

This is our first chapel of the new year, and as we begin the new year I thought it would be good for us to think about the One who was the first leader of the modern church, the one who laid the foundation upon which all of our Protestantism was developed and is based -- Martin Luther.

I find that many people today do not realize anything about how very important in our Christian history M. Luther is. Sometimes you find someone who says that Henry VIII was the founder of the Eng. Reformation, that the English Protestantism began because Henry VIII wanted to divorce his wife and the Pope would not let him. Now there is a lot of truth to that as far as Henry's attitude is concerned. But as far as the Eng. Ref. is concerned Henry VIII is not the founder of the ~~English~~ Church of England. It is M. Luther. The Ch. of Eng. began with students in Cambridge University meeting to read M. Luther's writings, and the other students poked fun at them; called them "the Germans" because they were reading the writings of this German and through the writings were being led to the doctrine of grace of the NT. A century went by in Eng. and then there came that consecrated teacher, that man who wrote Pilgrim's Progress and other great allegories of the Christian life, John Bunyan. I remember reading how it was the writings of M. Luther that had so stirred J. Bunyan in his early life and had such an influence upon him. The unbelievers gained control in England and for nearly a century Christianity was in eclipse. Then there was a man named John Wesley who worked very hard by most methodical methods in order to develop his spiritual life, and in order to try to do good and to serve God. He worked in England. He had considerable influence, but he felt his life was a failure. He came over to America, and he was in Georgia for two years, and he felt he had accomplished nothing. He went back to Eng. and on the way back he met a Moravian preacher whose absolute fearlessness in a great storm showed Wesley that this man had something that Wesley did not have. So he went to the Moravian chapel in Eng. on a few