

DESIDERIUS ERASMUS

Biography

- Born 1466 in the Netherlands
- Died 1536 in Switzerland
- Sent away for school at age 9
- His life emphasized cultivating the mind, and generosity and tolerance
- He looked toward Jesus Christ as a positive example for pious Christians to emulate
- He produced a translation of the New Testament that changed the way Christians think about their faith
- The issues between the Catholic Church and the growing religious movement which would later become known as Protestantism, had become so clear that few could escape the summons to join the debate. Erasmus, at the height of his literary fame, was inevitably called upon to take sides, but partisanship was foreign to his nature and his habits. He did not take either side



Philosophy (major ideas)

“Intrinsic perfectibility implies the power of self-determination and moral achievement”

“Perfectibility is intrinsic in human beings”

He embraced the humanistic belief in an individual's capacity for self-improvement and the fundamental role of education in raising human beings above the level of brute animals.