

Letter 354: 14 April 1528, Strasbourg, Capito, Martin Bucer and Jakob Bedrot to Joachim Vadianus

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[*Summary*]: They congratulate Vadianus on the departure of the parish priest [Benedikt Burgauer] from St. Gallen to Schaffhausen, and are sorry for the congregation there. They urge him to complete his *Chorographia sacra* [Zurich: Froschauer, September 1534]. They are pleased to hear there is no danger of the Swiss confederation breaking up. There is hope that the city council of Strasbourg will take steps against superstitious practices [i.e. the mass]. Mercenaries have been hired in the vicinity for the war [between Charles V and Francis I] in Italy. In the Netherlands, there is war between Gelderland, aided by France and England, and Brabant. The Hague has been sacked. This is how God avenges the death of his martyr [Wendelmoet Claes, burned at The Hague on 27 November 1527]. There are rumours of war in Germany and plotting among the secular and ecclesiastical princes. Word has it that [John III], the Duke of Cleves, [Philip of] Hesse, the dukes of Lüneburg and many other noblemen and bishops are plotting against the marriage of [John Frederick], Duke of Saxony, and [Sibylla], the daughter of [John III]. They say that [Franz I von Braunschweig], the bishop of Minden, and [Erich von Braunschweig-Grubenhagen], the bishop of Paderborn, have taken wives. There is danger of an upheaval in Germany, although George of Württemberg, who has recently returned from Hesse, does not think this will come to pass. Capito and his colleagues fear that Philip of Hesse will suffer the same fate as Franz von Sickingen if he goes to war. They believe that the gospel will be victorious through patience rather than armed combat. Martin Luther, meanwhile, has published *Vom Abendmahl Christi Bekenntnis*, a book that is aimed against the beliefs of the Strasbourg preachers. Luther speaks of a “sacramental union” (*unitas sacramentalis*), which is no different from saying that it is a “union of the sign and the signified” (*unitas signi et signati*), and that is what the Strasbourg preachers are teaching. [Johannes] Brenz teaches the eternity and omnipresence of Christ’s humanity, a doctrine of which they disapprove. Bucer is sending along his commentary on John, although it has been hastily edited. He finished the book in a rush on his return from Bern. He would have liked to say more about the Disputation of Bern [January 1528] in his preface, but the printer demanded the manuscript. They send greetings to [Christoph] Schappeler and Dominik [Zili].