam

1519–22 Zwingli becomes a reformer

1519 Leutpriester at the Grossmünster in Zurich; preaching activity → continuous interpretation of entire biblical books (Jesus and early Christianity in Matthew – Acts – 1Tim), increasing criticism of the church (veneration of saints, Eucharistic piety, tithing, clerical celibacy, etc.)

beginning of the 1520s further development of the Scotist-Erasmian orientation through engagement with Augustine and Martin Luther's criticism of the Church → Zwingli's reformatory turn; research problem regarding Zwingli's reformatory turn: content? – date? – Luther's influence or Zwingli's independence? **1521** appointment as Grossmünster canon while retaining the position of priest

1522 breaking of the fast → *Von Erkesien und Freiheit der Speisen* (Z 1:88–136); disputes in the city about Zwingli's criticism of the church → support from the church and the city for Zwingli; *Apologeticus Archeteles* (Z 1:256–327) → defense of Zwingli's criticism of the church

1522 *Von Klarheit und Gewissheit des Wortes Gottes* (Z 1:338–384) → scriptural principle, spiritual nature of the Word of God, inner working of the Spirit as a prerequisite for understanding the external Word of God

1522 marriage to Anna Reinhart (not publicly known until 1524)

1522 Zwingli is discharged from his priestly obligation to perform Mass and hear confessions → he only has to preach

Summaries of Zwingli's theology

- Auslegen und Gründe der Schlussreden, 1523 (Z 2:1–457)
- Commentarius de vera et falsa religione, 1525 (Z 3:628–912)
- Fidei ratio, 1530 (Z 6/2:753–817)
- Sermonis de providentia dei anamnema, 1530 (Z 6/3:1–230)
- Christianae fidei expositio, 1531 (Z 6/5:50–163)

1523–25 Advocating religious renewal

1523 first Zurich disputation (January) → Zwingli's 67 articles (Z 1:458–465) present the reformatory sola scriptura/solus Christus and demands church reform with the help of the city authorities → support of the city authorities for Zwingli

1523 Zwingli's *Auslegen und Gründe der Schlussreden* (Z 2:1–457) gives a first presentation of his theology: 1. God is spiritual (contrast between spirit and matter, God's providence, criticism of externalized religious practices), 2. redemption of sinful man through Christ's work of salvation, 3. Lord's Supper as a spiritual event (criticism of the sacrifice of the Mass and the doctrine of transubstantiation), 4. church as a spiritual community (criticism of church hierarchy and canon law, integration of the clergy into the urban community), 5. Christian ethics

1523 *Von göttlicher und menschlicher Gerechtigkeit* (Z 2:458–525) → distinction between divine and human justice

1523 *Quo pacto ingenui adolescentes formandi sint* (Z 2:526–551) → humanistic reform of the urban school system

1523 criticism of the Roman Mass and reform of the liturgy in *De canone missae epichiresis* (Z 2:552–608) and *De canone missae libelli apologia* (Z 2:617–625) → deepening the interpretation of the Last Supper as a memorial meal

1523 second Zurich Disputation (October) → city authorities are responsible for church reform, official support for Zwingli, affirmation of the scriptural principle, retention of the liturgy and images for the time being, promotion of church reforms among the population

1524 *Der Hirt* (Z 3:1–68) → preaching and pastoral care of evangelical clergy

1524 Zwingli plays a leading role in breaking the resistance of the opposition in the city and in ending the city's relations with the Bishop of Constance

1524 Zwingli criticizes the action taken against the Protestant movement by localities loyal to the papal church and the Swiss Confederation

1525 *Commentarius de vera et falsa religione* (Z 3:628–912) → contrasting true and false religion against the background of the Scotist diastasis of creator and creature, false religion is externalized and performance-oriented, true religion is determined by the spirituality of God, the saving work of Christ and the sanctification of believers

1524–29

Reforming the Zurich church

1524 *Wer Ursache gebe zu Aufruhr* (Z 3:355–469) → critical examination of the early modern economy, criticism of tithes, demand for reforms of the commonwealth based on divine justice

1524/25 Zwingli plays a leading role in the liquidation of the Grossmünsterstift and Fraumünsterstift as well as the monasteries and in the reorganization of welfare for the poor

1525 Zwingli takes over the supervision of the municipal Latin school → reorganized as 'Prophezei' (teaching Latin, Greek and Hebrew, open exegetical Bible lectures for those interested) → Zwingli continuously interprets Old and New Testament books

1525 *Action oder Brauch des Nachtmahls* (Z 4:1–24) → Reformation communion service

1525 *Von der Taufe, von der Wiedertaufe und von der Kindertaufe* (Z 4:188–337) → further reorganization of the baptismal liturgy (symbolic character of baptism as an act of human confession), distancing from the Anabaptists (necessity of infant baptism)

1525 *Eine Antwort, Valentin Compar gegeben* (Z 4:35–159) → criticism of religious images

1525/26 Zwingli takes part in the establishment of the marriage court and its expansion into a supervisory authority over the morality of the population

1528/29 *Ordnung der christlichen Kirche zu Zürich* (Z 4:671–694) → collection of the liturgical orders influenced by Zwingli

1529 Zurich Bible

Zwingli and the evangelical movement in Switzerland

1526 Zwingli refuses to take part in the disputation of Baden → condemnation of Zwingli's doctrine and confirmation of the papal church by the majority of the Swiss Confederates

1526–29 Zwingli promotes the evangelical movement outside of Zurich (St. Gallen, Schaffhausen, Basel, Bern) and campaigns in Zurich for political support for the evangelical movement in other places

1528 Disputation of Bern with Zwingli's participation → Reformation in Bern under Zwingli's influence

1529 Zwingli advocates military action against the coalition of the five estates loyal to the Pope → first Kappel War → disappointment for Zwingli's far-reaching plans for the renewal of the Swiss Confederation through the Reformation

Zwingli against the Wittenberg Reformer about the Lord's Supper

1524 *Ad Matthaeum Albrum de coena dominica epistola* (Z 3:322–354) → Zwingli agrees to Karlsstadt's spiritualist doctrine of the Lord's Supper and Cornelius Hoen's symbolic interpretation of the words of institution

1525 further elaboration of Zwingli's eucharistic theology in the *Commentarius de vera et falsa religione* (Z 3:773–820), in the *Subsidium sive coronis de eucharistia* (Z 4:440–504) and in the *Responsio ad epistolam Ioannis Bugenhagenii* (Z 4:546–576) and liturgical implementation in *Action oder Brauch des Nachtmahls* (Z 4:1–24)

1526 *Eine klare Unterrichtung vom Nachtmahl Christi* (Z 3:773–862) → criticism of the doctrine of real presence and defense of the symbolic understanding of the Lord's Supper

1527 sharp criticism of Luther's doctrine of the Lord's Supper in several writings: *Amica exegesis, i.e. expositio eucharistiae negotii ad Martinum Lutherum* (Z 5:562–758), *Freundliche Verglimpfung und Ablehnung über die Predigt des trefflichen Martini Luthers gegen die Schwärmer* (Z 5:771–794), *Dass diese Worte: Das ist mein Leib etc. ewig ewig den alten Sinn haben werden* (Z 5:805–977)

1529 Zwingli takes part in the Marburg colloquy

Zwingli against the Zurich anabaptists

1523/24 break between Zwingli and some advocates of rapid and radical innovations → formation of a circle of supporters of a radical Reformation → rejection of infant baptism

1524 failed agreement between the Zurich clergy and the supporters of a radical reformation → Zwingli distances himself from the radicals in *Wer Ursache gebe zu Aufruhr* (Z 3:355–469)

1525 public disputation with the radicals → obligation to baptize infants → action against radicals who in turn start baptizing adults

1525 *Von der Taufe, von der Wiedertaufe und von der Kindertaufe* (Z 4:188–337) → distancing from the Anabaptists

1525 *Antwort über Balthasar Hubmaiers Taufbüchlein* (Z 4:577–642)

1527 *In catapastarum strophas elenchus* (Z 6/1:1–196)

1529–31 Confession and politics

1529/30 Zwingli corresponds with Philip of Hesse to promote a political alliance

1530 Diet of Augsburg → Zwingli presents the *Fidei ratio* (Z 6/2:753–817) → double demarcation against the papal church and the Wittenberg Reformation; defense against Eck's criticism → *Ad illustrissimos Germaniae principes Augustae congregatos de convitiis Ecciae epistola* (Z 6/3:231–291); Zwingli rejects the Confessio Tetrapolitana and criticizes the Upper German cities for their willingness to cooperate politically with the supporters of the Wittenberg Reformation

1530 *Sermonis de providentia dei anamnema* (Z 6/3:1–230) → presentation of Zwingli's theology with a clear distinction from the Wittenberg Reformation

1530/31 Zwingli calls for a war against the five cantons loyal to the papal church in order to enforce the Reformation throughout the entire Swiss Confederation

1531 Zwingli tries to establish contacts with France → sending the *Christianae fidei expositio* (Z 6/5:50–163) to the French king

1531 Second Kappel War → defeat of Zurich, death of Zwingli