SOME THOUGHTS ON LUTHER

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Category: Quotes

This weekend, I had the immense privilege of visiting Eisenach, a small town in Germany.



Eisenach, which is just inside the former East Germany, has a number of claims to fame. It is there that JS Bach (probably my favourite classical composer) was born. But, for a Bible translator, it is supremely theÂ locationÂ of Â theÂ Wartburg; the Castle where Martin Luther first translated the German New Testament.

English speakers, if they think of him at all, tend to think of Luther as the man who kick started the reformation; but there is far more to him than that.

> *There are many worthy reasons for studying the life of Martin Luther. Students of the German language celebrate him for his linguistic genius and for making the speech of the Saxons (enshrined in a Bible translation withÂ moreÂ impact in Germany than the King James Bible had in England) the standard of modern German language. Those who study the family find Luther's marriage a landmark in the development of modern forms of social interaction. Historians of the church find Luther an incredible dynamo in reconstituting the ecclesiasticalÂ structuresÂ of the sixteenth century. Roland Bainton,Â authorÂ of one of the best lives of Luther, once said that in Germany, Luther did all by himself what in England it took Bible-translator William Tyndale,Â liturgistÂ Thomas Cranmer, Preacher Hugh Latimer, hymn-writer Isaac Watts and sever generations of theologians to do."*

There won't be many more quotes fromÂ Â Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of ChristianityÂ (p. 164), but in the context, I couldn't resist this one!