

10/11/76

Luther # 6

a sharp distinction remained between Lutheran and Calvinistic Protestants of France Protestants of France, the great bulk of those of ~~France~~ The Netherlands, those of England in the end, ~~in~~ followed Calvin, and also a substantial number in Germany. The larger number in Germany, and all the Scandinavian countries followed Luther. Great harm resulted ~~from~~ from a flaw in Luther's character, the flaw of putting inordinate ~~an~~ emphasis on a secondary matter and making it cause a distinction ~~between~~ between Christians. After Luther's death the flaw went further and resulted in the establishment of names separating the two groups, with people declaring their loyalty loudly to one and detesting the other. Calvin never desired this division. He always thought very highly of Luther. He was ~~always~~ always anxious to be on good terms with the followers of Luther, but they, loyal to their master, ~~refused to~~ although they recognized his great ability and in ~~fact~~ fact considered him as the exegete, par ~~excellence~~ ~~excellence~~ excellence, of the Reformation, yet they considered it a term of reproach to be a follower of Calvin. Evan Melancthon, Luther's closest associate, writer of the original great creed of the Lutherans, became one of Calvin's very best friends, and kept up a long correspondence with him, ~~in~~ and in his later years, after Luther's death, came to be greatly hated by his associates who called him "Crypto-Calvinist." and who, *was dying* When he died, he said he was glad to be free from the fury of the theologians. Today the difference between Luther and Zwingli is largely forgotten. There is a small group of Lutherans that who ~~strongly~~ vigorously contends for Luther's position, but they are in a very small ~~an~~ minority among those who call themselves Lutherans. "Lutherans." The greater number of the Lutheran churches, like the greater number of churches that historically follow Calvin, have been shot through with modernism and deny the great essential doctrines of the Gospel. I spoke in an independent church recently where one of our graduates is pastor. After the service a man spoke to me. He told me that he had been formerly a Lutheran, but had heard no Gospel. Now he received the Gospel here and reveled in it. He said to me, "I heard far more about Luther since coming to this church than I ever heard in the Lutheran church that I attended." In our day