

Letter 317: 1 January 1527, Strasbourg, Capito to Ulrich Zwingli

Printed in ZwBr 3, pp. 4-6, Ep. 568.

[*Summary*]: Capito assumes that Zwingli has heard from [Johannes] Oecolampadius about the progress of the Reformation in France. [Marguerite of Navarre] supports two Christian preachers: [Michel d'Arande?] and Gérard Roussel. The latter suffers the tedium of living at court to oblige his brethren. Otherwise he would be preaching in Blois. [Louis de] Berquin and [Aimé] Maigret will be set free. [Francis I] favours the Word. [Jean de Lorraine], the cardinal of Metz, is said to have taken a wife. [Desiderius] Erasmus has written three letters, which were published together [i.e. *D. Erasmi Rotherodami epistolae tres*, Paris 1526]: the first, to the University of Paris, in which he says that Lutherans are heretics and indeed worse than those who deny the Eucharist; the second, to the Parlement of Paris, in which he disapproves of innovators; the third, to [Francis I]. Erasmus prevaricates, writing to each party what he thinks will please them. He does not want the king to concede power to monks and theologians to proceed against good men like Berquin and Maigret. These clerics (he says) will rob the king of his authority under the pretext of fighting heresy and in the name of a council run by scholastics. Capito has not yet found the time to read the letters carefully. He may send a copy to Zwingli. On 3 January, the Strasbourg magistracy will change according to usage. The outgoing council has been tolerable; how much the new council will do for the Reformation depends on the skill of the ministers of the Word. Capito notes that the cities are not yet powerful enough to have a positive effect on the Reformation and restore tranquillity in the Empire. Luther is writing a book against Zwingli and Oecolampadius [i.e. *Das dise wort Christi ... noch fest stehen widder die Schwermgeister*]. It concerns the Eucharist. Capito urges Zwingli to be more moderate than Luther has been.