

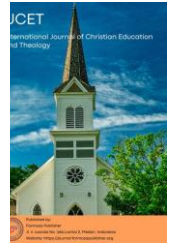


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The Call for Reformation by Huldrych Zwingli and the Reformed Church Movement and its Implications for Christian Religious Education

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the theological implications of Huldrych Zwingli's Reformation in the context of Christian Religious Education. Zwingli's reformative ideas significantly influenced the transformation of the Church and the city of Zurich, shaping the religious, social, and political landscape of the time. This study aims to analyze the theological aspects of Zwingli's Reformation, specifically focusing on the implications for Christian Religious Education. The research employs a qualitative approach, analyzing primary and secondary sources related to Zwingli's theology and its impact on religious education practices. The results reveal that Zwingli's emphasis on Scripture as the sole authority, his rejection of the Catholic sacraments, and his views on church-state unity influenced both religious thought and the educational curriculum of the time.

INTRODUCTION

Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531) was a Swiss Reformed leader and theologian who became a key figure in the Protestant Reformation, particularly in the Zurich region. Born in Wildhaus, Switzerland, Zwingli received his education at the Universities of Vienna and Basel, where he developed an interest in humanist thought and the original texts of the Bible. In 1518, Zwingli was appointed as a pastor in Zurich, where he began to criticize the doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. He opposed the doctrine of transubstantiation in the Lord's Supper, viewing it as a church tradition not grounded in Scripture, and argued that the sacrament was merely symbolic. He also rejected many church rituals he deemed inconsistent with biblical teaching, including the veneration of relics and the use of images in worship. Zwingli believed that the Bible was the sole authority in Christian life, and his influence led to significant reforms in Zurich and surrounding areas.

Zwingli was involved in political struggles, seeking to establish a more religiously oriented state and to promote religious freedom. In 1529, he became involved in the Swiss Cantonal Wars, a conflict between cantons supporting the Reformation and those loyal to the Catholic Church. Although he attempted to reach an agreement with Martin Luther, theological differences between them created tension. In 1531, Zwingli died in the Battle of Kappel, but his theological legacy and influence lived on in the Reformed church tradition, which emphasized *sola scriptura* (Scripture alone) and the doctrine of salvation by faith.

The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century stands as one of the most pivotal periods in the history of the Christian church. The movement arose in response to various practices and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church that were considered unbiblical. Huldrych Zwingli, a central figure in the Swiss Reformation, played a key role in initiating major changes in the church by emphasizing the need to return to the Bible as the sole source of authority. According to McGrath (2012), Zwingli rejected church teachings and practices not found in Scripture, including certain sacraments he deemed inconsistent with biblical teaching.

Zwingli was also known for his views opposing the union of church and state. He believed that the church should be separated from political power in order to preserve the purity of its doctrine. According to Diarmaid MacCulloch (2005), this view significantly influenced the formation of the Reformed churches, which became more independent in terms of both organizational structure and theological teaching. This became a hallmark of the Reformed tradition, which grew rapidly in Europe, especially in Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Scotland. The movement emphasized a life aligned with biblical principles, leading to major changes in theology and church liturgy.

Furthermore, Zwingli's view on the sacraments became a distinguishing feature of the Reformed churches. Zwingli argued that the Lord's Supper did not literally become the body and blood of Christ, but was a symbol of the believer's fellowship with Christ and one another. In his article, Kisno Hadi (2017) explains that this view had a wide impact on Reformed theology, where an emphasis on symbolism and simplicity in worship became defining characteristics distinguishing the Reformed tradition from Catholicism and Lutheranism.

Based on these views, the Reformed churches developed with a strong emphasis on biblical teaching and the rejection of church practices considered inconsistent with Scripture. The movement spread across various parts of the world, including Indonesia, and influenced the growth of Protestant churches. The implications of Zwingli's teachings and the Reformed church movement are also evident in various aspects of church life, including in Christian Religious Education (CRE). According to Desy Milenia Yusnita (2024), CRE within the Reformed tradition emphasizes the importance of understanding the Bible as the foundation for teaching moral and ethical values, with the goal of shaping mature and resilient Christian character.

Further implications of Zwingli's Reformation for CRE include reinforcing the principle that religious education must be rooted in a deep understanding of biblical texts. This leads to a more critical and reflective approach to religious instruction, where students are encouraged not merely to receive teachings passively but to actively reflect on and comprehend their meaning. As Desy Milenia Yusnita (2024) explains, the application of

Reformation principles in CRE can help form individuals with a solid grasp of Scripture who are prepared to face the challenges of the times.

Nevertheless, while the Reformed movement brought renewal in theology and church life, major challenges remain in integrating these Reformation principles into the context of modern Christian education. This includes questions regarding the relevance of Zwingli's teachings in addressing contemporary issues faced by the church, such as religious pluralism and shifting social values. Therefore, it is crucial to further explore how the influence of Zwingli and the Reformed church can be applied in developing a CRE curriculum that is both relevant and effective in today's globalized era.

METHODS

The research method used in this study is qualitative research with a literature review approach. This approach aims to explore a deep understanding of the topic under investigation through the analysis of relevant literature, such as books, scholarly journals, articles, and other theological sources related to Huldrych Zwingli's Reformation calling and its implications for Christian Religious Education. This study will examine Zwingli's views on biblical authority, the sacraments, and the separation of church and state, and how these views are applied in the context of Christian religious education. The literature review enables the researcher to analyze various previously published ideas, compile a synthesis of different perspectives, and identify theological contributions that can be applied to the development of the CRE curriculum. As explained by Creswell (2014), qualitative research with a literature review approach allows researchers to build a deep theoretical understanding by relying on written sources as the primary data. Therefore, this study will focus on analyzing existing sources to obtain findings relevant to the research objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Describe your research findings according to the research problem and purpose of the study. Discuss your findings according to the perspective of theory, concept or previous findings. Should describe this section in a comprehensive, simple and detailed manner. The author can make subchapters in this section.

The Reformation Calling of Huldrych Zwingli

Huldrych Zwingli was one of the key figures in the Protestant Reformation movement of the 16th century, particularly in Switzerland. Zwingli felt called to reform the Church after witnessing many practices within the Roman Catholic Church that, in his view, were not in accordance with the teachings of Scripture. He believed that the doctrines of the Church at that time had been corrupted by traditions that lacked strong biblical foundations. One of Zwingli's core convictions was that the Bible must be the sole source of authority in the life of the Church and of Christians. According to Hans Burger (2009), Zwingli emphasized that the Church must return to the original teachings found in Scripture and avoid adding doctrines or traditions not found in the Bible.

Zwingli began his reformation calling through teaching and pastoral ministry that re-emphasized the pure teachings of Christ. He rejected various Catholic doctrines which he considered deviations from biblical truth, such as the veneration of saints, the practice of indulgences for the forgiveness of sins, and the idea of sanctification through certain sacraments. He believed that salvation could be attained only through faith in Christ and the grace of God, which could not be earned by human works. In this regard, Zwingli was strongly influenced by the principle of *sola scriptura*, which teaches that Scripture is the only source of truth and authority for the Church and Christian life (McGrath, 2012).

One of Zwingli's earliest steps in the Reformation was opposing the Catholic practice of the Eucharist. Zwingli argued that the Lord's Supper was not the literal body and blood of Christ but rather a symbol of the believer's fellowship with Christ and one another. On this matter, Zwingli differed from Martin Luther, who maintained the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the sacrament. As explained by Theodore Beza, Zwingli argued that Scripture provides no foundation for the doctrine of transubstantiation, which he regarded as an ecclesiastical innovation incompatible with biblical teaching (Theodore Beza, 2012). This highlights Zwingli's deep concern for preserving the simplicity and purity of Christian doctrine in accordance with Scripture.

The Reformation led by Zwingli did not only address liturgical matters but also involved the structure of the Church and its relationship with the state. Zwingli believed that the Church should be free from political control. He rejected the idea that political rulers, such as kings or emperors, should have authority over church affairs, arguing that Church and state must be separated to safeguard the purity of Christ's teachings. As McGrath (2012) noted, Zwingli desired for the Church to be a community grounded entirely on biblical principles, without interference from worldly power. This perspective became the foundation of Reformed theology, which later developed in countries such as the Netherlands and England with a distinct emphasis on the independence of the Church from the state.

Zwingli also rooted his reforming mission in the conviction that every aspect of Christian life must conform to biblical teaching. He taught that believers' lives should reflect Christ's teachings, both in their personal conduct and in social life (Stephens W.P., 1986). Thus, Zwingli's call to reform extended beyond the Church to include broader social transformation. This view underpinned the development of the Reformed movement, which emphasized a consistent Christian life both in worship and in daily living.

As a Reformation leader, Zwingli also emphasized the importance of education in the process of transforming the Church and society. For Zwingli, education was a crucial means of shaping individuals with a correct understanding of biblical doctrine. He believed that Christians must be equipped with deep biblical knowledge in order to live according to Christ's calling. As Hans Burger (2009) stated, Zwingli regarded education as a way to empower believers to live out their faith authentically, which directly influenced his view on Christian Religious Education (CRE).

Therefore, Zwingli's reformation calling went beyond rejecting certain Catholic practices it was a comprehensive effort to build a Church that returned to the pure principles of Scripture. It was a call for the Church and Christians to live according to the teachings of Christ, free from political influence or unbiblical traditions. The Reformation led by Zwingli not only had an impact on the Church of his time but also laid the foundation for the development

of the Reformed church movement, which continues to endure today.

The Core Thoughts of Huldrych Zwingli

As a reformer, Huldrych Zwingli held profound theological and pedagogical insights concerning the Church and the life of believers, especially regarding the sacraments and the relationship between Church and state. His core ideas can be seen in the 67 theses he presented, which served as the foundation for the teachings and practices of the Reformed Church he introduced. These theses are organized into 21 main themes that address essential aspects of Church doctrine and practice. The following points highlight Zwingli's teachings on major Christian beliefs that opposed the traditions of the Catholic Church in his time.

The Gospel (Articles 1–16)

Zwingli began by emphasizing the supremacy of the Gospel as the sole source of truth in Christian life. He rejected human doctrines or church traditions that contradicted the Word of God. According to him, it is only through the Gospel the good news of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior that people can know the truth and obtain salvation. He also asserted that church teachings must submit to Scripture, not the other way around. This directly challenged the authority of the Catholic Church at the time, which often equated or even prioritized church tradition over the biblical text.

The Pope (Article 17)

Zwingli firmly rejected the pope's claim to be the head of the universal Church. He argued that there was no biblical basis for the pope's supremacy over all Christians. For Zwingli, only Christ is worthy to be called the Head of the Church, as He is the sole mediator between God and humankind. By denying papal authority, Zwingli paved the way for local churches to practice their faith independently, in accordance with biblical teaching.

The Mass (Articles 18–20)

Zwingli criticized the concept of the Mass as a repetition of Christ's sacrifice. He declared that Christ's death on the cross was once for all and fully sufficient for the atonement of sin. Therefore, the Mass should not be viewed as a new sacrifice, but rather as a symbolic remembrance of Christ's

completed redemptive work. He also rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation, asserting that it did not align with the spiritual meaning taught in Scripture.

The Intercession of the Saints (Article 21)

Zwingli opposed the practice of asking saints for intercession. He affirmed that only Christ is qualified to mediate between God and humanity, as emphasized in 1 Timothy 2:5. Depending on the saints in prayer, he argued, was a deviation from true faith, because only Christ has the power to present our requests to God.

Good Works (Article 22)

According to Zwingli, good works cannot save humanity. Salvation is a gift from God, received through faith in Jesus Christ. While good works are important, they are the result of a living faith, not the means to earn salvation. Thus, he rejected the Catholic teaching that gave good works a salvific role.

Clerical Property (Article 23)

Zwingli denounced the excessive wealth possessed by the clergy. He believed such wealth contradicted the teachings of Jesus, who lived in simplicity. He called upon church leaders to embody Gospel values, reject worldly riches, and use church resources to serve the people, especially the poor and marginalized.

Forbidding of Food (Article 24)

Zwingli opposed food prohibitions imposed by the Catholic Church, such as obligatory fasting or abstaining from meat on certain days. He held that Scripture does not teach that certain foods are more sacred than others. In his view, Christian freedom includes the liberty to eat and drink, provided it is done with thanksgiving and does not become a stumbling block to others.

Holiday and Pilgrimage (Article 25)

Zwingli strongly criticized the establishment of religious holidays and pilgrimages that lacked biblical foundations. He observed that many religious celebrations had lost their spiritual significance and become empty routines. Pilgrimages, often seen as acts of special devotion, were viewed by Zwingli as outward expressions of piety that could mislead believers. He emphasized

that true worship depends not on time or place, but on a heart surrendered to God in truth.

Hoods, Dress, Insignia (Article 26)

Zwingli rejected special clothing or symbols worn by clergy to signify spiritual authority. He believed that true piety is not defined by outward appearance, but by holiness and humility before God. By rejecting clerical garb, Zwingli upheld the spiritual equality of all believers before the Lord.

Order and Sects (Article 27)

Zwingli opposed the formation of religious orders or special groups within the church that created spiritual class distinctions. He stressed that all Christians are members of Christ's body and should live in unity of faith. Such divisions, he believed, only fragmented the church and distracted from the core message of the Gospel—love and fellowship in Christ.

Marriage of Ecclesiasts (Articles 28–29)

Zwingli defended the right of clergy to marry, opposing the Catholic rule of celibacy for priests. He argued that marriage was ordained by God from the beginning and considered holy. For Zwingli, forbidding clergy to marry encouraged hypocrisy and moral failure. He viewed marriage as a gift, not a hindrance to spiritual service.

The Vow of Chastity (Article 30)

Zwingli criticized the mandatory vow of chastity for clergy. He believed such vows were often unrealistic and contrary to the natural design of humans created for relationship. Chastity, he argued, should be a personal choice guided by the Holy Spirit, not an institutional requirement. He aimed to restore the dignity of marriage within spiritual life.

The Ban (Articles 31–32)

Zwingli taught that church discipline and excommunication should be conducted wisely and in accordance with Christ's teachings. He opposed using excommunication as a political or authoritarian tool. For Zwingli, exclusion from the church was valid only as a means of pastoral correction for those who persistently rejected the truth of the Gospel.

Illegal Property (Article 33)

Zwingli emphasized that property obtained unjustly must not be used for church purposes. He rejected the practice of acquiring church wealth through oppression or corruption. Instead, such property should be returned to rightful owners or used to help the poor. This reflected Zwingli's commitment to justice and social holiness within church life.

Majesty (Articles 34–43)

Here, Zwingli explained that all authority and majesty must be subject to God's will. Even secular rulers must govern with justice and in fear of the Lord. He condemned the abuse of power for personal gain or oppression. According to Zwingli, authority is a divine trust and must be used to promote order and public well-being in the light of God's Word.

Prayer (Articles 44–46)

Zwingli emphasized that prayer is not a mechanical ritual but a sincere, personal communication between humans and God. He rejected prayers recited merely as formalities or for public display. True prayer must come from a heart that loves God and desires His will. He also encouraged praying in the vernacular, so believers could pray with understanding and faith.

Offence (Articles 47–49)

Zwingli urged Christians to live with love and caution so as not to offend or become a stumbling block to others. He believed that a Christian's witness through daily life is crucial in spreading the Gospel. Therefore, all speech and action should reflect Christ's love and avoid unnecessary scandal or conflict.

Remittance of Sin (Articles 50–56)

Zwingli firmly asserted that the forgiveness of sins comes solely from God through Christ's redemptive work. He rejected the Catholic doctrine of forgiveness mediated by priests through the sacrament of penance or indulgences. For Zwingli, salvation belongs entirely to God and cannot be manipulated by the church. Believers need only approach God with true faith and repentance.

Purgatory (Articles 57–60)

Zwingli rejected the doctrine of purgatory as taught by the Catholic Church. He argued that there is no biblical basis for the concept of a postmortem purification process. He emphasized that judgment occurs immediately after death, leading to eternal life with God for believers, or eternal separation for the unrepentant. For Zwingli, the idea of purgatory was an invention of the Church to manipulate the faithful through fear and promises of indulgences.

The Sacrament of Baptism (Articles 61–65)

Zwingli believed that baptism should be understood symbolically, as an outward sign of an inner reality. Unlike the Catholic Church, which held baptism as a means of removing original sin and a requirement for salvation, Zwingli taught that baptism was a public declaration of faith. He emphasized that baptism did not have the power to save; rather, it signified the believer's identification with Christ's death and resurrection.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (Articles 66–67)

Zwingli's views on the Lord's Supper were a major departure from Catholic theology. He rejected the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, which teaches that the bread and wine literally become the body and blood of Christ. Instead, Zwingli affirmed a symbolic understanding of the Eucharist, where the bread and wine represent Christ's body and blood. For him, the Lord's Supper was a means of spiritual nourishment and a symbol of the unity of believers with Christ and with each other.

From the overall themes of Huldrych Zwingli's 67 Articles, it is clear that the essence of the reformation he championed focused on purifying Christian teachings from non-biblical influences that had developed within the Catholic Church of his time. Zwingli emphasized that the Gospel is the sole foundation of salvation and that Jesus Christ is the center of faith, the only mediator between God and humanity, and the true head of the Church. He rejected the authority of the Pope, the Mass as a repeated sacrifice, prayers to saints, celibacy for clergy, and various symbolic and structural practices that had no biblical basis, such as special clerical attire, man-made church feasts, dietary restrictions, and purgatory. Zwingli also strongly condemned the wealth of the clergy, the abuse of spiritual and political power, and the practice of forgiving sins

through human intermediaries or the church system. Instead, he emphasized the importance of faith as the means of salvation, sincere prayer, a simple life, Christian freedom in earthly matters, and the shared responsibility of all believers as "priests" in serving God. In this framework, Zwingli called for a comprehensive reformation and the eradication of abuses within the Church, with the goal of restoring it to the purity of Christ's teachings as outlined in Scripture.

The Reformed Movement in Europe: The Netherlands, France, and Germany

The Reformed movement, which began in the 16th century with figures such as Huldrych Zwingli and Jean Calvin, had a significant impact on Europe, particularly in countries like the Netherlands, France, and Germany. This movement not only marked a reformation in church teachings and practices but also influenced the social, political, and cultural life of the societies in these regions. Each country had its own characteristics in adopting and developing Reformed teachings, although there were common goals in purifying the church from practices deemed inconsistent with biblical teachings.

The Reformed Movement in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the Reformed movement flourished after the repression by the Catholic Spanish government. The Dutch Revolt in the 16th century against Spanish oppression provided an opportunity for the spread of Reformed teachings. During this time, figures like Guido de Brès and Theodorus Beza played significant roles in organizing the Reformed Church in the Netherlands (Kuyper, 2010). The Reformed Church in the Netherlands focused on the teaching of God's Word through profound preaching and the active role of the church in social life. One major contribution of this movement was the Belgic Confession, created in 1561, which became the foundation of Reformed teachings in the Netherlands and other countries. In this confession, it was emphasized that the authority of the church should be based on the Bible, not on tradition or other authorities, as was accepted in the Roman Catholic Church (Kuyper, 1898). Under the government that later became the Dutch Republic, the Netherlands also implemented the principles of religious freedom and the separation of church and

state, laying the foundation for the formation of secular states in Europe.

The Reformed Movement in France

In France, the Reformed movement was known as the Huguenots. This movement was strongly influenced by Calvinism, which was introduced by Jean Calvin in the 16th century. Although initially only affecting a small portion of the population, the Huguenot movement gained widespread attention after religious conflicts between Catholics and Protestants, including the French Wars of Religion. One factor that accelerated the growth of this movement was the spread of Calvin's writings and the Reformed Church's teachings that emphasized salvation by faith rather than by works or sacraments prescribed by the church (John Calvin, 2021). In France, the followers of Calvin, known as the Huguenots, fought for religious freedom and faced severe persecution from the Catholic side. The St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1572 was one of the tragic events in Huguenot history, where thousands of Protestants were killed by Catholic forces (John Calvin, 2021). Despite this, Reformed teachings continued to spread through underground churches and eventually influenced the formation of a more tolerant French state after the end of the French Wars of Religion in 1598.

The Reformed Movement in Germany

The Reformed movement in Germany was primarily influenced by the teachings of John Calvin and Huldrych Zwingli. Although Germany is more widely known as the center of Lutheran reformation, Reformed teachings began to spread in certain regions, such as Swiss cities and areas near France. Calvin's teachings were accepted in more free and secular regions, such as the Palatinate and some western parts of Germany. Calvinism in Germany focused more on the Bible's authority as the source of truth and emphasized the doctrine of salvation by faith, as well as the importance of a well-organized church structure (Charles Partee, 1997). Moreover, the influence of this movement was also evident in the development of Reformed theology, which emphasized Christ's presence not only spiritually but also in the church's teachings focused on purifying doctrine and religious practices. C. Scott Dixon stated that in the 16th century, many German cities established Reformed churches and adopted

confessions of faith based on Calvinist teachings, such as the Heidelberg Catechism (C. Scott Dixon, 2002). Thus, although initially dominated by Lutheran influences, the Reformed movement in Germany successfully formed its own theological identity through the spread of Calvin's and Zwingli's teachings and its contributions to church renewal and the development of Bible-centered doctrine.

The Influence of the Reformed Movement in Europe

The Reformed movement had a significant impact not only on church life but also on the social and political developments in Europe. As explained by Geoffrey Parker, in the Netherlands, for example, the influence of Reformed teachings played a role in the formation of nations more tolerant of religious freedom and also in shaping the Dutch national identity, which was focused on values of freedom and independence. Meanwhile, in France and Germany, the Reformed movement also influenced the development of ideas about religious freedom and the separation of church and state, though it faced opposition from the Catholic Church and political rulers (Geoffrey Parker, 2008).

Thus, the Reformed movement in the Netherlands, France, and Germany shared a common foundational principle, namely a return to the Bible as the source of authority and the rejection of church practices deemed inconsistent with biblical teachings. However, each country had its own differences in how they adopted and developed Reformed teachings, depending on the political and social contexts at the time. Despite facing numerous challenges and persecution, Reformed teachings continued to spread and have a significant impact on the formation of Protestant churches and the development of modern European nations.

Zwingli's Theology on the Sacrament of Baptism (Infant Baptism)

Huldrych Zwingli, a leading figure in the Reformation movement in Switzerland, had a distinctive view on the sacrament of baptism compared to the Catholic Church and even other Reformers such as Martin Luther. According to Peter Opitz, Zwingli emphasized the symbolic and pedagogical aspects of baptism, which made his view on this sacrament stand out. In Zwingli's perspective, baptism does not have the sacramental

effect of directly removing sin, as is believed in the Roman Catholic Church, but rather serves as a sign or symbol of the covenant that God has made with His people, leading to repentance and a personal confession of faith (Peter Opitz, 2024). Zwingli viewed baptism as an outward expression of inner commitment to God, marking a person as part of the covenant community, but it did not automatically guarantee salvation or justification without true faith.

Baptism as a Symbol of the Covenant

Zwingli believed that baptism was an external sign of a deeper covenant between God and His people. In his view, baptism does not have the power to cleanse sins directly, but rather becomes a symbol showing that a person has been accepted into the church community and sanctified in Christ. Zwingli emphasized that all teachings regarding the sacraments should be based on the Bible, which does not provide sufficient theological authority to believe that baptism automatically removes sin (Schaff, 1910). Therefore, according to Zwingli's theology, baptism including infant baptism is not a means of salvation as in Catholic belief, but a sign of the covenant and a symbol of membership in the community of believers (the church).

Zwingli emphasized that:

- Baptism does not wash away sins but shows that a person (including a child) becomes part of the covenant people.
- Just as circumcision in the Old Testament marked membership in God's people, infant baptism marks participation in the church.

Thus, according to Zwingli, infant baptism is a symbolic act for the children of believing parents because they belong to the church community.

Zwingli's View on Infant Baptism

One aspect that distinguishes Zwingli's view on baptism from that of the Catholic Church is his perspective on infant baptism. In Catholic tradition, infant baptism is considered a means of cleansing original sin and introducing the child into the life of the church. However, Zwingli rejected this understanding. He argued that baptism should only be given to those who are able to make a personal confession of faith. Therefore, according to Zwingli, infant baptism has no biblical foundation. He emphasized that baptism should only be administered to those who are capable of consciously

receiving the gospel and making a personal profession of faith (Schaff, 1910).

Zwingli argued that baptism does not have the power to cleanse original sin in infants, and administering baptism to children only adds practices that are not taught in the Bible. In his view, the church should administer baptism only to those who are old enough to understand Christian faith. This became one of the key points of distinction between Zwingli and other Reformers like Martin Luther, who retained infant baptism despite criticizing other sacramental practices.

Implications for the Reformed Church

Zwingli's view influenced Reformed churches that developed in Switzerland and Europe, which emphasized adult baptism as a sign of personal commitment to the Christian faith (George Hunston Williams, 2021). This concept also influenced the development of Anabaptist churches, which considered baptism valid only if administered after an individual is able to make a conscious profession of faith (George Huntston Williams, 2021). This highlighted a sharp difference between Reformed churches and the Catholic Church, as well as with most other Protestant churches that considered infant baptism valid and important in the life of the church.

The Importance of Baptism in Zwingli's Theology

Although Zwingli rejected the Catholic understanding of the sacramental effects of baptism, he still regarded baptism as an important aspect of the Christian life. He saw it as a symbol of faith that should be deeply embraced by each individual. Zwingli taught that although baptism cannot remove sin or provide salvation directly, it is a way to affirm the Christian's commitment in fellowship with God and with fellow believers. Baptism becomes a way of showing that a person has been justified by faith and sanctified by Christ (Charles River Editors, 2019). Therefore, Zwingli's theology on baptism, particularly infant baptism, was strongly influenced by his understanding of symbolism and biblical teaching. He viewed baptism as a sign or symbol of God's covenant, not as a sacramental means that automatically changes a person's spiritual status. Zwingli rejected the practice of infant baptism because he believed it was inconsistent with biblical teaching, asserting that baptism is valid only when

received by someone old enough to consciously profess their faith.

The Disagreement Between Zwingli and the Anabaptist Movement

Initially, Zwingli, Conrad Grebel, and Felix Manz were part of a coalition defending the Magisterial Reformation in Zurich, collectively opposing the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. However, over time, significant theological differences began to emerge between them, especially regarding the practice of baptism. Zwingli maintained the view that infant baptism was valid and in accordance with biblical teachings, while Grebel and Manz, members of the Anabaptist movement, strongly rejected infant baptism, arguing that only those who had reached adulthood and could understand and acknowledge their own faith should be baptized (Schaff, 1910).

On January 15, 1525, an open debate on the correct form of baptism according to the Bible was held in Zurich. The debate failed to reach an agreement, with Zwingli and his group insisting that infant baptism was valid, while the Grebel and Manz group stuck to their position on adult baptism. As a result, the Grebel group decided to separate from the Zurich City Church, as the Zurich City Council favored maintaining the practice of infant baptism (Hery Budi Yosef, 2021). This decision placed them in a dangerous position, as they had to face the threat of punishment from the city authorities, who were dominated by Zwingli's influence. However, this threat did not dampen the Anabaptists' zeal. On January 21, 1525, just a few days after the debate, they performed the first adult baptism led by Grebel on George Blaurock, a former priest from Chur. Subsequently, several others were also baptized by this group. Their courageous act of performing adult baptisms further solidified their position as a separate group from the official church in Zurich (Schaff, 1910). Although this act was seen as defiance against church and state authority, the Anabaptists did not retreat. They continued to spread their teachings in various parts of Switzerland, even though it led to greater isolation and persecution by the authorities.

On November 18, 1525, the Zurich City Council finally arrested three prominent leaders of the Anabaptist movement: Grebel, Manz, and Blaurock, on charges of disloyalty to the city of Zurich. Grebel eventually died in prison due to illness, while Manz and Blaurock faced even more tragic consequences. On March 7, 1526, the Zurich City Council issued an edict that mandated the death penalty for anyone who performed a rebaptism, which was considered heretical. Felix Manz became the first martyr, sentenced to a brutal and tragic death.

Felix Manz, who remained steadfast in his faith, was led from the Wellenberg prison to the boat dock in Zurich. During the journey to his execution, he continued to praise God and showed no fear of death. Before he was drowned, he sang a hymn of praise: "*In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum,*" which means "Into Your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit." Despite being bound at hands and feet, Manz continued to proclaim his faith with unwavering courage. He was finally drowned by the Zurich authorities, ending his life in a horrific manner. This event reflects the depth of the theological and social conflict that occurred during the Reformation period, as well as the tragic consequences of such sharp theological differences (Hery Budi Yosef, 2021).

Thus, it can be concluded that the disagreement between Zwingli and the Anabaptist movement was not merely a theological difference regarding baptism but also involved ideologies about church, state, and authority. The violent actions taken by the Zurich authorities against the Anabaptists demonstrate how Zwingli's theology influenced state policy, which ultimately led to the persecution of those who held differing views. Felix Manz's tragic story became a symbol of sacrifice and unwavering faith, even at the cost of his life.

The Differences Between Zwingli and Martin Luther

A fundamental difference between Zwingli and Luther can be seen in their views on the Lord's Supper, which led to the famous Marburg Colloquy in 1529. The debate centered on the interpretation of Jesus' words in Matthew 26:26: "*hoc est corpus meum*" (this is my body). For Luther, the word "est" (is) was understood literally, meaning that in the Lord's Supper, the bread and wine truly became the

body and blood of Christ. In contrast, Zwingli understood the word "est" symbolically, meaning that the bread and wine only signify the body and blood of Christ. For Zwingli, the Lord's Supper was a symbolic act intended to remember Christ's sacrifice and not a change in the substance of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood.

While both Zwingli and Luther rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation, the belief of the Roman Catholic Church that the bread and wine truly become the body and blood of Christ, their views on the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper differed significantly. Stephen Tong explains that although they both rejected transubstantiation, their views on the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper were very different. Luther proposed the doctrine of consubstantiation, meaning that the body and blood of Christ are present alongside the bread and wine, but do not merge with them. For Luther, Christ is truly present in the Lord's Supper, though His physical body does not become the bread and wine; it remains sacramentally present in them (Stephen Tong, 1994).

On the other hand, Zwingli rejected both transubstantiation and consubstantiation, as he believed that the bread and wine were merely symbols and did not contain Christ's actual presence. Zwingli emphasized that in the Lord's Supper, we commemorate Christ in His absence, not in His physical presence. For him, the Lord's Supper was more a celebration of faith and acknowledgment of Christ's sacrifice, not a sacramental experience where Christ is spiritually present in the bread and wine.

This debate, which took place in Marburg in 1529, deepened the rift between Zwingli and Luther, who had previously shared common views on several aspects of the Reformation. This theological difference further hindered their efforts to unite in strengthening the Reformation movement in Europe. The sharp theological division led to an even greater split, with Luther emotionally declaring after the debate, "You are of a different spirit than we are" (Berkhof H., and Enklaar, I., 2001). In other words, Luther felt that Zwingli was outside the theological understanding shared by other Reformers, and that the difference was not just about biblical interpretation but about a deeper understanding of the presence of Christ.

Additionally, Zwingli's view of Christ's presence at the right hand of God also conflicted with Luther's view. For Zwingli, Christ's presence at the right hand of God was symbolic, meaning Christ was not physically present anywhere in the world. In contrast, Luther argued that Christ's presence is not limited by space and time, and that Christ is present anywhere, including in the Lord's Supper. Luther regarded Zwingli's view as naïve and philosophically indefensible, as for Luther, Christ's presence was a reality that transcends spatial and temporal limits (McGrath, 2021).

This difference of opinion regarding Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper and their understanding of Christ's omnipotence, which is not limited by space and time, shows that even though Zwingli and Luther both sought church reform, they had very different understandings of how the Christian faith should be experienced. Both remained within the Reformation tradition, but their differences led to a larger division, marking a significant fracture in the early Reformation movement.

Appreciation for Zwingli's Theology and Reform Approach

Hery Budi Yosef (2021) explains in detail that Zwingli is recognized as a very determined reformer. From a young age, specifically at the age of 22, he showed firmness in acting against the social and political conditions of his time. One of Zwingli's bold actions was opposing the existence of Swiss mercenaries who were deployed for the benefit of other countries and the Pope. He also harshly criticized the practice of selling indulgences and the Papacy's authority, which he saw as deviating from biblical teachings. His critical stance towards these Catholic Church practices reflects a deep sense of nationalism that drove him to initiate the Reformation in Switzerland.

Zwingli demonstrated his courage by engaging in public debates, which became one of the hallmarks of his reform approach. These debates not only had a positive impact on him, but also accelerated his influence on the people of Zurich, especially his community in the city. For example, when Zwingli protested against the ban on eating meat during Lent and proposed that priests be allowed to marry, he formulated these ideas in his famous 67 Theses. This action was then supported by the Zurich city council,

allowing Zwingli to carry out broader reforms in the city.

The reform Zwingli initiated was not limited to theological issues but also extended to social and moral fields. He sought to establish a Christian community based on biblical teachings that was moral. His theology viewed the church and the state as entities that should cooperate to achieve a higher moral standard. Through this integration, Zwingli hoped that the process of moral renewal in Zurich could progress more quickly and effectively. The reforms he implemented in Zurich not only changed the religious structure but also created a Christian community that became a model for other cities in Switzerland and Europe.

The 67 theses proposed by Zwingli outlined bold and radical theological principles for his time. Zwingli emphasized that Christ is the core of the Gospel and sought to return the Bible to its rightful position, free from manipulation by the Pope and the authority of the Catholic Church. In his view, salvation could only be attained through faith in Christ, not through works or church traditions. He also rejected Catholic doctrines that regarded Purgatory and forgiveness of sins through priests as teachings not based on the Bible. Zwingli emphasized that forgiveness of sins comes directly from God without human intermediaries.

Among Zwingli's revolutionary actions was the demolition of statues in churches, which he considered as idolatry. He also altered the Mass liturgy, replacing it with a language that the congregation could understand and changing the sermon themes, which had previously been set by the Pope, to sermons that directly quoted and explained the Bible. This made his sermons fresher and more relevant, giving new energy to the congregation. His view of the Lord's Supper as a memorial of Christ's work and a sign of fellowship among believers brought a more accurate and profound understanding of the sacrament, which had previously been practiced incorrectly.

Zwingli's reform achievements in Zurich had a significant impact, not only in the city but also influencing other cities in Switzerland such as Basel and Bern, which followed Zwingli's reform model. His influence even extended to Geneva through the influence of his more famous successor, John Calvin.

Criticism of Zwingli's Thought

Criticism of Zwingli's thought touches on several important aspects of his theology and its implementation in society. While Zwingli successfully laid the foundation for reform, especially in Zurich, several critiques emerged, particularly regarding his authoritarian approach to reform and the principle of the church-state union.

Involvement in Physical Warfare

Some argue that Zwingli's involvement in physical warfare, although controversial, reflects his zealous spirit in defending his beliefs and fighting for the reforms he championed. Zwingli may have seen the battle as a legitimate action to defend the church and the reform values he had fought for (Amy Nelson Burnett, Emidio Campi (eds.), 2016). However, many critics point out that Zwingli's involvement in warfare contradicts the teachings of love in the Gospel, which instructs Christians to love their enemies. In this context, Zwingli's actions, fighting against Catholics even to the point of sacrificing his own life, are seen as an inconsistency in applying Christian teachings. Historians like John T. McNeill (1960) argue that Zwingli's harsh stance veered towards overly political policies, contradicting the early spirit of the Reformation, which emphasized love as the central foundation.

Church-State Union

Zwingli's supporters argue that the church-state union was an effective way to maintain social and spiritual stability in Zurich. In this context, baptizing children was not just a religious ritual but also a recognition of social status within Zurich society. Zwingli saw this as an important step to ensure that city residents adhered to the moral and rules set by the church (Irena Backus, 2000). Through this integration, Zwingli sought to create a more structured and orderly social system. However, many critics viewed this idea as a step backward in religious freedom. The practice of baptizing children as a sign of social status became controversial because it oppressed groups that rejected the practice, such as the Anabaptists. For these groups, baptism only had meaning if performed with personal understanding and should not be imposed as a social status sign. George Huntston Williams (2024) argues that Zwingli, in his efforts to strengthen the church's authority, created a new

tyranny that oppressed religious freedom and individual thought.

Treatment of Anabaptists

Zwingli's supporters argue that harsh actions against the Anabaptist movement may have been necessary to maintain social order and prevent division within Zurich. Some believe that Zwingli's courage in defending his beliefs proves his commitment to true doctrine and that the Anabaptists, with their opposing views, were a threat to the stability of the church and state (George Huntston Williams, 2024). Conversely, many historians and theologians criticize Zwingli for his failure to practice true Christian love, which he claimed was the foundation of Christ's teachings. His harsh treatment of the Anabaptists, even to the point of executing them, is seen as a blatant inconsistency with Christian teachings. Michael Sattler, an Anabaptist martyr, sharply criticized the persecution carried out by the Reformation faction against fellow Christians with differing views. Critics like George Huntston Williams (2024) argue that Zwingli became entangled in political pragmatism and lost his commitment to the true principles of love.

Biblical Interpretation by Political Authorities

Zwingli's supporters argue that the involvement of the city council in interpreting the Bible was necessary to ensure that the teachings accepted by the public were correct and did not confuse society. In this context, the interpretation provided by the city council was seen as a representation of the truth accepted by the majority, which in turn could reinforce social and religious stability (MacCulloch, 2005). However, many critics argue that Zwingli abused his power by using the city council to impose biblical interpretations. This "political hermeneutics" opened opportunities for power abuse and prevented independent thinking and interpretation from individuals. Theologians like Alister McGrath (2012) consider that biblical interpretation controlled by the city council led to theological authoritarianism, threatening the core principle of the Reformation, which was individual freedom and autonomy in religion.

The pro and contra opinions on Zwingli show that while the reform he initiated had a significant impact on the development of the church in Europe, many aspects of his theology and its practical application merit deep criticism. The union of church and state, treatment of dissenting groups, and the political control over biblical interpretation had significant consequences on religious freedom and individual dignity. Criticism of Zwingli serves as a reminder that true reform must encompass love, religious freedom, and respect for theological differences.

The Implications of Zwingli's Reformation Theology in Christian Religious Education

Zwingli's Reformation Theology has had a significant impact in the context of Christian Religious Education (CRE), especially in terms of understanding the Bible, church practices, and the relationship between religion and the state. Although Zwingli is better known for the reforms he carried out in Zurich, his ideas and their applications remain relevant for contemporary studies in Christian religious education.

The Importance of Emphasizing the Bible as the Primary Source of Christian Doctrine

One of the key contributions of Zwingli's Reformation Theology is his emphasis on the Bible as the sole primary source of Christian doctrine. Zwingli argued that Christian teachings should not be controlled by the Pope or the church's authorities, but should instead return to the Bible as the foundation of faith and religious practice. This perspective marked a significant shift in church history and encouraged spiritual independence among believers. In the context of CRE, this idea teaches that students must be equipped to engage with the Bible directly and critically, so they can develop an understanding of faith that is not merely inherited traditionally but rooted in their personal interaction with God's Word.

In CRE practice, Zwingli's perspective encourages participatory and Bible-based teaching methods. Esti Regina Boiliu, in her article on the Literacies of Religious Moderation in the Context of CRE, emphasizes the importance of developing biblical literacy, which is the ability to read, understand, and apply the Bible contextually (Esti Regina Boiliu, 2022). CRE is not just about memorizing verses, but about developing critical, hermeneutical, and applicative thinking skills regarding sacred texts. Therefore, contemporary Christian religious education should guide students to an understanding of the Bible that is relevant to their social, cultural, and contemporary challenges.

Furthermore, this approach directs CRE towards building a personal and dynamic relationship between individuals and God's Word. Tri Pudji Rahayu and Rode Sri Rahayu state that faith education should lead participants to life transformation, not just cognitive mastery (Tri Pudji Rahayu and Rode Sri Rahayu, 2025). Following Zwingli's spirit, each student is encouraged to experience the Bible as an authoritative source speaking directly into their daily lives. Thus, a personal relationship with God's Word becomes central to the entire educational process, creating a generation of Christians who are theologically independent, responsible, and capable of applying Gospel values in real life.

A Deeper Understanding of Sacraments and the Lord's Supper

An important aspect of Zwingli's Reformation Theology is his interpretation of sacraments, especially the Lord's Supper, as symbolic acts that remind believers of Christ's redemptive work. Unlike the Roman Catholic Church's teaching on transubstantiation, Zwingli taught that the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are only symbols of Christ's body and blood, not a change in substance. In CRE, this understanding implies the importance of teaching that emphasizes the memorial and spiritual meaning of the sacraments. Students need to be taught that sacraments are not magical acts, but a conscious response of faith and thanksgiving for the salvation Christ has accomplished.

This perspective also leads CRE to present sacraments as opportunities for renewing personal faith and strengthening the fellowship of the church. As I Putu Ayub Darmawan, John Mardin, and Urbanus explain, faith education must help students see religious rituals as occasions to deepen their relationship with Christ and strengthen solidarity with others (I Putu Ayub Darmawan, John Mardin, and Urbanus, 2023). Therefore, through a proper understanding of the sacraments, students are encouraged to appreciate the Lord's Supper as a moment for reflecting on faith and renewing life, not just as a liturgical routine without personal meaning.

Separation of Religion and State

One controversial aspect of Zwingli's Reformation Theology is his view on the integration of religion and state, where the church became part of the governance structure in Zurich. For Zwingli, this collaboration was intended to expedite the application of Christian principles in the social and political life of society. However, as this model developed, it faced criticism for opening the door to abuse of power, where religious authority could be used to legitimize certain political interests. In contemporary CRE reflection, understanding this relationship is important to avoid tendencies of religious manipulation in the public sphere.

The implication for CRE is the importance of building students' awareness about the necessity of separating religious and state functions. CRE needs to emphasize that although Christian faith has social and ethical implications for communal life, religious authority should not be exploited to support particular political agendas. As Zakaria J. Ngelow states, faith education should focus on character development that upholds tolerance, justice, and religious freedom, rather than strengthening a particular group's identity in political struggles (Zakaria J. Ngelow, 2014). Therefore, CRE plays an essential role in instilling healthy and responsible values of religious freedom. CRE teachers must teach that the Christian faith encourages active and constructive social engagement, without sacrificing democratic principles and the rights of others who may differ in faith. Through this approach, students are expected to develop a critical attitude toward any form of religious misuse for political interests and become agents of peace who contribute to a just and harmonious society in accordance with the Gospel.

The Importance of Moral Education Based on Christian Principles

Zwingli envisioned Zurich as a model Christian society that integrated biblical moral values in all aspects of social life. For Zwingli, faith was not just a private matter between individuals and God, but should also be reflected in social practice and public ethics. Moral education based on Christian principles, in this framework, was seen as a means to form individuals who live in truth, justice, and love toward others. Therefore, in the context of CRE, it is crucial to emphasize that Christian faith should be visible in everyday behavior, not just in verbal confessions of faith.

In CRE practice, Bible-based moral education invites students to understand and apply principles such as honesty, loyalty, hard work, love, and forgiveness in their social interactions. According to Esti Regina Boiliu, moral character formation in Christian education cannot be separated from active and contextual faith learning (Esti Regina Boiliu, 2024). This means that, besides teaching doctrines or theological theories, CRE teachers need to create learning spaces that encourage students to reflect on their actions based on Biblical teachings and the realities of their daily lives. Furthermore, CRE based on Christian moral principles serves to prepare students to become responsible citizens who are just and care about the collective well-being. The Christian faith encourages individuals to live not only for themselves but also to actively contribute to building a better society. By establishing a strong moral foundation early on, CRE prepares students to face ethical challenges in the modern world with integrity and wisdom derived from God's Word.

Religious Freedom and the Importance of Tolerance

Although Ulrich Zwingli played a significant role in advocating for the church's reformation, in practice, he often showed inconsistency, especially in applying the principles of love and tolerance toward different groups, such as the Anabaptists. Zwingli supported efforts to suppress those who rejected certain reformation principles, viewing diverse views as a threat to the stability of the Christian society. This historical context provides an important lesson for contemporary CRE: the importance of teaching the true principle of religious

freedom, not merely maintaining theological uniformity.

The implication for CRE is the necessity of instilling in students the value of tolerance rooted in the teachings of Christ's love. CRE should encourage students to understand that Christian love applies not only to fellow believers but also to those of different faiths. As Yohanes Mandala and Ezra Tari explain, the law of love demands that Christians love God and others without discrimination, even in the context of religious pluralism in the modern world (Yohanes Mandala and Ezra Tari, 2023). CRE should also teach that religious freedom is not only an individual right but also part of respecting human dignity, created in the image of God (Yohanes Mandala and Ezra Tari, 2023). Respecting others' freedom to choose their beliefs is a tangible expression of mature and responsible Christian love. Therefore, an effective CRE program must integrate a curriculum that addresses the importance of valuing differences, engaging in peaceful dialogue, and cultivating empathy and openness to cultural and religious diversity.

In conclusion, the implications of Zwingli's theology for CRE point to several fundamental principles: emphasis on the Bible as the primary source of doctrine, a deeper understanding of sacraments and the Lord's Supper, awareness of the need to separate religion and state, moral education based on Christian principles, and the development of tolerance and respect for religious freedom. While Zwingli himself demonstrated some weaknesses, such as his violent policies toward the Anabaptists and the integration of religion and state, the reform legacy he left behind remains relevant for building a CRE that is more inclusive, love-based, and responsive to the challenges of modern times.

CONCLUSION

Zwingli's theological thinking, while making significant contributions to the church's reform, especially in Zurich, also presents a number of challenges and criticisms, both in church practices and its application in the social and political context. His approach, which emphasizes the Bible as the sole source of authority, has an important impact on Christian Education (PAK) by encouraging a direct understanding of God's Word, though it often leads to interpretations that are overly politicized. His view of the sacraments and the Lord's Supper as symbolic,

as well as his belief that the church and the state should be united, creates tensions, especially in terms of religious freedom and tolerance. The principle of merging religion and state carries the risk of being abused, and although Zwingli emphasized love as the core of Christian teaching, his actions in defending violence and persecution against the Anabaptists contradicted this principle. The implications of Zwingli's theology in PAK encourage freedom in interpreting the Bible, strengthening the understanding of Christian morality, as well as the importance of separating religion from the state, while teaching tolerance towards differing beliefs. Despite the inconsistencies, Zwingli's reform lays the foundation for the development of a more inclusive and love-based Christian education.

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