



Martin Luther was a monk concerned for his own salvation, Zwingli was a pastor and Swiss patriot who was concerned for the salvation of his own people. His fear was not for his personal plight, but for the plight of his people[1]

Zwingli loved his country and the people in his country. He showed himself to be a courageous pastor when he gave no thought to his own safety as he ministered to victims of the plague that hit Zurich shortly after he began his ministry there. He himself fell sick and nearly died. This experience, no doubt, led to a deepening in his faith. While in the grip of this illness, he wrote the Song of the Plague in which he shows a sturdy faith in Christ alone.

Zwingli like Martin Luther was concerned with the spiritual condition of himself, his church and his country. One of the ways that Zwingli differed from Luther was in how they viewed communion. Luther felt in communion God was present Zwingli felt it was just a symbol that reminded us of Christ. The other difference was Zwingli was very concerned with the social issues of his day. He was concerned with the conditions people lived in not just the conditions of their soul.

In a time where the Catholic church was strong and most people believed that you could buy your way to heaven with money or earn your way to heaven by being a good person. Zwingli “praised God the Father, and taught men to trust only in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, as Savior.” In 1531 Zwingli died in battle, defending Zurich against Catholic forces, and plans for spreading the Reformation into German Switzerland were ended. Still Zurich remained Protestant, and under the leadership of Heinrich Bullinger, Zwingli’s successor, this unique branch of the Reformation continued to blossom.[2]

## ***WHAT THE KIDS NEED TO KNOW***

1. Zwingli understood the gospel out of concern for his people in his church and his fellow countrymen.
2. Zwingli got sick helping people infected by the plague and almost died that even changed how he saw God
3. Zwingli preached the gospel. He was concerned that people understand they are saved by Grace alone. He was also concerned for the conditions people were in.
4. He mostly agreed with Luther they disagreed over communion and the importance of addressing social issues.
5. Zwingli died in battle fighting for his country and for the truths he held most dear.

[1] Payne, J. B. (1984). Zwingli and Luther—The Giant vs. Hercules. *Christian History Magazine-Issue 4: Zwingli: Father of the Swiss Reformation*.

[2]Galli, M., & Olsen, T. (2000). Introduction. In *131 Christians everyone should know* (p. 219). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.