

Letter 345a: 5 January 1528, Bern, Capito and Martin Bucer to Thomas Murner

Printed in *CorrBucer* 3, p. 98-100, Ep. 172. At the time of writing, Capito and Bucer were in Bern to attend the Disputation of Bern, in which Oecolampadius and Zwingli were the chief speakers on the side of the reformers.

[*Summary*]: Capito and Bucer declare their solidarity with Zwingli and Oecolampadius, whom Murner has accused of heresy. They indicate that they had been looking forward to confronting him at the Bern Disputation and are disappointed by his failure to attend. They discount the notion that Murner might have feared for his safety, especially in light of the guarantee of safe conduct offered by the Bern city council. They object to his excuse that Bern lacked a qualified judge, pointing out that the people of Bern are Christians imbued with the Holy Spirit and thus able to recognize God's voice. They insist moreover that scripture itself is the ultimate criterion of truth. Bucer and Capito furthermore reject as a pretext the claim that Murner's superiors have forbidden him to engage in disputation. They note that this position does not accord with the oath that he swore upon becoming a doctor of Holy Writ. They cite the biblical injunction requiring everyone to correct error and to spread the Word of God to the people. Finally, Capito and Bucer renew their invitation to debate his beliefs with them.