

Letter 594: [After 4 February 1536, Strasbourg], Capito and Martin Bucer to Martin Luther

Printed in WABr 7:357–9, Ep. 2293.

[*Summary*]: Bucer and Capito are expecting Luther's summons to a meeting once he has obtained the consent of the Elector. They attended a meeting in Basel on 1 February with representatives from the evangelical towns of Zurich, Bern, Schaffhausen, St Gallen, Mulhouse, and Biel. They agree that the sacraments are not only symbols of their communion with God, but also symbols representing the gifts of the Lord: rebirth in baptism, the body and blood of the Lord in the Supper. They reject the concept of *opus operatum* [i.e., the efficacy of the rite itself] and stress that salvation is by the grace of God alone and that the sacrament is received through faith alone. They assured their fellow ministers that this agreed with Luther's beliefs (see below, Ep. 594a). The ministers returned to their congregations, confident that they would subscribe to these beliefs. Bern has 204 parishes, Zurich more than 100, Basel approximately 30. There are other evangelical parishes in the region of Glarus and Appenzell, in Thurgau, in Toggenburg, and in the Graubünden, although these regions are not universally evangelical. They ask Luther to speed up preparations for a meeting.