

life the next fifteen years.

I wish I could go into more of the details of Luther's life, but he's one of the great figures in Christian history. Not the founder of the Gospel, not a discoverer of the Gospel, but a man who took the Gospel that amonk here knew, and a leader here, and a simple Christian here, and was known all through the world, but only a little to these and these and these, and he gathered together, and he presented it as no man had ever presented it before since the time of the Apostles. And all through Europe, the preaching of Martin Luther led a tremendous revival--the greatest revival since the times of the Apostles. And all the northern two-thirds of Europe was just filled with love of the Scripture and it even was coming down into Spain and down into Italy.

And then the Papal forces began to organize against it. They had the Council of Trent at which they laid down the principles of the superstitious things against which Luther stood, They orgainzed the Inquisition in Italy. Some of the bishops in Italy were burned at the stake and others fled and joined with Luther as preachers. But in Italy the force of the counter-Reformation clamped down upon it to such an extent that it was impssible, for centuries, to preach the gospel anywhere in Italy. About fifteen years after Luther began the Reformation, an Italian wrote a book on "The Benefits of Christ's Death", and 40,000 copies of it were distributed in Italy and people were reading it every where. The Papal Inquisition sought out those books, hunted them up, and burned them, until fifty years ago it was thought there wasnt' a single copy left, and then one was found in the British Museum that some English traveller had brought back, so we know what was in it. But the Inquisition clipped the lower third