

Letter 477: 12 May 1532, Augsburg, Boniface Wolfhart and the Augsburg Preachers to Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 162, pp. 571–74; a modern edition is available in CorrBucer 8:41–54, Ep. 584.

[*Summary*]: The evangelical preachers of Augsburg are in a difficult situation. They have spoken to the mayor, [Ulrich Rehlinger], about a concord with the Lutherans, but he feared that any shift in their teaching would cause scandal and draw on them the anger of the people. They ask for advice from the Strasbourg preachers on how to handle the Sacramentarian question. If they use the words “corporeally” and “substantially,” they will disturb the people. They fear that they will have to offend either the Lutherans of their own people, and they want to be sure to support the correct view. They ask to be informed of the exact conditions of the proposed concord with the Lutherans. They must answer their opponents, who are making trouble for them and want [Johannes] Frosch and [Stephan] Agricola recalled. They will gladly follow the advice of the Strasbourgers, as long as it does not prejudice the gospel truth. So far the Lutherans have shown a lack of charity, calling them “*Schwermer*, messengers of the devil, and destroyers of piety, who trample on the sacrament.” The only difference between their preaching concerning the sacrament is this: “We do not attribute to them the power of justification, which is through faith in the Spirit. Nevertheless I confess that we are split and divided, for we have neither the true power of the keys, nor true administration of the sacraments, nor church discipline, but I leave it to other people’s judgment whether the Lutherans have those things.” The Augsburgers do not want concord with Luther at the price of losing “concord with the Spirit.”

[There follows what appears to be a postscript (1AST 162, p. 574), which is not included in CorrBucer 8:41–51, Ep. 584, and is therefore given here in full]:

Praeterea, quod fere oblitus eram, paucis accipite, quid cum illo Hel[...?] impostore actum sit, qui relicta apud nos uxore sua puellam Augusta[nam] pro scorto, praetextu tamen matrimonii circumduxit, mox atque literae ab Argentorato huc missae sunt, mihi a Capitone, cognatis puellae a Kreler aurifabro, quae testabantur, quantus esset ille nebulo, statim nuncium pro eo accersendo Ulmam misi[mus?], illo enim literis a nobis commendatus iverat, caussa igitur contionatoribus exposita spe adipiscendae apud nos conditionis eum ut rediret persuaserunt etiam invitum, in itinere enim uxori putativae, ut ipsa postea referebat, sibi nescio quid mali animum presagire, atque literas, quas illi contionatorum nomine, professor graecus ad me dederat in itinere aperuerat sed apertas legere non poterat, erant enim graecae scriptae, nisi ubi illi fecte de adepta conditione gratulabatur. Haec latine scripserat, ad tollendam nimirum suspicionem, porro cum iam advenisset, sceleris sibi conscius uxorem ad nos misit, eo extra moenia expectante, ut si nullam illi commodam conditionem, confestim rursus abiret, monuerat etiam, antea uxorem, si rumor de ipso sparsus esset, quod plures uxores haberet ne crederet, nos uxori omnibus coram cognatis indicatis, tandem illa fraudes intellexit. Indicato deinde ipso a cognatis, quaesitus, inventus et in urbem perductus est. Caeterum cum solam puellam non ipsum peterent, accepto ab eo χειρογράφω, quo confitetur fraudulenter se illi coniug[alem] fidem dedisse, ut ex confessione sua his simul literis addita intelligetis. Abstulerat praeterea mihi coclear, quod utcunque primum sustulisse infitaretur, tandem ab uxore mendacii convictus coram Musculo atque aliis rursus mihi restituit pene exanimatus. Ita videtis fratres quam nihil sit in orbe tutum, et quam vere Plinius

scripserit: Reliqua animantia in diversa ferarum genera saevire, homini vero nisi ex homine plurima esse mala, fratres fratribus, amici amicis detrimentosi sunt, quos neque fides neque pudor a nocendo retinet. Cum igitur tot sint improborum fraudes, tociesque insidiis circumveniamur, cautiores posthac erimus in suscipiendis fratribus circumforaneis nisi a vobis vel aliis ecclesiis nobis fuerint commendati, quod et vobis faciendum consulimus, non ut nemini, quod infidelitatis esset, sed ne cuivis temere credatis, tam enim nos quam evangelion quod praedicamus propter hos fucos male audimus. Iterum atque iterum valete atque literas bene longas boni consulite. Dum enim singulis rarius possum, omnibus semel prolixius scribere volui et scribenti plura quam volebam in calamum incidere.