AN EVALUATION OF DOCTRINAL TEACHINGS OF HELL AMONG THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS AND THE AFRICAN INSTITUTED CHURCHES IN LIGHT OF THE SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS

BY

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DECLARATION

This dissertation is my own work and it has not been previously presented to any other institution. Therefore it may be available for reference and photocopying at the discretion of the University.

STUDENT SIGNATURE_____ DATE_____

I confirm that the work presented in this dissertation was carried out by the student under my supervision.

SIGNATURE OF THE SUPERVISOR: REV. DR. JULIUS KIAMBI KITHINJI

_____ DATE_____

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is also dedicated to my entire family and the lovers of knowledge.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This study has been made possible through the help of God Almighty, friends and well- wishers. I must express my sincere gratitude to them all.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACUTE	-	Alliance Commission on Unity and Truth
B.C.E.	-	Before Christ's Era
CE	-	Christ's Era
Lk	-	Luke
Matt	-	Matthew
Pet.	-	Peter
Rev.	-	Revelation
SDA	-	Seventh Day Adventist
Thess.	-	Thessalonians

ABSTRACT

The study dealt widely with the understanding of the doctrine of Hell among the Seventh Day Adventists (SDAs) and the African Instituted Churches (AICs). There has been a long-standing history of the origin or the source that informs the denominational stand on a doctrine, for instance, the doctrine of Hell. The varying approaches to the understanding of the doctrine caused a gap in the Christian Church yet having a common ground pursuing a similar goal. The study had the following objectives: the exploration of the understanding of the doctrine of Hell among the SDAs and the AICs; establishing the comparisons in the understanding of the doctrine; establishing a hermeneutical deviation on the doctrine of Hell among SDAs and AICs and proposing a harmonized comparative understanding of the doctrine of Hell among the SDAs and the AICs. The study employed Hermeneutics of Suspicion as a methodology to harmonize the understanding of the doctrine among the SDAs and the AICs specifically, the contextual hermeneutics which focuses on the position or place where individuals approach the interpretation from. The findings in the study showed that there is Hell as another life moment that will involve the suffering to all who lived a wicked life that deserves eternal punishment. On the second objective, Hell is real whether a place or not, the concept has an aspect of suffering and destruction. The understanding in the suffering in Hell should not be dichotomized based on whether everlasting or not but just destruction and suffering. The study recommended further exploration on the understanding of the doctrine of Hell beyond the two denominations used as cases so that the gap in between the denominational practices and others can be minimized. There is need for the two denominations to revisit the origin of their denominations and draw their beliefs from one biblical source through a clear hermeneutical approach. The deviation on the understanding of the doctrine should be handled through revisiting the historical approach to the whole issue to bring out a clear picture in order to gap the unconformity. The study recommends the need to visit a variety of scholarly work on matters of the doctrine checking on the perspective used in understanding the doctrine.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

From the biblical traditions and other academic sources, the understanding of a given doctrine has a variation. In a similar way, the doctrine of Hell has been reckoned differently by scholars who adopt it in denominational practices. This chapter carries the importance in the faith and practice of African Instituted Churches and the Seventh Day Adventists on the theological discussion about the understanding of the doctrine of Hell. Hell has been associated with the suffering that has no end. The varying understanding of the concept of hell has several effects that result to different views among denominations. In regard to this, Seventh Day Adventist Church has more information on the doctrine of hell compared to other denominations. The chapter introduces the background to the problem of the doctrine of hell among the SDAs and AICs, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, assumptions, significance, and delimitation and conclusion.

1.2 Background to the Study

The subject or doctrine of hell is one of the confusing subjects in systematic theology. Both clergy and lay people have had their own understanding thus the need for a clear explanation of the doctrine. With the diverse understanding yet unclear, it has become a common unrefined and expletive term. The major question all over the world among the Christian believers is the meaning and location of hell? What are the wicked destined for? Will God of love let His people experience torture throughout eternity? Will the wickedness of sinners be burnt out by the fire of hell? Hell is defined as a place of eternal punishment reserved for those, and only those, who reject God. The two broad categories of inhabitants are, first, Satan and his demon's angels who rejected God before the creation of the material world and, secondly, human beings who die in a state of unrepented, personal mortal sin (Oderberg & David, 2011: 342). This is because African Christians have the comfort of living with expectations of jubilant expectations of a reunion with their fore ancestors after death. They do not see the coming of Jesus as a moment of suffering, pain and tears, but instead they see it as a moment of rejoicing and dancing (David, 2011: 345).

On the theological and philosophical literature in Christian tradition, we encounter, as we would in any of the other great religious traditions as well, a bewildering variety of different and often inconsistent theological views. The views about hell in particular include very comparable and different conceptions of divine love, divine justice, and divine grace (Oderberg, 2011: 350).

In the global view, Wayne Grudem and Christian scholars hold that hell is a dwelling place of Satan whose location is not known to us. Other Christian writers exemplify the same view in their Christian witnesses (Scripture Union, 1993: 13) while other scholars hold that hell is a state of being. Since the historic churches have at best been suspicious of AICs, regarding them as a heathenization of Christianity, it is not surprising that they have rarely found a place in the ecumenical movement (Grudem, 1994: 1159- 1160).

Other Christian scholars hold that there are two post-mortems, those human beings who did Gods will while still on earth and accepted his love will be reconciled to him and enjoy eternal life, while those who did contrary will suffer forever in eternal hell (Patsalidou, 2012: 31). This understanding raises many questions on the attribute of God and His relation to his own creatures. The World Council of Churches currently includes only two AICs: the Church of the Lord (Aladura) from Nigeria, which claims a membership of over 1 million, and Eglise du Christ sur la terre par le prophète Simon Kimbangu (Church of Christ on Earth by the Prophet Simon Kimbangu), or Kimbanguist Church, from the Democratic Republic of Congo, which claims a membership of five million (Pobee & Ositelu ,1998: 29).

1.2.1 Seventh Day Adventists' Teachings of Hell

The Seventh-day Adventist is a Protestant Christian church that is different from the rest since it observes the Sabbath on Saturday as the seventh day of the week in Jewish and Christian calendars. They also insist more on the second coming of Jesus Christ which is also known as advent. The doctrine of Hell must be the most difficult subject of the Christian faith for many people. Hell is written approximately thirty-one times in the Old Testament.

Hell is translated from a Hebrew word "sheol." Hell can also be translated as "pit" and it has been done so three different times in Job 17:16 and Numbers 16:30, 33. Sheol also translated as "grave" twenty five times approximately in the Old Testament and this has brought about a lot of confusion concerning the doctrine of Hell (Younce, 2008: 50).

Jehovah's Witnesses take this translation and use it to their own advantage and claim that Hell is the grave and nothing more. The word "gibrah" is a Hebrew word and throughout the Old Testament is translated as "grave, and sepulcher, burying place." Sheol in the Old Testament has not been used to refer to a grave, sepulcher or burying place, but rather a place located in the center of the earth. Grave or a burying place is where the dead bodies are housed, but sheol is the place where spirits and souls that will never die, and which were in those earthly bodies are (Younce, 2008:56).

An annihilationist is a person that believes the souls of unsaved people ceases to exist if they die without being saved by Jesus. Annihilationist does not believe in the idea of a literal Hell as where the souls of the unsaved are taken to be tormented in a lake of eternal fire. Their argument is that a loving, compassionate, and moral God would not torture souls for eternity. They believe that these souls are annihilated at their death and thus they cease to exist (Younce, 2008: 61).

Other annihilationist like the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Seventh-day Adventist are of the school of thought that Hell is real and that the lost are taken there for punishment. Also, they believe that at some point, these souls perish and therefore cease to exist. The duration in which these souls are tormented until they are annihilated is not known (William, 1992:200).

Apart from what the scriptures teach, one may ask, what kind of God is capable of this? Modern "human rights activists" recognize the terrible evil of torture even in its temporary forms. Would the loving God of the Bible design an everlasting torture chamber? The Church of the Seventh-day Adventist has a unique interpretation on the issue of end times or eschatology. Their eschatology beliefs are derived from a prophecy which is based on the pre-millennial of Jesus Christ second coming (William, 1992: 203).

Traditionally, Christian teachings have held that the second coming will lead crisis globally with the Sabbath as the main issue. The second coming of Jesus, in one thousand years the righteous will be taken to Heaven.

After, the ones who died before accepting Jesus as their savior will by annihilation be punished while the ones who were saved before dying on a recreated earth will live forever.

The SDA doctrine of hell is in contradiction with that of the other mainline Christian denominations. They believe in the doctrine of soul sleep; where the righteous resurrect and join Christ in the advent and the unrighteous remaining asleep as Satan and his helpers are left on earth. After the Millennium, Christ with His saints and the Holy City return to earth and Satan, his helpers and the unrighteous who are resurrected and annihilated. This leaves behind a universe without sinners (William, 1992: 210- 2013).

The church of the Seventh-Day Adventist derives its eschatological beliefs from books of Daniel and Revelation the apocalyptic books and the sermon of end-times found in Mathew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. Many Adventist churches interpret Biblical prophecies by historical methods (Holbrook, 1983:12).

1.2.2 African Instituted Churches' Teachings on the Doctrine of Hell

Historically, the African Instituted Churches have been on the margins of Christianity in Africa. They arose outside the Christian missions and were not included in the Christian Councils. They were neither accepted by the ecumenical churchmen nor the evangelicals (Kombo, 2006: 45). African Instituted Churches are defined by Gleny Oduro are churches that have been started by Africans or denominations planted, administered, led, supported, propagated, instituted and funded by Africans for the sole purpose of propagating the gospel of Christ Jesus and worshipping the true God (Oduro, 2001: 12). Peter Akrong is in support of the definition. Though it does not mention that there are some independent churches that were founded by non-Africans, but still claim that they are Indigenous African Churches (Akrong, 1998: 56). Some of these churches were established by black Americans who campaigned for contextualization, enculturation and indigenization of Christianity. These churches are not entirely independent from foreign missionaries. Turner argues that many of these African Indigenous Churches get financial support from overseas missions because of the economic situation in Africa (Turner, 1967: 34).

African Instituted Churches are normally categorized into three groups: Conservative, Charismatic and Reformed. Conservative AICs are those who follow the teachings

and practices of their founders regardless of the perception of the wider church or what the Bible says about such beliefs and practices (Oduro, 2006: 23).

These types of churches are highly ritualistic, attaching deeds to consequences which are defined as evil and good therefore determining the fate of an individual at an eschatological moment.

Richard Anderson describes charismatic churches as churches that are founded by charismatic and young men and women, who command great respect from the congregation for their preaching and ability to lead. These leaders are not necessarily schooled in theology though are generally educated. These churches are quite different from conservative churches and they differ sharply on some traditional practices performed by the conservative churches (Anderson, 1974: 60).

Conservative churches do not allow use of tobacco and alcohol, the followers wear uniforms and the practice of symbolic healing using objects. The third type is the reformed AICs. They have some similarities with the conservative type although their differences are clear cut in theological interpretation and application of the scriptures (Davis, 2008: 211).

John Mbiti asserts that AICs have maintained an expression of African beliefs within Christianity, or African traditions on Christian doctrines. Most of the AIC church leaders and founders claim that they were ordered by the Holy Spirit to establish the churches. That is why most of these churches have a prefix "Holy Spirit" as part of their name. They believe that it is the Holy Spirit that runs the churches but not human beings therefore they do not see the need for structures, constitutions and doctrines. It is always difficult for the African instituted churches rather to relate positively the notion of external final judgment (Mbiti, 1975: 67).

The AICs are found to have a dual religiosity by ministers and theological students hence creating a difficulty with it. This duality in the religion is explained by Mbiti. He highlights that clear majority are namely Christians and traditionalists consequently. It is interesting that the AICs congregations have difficulties in making sense of the judgment theme and external punishment in hell preached to them. Failing to reconcile the idea of punishment and the creator who is known as God of Love is the main identified reason for these difficulties hence the need for the dissertation. Behind the various Christian ideas about heaven and hell lies the more basic belief that our lives extend beyond the grave (Mbiti, 1975: 69- 70).

According to Augustinians, God's saving grace is irresistible in the end, and yet everlasting torment in hell will nonetheless be the terrible fate for some; therefore, God does not love all created persons equally and his (electing) love is thus limited in its scope. Augustine's own interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:4 provides a nice illustration. He wrote: "the word concerning God, 'who will have all men to be saved,' does not mean that there is no one whose salvation he (God) doth not will but by 'all men' we are to understand the whole of mankind, in every single group into which it can be divided (Jordan, 2012: 50).

In response to similar questions, Jeff Jordan has challenged the whole idea, which he acknowledges to be widely accepted among theistic philosophers, that "God's love must be maximally extended and equally intense" (Jordan, 2012: 53).

According to Jordan, such maximally extended love would be a deficiency in any human who manifested it; hence, it should not be numbered among God's perfections or great-making properties. Neither is it possible, he appears to argue, that God should love equally all of the persons whom he has in fact created. For "if God has deep attachments with some of them, it follows that He does not love all (of them) equally. And being a perfect being, God would have loves of the deepest kind" (Jordan, 2012: 67).

Jordan thus asks in a later article, "What if it is not possible in-principle (even for God) to love every person uniformly to the same degree?" And in support of his contention that this is indeed impossible, Jordan argues, first, that people in fact have incompatible interests, second, that two "interests are incompatible just in case attempts to bring about one of them require that the other be impeded," and third, that love of the deepest kind "has as a necessary constituent identifying with the interests of one's beloved" (Jordan, 2012: 84).

Behind the Augustinian understanding of hell lies a commitment to a retributive theory of punishment, according to which the primary purpose of punishment is to satisfy the demands of justice or, as some might say, to balance the scales of justice. And the Augustinian commitment to such a theory is hardly surprising. For based upon his interpretation of various New Testament texts, Augustine insisted that hell is a literal lake of fire in which the damned will experience the horror of everlasting torment; they will experience, that is, the unbearable physical pain of literally being burned forever.

The primary purpose of such unending torment, according to Augustine, is not correction, or deterrence, or even the protection of the innocent; nor did he make any claim for it except that it is fully deserved and therefore just. As for how such torment could be even physically possible, Augustine insisted further that "by a miracle of their most omnipotent Creator (Mbiti, 1975: 91-96).

Historically, AICs have had a tense relationship with the subject of hell. On the one hand, they firmly believe that faith in Jesus' death and resurrection is absolutely indispensable for salvation. Yet, it is not surprising that many refrained from focusing on the issue, instead choosing to highlight the promise of heaven in an attempt not to alienate those they are trying to reach. However, while largely unacknowledged, or at least mitigated by AICs, there have always been moments in time where the issue of the reality of hell creeps up, making its way into the common discourse of Evangelicalism (Jordan, 2012: 112- 113).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Michael Horton in his book "Pilgrimage Theology" states that it is a natural course that every creature of hope would wish to hear someone telling us not only about our lives but where we are going to. The quest is to understand whether there is something more than life under the sun (Horton, 2011: 421). Life after death as reiterated by the author is key in determining the current situations. This implies the picture of life; suffering or enjoyment. The belief that those alive or dead will reunite with the fore ancestors and live happy forever is forwarded by religious ideas in African set up. They do not debate about the time and location of the punishment. Both Christians and traditionalists believe that punishment is key as seen in certain occasions whereby God and ancestors are accepted and agreed upon to punish people for various reasons for certain ways even in a harsher way than thought. It is observed by John Magesa biblically, on the promise of judgment at or after death has a lot of ignorance attached to them (Magesa, 1997: 55- 56). The doctrine of Hell as understood by SDAs and AICs, paints a deviation in the Christian sphere that calls for a need to have an amicable understanding. The deviations observed in the understanding, need hermeneutical revisit in order to harmonize the deviations. This dissertation sought to

explore the understanding of the doctrine of Hell among the SDAs and the AICs in the light of the scriptural teachings (Magesa, 1997: 61).

1.4 Research Objectives

General objective

To evaluate the doctrinal teachings of Hell among the SDAs and AICs in the light of the Scriptural teachings.

Specific Objectives

1. Explore the doctrinal teachings of Hell according to the SDAs and AICs.

2. To determine the scriptural teachings of the doctrine of Hell.

3. To evaluate the doctrinal teachings on Hell among the SDAs and the AICs in the light of the Scriptural teachings.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the doctrinal teachings of Hell according to the SDAs and AICs?

2. What are the scriptural teachings on the doctrine of Hell?

3. What are the doctrinal teachings on the doctrine of Hell among SDAs and AICs in line with the scriptural teachings?

1.6 Assumptions

The researcher assumes that the study will;

1. The study explored the doctrinal teachings of Hell according to the SDAs and the AICs.

2. The study determined the scriptural teachings of the doctrine of Hell.

3. Evaluated the doctrinal teachings on the doctrine of Hell among the SDAs and the AICs in the light of Scriptural teachings.

1.7 Justification

The study is meant to provide the comparative information on the SDAs and AICs which is essential in shedding light on the understanding of the doctrine of Hell.

The study will clarify the contentions that love (especially in the form of willing the very best for another) is inclusive in a sense: even where it is logically possible for a loving relationship to come to an end, two persons are bound together in love only when their purposes and interests, even the conditions of their happiness, are so logically intertwined as to be inseparable.

The study is a source of knowledge in the religious fields as far as doctrines are concerned to shed light on controversial denominational implications attached to varying understanding.

1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study will explore the comparative understanding of the doctrine of Hell among the SDAs and AICs and not a general view from other churches or other fields of doctrines. The study is likely to encounter personal expressed views on the doctrine which may not necessarily address the real understanding thus a challenge on the validity of the information. The researcher will be forced to go beyond personal views on the doctrine.

1.9 Conclusion

The conclusion on this chapter focuses on the basic comparative understanding of the doctrine of Hell among the two identified churches with a presupposition of arriving at a proposed way of harmonized understanding through the accomplishment of the research questions and objectives.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the written literature related to the understanding of the doctrine of Hell among the Seventh Day Adventists and AICs. The critical approach to the comparative study of the doctrine will usher in a clear and harmonized understanding of the doctrine. The chapter discusses the doctrine of Hell drawn from various understanding for instance the biblical understanding, the church tradition and how the teachings according to SDAs and the AICs can be understood in line with the scriptural teachings. The chapter covers sections on the historical survey of Hell, the theological or biblical and church tradition approach to the doctrine.

2.1 A Historical Survey of Hell

An opinion prevails that God turns away his face from man, casts man away from himself, and casts him into Hell, and is angry with him on account of his evil; and some believe also that God punishes man and does evil to him (Oderberg, 2011: 355).

Other pagan philosophers, along with some of the poets of the day, were repulsed by the immorality of this teaching, and developed the idea of a place where the fleshly body was purified by fire but, at the completion of purification, would find release. It was a middle way between Heaven and Hell. This concept had its origin in Persian teaching. From there it passed to certain Jewish groups, and later was taken into Christian thought and teaching. It arose out of the Gnostic idea that the body, flesh, and matter, is inherently evil and must be purified and purged by fire elsewhere. But we know bodies can be exhumed for examination, so it cannot be true that the flesh goes elsewhere (Oderberg, 2011: 360).

Initially, the afterlife was neutral; the righteous and wicked shared the same fate. In the Greek tradition, only particularly wicked heroes suffered. But this created problems: why should the righteous dwell together with the wicked? The History of Heaven and Hell was about Osiris, the god of the dead) and the Homeric period (in worship of Demeter, a goddess of agriculture), a bifurcation emerges wherein the moral or enlightened quality of one's life determines one's fate (e.g. the writings of Plato and Plutarch, and the book of Daniel). Is Hell annihilation or eternal suffering?

And if the latter, is there any escape? Hence the tension between the early theologians Origen (185-232 A.D.), who believed in the reforming character of Hell such that even death itself will be reconciled (Colossians 1:20), and Augustine (354- 430 A.D.), for whom perfection implied immutability, who could allow no further character change in those persons consigned to Heaven or Hell after the final judgment (David, 2011: 315).

2.1.1 The Seventh Day Adventists' Teachings on the Doctrine of Hell.

Hell, whether a perception or a reality has a varying understanding from varying contexts thus the varying belief and practice. According to the SDAs, the so called "roasting in Hell" became the most common image of people picturing a God who is willing to burn people for all eternity without ever totally burning them up. Apart from what the scriptures teach, one may ask, what kind of God is capable of this? Modern "human rights activists" recognize the terrible evil of torture even in its temporary forms. Would the loving God of the Bible design an everlasting torture chamber? If so, He would have to witness for the rest of eternity the suffering of those that He had condemned to such a "Hell" (Pack, 2008: 77- 80).

One might also ask: How enjoyable could salvation be for the saved, if they were forced to watch their children or parents and other loved ones screaming in pain and agony for the rest of time? One can easily see the absurdity of this idea. Yet millions upon millions come to this conclusion when they accept the beliefs surrounding the popular concept of Hell (Pack, 2008: 83).

The common image of people "roasting in Hell" pictures a God willing to burn people for eternity without ever totally burning up. Apart from what the scriptures teach, one may ask, what kind of God is capable of this? Modern "human rights activists" recognize the terrible evil of torture even in its temporary forms. Would the loving God of the Bible design an everlasting torture chamber? If so, He would have to witness for the rest of eternity the suffering of those that He had condemned to such a "Hell" (Pack, 2008: 85).

According to various literatures, Seventh-day Adventism teaches that the unsaved will be burned up in the lake of fire. "The theory of eternal torment is one of the false doctrines that constitute the wine of the abomination of Babylon. There will then be no lost souls to blaspheme God as they writhe in never-ending torment; no wretched

beings in Hell will mingle their shrieks with the songs of the saved" (Fischer, 1844: 470- 477).

They claim that the eternal torment of the wicked cannot be reconciled with God's love and mercy. "How repugnant to every emotion of love and mercy, and even to our sense of justice, is the doctrine that the wicked dead are tormented with fire and brimstone in an eternally burning Hell?" (Fischer, 1844: 481).

The SDAs therefore believe in the existence of Hell but not eternal torment to people since that cannot be associated with a God who loves, the same God punishing them eternally. This notion is supported widely by scholars including those from the evangelical movements like for instance, outside the church; philosophers such as Bertrand Russell claimed that any profoundly humane person could not believe in everlasting punishment. For Russell, it "is a doctrine of cruelty", responsible for producing generations of "cruel torture. Inside the church, well-known evangelicals have brought the subject under increasing scrutiny. Some have demoted the topic of Hell to a 'secondary issue', encouraging the tolerance of both traditionalist and conditional interpretations (Russell, 1967: 56).

John Stott who describes himself as "agnostic" on the issue has said that the ultimate annihilation of the wicked should at least be accepted as a legitimate, biblically founded alternative to their eternal conscious torment (Stott, 2009: 38).

On the denial or rejection of the existence of Hell, William H. Branson states that "Seventh-Day Adventists believe that the wicked will be destroyed in a literal lake of fire and brimstone; that this fire will be here on the earth, and that it will not only burn up the wicked, but will cleanse and purify the earth, removing all the works of man and the blemishes of sin; and that afterward the earth will be made new and become the eternal home of the saved". On eternal punishment, the finally impenitent, including Satan, the author of sin, will, by the fires of the last day, be reduced to a state of non-existence, becoming as though they had not been, thus purging God's universe of sin and sinners. That the wicked will be punished by suffering and complete destruction in the lake of fire; they do not believe in an eternally burning Hell in which souls are tormented without end (Branson, 1987: 242- 245).

2.1.2 The African Instituted Churches' Teachings on the Doctrine of Hell.

On the AICs**,** historically, the African Instituted Churches have been on the margins of Christianity in Africa. They arose outside the Christian missions and were not

included in the Christian Councils. They were neither accepted by the ecumenical churchmen nor the evangelicals.

African Christianity does not have the promise that spiritual forces, ignorance, fear, evil, death and everything that is mean will be eliminated from the African scene in the decades to come (Peterson, 1995: 11).

There is thus no easy answer to the questions plaguing Africa. Even in the decades to come, the God we have come to know in the Lord Jesus Christ will still surround the African people on every side. The African people, however, still must face the reality of spiritual forces, diseases, ignorance, evil and fear. The task of the African church is to guide the African audiences to acknowledge and to actively participate in what it means to be followers of Christ amid the forces and vices of Africa. AICs have various designations on the doctrine of Hell based on the traditions and the biblical notions (Peterson, 1995: 13).

According to AICSs, the Valley of *Hinnom Gehenna* came to represent a place of final punishment a place of "absolute ruin" for all who go there. The reference to Hell fire actually refers to the "lake of fire" described in Revelation 20:13-15: "And the sea gave up the dead who were in it; and death and Hell delivered up the dead who were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hell (hades) were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Pack, 2008: 44).

Pack further states that all who enter this lake suffer permanent death. They suffer complete destruction a final punishment that is everlasting eternal permanent. It is not punishing but is rather punishment that is everlasting (Pack, 2008: 47).

Christ understood this just as anyone that knew of the fires in the Valley of Hinnom recognized that the bodies of criminals and animals thrown there burned up. Jude 7 speaks of the ancient cities of Sodom and Gomorrah having received the "vengeance of eternal fire" for their sins. Those cities are not burning today and have been so destroyed that archaeologists have never been able to prove with certainty their exact location (Horton, 2011: 446). What happened to these cities does not reflect a permanent state of visible fire burning for all to see today. Their destruction was eternal. When those cities completely burned up, the fires went out. However, their punishment continues to this day (Horton, 2011: 449).

Revelation 20:10: “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

This lake of fire is the same one referred to in Revelation 19:20, which indicates that the Beast and False Prophet “were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”

This section presents the AICs views on the doctrine of Hell as a place. The arguments are widely supported by the biblical evidences tied together with the evangelical views. In Mark 9:43 Jesus speaks of people being thrown into ‘Hell’ (cf. Matt 5:22, 29-30; 10:28; 18:9). The Greek word here is Gehenna, which comes from the Hebrew “Ge-hinnom”, meaning “valley of Hinnom”. The word “Hinnom” may refer to a furnace or fireplace. It was a place just outside Jerusalem, where the Israelites had burned their children in sacrifice to the Ammonite god Molech (2 Kgs 23:10; 2 Chron 28:3; 3:6).

The location echoed a place of devilment and heart-wrenching grief, and came to symbolize the place of eschatological punishment (1 Enoch 54:12; 2 Bar 85:13; cf. Matt 10:28; 23:15, 33).

Jesus used Gehenna as a metaphor for Hell to convey a place of despicable, disgusting, and harrowing suffering. The metaphor certainly communicates a ‘Hellish’ experience but it also implies that Hell is a place. After all, Jesus states that people are ‘thrown into’ somewhere. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:28) the rich man speaks of “this place (topos) of torment”. We are told in Acts 1:25 that Judas Iscariot went to “his own place” (topos). In John 5:29 Jesus states that there will be a resurrection for believers and unbelievers, which suggests that, like Heaven, Hell will be a real place inhabited by physical people. As with the exact location of where the risen Christ is enthroned, the precise location of Hell is unknown to us. The only indication we do have is that it is remote, away from God’s life and light, being described as ‘outside’ or “outer darkness” (Matt 8:12). Those who sin are “thrown” into Hell (Mark 9:45). Jesus says in Matt 10:28: “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in Hell.” Hell is not Satan’s realm; it is under God’s sovereign rule. Therefore, the proposal that Hell is solely our choice, ‘locked from the inside’, is only half the truth. Yes, we do choose Hell. Jesus says so: if we don’t deal radically with our sin, then Hell is our fate (Mark 9:42-48). But he also

says that God sentences us to Hell, and because he is the judge of Hell people remain there under his jurisdiction.

According to Mark A. Noll, the term "evangelical" comes from the Greek word *euangelion*, meaning "the good news" or the "gospel." Thus, the evangelical faith focuses on the "good news" of salvation brought to sinners by Jesus Christ.

AICs are a vibrant and diverse group, including believers found in many churches, denominations, and nations. Our community brings together Reformed, Holiness, Anabaptist, Pentecostal, Charismatic and other traditions. Our core theological convictions provide unity amid our diversity (Noll, 2003: 17-19).

Historian David Bebbington also provides a helpful summary of evangelical distinctive, identifying four primary characteristics of evangelicalism:

1. Conversionism: The belief that lives need to be transformed through a "born-again" experience and a lifelong process of following Jesus.
2. Activism: The expression and demonstration of the gospel in missionary and social reform efforts.
3. Biblicism: A high regard for and obedience to the Bible as the ultimate authority.
4. Crucicentrism: A stress on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as making possible the redemption of humanity.

These distinctive and theological convictions define the AICs, not political, social, or cultural trends.

In fact, many AICs rarely use the term "evangelical" to describe themselves, focusing simply on the core convictions of the triune God, the Bible, faith, Jesus, salvation, evangelism, and discipleship (Bebbington, 1989: 56-60).

That the finally impenitent, including Satan, the author of sin, will, by the fires of the last day, be reduced to a state of non-existence, becoming as though they had not been, thus purging God's universe of sin and sinners. That the wicked will be punished by suffering and complete destruction in the lake of fire; they do not believe in an eternally burning Hell in which souls are tormented without end (Bebbington, 1989: 65).

Leith Anderson and Ed Stetzer insist that evangelical belief in Hell begs the obvious question, what is Hell? The very brief answer is that it varies among churches and individual believers. It could be successfully argued that no two ideas of Hell are exactly alike, and that no place has been speculated about more than Hell. While ideas

of what Hell will be like differ widely, there are several predominant beliefs that circulate among the Evangelical movement.

The researcher will only be able to mention a few here, but a more detailed and in-depth comparison of these beliefs would be an advantageous project (Anderson & Stetzer, 2016: 165)

First, there is the traditional idea of Hell, or what the researcher would colloquially call the "Dante Hell." Its imagery of naked men and women being thrown into bottomless pits of fire and brimstone may be somewhat over-exaggerated to some modern believers, but not by much for others. John Piper, using Biblical passages as evidentiary proof, describes Hell as being a place of "unquenchable fire," "eternal fire," "eternal punishment," "conscious eternal torment," and "destruction." In Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshear's Doctrine: What Every Christian Should Believe, they write "At the end of the age, the Devil will be 'thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.' Hell will be ruled by Jesus, and human and demon alike, including Satan, will be tormented there continually" (Driscoll & Gerry, 2010: 405)

Second, the more modern and less "literal" idea of Hell is of it being a separation from God. No exact details are given besides the idea that the unbeliever will live apart from God for eternity. This view relies heavily on the concept of "common grace," where even the non- Christian can experience God's grace and love while alive on earth.

Campus Crusade for Christ, a national Evangelical organization espouses this idea, stating in their Statement of Purpose their belief that "At physical death the unbeliever enters immediately into eternal, conscious separation from the Lord and awaits the resurrection of his or her body to everlasting judgment and condemnation." "At the great final judgment, all humans will be separated based on their relationship to Christ during this life. Those who have not accepted Jesus will experience Hell, a place of unending suffering, where they will be eternally separated from God" (Driscoll & Gerry, 2010: 407).

Finally, there is the disavowal of any kind of concrete speculation or belief of what Hell will be like. In a refutation against Universalism, the Evangelical Alliance Commission on Unity and Truth Among AICs (ACUTE) write, "While rejecting Universalism as a theological position, we would nevertheless emphasize that God's mercy might extend further than we can legitimately contemplate."

And again in Francis Chan and Preston Sprinkle's Erasing Hell, they write "while the Biblical passages examined in this study are clear about Hell as a real place where the wicked will be tormented, the Bible does not seem to tell us exactly what that torments will entail" (ACUTE, 2000: 31). Evangelical debate, rather than one that (for now) would cause complete ideological and theological splits and divides. In the film Hell bound? Mark Driscoll describes this debate using political terms.

The debate over the physical description of Hell is like, to Driscoll, an inner-national debate, one that goes on within the defined borders of a country. However, the debate over who goes to Hell and why is an international debate, one that goes on between defined nations. Evangelicalism then, to Driscoll, is a defined religion with concrete borders, where there is room for difference over what Hell will be like, yet who is in Hell has been determined and is unchangeable within the boundaries of Evangelical Christianity. Apart from this question of the specific nature of Hell, to these AICs, there is no argument over whether Hell is real or literal. It exists, and non-believers will spend eternity there, regardless of what it will be like" (Driscoll & Gerry, 2010: 410).

Historically, AICs have had a tense relationship with the subject of Hell. On the one hand, they firmly believe that faith in Jesus' death and resurrection is indispensable for salvation. Yet, it is not surprising that many refrain from focusing on the issue, instead choosing to highlight the promise of Heaven in an attempt not to alienate those they are trying to reach. However, while largely unacknowledged, or at least mitigated by AICs, there have always been moments in time where the issue of the reality of Hell creeps up, making its way into the common discourse of Evangelicalism. The researcher will attempt to address what AICs are saying and some of the Scriptural references they are making in regards to Hell, but also what they are saying about the past, and how they understand themselves and their faith in the larger historical context of Christianity (ACUTE, 2000: 32- 35).

It is important to reiterate this dialectical relationship that makes up this "traditional" idea of the Evangelical doctrine of Hell, that non-believers, by refusing Christ in this life, are sentenced to Hell. Sin and the quality of one's life do not necessarily matter to the Evangelical (although this is an ongoing issue in the movement,) rather the emphasis is placed on the individual decision to accept or reject Christ. The way that Hell is popularly interpreted by many Evangelicals can be understood as a violent

threat to non-believers, and something to escape from by becoming (and remaining) a Christian (ACUTE, 2000: 37- 39).

John Piper, the popular pastor who bid farewell to Rob Bell, describes Hell as a place of "eternal conscious torment," going on to say that Hell is "a fire that will not be extinguished and therefore a punishment that will not end," a place of "unending misery for those who go there," and "the eternal fire is explicitly 'punishment,' and its opposite is eternal life (Bell, 2011: 16-18).

Paul Alan Laughlin, from Otterbein College, writes that Christian thinkers have "elaborated on the horrors of Hell as a place of fiery and unrelenting punishment." Hell, as presented, is an awful place, and somewhere no sane person would want to go, especially for eternity (Laughlin, 2000: 166).

Before Bell's Love Wins, it was difficult to find a popular Evangelical treatise on the belief of Hell. Hell, never went away, but it cannot be denied that the theological arguments on the subject took a backseat to more popularly salient issues like abortion and gay marriage. Rather than being in the forefront, Hell was the other option when presenting Christianity to a potential convert. Yet, there were a handful of theologians and authors writing about the topic of Hell and its alternatives before today's veritable explosion of Hell (Bell, 2011: 22).

Richard J. Bauckham's 1979 article on Universalism, the belief that eventually everyone can and will be saved by God regardless of their faith while alive, is popularly and commonly cited by Evangelicals writing on the subject today (Bauckham, 1979: 71).

Rather than being a defense for the doctrine of Hell, Bauckham's article is a historical argument against Universalism. He presents Universalism as being a recent phenomenon outside the purview of mainstream Christianity, writing: Until the nineteenth century almost all Christian theologians taught the reality of eternal torment in Hell. Here and there, outside the theological mainstream, were some who believed that the wicked would be finally annihilated (in its commonest form this is the doctrine of 'conditional immortality'). Even fewer were the advocates of universal salvation, though these few included some major theologians of the early church. Eternal punishment was firmly asserted in official creeds and confessions of the churches. It must have seemed as indispensable a part of universal Christian belief as the doctrines of the Trinity and the incarnation (Bauckham, 1971: 75- 77). Since 1800

this situation has entirely changed, and no traditional Christian doctrine has been so widely abandoned as that of eternal punishment (Bauckham, 1979: 79).

Bauckham continues, writing that Universalism was "not uncommon in the East during the fourth and fifth centuries," having been influenced by early Church father Origen, and was "regarded as an open question." Yet, he is quick to mention that both Origen and this brand of theology were condemned and declared heresy in 543, thereby casting Origen and Universalism off as contrary to "Orthodox" Christianity.

While, to Bauckham's credit, he does point out that "in the West, not only Origen's heretical reputation but also Augustine's enormous influence ensured that the Augustinian version of the doctrine of Hell prevailed almost without question for many centuries," he refrains from pushing this possible problem of the influence of Augustine as being a very real reason for why the doctrine of Hell "won" over Universalism. As Bauckham's argument continues, he writes about three other theologians who have discussed the possibility of an alternative to his idea of Hell, but quickly and succinctly brushes them off as "modern," "guilty of contradicting" creeds, "less common," "non-traditional," disagreeing with the text of the Bible, on par with the heresies of Origen. According to Bauckham, the proliferation of Universalism, or denying the reality of Hell and asserting that everyone will be saved, is an event only now getting widespread acceptance in Christianity (Bauckham, 1971: 81- 83).

That up until now, the discussion of Hell has been closed, and no longer (if ever) up for serious debate. Sure, there may have been one or two dissenters, but like all other heresies, they were dismissed, never to be heard of again. What this style of argument means for the Evangelical today, how they are using it to present their own ideas about Hell and the afterlife, will be more formally discussed later (Bauckham, 1979: 85).

In Robert A. Peterson's Hell on Trial: The Case for Eternal Punishment, published over fifteen years before Love Wins, Hell is presented as being on trial, with Peterson acting as its defender. If the idea that someone would willingly, and even happily, write a defense on the doctrine of Hell was not odd enough, he sets the book up with "witnesses" in order to testify for the defense, different portions of the Bible, and the history of Hell as thought by important church leaders (Peterson, 1995: 15).

While his "defense" of Hell by using the Bible is intriguing, my focus will be on Peterson's historical arguments, as they are perhaps the more problematic of the two.

Peterson quickly goes to work, referencing Bauckham's article, and his assertion that common teaching on Hell only changed after the nineteenth century. As Peterson writes about the early church father Origen, he reminds the reader that Origen was "most remembered as the father of universalism and judged heretical after his death" (Peterson, 1995: 17). Peterson casts Origen aside, asking how are we to evaluate Origen's vision of all things coming from God in the beginning and returning to Him in the end. Despite his efforts to prove it from Scripture, 'the final unity of all things with God is more Platonic than biblical in inspiration.' His theology was greatly shaped by his commitment to revived Platonic philosophy.

This commitment influenced each doctrine, in this case casting a Christian view of last things in terms of the Platonic idea of flow and return vial purifying punishments (Peterson, 1995: 23).

While, to be fair, Peterson does acknowledge the scope of influence Origen's theology had later into the future, but he only references it in regards to one person, John Scotus Erigena of the Middle Ages, and as Erigena being the only theologian to teach Universalism. After briefly brushing over Arnobius and delving deeper into the "incalculable influence upon subsequent Christianity" of Augustine, Peterson jumps to the eleventh century to discuss Thomas Aquinas, writing, "The most eminent of medieval theologians joins Tertullian and Augustine in teaching the orthodox view of the fate of the wicked. So do the major Reformers (Peterson, 1995: 31).

Peterson concludes his historical survey of the doctrine of Hell by asserting that "eternal punishment was the predominant view of the church through the time of the Reformation," and that only Origen and Arnobius were the defectors of this view. Any other thought against, or disagreement about, the doctrine of an eternal and literal Hell has been reserved for the "modern period," and even they are few and far between (Peterson, 1995: 33). Included in his "modern" discussion of Hell's detractors are William Whiston (1667-1752) who had an emotional response that led him to espouse the problematic doctrine of annihilationist where the wicked will be ultimately destroyed rather than suffering for eternity, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) who is regarded by Peterson as "the father of liberal theology," "rejecting the doctrine of Hell because it does not appeal to modern notions of God and human sympathy"(Peterson, 1995: 35).

F.D. Maurice (1805: 72) who was actually in fact a Unitarian and not a Christian in the traditional sense and was, according to Peterson, "fired for a modification of the

doctrine of Hell; he neither condemned the traditional view nor asserted dogmatically that all would be saved." Even the air of impropriety around the doctrine of Hell was reason enough to be fired from his job, as it was such an aberration to Peterson.

Finally, he finishes his discussion of Hell's detractors with both F.W. Farrar and E.B. Pusey in the late 19th-early 20th centuries (Peterson, 1995: 38).

In the years following Rob Bell's publication of Love Wins, a handful of books have been released. They have specific intent of delegitimizing Bell and arguing for this specific and "traditional" view of Hell.

Among them are Erasing Hell, What God Said About Eternity, and the Things We Made Up by Francis Chan and Preston Sprinkle, God Wins. Heaven, Hell, and Why the Good News Is Better than Love Wins by senior managing editor of the popular Evangelical publication "Christianity Today" Mark Galli, and Michael E. Wittmer's Christ Alone. An Evangelical Response to Rob Bell's Love Wins is notable, and worth mentioning. The books either directly reference Bell or his book in the actual titles, or allude to it by a play on words. Even the covers themselves bear a striking resemblance to Bell's Love Wins, perhaps an intentional decision made by several people involved with the publications. The effects are striking, and not altogether subtle, as they were intended. Each book challenges Bell directly as a cohesive argument not only for Hell, but against Bell as a heretical and false teacher (Galli, 2011: 118- 119).

In Chan and Sprinkle's Erasing Hell, they refer to the Bauckham article from 1979. The choice to quote the dated article, itself a response to the problem of Hell is an example of the problematic move of self-referencing as a valid argument. What the researcher is left with, after seeing the same article referenced several times over by different authors at different times is the question of why? Why is this one article sufficient evidence for the reality of Hell? The researcher contends that this move accentuates the lack of a clear and nuanced view of history for the Evangelical theologian, rather allowing for this evidentiary weak argument. Self-referencing, as done in this way, is not a valid argument, nor is it altogether interesting. Providing contestation from one source is historically problematic, yet is what we see being done (Bauckham, 1979: 88- 90).

The authors then go on to contend that Origen was not always consistent in his Universalism, either attempting to redeem Origen and his ideas, or mentioning it briefly because there is no other way around it. Interestingly, while writing "advocates

(for an alternative idea of Hell) were always a minority," they find two other detractors to mention that have not been referenced by other Evangelicals up until this point (Knight & Winstanly, 1850: 102- 105)

They go into an abbreviated discussion of the Jewish ideas and philosophies on Hell, arguing that the Jews had a concrete definition of what Hell was, and how that influenced early Christian thought. While Mark Galli's God Wins is a review and attack on the arguments of Bell's Love Wins, the crux of his argument lies in the exegetical readings and understandings of Biblical texts (Galli, 2011: 127).

In 152 pages, Galli spends just under three full pages on the history of the question of Hell, rather choosing to focus on his interpretation of the Bible and who and what he understands God and Jesus to be. In the three pages Galli does mention the problem of history; he brushes off major issues with "(Universalism) was condemned by the early universal church council that met at Constantinople in 543." "The view has not found favor with any significant theologian of the church since." "One can count on one's hands the number of prominent Christians who have held this view throughout the ages." "It has been rejected by Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, and Protestants, and there is good reason for that." and finally "It is a matter of debate whether (Clement and Gregory of Nyssa) were Universalists" (Galli, 2011: 130).

However, much like Chan and Sprinkle, Galli mentions quickly in passing two other possible detractors, George Macdonald and William Law, that up until now have been left out of the Evangelical's discussions on Hell, again presenting clear evidence to the fact that the Evangelical construction of the history of Hell as a continuous doctrine and a very small number of people who would argue against it is slightly askew (Galli, 2011: 141).

Finally, the last of the widely distributed books written for the express purpose of refuting Rob Bell's claims in Love Wins is Michael Wittmer's Christ Alone. Christ Alone presents perhaps the most concrete example of revisionism in regards to the history of the belief in Hell. Much like the other authors we have seen, Wittmer does own up to the fact that there were theologians and people who questioned the doctrine of Hell, but he only goes as far as saying that there were only a handful in antiquity, and that they taught the heretical doctrine of Universalism, leaving no room for alternative views of Hell, such as Annihilationism: The center of Bell's chapter on universalism throws a lengthy bouquet in its direction (Wittmer, 2011:18- 20).

He writes that not only is the Christian faith 'big enough, wide enough, and generous enough' to make room for universalism (p. 110), but also universalism has been 'at the center of the Christian tradition since the first church' (p. 109). This is historically incorrect (Wittmer, 2011: 24).

There have always been stray Universalists popping up here and there, mostly in the East and mostly enormously influenced by Plato. Ever name that Bell lists as a Universalist (p. 107) belongs to the philosophical family of Origen (except Clement, who anticipated and influenced Origen's thought).

But this Origen school is the exception which proves the rule: the center, circumference, and everything in between of the Christian tradition have always held that some people unfortunately end up in Hell. With the caveat that the researcher could be incorrect, all of the Evangelical arguments for Hell that the researcher has researched and noted here have used more or less the same Biblical passages in order to defend their view of Hell, coming mostly from Daniel, Isaiah, and the four Gospels (Wittmer, 2011: 68).

As teasing out the subtleties of the how and why this is the case is not in the scope of my project, nor is an interrogation of these verses from an academic and critical point of view advantageous to proposal, the researcher will not be going any further in this regard. However, as the researcher hopes to continue this research on the Evangelical doctrine of Hell, he will place it aside as a possible future project, as it has definite merit and can also lead to a greater understanding of how personal exegesis works and the importance believers place on specific verses (Wittmer, 2011: 73).

It should be noted that DeYoung is part of the specific Reformed Christian denomination. Understanding that some may have issue with DeYoung being labeled as an Evangelical, this is precisely one of the reasons the researcher has defined Evangelical the way he has. Evangelical does not require an allegiance to any one denomination, nor is it strictly "non-denominational." Evangelicals inhabit all varieties of denominational Christian churches, and neither church membership nor official affiliation is required. What is required by my definition of Evangelical is that they hold to the tenets the researcher has previously and carefully laid out, which DeYoung quite obviously does (DeYoung, 2011: 5- 7).

Besides the Biblical hermeneutics that Wittmer delves in, which resemble every other Evangelical's Biblical defense of Hell, these are the claims he makes about the history of the doctrine of Hell. That the "Christian" tradition has always held to the same

tenets and doctrine regarding Hell, and implicit in his argument is the idea that anyone outside of this doctrine is not a Christian. The "careful and devastating review of Bell's book" that was attached to the tweet sent by John Piper that effectively cast Rob Bell into the shadows of Evangelicalism was the reactionary online review of Bell's book, written by Kevin DeYoung, Senior Pastor of the University Reformed Church in East Lansing, Michigan (DeYoung, 2011: 13).

In it, DeYoung attacks Bell's claims in a logical and consistent manner, presenting his objections as being indispensable due to the kind of effect Bell's book can have on the larger church. DeYoung, like many of the other Evangelical apologists for Hell, makes specific historical claims in reference to the doctrine, chief among them being that "Love Wins is such a departure from historic Christianity, that there's no easy way to tackle it. To fully engage the material would require not only deconstruction, but a full reconstruction of orthodoxy theology." In order to understand what kinds of claims DeYoung continues to make, and the way in which he does it, it is important to reiterate some of the most salient (De Young, 2011: 18). Bell maintains he is not saying anything new. And that's right. The problem is he makes it sound like his everyone-ends-up-restored-and-reconciled-to-God theology is smack dab in the center of the Christian tradition.

Whatever Origen's influence on the Cappadocian fathers (and it was considerable,) Origen's views were later refuted by Augustine and, as Bauckham notes, condemned in 543 in a council at Constantinople. Universalism has been around a long time. But so, has every other heresy. Arius rejected the full deity of Christ and many people followed him. This hardly makes Arianism part of the wide, diverse stream of Christian orthodoxy. True, many recent liberal theologians have argued for versions of universalism, and this is where Bell stands, not in the center of the historic Christian tradition (Bauckham, 1979: 61- 63).

DeYoung's problems with Bell, rather than being strictly historical, stem more from Bell's claims of orthodoxy in regards to his alternative view of Hell, and Bell's claim of authority by writing such an argument that DeYoung so forcefully disagrees with. It's not enough that Bell is patently incorrect, but the fact that Bell can claim Christian authority for himself while being wrong in his theology sets DeYoung off, and down the road that led to his response to Bell's book. In order to understand how the issue

of Hell is being dealt with "on the ground," so to speak, and not just online and in bookstores, it is important to look at sermons some Evangelicals are giving and hearing, and to see how Hell, along with its history, is being presented (De Young, 2011: 27).

First is Peter Merry's presentation at Rick Warren's Saddleback Church. The abstract of the sermon reads: In this seminar, guest speaker Peter Merry will discuss what the Bible has to say about Heaven and Hell, while also examining many of the popular misconceptions that have been presented in our culture. Finally, we will explore some of the distortions that have been promoted as 'Biblical' by some groups, including cults. Our lives here will be incredibly short compared to our existence in eternity (Merry, 2008: 23).

Merry describes Hell through Biblical interpretation as being "horrifying" (Isaiah 66:24, Luke 16:23-24) "Everlasting" (Daniel 12:2, Mark 9:43, 2 Thess 1:9) "Lonely" (Luke 16:26, 2 Thess 1:9) and "Lucid" (Psalm 55:15, Rev 20:10, 15.) This is Merry's (and by extension, Saddleback Church's) definition of what Hell will be like, and the reason one goes there. In an Easter sermon given to New Spring Church in 2009, Perry Noble presents an argument for Hell, again based entirely on the Bible, creating this type of orthodox Evangelical doctrine from nothing other than Scripture. It is worth noting here that Noble uses the argument that "God only gives you want you want when He sends you to Hell for not believing in Him" line of reasoning that appears to be common in the Evangelical culture (Merry, 2008: 25- 31).

John Wenham describes evangelical sermons being full of rife with this rhetoric, putting the onus of salvation on the individual, rather than on the believer or even on God. Noble also defines Christianity as being "too narrow" to allow for any other kind of doctrine, that it is the only way to God, and all other religions are false. Mark Driscoll, the pastor of the mega-church Mars Hill, gave a sermon titled "Heaven and Hell," only a month after the release of Love Wins.

The sermon as given is an obvious response to Bell and his arguments, as much of what Driscoll says about people who would disagree with his treatment on Hell seem so largely directed at Bell himself, you're left wondering whether Bell heard it and what his reaction would have been (Wenham, 1994: 91).

In the sermon, Driscoll claims that it is his intent to teach the Bible and tell the truth, because Jesus tells the truth, and he only wants to reiterate what Jesus has said. His

claims are backed not by himself or his own reasoning, but by God through Jesus and the Bible. Driscoll goes through post-death options, laying them out methodically and intentionally, refuting every one through use of Biblical texts and his authority as pastor. It is probably more important here to mention what Driscoll does not say rather than what he does, especially as this sermon is such an obvious response to Love Wins. He does not make any argument about the nature of Hell or of God from anything other than the Bible, and there is no claim of historical orthodoxy besides presenting Biblical text. As Evangelicals seem to be so focused on being based on the Bible along, Driscoll's approach is not surprising, but it is confusing, especially when remembering that his arguments to come will revolve around the historical record in relation to the doctrine of Hell (Driscoll & Gerry, 2010: 428).

And while not a sermon per se, Hank Hanegraff, or "The Bible Answer Man" as he advertises himself, hosts a popular Evangelical radio show through his Christian Research Institute. In an interview with author Lee Strobel who has written one of the most used evangelism tools to date, The Case for Christ, they discuss Hanegraff's recent book about Hell and what it will be like. Interestingly, much like Driscoll's sermon, neither Hanegraff nor Strobel give any kind of historical reasoning for Hell being traditional Christian doctrine, rather, they rely solely on the Bible as being "an objective reference point," the way to "test a subjective experience" about Hell, and "the final quote of arbitration." The argument is that Hell is Biblical; therefore, it is orthodox, and truthful (Driscoll & Gerry, 2010: 44- 45).

Finally, another popular method of arguing for the reality of Hell comes in the form of basing the Christian belief in this real and literal Hell on pre-Christian Jewish ideas of the afterlife. Most, if not all, of the previous authors and speakers have done this by either reinterpreting the historical record or specific Biblical passages (such as the ones that deal with Sheol,) as has Dr. Desmond Alexander, professor, and theologian (Alexander, 1986: 37). He argues that while the Jewish idea of life after death changed and evolved over time, there was one continual stream through Jewish thought that would make this dichotomy of eternal destiny not only probable, but also likely (Alexander, 1986: 41-46).

2.2 Development of the Doctrine of Hell

This section presents the scholarly teachings and argument supported biblically in understanding the doctrine of hell. The section employs identified number of scriptures that ascertain to the understanding of the doctrine of Hell and as further argued by different scholars.

2.2.1 Hell, as a Furnace of Fire

According to John in the book Revelation 20:14-15, the people whose names will not be found in the book of life will be thrown into the lake of fire. This picture has been used to argue that Hell is a place wherein there will be fire. But this is a pictorial representation of Hell. Indeed, the term lake originated from the Abyss (bottomless pit), which was the alleged abode of the monster, the enemy of God (Beasley-Murray, 1994:1453). Also, Abyss is traditionally, the home of evil spirits and the place where fallen angels were punished. For John, symbolically this will be the life of those who will be outside the city of God (see Rev. 21:27) as opposed to the life of those who will be in the city of God (see. Rev. 21:24ff.).

In a nutshell, Revelation 20:14 refers to Hell as the lake of fire, the place for the devil and his followers. Symbolically, John argues that the beast, the false prophet, and the devil had been thrown into the lake of fire. Now, he claims that in the same manner death and Hades were thrown into the same lake. The primary point for the readers is that death and Hades are finally as powerless as the other forces of evil. Ultimately, there is no power, which is greater than God's power. Furthermore, the text highlighting that the second death will entail the spiritual existence of the wicked people in the absence of God, clearly asserts that Hell is a state of being.

2.2.2 Hell, as an Abyss (Bottomless Pit)

In the Gospel according to Luke 8:31, having been commanded to come out of an innocent man, the demons are begging Jesus not to command them to go out into the abyss. The abyss is the abode or prison of the demons (Rev. 9:1-11). It means a bottomless pit, the habitat of the demons (Marshall, 1994:994-995).

The main aim of linking the term abyss with Hell is not to show it as a place, but to point out the gigantic gulf that exists between Heaven and Hell such that those who

are on either of the two sides will not have a chance of joining the others on the other side as echoed in the story of Lazarus and the rich man (cf. Lk. 16:19ff.).

So, this verse is meant to show Hell as an eternal damnation; it cannot be used to claim that Hell is a place. The convicted beings will eternally suffer the loss of being and lower limit of human existence. They will remain eternally separated from God (Marshall, 1994: 1000).

2.2.3 Hell, as Eternal Fire

Matthew 25:41 is derived from the main text, that is, Matthew 25:31-46, which talks about the final judgment. In his attempt to show that salvation embraces both the forgiveness of sins and the resultant good deeds, Matthew observes that the righteous ones whose deeds are good will acquire the Kingdom of God for an eternal life, whilst the wicked ones whose deeds are evil will be put into the everlasting fire for an everlasting punishment (Mt. 25:34, 41, 46) (France, 1990:938). This description of Hell as an eternal fire has been used by Berkhof and Grudem to argue that Hell is a place, wherein the wicked ones will eternally be punished by means of fire (1994: 51).

2.2.4 Hell as Sheol, a Land of Darkness

From the following texts, (Ezk. 28:8; Jb. 10:21f; Ps. 30:9f.), there is a great assumption that Hell is a place. Here, it is termed as Sheol, a land of darkness. But as this study portrays to base the description of Hell as a place on these texts does not hold water. The Old Testament Pictures Hell as a Sheol, the underworld where the spirits of the dead exist. This is a land of darkness (cf. Jb. 10:21f.) and silence (cf. Ps. 115:17) in which God is not remembered (cf. Ps. 30:9f.). Thus, the dead in Sheol are cut off from God (cf. Ps. 88:5) the source of life. So, those who will be in Sheol will not be in union with God and His presence will not be with themfurther scriptures attesting the same include Ezekiel 28:8; Job 10:21f.; Psalm 30:10 (Munyua, 2012: 19).

The understanding of Hell is seen as a place where the wicked will continue to exist and be punished after death (Matthew 24:5; 25:30, Luke16:19-31). The word Hell comes from the Hebrew word*sheol* and the Greek word Hades, both translated to "grave" or "pit". Kunhiyop (2012: 19) quotes the book of Job17:13; Psalm1:10 and Isaiah 38:10 supporting the Hebrew word *sheol* referring to grave.

Olson argues that when people die, their soul either go to Heaven to be with the lord forever or go to Hell and everlasting fire (2002:28). Hell is depicted as a place of suffering forever. This is in support with Kunhiyop who pictured the same (Kunhiyop, 2012: 31). In the New Testament, the word *gehenna* is used to refer to eternal state or a place of punishment and condemnation for the wicked. It is described as a place of unquenchable fire. The knowledge of Hell comes almost exclusively from the teachings of Christ who spoke emphatically on the subject on several occasions.

In the sermon on the mountain, Jesus said that one who is angry with another is in danger of the fire in Hell; Mathew 5:22 and that it is better to lose a part of the body than the whole body going to Hell (Bruce & Gordon, 1987: 91- 93).

2.3 Church Tradition on the Doctrine of Hell.

In the awakening of 18th century Massachusetts, Jonathan Edwards presented a vigorous defense sermon on the traditional idea of Hell which was designed to shock the audience in to repentance. Edward further puts the understanding of Hell that pictures God having power to rule even in Hell that no one can resist when he decides to throw wicked people into fire. He argues and holds that what entails in Hell and in Heaven as the Punishment from the irresistible power of God (McGrath, 1995: 10).

Tertullian in support of the same argues that Hell is a zone of fire where it is separated from paradise a place of divine delight appointed to receive saints, cut off from fire. While the Christian epic does not yield up encyclopedic knowledge about the how, when, where and who of the consummation, it does give us bold affirmations about the end of the matter. That God was able to initiate the beginning; there must be the end in such where he shall fulfill the divine intention, as the omega, implying that end time and death is inevitable and must come (McGrath, 1995: 16).

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God is mighty and his decision over sinners is final. Sinners are already predestined to Hell with or without repentance. They deserve to be cast into Hell so that divine justice never stands in the way; it makes no objection against God using the power at any moment to destroy them. The divine justice says of the tree that brings forth such grapes of Sodom, “cut it down, why cumbered it ground?” Luke 13:7.

McGrath puts Philip’s idea of certain lower creatures and the Salamander that can live in the fire burning without being consumed, in pain without dying. Hell, a place of fire can be another place for life even if it is associated with fire and suffering (McGrath, 1995: 26).

The doctrine of Hell has never been an attractive subject and reminds us too starkly of the terrible consequences of sin and the just wrath of God against the impenitent sinner. But the unpopularity of this subject has perhaps never been so evident as it has become in the twentieth century in which many, if not most, pulpits have fallen silent on, and a great deal of confusion surrounds, this matter (Venema,1991: 47). Though there may have been a substantial consensus in the history of the church that the impenitent will suffer torment eternally in Hell, this consensus has eroded significantly, even among professedly conservative and evangelical writers. Furthermore, in lieu of the doctrine of Hell has come the attraction of universalism and "wider hope" teachings that seek to present a gospel more palatable to the modern taste (Venema, 1991: 51).

Almost every natural man that hears of Hell flatters himself that he shall escape it. He depends upon himself for his own security flattering himself in what he has done, what he is now doing or what he intends to do. Facing a person who is dying when you believe that those who are not Christians go to torment in Hell is a challenge to how one offers pastoral care. You may be clear in your own mind that biblical teaching is unequivocal the lost are lost to an eternity without Christ which includes mental and physical torment (Venema, 1991: 53).

Part of Orbis Book’s “Theology in Global Perspective Series,” Eschatology and Hope, explores end-time themes within the broader context of religious pluralism, recent scientific discoveries, and ecological awareness. Drawing richly from Scripture, familiar voices from the tradition, and key contemporary thinkers, Christian eschatology is explored in a way that is humbly conversational and suggestive.

The book represents an “inter-hope” dialogue, as inventively put, one that affords creative insights into various aspects of human hope.

At times, however, the dialogue is unevenly conducted. Engagements with non-Christian traditions (as in the case when bodily resurrection and reincarnation tend to rely on broad generalizations and serve mainly as occasions for clarifying the Christian perspective (Flanagan, 2008: 56- 58).

In her fine book, "Light in Darkness", Alyssa Pitstick undertakes two enterprises. The first is a retrieval and formulation of what she calls the traditional doctrine of the descent, by which she means the church's constant teaching about what Christ did between his death on Good Friday after-noon and his Resurrection on the morning of Easter Day. And the second is exegesis of and commentary upon Hans Urs von Balthasar teaching on the same matter, whose upshot is to show that the two bodies of teaching are irreconcilable (Pitstick 2007: 31).

Pitstick offers four linked claims to the descending to Hell by Christ. First, Christ's descent was only to the limbo (divine line) of the Fathers, and it was a descent "in His soul united to His divine Person". Second, the descent made Christ's power and authority known throughout Hell that is, not just in the Fathers' limbo (Pitstick, 2007: 35). Third, the descent accomplished two purposes: liberating the just from limbo by conferring upon them the glory of Heaven, and proclaiming Christ's power even in the realms of the dead. And fourth, the descent was glorious, which she takes to imply that it involved no suffering on Christ's part (Pitstick, 2007: 40).

2.4 Religious Perspectives on the Doctrine of Hell

The subject of Hell is a common denominator in many religions in the world, including Hindu and Islam. The section presents religious perspectives of Hell from Islamic, Hinduism and Judaism.

2.4.1 Hinduism and Hell

Hell, in Hinduism is called Narak (नरक), a Hindu equivalent of Hell, where sinners are tormented after death. It is also the abode of Yama, the god of Death. It is described as located in the south of the universe and beneath the earth. According to religious belief, Hell is the place where the soul of sinners is sent to be punished. After the punishment for the sins, the soul is born in another creation. It is said that Heaven is above the earth, while Hell is under the earth (Froehlich,1981: 323).

2.4.2 Islam and Hell.

Muslim scholars read the Quran to suggest that God brings each soul to life and death only once. The soul lies dormant after death as if in a coma. Then all the souls are raised simultaneously on the Day of Judgment. God judges them.

Those who have followed God's directions live permanently in Heaven thereafter. Those who have not followed God's direction permanently live in Hell thereafter (Karl, 1983: 42).

Ayat 40:11 says, "Our Lord, twice you have put us to death and twice you have brought us to life; now we have confessed our sins, is there any way out?" The Islamic belief is that the soul is given birth, dies, given birth again only on the Judgment Day, then sent to Heaven or Hell permanently.

Ayat 23:101-104 also says, "The Fire will sear their faces, and they therein will have taut smiles (i.e. their lips having been contracted by scorching until the teeth are exposed)." This Ayat seems to say the punishment is Hell is not eternal. It is only "until lips have been contracted." So how do we explain the belief that God gives an eternal punishment on the Judgment Day?

Muslims believe that the believers will enjoy seeing Allah the Almighty after the end of these beings and after, the true believers will enter paradise and the wrongdoers will enter Hell of fire. The Quran stresses both God's Heavenly reward and punishment in Hell.

Navid Kermani remarks, "in the Quran God is represented in many facets of mercy; however, as in the Bible, these facets are inextricably linked with His violence, His malice and His terror." Opinions are divided among scholars as to how much space exactly Hell claims in the Quran in comparison to paradise. One scholar counts ninety-two "significant passages" about Hell and sixty-two about paradise; nineteen others identify about four hundred verses relating in a meaningful way, to Hell and about three hundred and twenty relating to paradise. Twenty others, however, claim that paradise occupies "significantly more space" in the Quran than Hell (Kermani, 2000: 34- 36).

In the Quran there is the notion that souls fall asleep at death, an idea that Tesei traces to a multitude of late-antique, Christian precedents. Indeed, the picture of Hell in the Quran is the result of a confluence of several traditions of eschatological thought of Late Antiquity (Tesei, 1999: 91). There is also, as some scholars contend, a gradual development toward a more Bibilicized version of Hell in the Quran.

Thomas O'Shaughnessy for example, has suggested that in the middle Meccan period, the Quran largely abandons the term jaḥīm to designate Hell, from now on using more frequently the more Biblical term jahannam (the "valley of Hinnom", Hebrew,gē-hinnōm, (see Joshua 15:8, Jeremiah 7:31, 32:35) (O'Shaughnessy, 2001: 51).

2.4.3 Judaism and Hell

Judaism is 'universalistic' for it teaches that the righteous of all nations enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Christianity is 'particularistic' for it bars from the Kingdom all unsaved, non-Christians, no matter how great their righteousness**.** Until long after the exile, the Jewish people shared the view of the entire ancient world that the dead continue to exist in a shadowy realm of the nether world where they live a dull, ghostly existence. According to K. Kohler, throughout the Biblical period no ethical idea yet permeated this conception and no attempt was made to transform the nether world into a place of divine judgment, of recompense for the good and evil deeds accomplished on earth. This was so because Biblical Judaism stressed the importance of attaining a complete and blissful life with God during earthly life; there was no need to transfer the purpose of existence to the hereafter (Kohler, .1986: 49- 51).

Thus, though there is no explicit reference to Hell in the Old Testament, several expressions are used to refer to the realm of the dead. In Psalms 28:1 and 88:5, both refer to a pit. In Psalm 6:6 as well as in Job 28:22 and 30:23, mavet is used in a similar sense. In Psalm 22:16 the expression afar mavet refers to the dust of death; in Exodus 15:2 and Jonah 2:7 the earth (eretz) is described as swallowing up the dead, and in Ezekiel 31:14 the expression eretztachtit refers to the nether parts of the earth where the dead dwell. Finally, the word she/oJ is frequently used to refer to the dwelling of the dead in the netherworld. In addition, the words ge ben hinnom, gehinnom are used.

First century Jewish thought on the afterlife was far from a cohesive set of beliefs, much like everything else in antiquity (and arguably, today.) Flavius Josephus chronicles some of the different reasons for postmortem rewards and punishments between the Pharisees and the Sadducees in his Wars of the Jews and Antiquities of the Jews. By reading these texts, it becomes obvious that these two groups believed a soul would go to what could be considered Hell for completely different reasons, and that the focus of pre-Christian Jewish belief in the afterlife was never "just" about personal faith. About these differences, Henry Chadwick writes "Judaism was not monolithic (Chadwick, 1986: 66).

In Sheol, souls exist as shades, rephaim, in a dark world; and although they have ‘existence’, and could even be ‘conscious’ enough to speak (so, Samuel to Saul), they are certainly considered the dead.

This is found in a wide range of texts from the Hebrew Bible and Apocrypha (for example, Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Isaiah, Daniel, Hosea, Sirach, and Baruch). Hence, the common term for the ψυχὴ in Sheol is νεκρὸς (Ps. 88.10). Most writers of the Hebrew Bible appear to deliberately avoid any discussion (Chadwick, 1986: 70).

There were differences between the Pharisees and the Sadducees that could become sharp.” The afterlife, or Heaven and Hell, was one of them. Evangelicals seem intent on aligning their beliefs with the historical record, attempting to claim that they maintain this “true” Christianity as believed by the early followers of Jesus.

By understanding the importance of this Evangelical claim, we can begin to see what Chan and Sprinkle mean when they write, “We need to enter Jesus’ world because Jesus was a Jew, and the only way we are going to understand what Jesus said about Hell is to soak ourselves in the Bible’s own culture.” However, the problem becomes apparent when we realize that because they are right, Jesus and his early followers were Jews, and were undeniably influenced by Jewish thought and doctrine, early Christianity would have necessarily inherited this incredible diversity that Judaism was known for.

As Alan E. Bernstein writes, “No correct understanding of Hell is possible, therefore, without taking into account the conceptual background of the ancient world prior to Christianity” (Bernstein, 1993: 2- 5).

To be sure, a religious community defines itself to a large extent by selecting its canonical literature. Yet all populations are divided by differing tendencies and preferences, sensibilities, and concerns. Thus, whereas a large fraction lives on the central plateau of consensus, it is not always a majority, and many minority groups live on the slopes of partial agreement or at the fringes of dissent toward various extremes. This variety was certainly characteristic of ancient Judaism, where the religious community was also a political one that was divided, scattered, and partially regrouped. The texts that both reflect and define the community that produced and reveres them will also reflect this diversity. For these reasons we cannot speak of one biblical tradition or characterize Judaism by any one quotation (Bernstein, 1993: 8- 9).

Any kinds of problems or doctrinal debates would not have simply disappeared once Jesus entered the scene, and new issues continuously became apparent as Christianity grew. It is an outright mistake to argue that Judaism represented any kind of monolithic set of beliefs where every issue of doctrine was completely hammered out that seamlessly evolved into Christianity.

The idea of Hell was no different, being one of these issues that varied among individuals and different groups of believers. The issue of Origen and his "heretical" Universalist views present a different problem for Evangelicals, and one that must also be dealt with. It is not sufficient to say that "no one" held alternative views of Hell, as Origen was excommunicated and declared heretic (Bernstein, 1993: 12- 19).

2.5 Reformists and the Doctrine of Hell

The Reformers strongly rejected Hell and purgatory, because by this time the teaching had become heavily corrupted by the sale of indulgences. These were the payments made to the priests to reduce the years of purification spent in purgatory. Wycliffe taught that death was an unconscious sleep, as did Tyndale and Luther, (although it must be said that Luther was not always consistent in his beliefs.) They taught neither Hell nor purgatory. They taught that 'men are breath in bodies' and not 'souls in bodies. Calvin, however, taught that those who were sinners went to the eternal pains of Hell at the time of their death and even denied a middle place or purgatory. The Reformed churches, like Calvin, have generally maintained a belief in an immortal soul and Hell-fire, but do not teach purgatory (Pitstick, 2007: 45- 48).

From the earliest centuries, however, Christian thinkers have wrestled with the question of Hell and the non-Christian. Tertullian said that the soul by nature is Christian. Clement of Alexandria thought that Christ saves souls even if they do not realize it. Augustine developed a place called Limbo for the unbaptized; God would not damn those who died without baptism thus belonging to Hell. Alexander of Hales in the twelfth century did not see a problem with Jews finding salvation by following the revelation in the Torah; for others, God must provide a special revelation. Thomas Aquinas asks what happens to the unbeliever in Africa who has never heard the gospel preached. Aquinas' answer is that perhaps God sends an angel to deliver the gospel to him. The solutions were often clumsy but at least they were tried.

The official doctrine makers did not directly address the question; they concentrated on practical guides for Christians rather than speculative questions about non-Christians (Flanagan, 2008:56- 58).

The theologian Origen of Alexandria developed another, different view of the fate of the wicked. He postulated that the wicked would be forgiven and restored by God and so in the end all would be saved. There would be universal salvation as held by his followers believe that even Satan will be saved (Venema, 1991: 51).

2.6 SDAs and AICs Convergence on the Doctrinal Teachings of Hell

John Wenham argues that first; a doctrine simply falls from mention. Over time, it is simply never discussed or presented from the pulpit. Most congregants do not even miss the mention of the doctrine. Those who do, become fewer over time. The doctrine is not so much denied as ignored and kept at a distance. Yes, it is admitted, that doctrine has been believed by Christians, but it is no longer a necessary matter of emphasis (Wenham, 1994: 110).

Second, a doctrine is revised and retained in reduced form. There must have been some good reason that Christians historically believed in Hell. Some theologians and pastors will then affirm that there is a core affirmation of morality to be preserved; perhaps something like what C. S. Lewis affirmed (Lewis, 2009: 89).

Third, a doctrine is subjected to a form of ridicule. Robert Schuller of the Crystal Cathedral, known for his message of "Possibility Thinking," once described his motivation for theological reformulation in terms of refocusing theology on "generating trust and positive hope." His method is to point to salvation and the need "to become positive thinkers" (Schuller, 2001: 56).

That statement ridicules Hell by dismissing it in terms of "whatever that means and wherever it is." Though few evangelicals are likely to join in the same form of ridicule, many will invent softer forms of marginalizing the doctrine (Schuller, 2001: 57).

Fourth, a doctrine is reformulated in order to remove its intellectual and moral offense. Evangelicals have subjected the doctrine of Hell to this strategy for many years now. Some deny that Hell is everlasting, arguing for a form of annihilationist or conditional immortality. Others will deny Hell as a state of actual torment (Schuller, 2001:60).

John Wenham simply states, “Unending torment speaks to me of sadism, not justice.” Some argue that God does not send anyone to Hell, and that Hell is simply the sum of human decisions made during earthly lives. God is not really a judge who decides, but a referee who makes certain that rules are followed (Wenham, 1994: 116).

According to John Wenham book on “the Enigma of evil”, Tulsa pastor Ed Gungor recently wrote that “people are not sent to Hell, they go there.” In other words, God just respects human freedom to the degree that he will reluctantly let humans determined to go to Hell have their wish (Wenham, 1994: 121).

While some of the evidence is ambiguous, and questions remain to be answered, we are perhaps now able to clarify certain fundamental issues regarding the Old Testament perception of the after-life. Firstly, we may reject the currently popular belief that in the pre-Exilic period death was viewed by the Hebrews as a natural legacy of man’s mortality and that; consequently, little interest was shown in the after-life. Secondly, it seems probably that the term Sheol frequently, if not always, designated the either world, and that as such it represented the continuing abode of the ungodly. Thirdly, whereas the wicked were thought to remain in the dark, silent region of Sheol, the righteous live in the hope that God would deliver them from the power of death and take them to himself (Alexander, 1986: 51-56).

As Evangelicals understand the Bible as a continual narrative, a story that runs from the beginning of Genesis to the prophetic end of Revelation, pre-Christian Jewish thought about the afterlife and Hell becomes extremely important. Jewish theology undoubtedly informed early Christian teachings and understandings, and as Evangelicals today attempt to place themselves in a direct line to the early church, it becomes imperative to have a firm grasp on what previous Jewish teaching was, and what Judaism looked like at the time of Christ because of this Jewish influence. Because the complete inerrancy of the Bible is so important, and arguably indispensable to the Evangelical faith, the idea that the Bible could present opposing viewpoints on any subject, like this subject of Hell, is, to say the least, problematic. Any shade of alternative viewpoints on the afterlife besides this dichotomy of Heaven or Hell based on faith alone needs to be dealt with in order to keep the argument consistent. Mark Galli, the author of God Wins, does this throughout the whole of his book. To the question of why Hell is not presented in the Old Testament as succinctly and often as it is in the New Testament (Galli, 2011: 123- 125).

The Hebrew writers were God's prophets, who were God's mouthpieces. They spoke and wrote down only the messages God wanted to send to his people at that time and in that place. God revealed most of the details we know about Hell later, in the New Testament period. It is God's prerogative to reveal what he wants us to know, and when.

It is also true that the New Testament does not talk in detail about Hell, but through Jesus' words and other New Testament writers, God reveals enough about it to suggest that it is something we should indeed be concerned with. What's important is how we will respond to what God has revealed to us in his Word, not when it was revealed or how many details, we have about it (Galli, 2011: 131).

2.7 Conclusion

In the above arguments, the concept of Hell has been under a subject of discussion. Place, an imaginary or just a feeling, there is a concept of enjoying and suffering of humanity at the last moments.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter presents the methodology viable for bringing the scriptural teachings on the doctrine from the two denominations a common ground. The Biblical reinterpretation method is one of the research methods that was employed in this study focusing on the exegetical method; the hermeneutics of suspicion put forward by Fredrich Schleiemacher (1768–1834). As a methodological discipline, it offers a toolbox for efficiently treating problems of the interpretation of human actions, texts, and other meaningful material. Hermeneutics looks back at a long tradition as the set of problems it addresses have been prevalent in human life, and have repeatedly and consistently called for consideration: interpretation is an ubiquitous activity, unfolding whenever humans aspire to grasp whatever is *interpreted* and deem significant. Due to its long history, it is only natural that both its problems, and the tools designed to help solve them, have shifted considerably over time, along with the discipline of hermeneutics itself. The dissertation focuses on the main problem areas and presents some proposals that have been put forward for tackling them effectively (Chowdhury, 2016:81).

The expression "*hermeneutic of suspicion"* is a tautological way of saying what thoughtful people have always known, that words may not always mean what they seem to mean. Some forms of expression, such as allegory and irony, depend on this fact. Sometimes a hermeneutic of suspicion may be important for more negative reasons, as when we suspect that texts are not telling us the whole truth. Examples would be what NT texts tell us about the role of women in early Christianity (naturally reflecting patriarchal assumptions) or what they tell us about "the Jews" and "the Pharisees" (clearly influenced by quarrels between the early church and the synagogue) (Birch & Bruce, 1984: 24).

The hermeneutic of suspicion can, however, be misused and overused. Unbridled, it leads to absurdities, as in the assumption that any text involving the miraculous must be unhistorical, or the preposterous notion that Jesus, misunderstood by those who shared his language, culture, and religion, is now for the first time to be truly understood by scholars who share none of these things. In sum, it is sometimes useful to "see through" things and suspicion has its place (Mantzavinos, 2016: 21).

In relation to the thesis, there are possibilities of misrepresentations as suspected by any interpreter over a period from different contexts, causing the deviance between the two identified denominational lines that require a reinterpretation to harmonize the understanding on the doctrine of Hell (Mantzavinos, 2016: 25).

3.1 Theoretical Analysis

This dissertation was informed by various theories put forward by both philosophers and theologians. Their understanding is based on different approaches towards hermeneutics.

3.1.1 Thiselton on the Communal Hermeneutics of Christian Doctrine.

According Anthony Thiselton, it is ever-important to deviate from a mistaken reduction of corporate doctrine to individual-centered belief. He sees the emergence of individualism, and individual-centered epistemology, as the primary cause of the marginalization of doctrine thus the misinterpretation and misunderstanding that emerge (Labuschagne, 2011: 41).

According to Thiselton, it means that for individualism the supposed basis of doctrine lies in a personal belief, and that comes at the expense then of the communal nature of doctrine and at the expense of the ecclesiology. The hermeneutics of doctrine is needed as response to the serious vacuum caused by individualism (Thiselton, 1980: 57).

Thiselton emphasizes that all the mainline traditions of the Christian church understand doctrine in communal terms. In his views of hermeneutics as communal understanding, he finds support in the works of prominent scholars such as Gadamer, Ricoeur and Pannenberg – in opposition to what he sees as Descartes' timeless and individual centered rationalism (Gadamer, 2010: 61).

He points out that some post-modern writers replace epistemology with a social or ecclesial self-construction. His purpose with The Hermeneutics of Doctrine is to establish a more significant interaction between hermeneutics and doctrine in order to contribute, at least to some extent, in rescuing Christian doctrine from its existing marginalized role and abstraction from everyday life (Thiselton, 1980: 60).

To him, there is more to the challenge than viewing doctrine as a theoretical system of truths that have little or no impact on our daily Christian lives, or even seeing doctrine as an instrument for distinguishing between true and false beliefs.

He is convinced that a thorough understanding of biblical and philosophical hermeneutics, and then specifically in its relation to doctrine, have far higher expectations of how the study of biblical texts can have not only a lasting influence but also a transforming effect on the lives of Christian believers (Gadamer, 2010: 65-70).

3.1.2 Schleiermacher on the Hermeneutics of Suspicion

The New Testament authors create and reshape their context to enhance proper understanding. “Thus, the New Testament texts illustrate how universal and particular features intersect to produce a unique literature”. Pro-seeing the specificity of both a “school” and of authors inside it. Schleiermacher is rooted in a hermeneutic tradition because of the problems he deals with (Kimmerle, 1969: 15-17).

For Kimmerle, “Schleiermacher’s preoccupation with pure understanding leads him to abstract hermeneutics from its historical matrix this happens both regarding the historicity of the object and that of the interpreter. Schleiermacher’s “shift” is challenged by the translators. A tension between difference and commonality between persons, hermeneutics spans distances.” For Schleiermacher, the historical text is not addressed directly to the present interpreter, but to an original audience. The present interpreter is to understand that original communication in terms of its historical context (Kimmerle, 1969: 23).

Schleiermacher viewed every word having a general sphere of meaning which can be 'felt' in its concrete applications ‘feeling’ instead of completeness. According to Schleiermacher, one can escape this apparent circle. One must begin by ascertaining the usage of the given word from the context of the sentence in which it occurs. Then, by comparing all known applications of the word, one can determine the general sphere in a provisional way. This provisional grasp of the general meaning becomes the point of departure for the hermeneutical operations, specifically directed towards determining the special application in each case. “Comprehensive hermeneutics commences from, dealing with the whole language, starting with children’s acquisition of language (Kimmerle, 1969: 29- 33).

Schleiermacher opposes the tendency to find hidden meanings everywhere through cabalistic interpretations, one must consider the interpretation of the original readers.

But one should not restrict interpretation to this, either. Interpretation begins only after we remove our differences from the original readers (Kimmerle, 1969: 41).

3.2 Analysis of the Theorists in Relation to the Doctrine of Hell

The understanding of the theorists paints a picture of the presence of a misunderstanding caused by modern approaches that consider individuality and personal belief at the expense of the communal nature of understanding the real meaning as argued and presented by Thiselton (Thiselton, 1980: 67).

In relation to the doctrine of Hell many churches have taken personal approach and ecclesial self-construction in understanding the whole concept. For the purpose of a harmonized approach to the understanding of the doctrine, the marginalization that has been in existence hence affecting Christian lives should be transformed for a better perception of Hell. Such an argument opens the forum for free contribution of points for and against the understanding of the doctrine through a wide and diversified interpretation vital for a smooth and agreeable move (Thiselton, 1980: 71).

Schleiermacher abstracts hermeneutics from its historical matrix this happens both regarding the historicity of the object and that of the interpreter. Under normal circumstance, the interpretation has ever missed the contextual. The historical text is not addressed directly to the present interpreter, but to an original audience. The present interpreter is to understand that original communication in terms of its historical context (Thiselton, 1980: 75).

Views from the scholar Fredrick suggests that one must begin by ascertaining the usage of the given word from the context of the sentence in which it occurs especially in the contextual base. Interpretation in this context therefore begins only after we remove our differences and varying perceptions from the original readers and consider their initial contextual interpretations (Thiselton, 1980: 80- 83).

3.3 Conclusion

The understanding of the doctrine of Hell is a concept that can be understood through embracing the communal interpretation of the doctrine as opposed to the individual or the self-constructed ecclesial approach without the consideration of wholesome understanding. For the harmonized understanding of the doctrine of Hell between the SDAs and AICs can be revisited using both communal hermeneutics of doctrine and the hermeneutics of suspicion which calls for the revisit of the initial understanding as proposed by the cited theorists.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the synthesis of the findings of the previous two chapters (two and three) under the study objectives; Evaluation of the doctrine of Hell among the SDAs and AICs in the light of the Scriptural teachings in understanding the doctrine of Hell among the SDAs and the AICs. The chapter specifically addresses the understanding of the doctrine of Hell among the SDAs with that of AICs. The chapter sought to correlate some of the information found from both chapters (two and three) with the hope that resultant information leading to a scriptural teaching on the doctrine in a clarified manner.

4.1 The Understanding of the Doctrine of Hell among the SDAs and the AICs

The section highlights the SDAs and AICs findings on the understanding of the doctrine of Hell. The SDAs understanding of the doctrine of Hell is backed by Fischer who argues that it would be repugnant to every emotion of love and mercy, and even to our sense of justice, when the wicked dead are tormented with fire and brimstone in an eternally burning Hell (Fischer, 1844: 469). The SDAs therefore believe in the existence of Hell but not eternal torment to people since that cannot be associated with a God who loves, the same God punishing them eternally. This notion is further supported by Bertrand Russell from the evangelical movement and outside the church; a philosopher who claimed that any profound humane person could not believe in everlasting punishment (Russell, 1967: 56).

On the other hand, AICSs see the Valley of *Hinnom Gehenna* as a place of final punishment a place of "absolute ruin" for all who go there. The reference to Hell fire actually refers to the "Lake of Fire" described in Revelation 20:13-15: "*And the sea gave up the dead who were in it; and death and Hell delivered up the dead who were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works"*.

This is the second death and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire". Pack further states that all who enter this lake suffer permanent death trough everlasting punishment (Pack, 2008: 61- 65).

4.1.1 SDAs Teachings on the Doctrine of Hell.

The SDAs argument on the punishment in Hell is attributed to God who is perceived to be God of mercy and love therefore He can discipline and not necessarily an everlasting torment. Scholars who venture in the understanding of God and His attributes dispute the point of everlasting torment. This is as a result of the biblical view on God who cannot love and turn to instill a cruel punishment. In a nutshell, SDAs teachings hold that hell is not eternal but clearing sin away and establish the new kingdom as opposed to everlasting torment.

4.1.2 AICs Teachings on the Doctrine of Hell.

According to the AICs, the concept of eternal punishment in hell is real for the sinners and enjoyment to the righteous who pleased God in their earthly life. AICs consider the kind of life on earth that determines the destination of an individual based on the biblical teachings on the judgment that will not be reversed but everlasting joy and celebration in heaven or suffering in hell. In a nutshell, Hell is real and eternal torment to the sinners irrespective of who God is in terms of his attributes.

4.2 Scriptural Hermeneutical Teachings on the Doctrine of Hell

The section focuses on the proposed method to handle deviations in the understanding of the doctrine in the study. The verb *'interprets'* came to refer to bringing someone to understanding of something in his language (thus, explanation) or in another language (thus, translation). The English word "interpret" is used at times to mean "explain" and at other times "translate." In its nineteen usages (both nouns and verbs) in the New Testament, it is more frequently used in the latter sense, as the following illustrates; "Explanation" "And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He explained (*"diermeneusen*") to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures" (Luke 24:27). "Translation" I Corinthians 12:10, "the interpretation of tongues" I Corinthians 14:26, "an interpretation".

In the process of interpreting the scripture, translations and explanations give out a different view on how the application is done in daily life encounter (Thiselton, 1980: 47- 50). Scholarly approach to the hermeneutics has a varying understanding explaining the results on the understanding of doctrines for instance, Hell.

Thistleton moves into modern times with extensive analysis of scholarship from the mid-twentieth century, including liberation and feminist theologies, the approach used by Thiselton brings the contextual hermeneutics in place as a preference to understanding the doctrines (Thiselton, 1980: 57).

Gadamer resisted attempting to articulate a timeless method of hermeneutics and was more intrigued by identifying the conditions of the style of interpretation. Gadamer stated that 'understanding is, essentially, a historically effected event'. He therefore rejects objective, neutral or value-free readings of legal texts, instead explaining what the conditions are for inter-subjective meaning (Chowdhury, 2016:81).

4.2.1 Hermeneutic of Suspicion Approach

As a methodological discipline, it offers a toolbox for efficiently treating problems of the interpretation of human actions, texts, and other meaningful material. Hermeneutics looks back at a long tradition as the set of problems it addresses have been prevalent in human life, and have repeatedly and consistently called for consideration: interpretation is a ubiquitous activity, unfolding whenever humans aspire to grasp whatever is interpreted and deem significant (Birch & Bruce, 1984: 24).

According to Christopher Bryan and David Landon, the expression "hermeneutic of suspicion" is a tautological way of saying what thoughtful people have always known, that words may not always mean what they seem to mean (Bryan & Landon, 2013: 19).

Some forms of expression, such as allegory and irony, depend of this fact. Sometimes a hermeneutic of suspicion may be important for more negative reasons. Among hermeneutics practiced, the study adopted the contextual (Bryan & Landon, 2013: 31).

4.2.2 Contextual Hermeneutics

It appears that before Schleiermacher, scholars appealed to hermeneutics only when they faced difficulties. In other words, they expected that interpretation and understanding were to take place automatically 'until some supposed meaning conflicted with their own prior expectations'.

Thus, hermeneutics served the purpose of preachers' prior agenda, whereas hermeneutics as 'a theory of interpretation and of understanding' seemed to have begun with Schleiermacher (1768- 1834), who insisted that hermeneutics must be freed from private and 'regional' concerns. For him hermeneutics involved philosophy, art of thinking and formed the basis for understanding texts (Thiselton, 1980: 71).

This meaning of the hermeneutic circle "conveys the crossing" in order to understand the matter (issues, Gospel, message) in the text. He notes further that the social and political environment of the interpreter affects the exegesis of a text; these factors dictate the function of the text (Burton, 2000: 21).

The function of a text as stated by Choo Lak mimics the role of a hermeneutic of suspicion expressed in feminist hermeneutics, liberation hermeneutics, postcolonial hermeneutics, to mention a few. Contextuality as a term of preference accommodates ecumenical and interreligious contexts. Contextuality accommodates every new meaning as it considers the *sitzim leben* and the meaning "it has for people where they are" (Vroom, 2006: 21).

The point made by contextuality from an African perspective is that the biblical text in its historic transmission is not free from androcentric, Eurocentric, and colonial interpretation. In support to the contextuality, Elizabeth Mburu suggests her four-legged stool model in understanding any given phenomenon; checking and applying the parallels to African contexts, the theological context, the literary context, and the historical and cultural context (Mburu, 2019: 20).

Due to its long history, it is only natural that both its problems, and the tools designed to help solve them, have shifted considerably over time, along with the discipline of hermeneutics itself. Sometimes a hermeneutic of suspicion may be important for more negative reasons, as when we suspect that texts are not telling us the whole truth. Examples would be what NT texts tell us about the doctrine of Hell in early Christianity (naturally reflecting patriarchal assumptions) or what they tell us about "the Jews" and "the Pharisees" clearly influenced by quarrels between the early church and the synagogue (Mburu, 2019: 27).

Contextual hermeneutic of suspicion can, however, be misused and overused.

Unbridled, it leads to absurdities, as in the assumption that any text involving the miraculous must be unhistorical, or the preposterous notion that Jesus, misunderstood by those who shared his language, culture, and religion, is now for the first time to be truly understood by scholars who share none of these things. In sum, it is sometimes useful to "see through" things and suspicion has its place (Thiselton, 1980: 81-83).

In relation to the chapter, there are possibilities of misrepresentations as suspected by any interpreter over a period from different contexts, causing the deviance between the two identified denominational lines that require a reinterpretation to harmonize the understanding on the doctrine of Hell (Thiselton, 1980: 90).

In the light of the probable origins of the term hermeneutics as a discipline it is therefore best and generally understood in one of two ways: firstly, the narrower understanding of hermeneutics as the theory of interpretation; and, secondly, the broader understanding of hermeneutics as addressing both the theory and the practice of interpretation (Thiselton, 1980: 93).

John Calvin is known as "one of the greatest interpreters of the Bible." Like Luther, Calvin rejected allegorical interpretations (he said they are "frivolous games" and that Origen and many others were guilty of "torturing the Scripture, in every possible sense, from the true sense"), and stressed the Christological nature of Scripture, the grammatical-historical method, exegesis rather than eisegesis, the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit, and a balanced approach to typology. In relation to the study, there is need to revisit the interpretation from all spheres in trying to shed light on the controversial understanding of the whole concept of Hell as portrayed by both the SDAs and the AICs (Calvin, 1564: 156).

4.3 Theological Reflection

On the theological reflection, perhaps the most expressed answer concerns the possibility of an irrevocable decision to reject God forever. Jerry Walls thus describes the damned as those who have made a decisive choice of evil (Walls, 1992: 18- 21). Richard Swinburne suggests that "once our will is fixed for bad, we shall never again desire or seek what we have missed" because we have made an "irrevocable choice of character" (Swinburne, 1989: 199). R. Zachary Manis interprets Kierkegaard, whose view he defends, as suggesting that the "damned are so filled with hatred so motivated by malice and spite that they will to remain in their state of torment, all for the sake of demonstrating that they are in the right, and that God is in the wrong" (Manis, 2016:

290). Another proposed answer rejects altogether the traditional idea that those in Hell are lost without any further hope of restoration. Buckareff and Plug have argued from the very nature of the divine perfections (including perfect love) that God will always have "an open-door policy towards those in Hell-making it always possible for those in Hell to escape (Buckareff & Plug, 2005: 111).

Raymond VanArragon has argued that those in Hell continue to reject God freely only if they retain the power to act otherwise and hence also the power to repent and be saved (VanArragon 2010: 51).

Because the damned never lose forever their libertarian freedom in relation to God's offer of salvation, in other words, and never lose forever the psychological possibility for genuine repentance, there is no irreversible finality in the so-called final judgment. Still, the possibility remains, according to this view, that some will never avail themselves of the opportunity to escape from Hell (VanArragon 2010: 54).

A third proposed answer rests upon a Molinist perspective, according to which God's omniscience includes what philosophers now call middle knowledge, which includes far more than a simple foreknowledge of a person's future free actions. It also includes a perfect knowledge of what a person would have done freely in circumstances that do not even obtain. So with respect to his decision whether or not to create a given person and to place that person in a given set of circumstances, God can base this decision in part on his knowledge of what the person would do freely if created and placed in these precise circumstances or if, for that matter, the person were placed in any other possible set of circumstances as well (Graig, 1989: 66- 67).

From this Molinist perspective, William Lane Craig has defended the possibility that some free persons are utterly irredeemable in this sense: nothing God can do that is, no revelation He might impart, no punishment He might administer, and no conditions He might create would ever induce them to repent freely or successfully reconcile them to Him. Craig himself calls this dreadful property of being irredeemable Trans-world damnation (Graig, 1989: 71).

4.4 Conclusion

The doctrine of Hell should be re-visited severally in the contextual manner through the reinterpretation as stipulated above to understand the real implication out of biased mood and situational issues. The two denominations under study base their understanding of the doctrine of Hell on the perception and understanding of the nature and operation of God.

Eschatologically, the AICs expect the Lord who will join them in the celebration since they waited for long, while SDAs see a God who is merciful and loving not to eternally allow sinners to suffer but to be cleared once. The basis for the choice and decision therefore should be scriptural in nature.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The aim of this study was to evaluate the teachings of the Seventh Day Adventists and the African Instituted Churches on the doctrine of Hell considering the scriptural teachings. The focus was on bringing out the findings based on the two denominations considering the scriptural teachings responding to the objectives. This chapter has presented the summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study.

5.1 Summary

The summary of the study was based on the three specific objectives as presented below;

On the exploration of the doctrinal teachings of Hell according to the SDAs and AICs, there was a notion attached to the practiced church doctrine, each denomination valuing what is clearly understood hence the varying understanding. SDAs understand doctrine of hell as not eternal because God of love ca not administer such punishment rather a short moment to clear sinful world. The AICs look forward to enjoy with the long-awaited savior to come and be together in eternal life for all that lived pleasing life. The scriptural teachings on the doctrine of hell states that all kinds of sinners are destined to hell known as the lake that burns with fire and sulfur (Rev 21:8.). The judgment determines whether humanity will be destined to hell or to heaven eternally.

In the light of the scriptural teachings on the doctrine of hell, both the SDAs and AICs have a different understating in seeing God as good and expected to celebrate with humanity and if there will be hell, it won't be eternal and the good God is powerful than Hell hence the potential of hell is powerless.

5.2 Pastoral Application

Having discussed the doctrine, there is need to obey the commands of God, walk in life choice that will not result to suffering at the end. It is a widely known concept that there is Hell however, people have perceived it as any other concept yet real that destruction is there. Therefore, as commanded by God, living worth the diving calling is vital to all people bearing in mind the eschatological judgment to come.

Hell is there and exists for the choice made by human beings while alive, the state or place to be after the life on earth. Life on earth should carry the reflection of the life after for the purpose of determining the kind of judgment to be bestowed on an individual.

God as the creator has power to determine human fate without any hindrance therefore, the decision made in an individual's life should be the subject to God's power. In a nutshell, the porter has the power and decision to make over what he wants to make; the shape and design. Human responsibility is to obey and live in the parameter of God's will.

5.3 Conclusion

The conclusion of this study was based on the following findings in conjunction with the objectives: In this study, Hell is real whether an SDAs follower or AICs or any other denomination and was understood based on what takes place; the destruction and suffering for the wicked as a judgment in line with the kind of live led.

The variance or deviation in understanding Hell results from the different hermeneutical versions stemming from the historical to the present without focusing on the context and changes experienced from time to time.

Avoiding the variance in the understanding of Hell is solvable through embracing Contextual Hermeneutics under hermeneutics of suspicion which considers the historical application, the present and the future as opposed to limited approach.

Whether a valley or a pit, Hell is a place for destruction and eternal comprising of all the wicked from different deeds. The citizens to Hell are determined by deeds that one does while still alive which are brought to judgment at the end for the rewards accordingly. There is no need of different understandings and debates since whether a state or a place, Hell exists.

5.4 Recommendations

The recommendations in this chapter were drawn based on the objectives regarding the understanding of the doctrine of Hell. The following were made as recommendations; the scripture should be used as the basis and overall approach to understanding concepts and not church doctrinal teachings based on what humanity deem right in their context.

The study recommends further exploration on the understanding of the doctrine of Hell beyond the two denominations used as cases so that the gap in between the denominational practices can be minimized. There is need for the two denomination to revisit the beginning of their denomination and draw their beliefs from one biblical source through the clear hermeneutical approach.

The deviation and the understanding of the doctrine should be handled through revisiting the historical approach to the whole issue to bring out the clear picture in order to gap the unconformity. The study recommends the need to visit variety of scholarly work on matters of the doctrine checking on the perspective used in understanding of the doctrine.

In a nutshell, the researcher having done a thorough work mainly library-based work, there is a feeling that more in-depth work in terms of time and resources is required to see whether doctrinal harmonization between the Seventh Day Adventists and the African Instituted Churches could be arrived at.

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