

Letter 622: 4 September 1536, Strasbourg, Capito to Martin Luther

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[*Summary*]: Capito fears that the four letters he wrote (one en route) to explain the negotiations concerning the Concord are lost. He therefore recapitulates their contents. On his return [from Wittenberg] he dealt with the XIII and the senate of Strasbourg. They are amenable to the Concord. Among his colleagues, a few were dissatisfied – Paul Volz was firmly opposed. After Johannes Zwick of Constance spoke strongly in favour of the Wittenberg Articles, they approached Volz again. He had no arguments to offer, but remained uncommitted. Capito suspects that he favours adult baptism. He agreed to another discussion. His confidence seems to derive from the fact that Erasmus has left him 100 gulden. [Caspar] Schwenckfeld, too, edges him on with frequent letters from Ulm. Martin Frecht bitterly complains about his activities there. The Strasbourgers have sent Caspar Hedio and Matthew Zell to remonstrate with him. He was unwilling to talk to them.

Since the senate and the XIII are in favour of the Concord, letters were sent to other churches about the matter; in Strasbourg all except Volz subscribed, whereupon the council asked him to refrain from preaching. They would have written to Luther announcing their formal acceptance, but they knew that he also wanted the consensus of the rest. All the churches in Swabia, except Ulm, expressed agreement in private letters; they are now waiting for an official response. He regrets the apparent disagreement with [Johannes] Bugenhagen on whether unbelievers benefit from the Supper. He encloses a copy of a letter from the Basel church to keep him posted of the negotiations about the Concord in Switzerland. [Oswald] Myconius is now in agreement with them. When they promoted the cause personally in Basel, some people still objected. They also wrote to Augsburg, counselling the brothers not to provoke the council by asking for the abolition of the mass at this point. Even preaching against it creates a great deal of opposition. One of the councillors who favours the evangelicals asks Luther to refrain from writing to the city council. The question of the emperor's power is a particularly sensitive point. The question of faith and secular authority should be kept separate. Capito asks for advice on the question of private communion for the sick. He sends greetings to Bugenhagen, [Caspar] Cruciger, [Justus] Jonas, Philip [Melancthon], and [Jakob] Milich.