

Letter 314: 26 December 1526, [Strasbourg and Basel], Capito and Johannes Oecolampadius to Ulrich Zwingli

Printed in ZwBr 2, pp. 819-21, Ep. 564.

[*Summary*]: The proceedings of the Disputation [of Baden] are about to be published with virulent prefaces. [Martin] Luther and [Ulrich] Zwingli are both heretics in the opinion of the Catholics. It is ironical, considering that the Wittenberg [reformers] recently accused the Zwinglians of heresy because they do not agree with them. Luther is publishing many sermons. His purpose is to show his authority and draw people into his camp. Capito urges moderation towards him.

The Strasbourg reformers held a colloquium with Hans Denck on 22 December. He explained his book [*Vom Gesetz Gottes*] artfully, alternating assertions with denials. It is certain, however, that he does not agree with them on essential matters and is causing difficulties in the church of Strasbourg. Denck has made a great impression on the people with his pretense of virtue and his acute mind. His attacks were mostly directed against Capito, but Bucer defended him skillfully. Denck was ordered to leave Strasbourg and did so on 25 December. The atmosphere is tense. People do not accept the explanations of the preachers. Capito senses a stubborn resistance. He has heard that two men were imprisoned in Zurich [perhaps the Anabaptists Felix Manz and Georg Blaurock are meant; cf. below, Ep. 329], who continued their agitations in spite of numerous edicts. Capito and his colleagues will give some thought to an [unspecified] colloquium mentioned by Zwingli. He has sent a letter through Jodocus Brennwald and a key to writing in code. He advises Zwingli to use Greek, Latin and Hebrew, to invert the most important words or state them obliquely, but in such a manner that they can still be recognized and interpreted. Capito is not afraid of the plots of their enemies and would write openly to Zwingli if it could be done without danger to others. The Strasbourg preachers are making public what is happening in Graubünden and St. Gallen. The bearer of the letter is a supporter of Zwingli. Martin Cellarius visited Strasbourg. Capito has always considered him a friend of Zwingli's.

[*Postscript by Oecolampadius*]: Hieronymus Artolph delivered Zwingli's letter with that of Capito. They are awaiting the outcome of the meeting in Lucerne [which began on 29 December]. Oecolampadius is preoccupied [with marriage plans]. He sends greetings to [Conradus] Pellicanus.