ESCHATOLOGYIN THE THEOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN AND JÜRGEN MOLTMANN: TOWARDS A DYNAMIC BALANCE

BY

JULIUS MUTEMBEI MURITHI

(MTH/NRB/4623/16)

THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF THE AWARD OF MASTERS IN THEOLOGY (MTH) FROM ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

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27th AUG 2019

DECLARATION

This dissertation proposal is the product of my own work and is not the result of anything done in collaboration. It has not been previously presented to any other institution. I agree that this proposal may be available for reference and photocopying at the discretion of the University.

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT _____ DATE_____

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

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_____DATE _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My foremost gratitude goes to God, for the dissertation idea, good health and providence, which enabled me complete the work and achieve my objectives.

Secondly, I extend acknowledgement to my able supervisors Rev. Dr. John Kiboi and Rev. Dr. Julius Kithinji for their guidance, encouragement, counsel and ensuring thoroughness that has made this dissertation come this far.

I thank my entire family for the moral and financial support accorded to me tirelessly. Much appreciation goes to those who have assisted me in typesetting and in editing my work. Finally, to the proposal defense panel whose critique, corrections and comments have helped me to make my research work to a better level, I am highly indebted.

May the Lord Almighty bless you and grant you His favor.

ABSTRACT

Universalism in the eschatology and particularity in salvation are grounds of controversies especially between groups that consider themselves more enthusiastic than others. If all biblical scripture is taken to be inspired and true, it would be wrong to attempt to take some as truer than others or as divine revelation and not others. This dissertation was guided by both the research objectives and questions. Objectives were to demonstrate the anxiety caused by universalism and particularism on the nature of the eschatology; to explore two major perspectives on the nature of the end times as taught by John Calvin and Jürgen Moltmann and to provide a dynamic balance between universalism and particularism for a harmonious understanding. Questions were; what is the anxiety caused by universalism and particularism on the nature of the eschatology? What are the two major perspectives on the nature of the end times as taught by John Calvin and Jürgen Moltmann? How can the dynamic balance between universalism and particularism be achieved? The dissertation found out that Moltmann's theology of universal salvation was the position that the nature of eschatology was a process at which at the onset, the kingdom of God was setting in and the point at which the eternal life begins. Preaching the gospel of universal salvation could easily be criticized for encouraging antinomianism and don't care spirits while embracing double predestination would too encourage antinomianism. Therefore, there was need to hold them at tension by using the principle of dynamic balance in which eventual redemption is grounded in the work of Christ at the Cross. In the dynamic balance, Christ the creator of the universe is the savior of the same universe. In eternity, those who will respond to the gospel are called the elect and those who will reject are called reprobates. The following were the recommendations from this dissertation; to avoid a state of anxiety and possible antinomianism among the Christians. This dissertation presents the ground that all scriptures are inspired and true, therefore there is need to hold all doctrines that seem to contradict one another in tension through the principle of dynamic balance. Since all perspectives resulting from the various hermeneutical approaches are considered correct by those who subscribe to them or those who find them convenient, such doctrine create unnecessary anxiety and confusion among Christians.

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ABBREVIATIONS

GC	Great Commission
KMC	Kariokor Methodist Church
RDER	Rethinking the Doctrine of Election and Reprobation
RDPS	Rethinking the Doctrine of Particular Salvation
TULIP	Total Unconditional Limited Irresistible Perseverance
TUS	Theology of Universal Salvation

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

The background of this dissertation presents the base for Calvin's soteriological particularity and Moltmann's eschatological universalism, bringing on board the empirical showcases, demonstrating the arguments of both Calvin and Moltmann in relation to the contemporary theological hermeneutics and reflections.

I once attended a conference that had attracted a tremendous congregation at Kariokor Methodist Church (KMC). The church was a magnificent sanctuary and it was easy to tell that no expense was spared in its establishment. A colleague who was also at the conference wondered if such a spectacular sanctuary would be folded up, thrown into fire and destroyed as it is stated in the word concerning end times, much later, in a catechism class, my catechumens asked me the fate of a sinner after the final judgment. "Is it true that all things shall pass away at the end?" It then dawned on me that such questions are occasioned by the way people interpret scriptures and emphasize certain texts. The emphasis put on texts that talk of the annihilation of the universe leads to such anxiety. My attention was thus drawn to scriptures and theological perspectives about the end of things (Eschatology). In my search, I realized that there are scriptures in the Bible that presented three possible fates of the sinner and the universe in three versions. First is that sinners and the material world will be annihilated by fire in Hell. Second, that the sinners will eventually be forgiven and the entire world will be recreated into new heavens and new earth (universalism) and the third version is that sinners will be tormented forever in hell fire (particularism). These three perspectives have Biblical bases and are stressed in equal measure by different Church traditions.

The various interpretations of scriptures on end times, causing anxiety and confusion among Christians formed the basis for this dissertation and guided the choice of the title of my dissertation. In the preliminary research, I have surveyed various theological scholars who have been confronted with similar questions and have given varied perspectives depending on the type of hermeneutics they have employed in reading scriptures that speak of the fate of the sinner (Gutessen. P, 2008:231). Such scholars are Jürgen Moltmann and John Calvin. In this dissertation, Jürgen Moltmann who represents the Universalistic views and John Calvin who represents Particularistic views were used.

Moltmann and Calvin were chosen because of their differing perspectives. Calvin, on one hand, has influenced the Church and theologians for centuries. Moltmann on the other hand, is quite contemporary to the 20th century and likely to influence 21st –Postmodern Christians.

1.1 Problem Statement

Universalism, particularism and annihilationism having biblical base, creates anxiety among many Christians and some have ended up holding onto one that suits their personal situations and ignoring that which seems to oppress them; and this has led to feelings of ambivalence on the matter of the end times. This dissertation explored a dynamic through hermeneutical approach to obtain a balance and arrive to a harmonious understanding regardless of the diversified doctrinal approach.

1.2 Objectives

1. To demonstrate the anxiety caused by universalism and particularism on the nature of the eschatology.

2. To explore two major perspectives on the nature of the end times as taught by John Calvin and Jürgen Moltmann.
3. To provide a dynamic balance between universalism and particularism for a harmonious understanding.

1.3 Research questions

1. What is the anxiety caused by universalism and particularism on the nature of the eschatology?
2. What are the two major perspectives on the nature of the end times as taught by John Calvin and Jürgen Moltmann?
3. How can the dynamic balance between universalism and particularism be achieved?

1.4 Methodology

This dissertation endeavours to set out a dynamic balance between the universalism in Jürgen Moltmann's theology and the particularity of salvation by John Calvin in his theology. This study intends to find the dynamic balance between the two perspectives derived from the application of various hermeneutical approaches limiting the scope on Calvin and Moltmann.

Furthermore, the focus on data was purely library based, involving the secondary data on the identified doctrines. For this reason, this dissertation has used Dynamic Balance as a theological hermeneutic. Dynamic Balance is a mechanical principle which explains the ability of an object to balance or switching between positions. It is concerned with the effects of forces on the motion of a body.

On the Post-Colonial Hermeneutics of Suspicion, some texts in the Bible are dismissed as being non-revelatory, operating from the principle that all scriptures are inspired, argues that divine

revelation is both instantaneous and progressive. It is further asserted that God from the very beginning revealed His will but that humanity receives clarity of these revelations progressively (John Kiboi, 2015:57). This dissertation, however, departs from this viewpoint and proposes that such apparently contradicting revelations should be held in tension and hence proposes the Dynamic Balance as a suitable hermeneutical tool.

Whilst the Church teaches that revelations ended at a particular time in the history of the Church and Kiboi argues that since then revelation is made clearer with unfolding of events, this dissertation avers that the instantaneous and progressive (static and dynamic) should be held in tension.

The methodology of the study; dynamic balance will bring a common or harmonized ground to amalgamating the Moltmann and Calvin's views on the universalism and particularity. Thus, this dissertation argues that both the texts that advocate for particularism and those that argue for universal salvation should not each be understood in isolation as crude and vague but both should be seen as true

1.5 Aim

The aim of this dissertation is to establish a dynamic balance in theology that is accommodative to the scriptures and offers pastoral solace to the anxious faithful Christians.

1.6 Hypothesis

This dissertation presupposed that the use of Dynamic balance as a theological hermeneutic in reflecting on the two major perspectives would possibly hold the two perspectives in tension thus alleviating anxiety.

1.7 Significance

In a Postmodern world, there is a lot of knowledge and people are highly educated and informed through social media and modern technology. Since Postmodernity is full of relativism, teaching the doctrine of end time requires critical thought about what the Bible says and the reality of things in the natural world. How rational is it to teach the doctrine of immortality in the context of philosophical rationalism? Teaching a God who creates only to annihilate that which He has called good (Gen. 1:31) does not make much sense. It becomes more complex to teach that God has a particular group of people called the elect who are entitled to eternal life notwithstanding of their character, and reprobates who are condemned to eternal damnation. While teaching God being all in all will accommodate both sinners and righteous people in His new dispensation does not make sense either. Therefore, we need a dynamic balance to hold these two perspectives.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the introduction to the dissertation focusing on the background information, the problem statement which is the varying understanding of the doctrines as put forward by Calvin and Moltmann, the objectives and questions, methodology and the significance of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

PARTICULAR SALVATION IN THE ESCHATOLOGY OF JOHN CALVIN

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the particular salvation in John Calvin's eschatology, which is rooted in his doctrine of double predestination (Calvin, 1998:123). The chapter addresses the first objective of the dissertation focusing on demonstrating the anxiety that is caused by the contradicting perspectives between Calvin and Moltmann.

Controversies experienced in the value given to each doctrine leaves contemporary Christians in a dilemma and extreme anxiety that should be addressed with an understanding that all polemics attached to each doctrine have a biblical scriptural support believed to be inspired.

In the doctrine of particular salvation, Calvin teaches that from eternity God purposed to create some human beings who would eventually be condemned to hell and others elected to salvation (Clarke James, 2011:87).This doctrine thus advocates for particularism. For us to address Calvin's eschatology effectively, we shall discuss his doctrine of salvation via election. Calvin's five pillars (Total Unconditional Limited Irresistible Perseverance) abbreviated as TULIP are viewed as an exclusive approach to a creation that God put in place. The pillars talk of the original sin (Total Depravity), the election which is Unconditional, the atonement for some i.e. Limited, Irresistible grace that is effectual calling, and the perseverance of saints. The study looks at God's approach to restore the deprived. Who qualifies for life? Who does not qualify? What was the achievement of Christ's death? Why did Christ die? We began with Calvin's doctrine of creation and specifically his doctrine of sin (the fall) in which he roots the doctrine of election and hence reprobation and damnation of the reprobates at eschaton.

2.1 John Calvin's on Creation and State of Humanity

In the theology of Calvin, God is infinitely distinct, Eternal Creator and his goodness, wisdom, and power are abundant to the creatures. The agent of creation is triune and the act of creation is 'from nothing' as well as in and with time. This is a resolute beginning, forming creaturely goodness and order for the Creator's glory and fatherly care portrayed in Creation. Calvin's understanding of humanity is that it is created in the image of God and his likeness. That is in an act of divine love, humans are made in God's image. This means that humans were endowed with integrity of nature, 'soundness in all parts', right understanding, bounded affection, tempered sense for which they directed praise to God. It means that human beings, unique among all God's creatures, participate in the powers of God; wisdom, justice and goodness and so reflect God's glory (Insti 1.15).

On the contrary, Calvin's approach on the human creation and predestination is disquieting. He asserts that God did not love all including those who descended from Abrahamic genealogy; he loved some and hated some. Quoting Deuteronomy 7:7-8 which says, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people: for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you."

Calvin taught that God's will is to be our resting place. He cautions those trying to go beyond the limit of their understanding. When men hear of election, they immediately want to ask, "Why would God choose some, and not others?" To this Calvin replied: "When they inquire into predestination, let then remember that they are penetrating into the recesses of the divine wisdom, where he who rushes forward securely and confidently, instead of satisfying his curiosity will enter in (an) inextricable labyrinth"(Calvin, 3.21.1).

2.2 The Fall and Theology of Inherited Sin in the Theology of Calvin

In his comment on Genesis 3:7 Calvin (158-159) emphasizes the noetic effects of the fall through the sense of evil as a result of Adam and Eve eating the fruit which opened there eyes. The act therefore is not fleshly, but the destruction done to the will and mind of the person that are the major effects of the fall (*Comm. Genesis*158-159).

In the Institutes (2.1.7) Calvin locates the reason for humankind's guilt in God's ordination. The source of the impurity is neither in the substance of the flesh nor the soul, but Lord was delighted to ordain that those gifts which he had conferred on the first man, that man should lose as well for his offspring as for himself (Inst.., 2.1.7).

According to Calvin, the fall leads to a weakening of the soul's capacity to maintain the integrity of the body and soul (Inst. 1.15.6). The crippling effect of corruption of the image, according to Calvin is located in the soul. In his view, the blemish of sin exists in the Spirit as well as in the flesh. The flesh here shouldn't be likened with the human body terms. In his thinking Calvin holds that the entire humanity is in the state of sin (Inst., 2.3.1). Flesh is the inclination of mind in separation from the Lord which misuses the body and the soul (Miles, 1981:312). The soul participates in the flesh more than the body does, because when the Bible says that a person must be saved; it refers soul not the body. It is hard for the body to be re-born (Inst., 2.3.1). In his thinking Calvin alludes that the body plays no part either in the corruption of the soul or in its own corruption, but it is the deserted victim of the destructive supremacy of the flesh. It is the mind and its potential awareness of the glory of God that interests Calvin. The body has no potential for awareness (Miles, 1981:314).

The critical nature of the humanity leads to diverse comprehensions of the genre of the transmission of the original sin. In as much as Calvin explains transgression as a genetic corruption in every part of the human being, he does not infer to biological types to explain total depravity and the dissemination thereof. Calvin's comments on Psalm chapter 51 (1846: 291), alludes that the query on the transmission of evils from Adam to following generations is not important and that it is not practical to engage into such mysterious discussions.

Unlike his predecessors like St. Augustine who held that sin was transmitted to progenitors by means of pro-creation, for Calvin sin is a divine decree and it is not transmitted through conception. Furthermore, in the (Inst.2.13.4) Calvin emphasized that the reason why Jesus was sinless was not as result of virginal conception, but because he was consecrated by the Holy Spirit. It would be inappropriate to hold the view that Jesus the Son of God was free from all defects, and was begotten to Mary's seed, through mysterious procedure of the Holy Spirit. Can we therefore infer that the seed of a woman is pure whereas the seed of a man is the one which is impure? Jesus Christ was spotless simply because he was born by the lady who was not connected with a man, but due to the sanctification done through the Holy Ghost in order for the generation to be pure and innocent, in a manner that it would have been before the fall of Adam Sin is therefore not transmitted through conception according to Calvin, but as a result the divine decree by God (Inst. 2.13.4).

2.3 Calvin on Sin and Atonement

According to Calvin, by wilful perversity and sin, humanity corrupted the image of God in which they had been created; through which they would come to the knowledge of God their creator (Zachman Randall, 1988: 64-68). However, in Christ, humanity behold the image of God made visible so that it can make reliable judgments about what it is even as we are transformed by it

and conformed to it (Ephesians. 4:23-24 ,2nd Corinthians 3:28 and Colossian. 3:10). Calvin supposes that God's image at creation is restored in Christ 'the most perfect image of God (Insti 1.8.51). While we are never fully divested of our vices in this life, the image only ever attains 'its full splendour in heaven,' the renewal of the image of Lord in us is the goal of the Christian life. It takes place through union with Christ, a life of repentance and forgiveness, with the guidance of the law, and by the restoring power and grace of the Holy Spirit. The divine image in humans is more easily recognized where the healing has begun in the household of faith (Galatians 6:10). Nevertheless, divine kindness means that 'remaining traces' or 'obscure lineaments' of God's image remain in all humans that it distinguishes them from 'brute beasts,' enables them to serve Lord's humane purposes in the world and then it moves Christians to love and honour all people.

Calvin's approach to the doctrine of sin and atonement is ontological. This approach is seen in his centrally organized work as he tries to establish and maintain God's glory. For Calvin showing this vision of the glory of God, he uses humanity as a foil. The faculties of human beings and works are all corrupted, therefore, inadequate for salvation (Miles, 1981:304). God's knowledge and that of the self is thus of utmost importance in achieving the consciousness of God's glory. It is from this evidence that we built a drive for the teaching of Calvin on total depravity. Pitkin (1999:349) alludes that Calvin moves the focus of the total depravity debate to his own paramount concern: God's knowledge and self.

Calvin's own statements in the *Institutes* ascribes to three crucial concepts. He starts by saying that, the real remission of sin was procured by Christ's death. In his view, Christ's death actually remitted sins of some people. In the second place, Christ's death actually remitted the sins of all the elect, and they alone. That is therefore to say, Christ's atonement was for a specific number of people. Thirdly Calvin explicitly teaches that Christ proposed to die for the elect in order to

secure their atonement. The redemption of the elect is something that can be directly correlated with what Christ by his death purposed (Venema P. Cornelis, 1986).

The saving work of Christ according to Calvin is in accordance to his three offices that is, prophet, priest and king (Inst. 2.15.1). Being the seer, He was anointed by the Spirit to be the bearer and witness of the Father's grace . . .the anointing He was given was not only for himself that he might carry out the office of teaching, but for the entire body that the Spirit's power might be present in the continuing proclamation of the Gospel (Inst. 2.15. 2). Being the ruler, he will be the eternal defender and protector of his Church, (Inst. 2.15.3). Being the priest, penitence must mediate in order that Jesus as a priest may acquire the favour of God for us and appease his wrath. Consequently, the sacrifice had to be brought forward in order for Christ to perform this office (Inst. 2.15.6). We were reconciled to God through Christ.

Suppose a man learns, Calvin says, that he was estranged from God through sin, he is a beneficiary of wrath, subject to eternal curse of death, disqualified from all hope of redemption, outside every blessing of God, living under the bondage of transgression, predestined for a horrible destruction and already involved in it; it is in this state Christ came in as the advocate for the man, He took upon himself and bore the punishment that, from Lord's righteous judgement, threatened every sinner; that he eradicated with his blood all the evils which had rendered the sinners detestable to God; that by his penitence he made contentment and sacrifice duly to God the Father; him being an intercessor he has appeased the wrath of God; therefore on this basis rests the peace of God with human beings; that by this bond his magnanimity is upheld toward them. Will the person not then be even more stimulated by all these things which so vividly describe the magnitude of the catastrophe from which he has been saved? (Inst. 2.16.2).

This marks our exoneration; the guilt that apprehended us responsible for penalty has been transferred to the Son of God (Isaiah. 53:12). It is of essence always to note that, Christ became our subrogation lest we tremble and remain anxious in our lifetime as if the righteous vengeance of God, which Jesus Christ took upon himself, still hung over us (Inst. 2.16.5). Christ's obedience, however, accurately attained and warranted grace for us with his Father. The Bible in many passages with conviction firmly attests this. Calvin infers that it should be ordinary that if Jesus Christ made contentment for our sins, if he compensated the penalty due to us, if Christ appeased God by his obedience, if as a righteous person Christ suffered for unholy people then he acquired redemption for us by his righteousness, which is tantamount to deserving it (Inst. 2.17.3).

2.4 Particularity in the Theology of Calvin

In his institutes (Inst..,3.21.7), Calvin alludes to the fact that, the only sins that are remitted are for the elect. It was in the hands of Abraham the adoption was put. However, due to many offspring of Abraham who were left out as rotten members, we must ascend to the Head, in whom the Heavenly Father has assembled his chosen together, and has joined them to himself by permanent bond, for the election to be effectual and truly enduring (Inst. 3.21.7) while the world itself is left to its own destruction, to which it has been predestined. Although Jesus Christ intervened himself as a mediator, he claims for himself, in common with the Father, the right to choose. Christ is speaking not, 'of all' he knows whom he has selected (John 13: 18). If anyone asks whence, he has chosen them, his response in a different passage: From the world (John 15:19), which he omits from his prayers when he commends his Apostles to the Father (John 17:9). This we must believe: when he declares that he knows whom he has chosen, he designates in the human genus a specific species, distinguished not by the quality of its virtues but by

heavenly decree, (Inst. 3.22.7). In commentary to Isaiah 8:15-16 (And many shall stumble on it. They shall fall and be broken; they shall be snared and taken.' Bind up the testimony; seal the teaching among my disciples) Calvin interprets 'my disciples from the background of his doctrine of election and blatantly displays how he directs the assurances of redemption precisely to the elect: for he asserts that they alone, not everybody without distinction, are to become his followers. He argues that it is clear that the doctrine of salvation, which is said to be kept solely and individually for those members of the church, is deceptively debased when presented as effectually beneficial to all (Inst. 3.22.10).

For whom did Jesus Christ intend to die? When deliberating the fact that Jesus is both Redeemer and Judge, Calvin raises a brilliant solace: that we recognize judgment to be in the hands of him who has already destined us to share with him the honour of judging (Matt. 19:28). Far indeed is he from mounting his judgment seat to condemn us! How could the head scatter his own members? How could our most compassionate King destroy his own? How could our Advocate condemn his clients? Therefore, the Father has glorified the Son Jesus Christ by giving all the judgement to him up to the end so that he may tend the consciences of people ,who quiver in dread of judgement (John 5:22). However, it should be noted that this solace is only unto the elect but a terror unto the reprobates.

Calvin shows that he is settled with the thought that Christ has his people over whom he gives life and rules. In what way can this be? This is not because they have chosen to be his, as it has been demonstrated. They already are elected to redemption. Rather, as Calvin remarks, Jesus Christ the Redeemer cares for the people whom the Father has given him. Not just by being 'a Redeemer', but he is 'their Redeemer'. Our only ground for being strong and confidence: is what Christ teaches here: Christ gives an assurance that whatever the Lord has bestowed to him will

be safe, and this is what liberates us of all anxiety and makes us victorious in the midst of many snares, dangers, and physical struggles (John 10:28-29). Then who are these? These are the sheep to which eternal life is given by the Shepherd; the elect.

Calvin talks of the Head, in whom the Almighty in Heaven has assembled his elect together, and has united them to himself by an everlasting bond, in the members of Christ a far more excellent power of grace appears, for, affixed to their Head, they are never removed from salvation, (Inst. 3.21.7). The members of Christ are the elect, affixed into the Head. In a conspicuous phrase, Calvin is referring to Christ as the, 'Author of election'. Then if Christ Jesus is the author of election and the elect are a certain number, how can it be that Jesus Christ would die for some whom he had not elected? In the same section, Calvin remarks that Jesus Christ will never let any of his people whom he has once for all engrafted into his body to die.

All whom the Father desires to be saved Jesus declares aloud that he has taken under his care (cf. John 6:37, 39; 17:6, 12). Therefore, if we wish to know whether God cares for our redemption, let us ask if he has entrusted us to Christ, whom he has established as the only Saviour of all his people (Inst. 3.21.6). If Lord the Father has recognised Jesus Christ as the only Redeemer of all his persons, and if Christ has taken such persons under his guard, can it be supposed that, in Calvin's view, Christ died for the whole world? In his work on predestination, commenting on John 6:37, Calvin says:

Here we have three things, briefly indeed, but most perspicuously expressed. First, that all who come unto Christ were before given unto Him by the Father; secondly, that those who were thus given unto Him were delivered, as it were, from the hand of the Father into the hand of the Son, that they may be truly His; thirdly, that Christ is the sure keeper of all those whom the Father

delivered over to His faithful custody and care, for the very end that he might not suffer one of them to perish (*Predestination*, 50).

According to Calvin, Jesus Christ takes care of 'those', particularly, 'only those', assigned to his upkeep by the Father in such a way that none of them will perish. In a contentious tract on the Holy Communion against Hesshusius, Calvin states that the most important thing to be explained is how Christ is present with unbelievers to be the spiritual food of their souls, and in short, the life and salvation of the world. Calvin rules out the likelihood of Christ dying for the reprobates. He states: "I desire to know how the unrighteous can eat the body of Christ which was not crucified for them, and how they can take the blood which was not poured to atone their sins?" (Reid Jack, 1954, 285).

2.5 Synthesis and Critique of Calvin's Perspectives

What was the role of God in the fall of man? Instead of Calvin in his commentary on Genesis providing a detailed account of the fall, he rather describes how it was practicable that the original nature of man could fall. According to Calvin God did only allow, but actually ordained the fall. To begin with, he argues that evil isn't from nature but from desertion therefore, Adam fell into sin due to his own mistaking (Calvin, 142). However, the fall of Adam was not without the will and ordination of Creator as the created personality of the first human beings will make such a defection possible (Calvin, 144). Calvin in his commentary on Genesis 3:7 he (158) avers it even more plainly that God formed man flexible, and not only allowed, but purposed that he should be tempted. It sounds logical to draw an inference that since God ordained this fall, He must be having his role.

He blames sin and evil on God's permission (Calvin, 158). According to Calvin the decree of God on reprobation and election, are not as a result of the fall, but were created before it, and they had nothing to do with it, God saw the fall ahead, and compelled it (Bonner, 1963:387). Calvin traced sin in the eternal decree and permission of God. He moved the focus in his teaching on total depravity to God's knowledge as well as the self. The effect was that he emphasized the noetic character of sin as moral and religious blindness. Calvin states that, sin is transmitted not through conception, but due to God's divine decree.

Calvin ascribes original sin to human being's yearning for dishonest knowledge. Total depravity designates a transformation of the mind. The first couple's sin can be best understood as unbelief that was shared by both Adam and Eve and not as a pride (Calvin, 152-153). By emphasizing fundamentally, the noetic character of the first transgression, he changes the focus away from the role of the will in the fall. In as much as the will was part of the fall and deserted with the mind, Calvin puts more emphasis on the mind's role. Total depravity is, alongside with a misdirected will, lack of knowing God as well as self. The corruption of mind is not merely moral in nature, but it is an essential religious blindness.

Calvin's emphasis on original sin as a corruption of the mind and the will, however, he escalates the issue of sin by asserting that the mind itself no longer knows the good to be done. This divergent understanding of sin is mainly because of a different understanding of the essence of human nature. According to Calvin (Inst. 1.15.2) man is made up of a soul and a body. The soul is the upright part and the chief seat of the divine image, whereas the body is purely the dwelling of the soul. God's image is exhibited in the soul through the light of the intellect, whereas the body is a reflection of the soul's dynamics.

Therefore, even if the soul is not the man, there isn't illogicality in believing that he is known as God's image in respect of the soul. Through the term 'God's image' stands for the uprightness with which the first man was endowed when his intellect was pure, his affections subordinated to reason, all his senses properly synchronized, and when he actually attributed all his excellence to the commendable gifts of the creator. Even though the chief seat of the divine image was in the soul and its powers, the rays of glory at the beginning shone everywhere even in the entire body. God's image was revealed through the illumination of intellect, righteousness of heart, and trustworthiness of each part (Inst.., 1.15.3).

The unity of humankind in sin is not a physical union, but a theological union. According to God man is a sinner, that is, Adam. However, the sin of humanity is not Adam's act, but Adam's sin is the act of humanity. God is just and therefore he cannot impute guilt to the entire humanity, due to the state of total depravity a state of inherited human nature (Ps. 51). Though human race cannot be held liable for something inherited since inheritance describes that which precurses the individual and for which he cannot account, human beings can be held liable for activities that they freely decide on even if it is inescapable that they would make the wrong decision (Niebuhr, 1941:66). Since the activities of man can either be unavoidable or freely chosen, man is really and truly guilty of Adam's sin (Rees, 2003:81).

The relationship between unavoidability and obligation is thus not conflicting, but rather dialectical in nature. Romans chapter 5 portrays a centeredness picture as first man who is Adam and the second man who is Jesus are perceived as agents of different ages. Paul, thus, stresses that grace of God in Adam rules over the power of sin in Adam. Apostle Paul describes the universal accountability of humankind in Romans chapter 5 christologically and corporately (Ridderbos, 1966:60). According to Ridderbos, in Romans chapter 5 Apostle Paul's didactic

determination isn't to uphold the presence of a distinctive sinner, but to stress the universal reach though not universal efficacy of salvation in Jesus Christ (Ibid). Paul doesn't look at the transgression of one man as the sin of all, but all acting in the sole individual who is representative to the group (Berkouwer, 1971:323). Sin is individual and real in all mankind in that each man lives separate of a right individual relationship with God and therefore in a moral state of sin. Sin is not only possibly part of humanity, but essentially, since man exists in the old era that is categorized by religious and moral blindness and a troubled relationship with God.

Although it is reasonable to conclude that the collective essence of Christ's saving work can only be ascribed to the universal nature of sin and the sacrificial atonement of Christ was essential simply because man is guilty in the presence God for his sins, and incapable, it is difficult to reconcile this with Calvin's insistence on Christ's atonement being limited to the chosen.

Jesus, in the opinion of Calvin, has the role of congregating all the children of the Father, the chosen, in one by his death. Is it not logical to deduce that Jesus did this knowingly and deliberately, and that through his death he purposed to save the chosen only? Then John Murray stands right in saying that 'Election is fundamental to Calvin's thinking, and election implies differentiation at the fountain of the whole process of salvation'. The evidence indicates that Calvin did not discount this differentiation at the point of Christ's expiatory offering (Buren, 1959:59).

So far, we have seen according to Calvin's teaching Christ's work from incarnation to his glorification focused only on the death of Jesus Christ which atoned for divine justice. The death of Jesus Christ brings redemption to the chosen, for through his death, Jesus Christ simply proposed to save the chosen. The matter that has been under discussion has one important

weakness; Calvin against explicit Biblical teaching. The question arises, if Jesus in fact died for a specific people, what of the universal atonement as taught in John 3:16 states?

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that Calvin's doctrine of salvation as rooted in his understanding of creation, responding to objective two on the apparent contradicting perspectives; that before the foundations of the earth, God by divine providence elected some to eternal salvation and others to eternal damnation without privilege and therefore damned. We notice apparent contradictions especially in his doctrine of election when it stands in opposition to explicit Biblical teachings that exhort humanity to believe in Christ in whom election is supposed to have taken place. From the argument of the gospel offering salvation to all, his stand on the election does not hold the link with predestination thus a contradiction.

CHAPTER THREE

UNIVERSAL SALVATION IN THE ESCHATOLOGY OF JURGEN MOLTMANN

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the varying views on the universal salvation and eschatological understanding as put forward by Calvin and Moltmann that in one way or the other have proved to be a problem in the Christian understanding. Moltmann has argued on the doctrines however he has varying views yet has relationship. The argument was based on the second objective which dealt with the varying perspectives.

Every Christian believer is confronted with questions regarding the nature of God and how He will deal with their sinful nature or precisely how He will deal with sinners. In the previous chapter, Calvin's perspective was analysed and observed that according to Calvin the sinners were eternally predestined to damnation and have no option but to accept that portion of creation. However, it was also noted that Calvin did not give certain biblical teachings their due position in his exegesis. This is what has led the study to consider another perspective on God's dealings with His creation appears to be opposed to Calvin's stand with hope of finding solutions where he failed to offer us one.

This chapter explores the future of creation and considers the impact of Moltmann's view of creation on this gradually increasing theological concern. This discussion shall particularly centre on the future of creation.

3.1 God and Creation

3.1.1 Love of God and Redemption

God as the creator does not leave the fallen man but derives a way to bring him back to his initial glory. This is realized in the process of redemption which has a universal approach for instance in Ephesians 1:7 "we have redemption in the Lord" carrying a picture of all regardless of who they are or what they do. This chapter has dealt with the varying views of the identified authors (Moltmann and Calvin).

3.1.2 Moltmann's perspective

Moltmann, just like Calvin, roots his discussion of eschatology and the fate of the entire creation in the purpose of creation and unlike Calvin; he introduces the character of God. He zeros in on the faithfulness and love of God. He opines that the heavenly love is for the entire creation and therefore, the Lord's future is for all things. For him, the divine affection is for the entire creation. Therefore, the Lord's future is for all things (Moltmann, 1991:57).

The Trinity's realm embraces all, not just metaphorically speaking: 'the correlative relations of the Trinity are wide open such that the entire world can find an expanse, and vindication, and its own glorification.' Embrace covers everything, not just metaphorically speaking: 'the mutual relationships of the Trinity are so wide open that in them the entire universe can find a wide space, and redemption, and its own glorification'. The Lord 'presses towards' congregation of all things in order for love to find it's fulfilment, eventually to take the entire creation far from the reach of transgression and death. God's motive therefore, includes each of His creation since He is devoted to all that the Divine has created (Moltmann, 1991:57).

Since the creator of all creation is still the one who redeems it, Moltmann is of the view that the two occurrences definitely have the same breath: 'the Reconciler is definitely the Creator, and consequently, the eschatological prospect of reunion should mean the reunion of the entire creation, and should unfold eschatology of all things. For purpose of this reason, therefore, the 'resolution to create then means a resolution to save' (Moltmann, 1968:370).

According to Moltmann, then, the intent and readiness to take up the entire undertaking that would finalize creation was already there. He adds that the manner in which the Lord remains steadfast to the creation is 'righteousness.' As the Almighty is virtuous, hope is ubiquitous and all things are entitled to life. Consequently, God would 'impugn himself' if He didn't carry the entire creation to the ending (Moltmann, 1968:377).

Moltmann posits that the Lord's active fellowship with the entire creation reveals the everlasting affection for, besides devotion to, the universe. God's deeds therefore, speak of hope for the whole creation. On this note, how does Moltmann regard this to be so? His stand is well summarized in his words:

> The anointing of the Holy Spirit 'on every flesh' has to be accompanied by 'the restoration to life,' just as the revival of mankind from the Spirit have to be accompanied by the revival of the cosmos. The rising of Jesus from the dead is definitely accompanied by the restoration to life of all the dead as well as the obliteration of death itself. The reunion of the world via the death of Jesus must be accompanied by the new creation, just as the incarnation of Christ has to be accompanied by the renewal, transfiguration along with 'deification 'of the cosmos (Moltmann, 1991:103).

3.1.3 Holy Spirit in Creation

The roles of the Spirit, as earlier examined are, in the view of Moltmann, part of the basis for ubiquitous hope. The Holy Spirit breaths in the entire creation; this depicts that there is a desire

for the absolution of all (Moltmann, 2003:114). The Holy Spirit uplifts each one of the creations and guides and succours it towards new creation (Moltmann, 2003:115). The Holy Spirit indwells each of the creation, sanctifies it in addition to joining the world and the Lord in a lasting relationship. It is the Holy Spirit who unifies creation to the history of Christ and ushers in the new creation's power to old creation (Moltmann, 1970:154). The Holy Spirit is 'the promise of the future' as well as 'the existence of the future' in the present-day, again the promise of God of the new creation to be (Moltmann, 1970:155).

3.1.3.1 The Suffering and Death of Christ

The major focus in the suffering and death of Christ was to bring mankind back to the lost glory when the disobedient act ruled the human heart. The suffering process was a remedy to human beings and redemption from the sinful nature. As argued by Clerk (2011:212), Christ in other words would not deserve the suffering however it happened to offer salvation base for mankind. This argument portrays a universal feeling of the saviour in ransoming the world.

According to Moltmann, he categorically noted that 'in attempting to quantify the reach of the Christian hope, we should not veer off into far-off spheres, but must plunge ourselves in the profundity of the death of Christ at Golgotha' (Moltmann, 1979:502). The suffering and death of Christ were not only concerned with the plight of mankind but also that of the entire creation (Moltmann, 1979:509). The cosmic horizon of the suffering of Christ points us to, and leads to a cosmic horizon vindication ushered by Christ (ibid). Jesus agonized and died for the creation hence the entire creation must enjoy the 'obliteration of death' and anguish since the death of Christ is 'the basis of liberation' (Moltmann, 1979:515). Moltmann expounds that Christian conjecture on the speculation on the time to come can only be assured with the perception of

renewal of everything; 'the totality of reality.' The Son of God incarnated for the sake of the whole creation (Moltmann, 1979:520).

3.1.2.2 Christ's Resurrection

The entire life of Jesus was receptive to each of the creation, for the sake of its salvation (Moltmann, 1976:4). The concept of resurrection is the culmination of this undertaking: 'Hope acknowledges the power together with the devotion of Lord in the story of the raising from the dead of the crucified one. Such an occurrence is definitely unforgettable!' (Moltmann, 1976:7).Moltann's understanding of the cross is that when Christ anguished for and with the entire creation, the resurrection includes all as well as the new creation for all (Moltmann, 1976:12). He opines that the resurrection is clear-cut indication of what the future holds for the entire creation.

Arguably, in Moltmann's view, there isn't stronger assurance of the future than the bodily resurrection of Christ from the dead (Moltmann, 1992:35). Chester professes that in the works of Moltmann, resurrection only points to an eschatological assurance for resurrection rather than being the basis for hope in the present. Chester maintains that this has a negligible impact on the present day (Sharma, 2001:118). Yet, for instance, Moltmann's school of thought on the outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost to usher in a new dawn of the cross along with resurrection to the creation depicts a renewal of the present (Moltmann, 1992:56).

3.1.3 God's Faithfulness to His promises

Moltmann is of the stand that the hope for the time to come lies in the promises of the Father. These promises are plausible due to the character and actions of God. He boldly mentions the Lord 'promising' the future a renewal of all things (Moltmann, 1999:271). Both the outpouring

of the Holy Ghost and the rising of Christ from the dead forms part of this promise though the basis for this mind-thought is far deeper. Moltmann severally refers to various biblical verses that touch on Christ's resurrection to also incorporate the physical (ibid).

In the New Testament, he refers to Matthew 19:28 where Christ speaks of the 'renewal of everything,' to imply the 'rebirth of the universe' (1967:144). From the epistles, he cites other verses. 'The Lord will offer breath to your fleshly bodies,' brings out the expectation of the mortal nature of the resurrection (Moltmann, 1967:146). The book of Revelation 21:4 and 1 Corinthians 15 tell of the epilogue of death, which is 'of every mortal' (Moltmann, 1967:150). He conceptualizes 'Jesus will renew the form of our indignity so that it may be in line with the body of his gory,' as an assertive declaration that is 'not solely speaking a divine sense' (Moltmann, 1967:152). 'I am renewing everything' therefore, means that nothing goes astray and all implies that nothing is mislaid and all things are 'returned again in a new form' (ibid).

The issue of Sabbath is equally a crucial part of the future's promise for everything in the view of Moltmann. The theologian points it's foundation to the Christian Scriptures: ' As per the biblical traditions, creation is oriented towards it's vindication right away from the beginning; since the works of creation directs to the Sabbath, " the banquet of creation" (Moltmann, 1996: 177). As for this reason, he regards the Sabbath as the future promise 'established on the initial creation' (Moltmann, 1996:181).

In the opinion of Moltmann, there is more to this common future than the notion that humanity and nature have got their individual paths that lead them to a future existence, since 'living assurance is ever related to relationships' (Moltmann, 1972:280). For him, the entire creation has a similar future, a future of 'ubiquitous fellowship'. Elsewhere, the theologian comments that:

‘This implies that all together, each of the crated being will participate in eternal life in its own way; they shall get into an unrestricted communication to each side, a communication which since time immemorial has been recognized as ‘commiseration of all things’ (Moltmann,1980:131).

The term, ‘created beings’, could mean many things. However, in this context, it implies ‘the commiseration of all things,’ which according to Moltmann encompasses all of creation. The implication of this ‘unrestricted communication’ does not insinuate that the nature will have the ability to relate to the things in the surrounding just like mankind does, or acknowledge everlasting life in the same manner. Variations will still prevail: ‘Humankind together with nature have got their unique destinies on their own distinct levels’ (Moltmann, 2000:12). The underlying argument isn’t that these are different fates, as still there is a shared future. Somewhat, implies that the fate of each is not to become indistinguishable.

The common future, as viewed by Moltmann, also means the ‘new creation’ does not annihilate bodiliness,’ but it ‘renews it for everlasting livingness’ (Moltmann, 1980:111). He remarks on the arguably widespread curtailment of salvation to the ‘existential situational’ of mankind, which at well liked extent might be referred to as their relation with the Creator or their ‘divine’ existence and desires to see ‘economic and social, physical and moral’ needs considered as well (Moltmann, 1979:90).

Moltmann reports that these are part and parcel of existence hence salvation should cater for them. Hope needs to be linked ‘to the entire man, to soul as well as body. His view of the future is one in which the corporeal and social existence is embedded in eternity; accordingly, physical

relatedness still forms part of everlasting life. However, one would ask, why cosmic hope from the Lord?

There are several rationales for Moltann's universal hope and inspirations behind his input to this view of the theological paradigm. Firstly, there is the character of God, his words and actions. The pattern of current existence of creation follows this as it is now.

3.2 How does the interrelatedness of creation contribute to hope?

Moltmann reckons that only the eternal body shall enjoy the Christian hope, and there is no possible way for the existence of a body in the absence of a surrounding which the body relates with. In acknowledging the power of death over the mortal body which cuts across the entire creation, he notes that: 'the corporeality which hence foreruns hope is clearly the onset of the unanimity of the Christian with the entire creation, which just like him, is affected by vanity-in hope' (Moltmann, 1979:20). This subject matter is reserved in the more boldly environmentally conscious literature: Mankind is perceived as being part of the long-lasting solidarity of the entire creation. Creation has its meaning for mankind; equally mankind has its elucidation for all creation.

If we are able to perceive what the existence of mankind is, as well as what human beings are called to be, we have to see mankind as being part of the all-inclusive coherence of the Lord's history with the universe, the creation's history and the history of vindication (Moltmann, 1972:281).

Moltmann expounds that the association and reliance which nature together mankind share in this universe and which he attests that it is brought into the redeemed everlasting life. Some of clauses used are eye-catching: "In the corporeal terms, Christians are joined together in a

common fate with the entire world including all the worldly creatures' and the history of mankind is consummated in " nature's resurrection," because it is only in that is a "redemption" of mortal life conceivable' (Moltmann, 1984:291). Mankind is 'rooted in nature' and will forever remain so (Moltmann, 1984:298).

3.4 The precise nature of eternal existence with corporeal inter-relatedness

Moltmann suggests that the present experience of corporeal existence of mankind is apparently inextricable from the process of material exchange material and rivalry which automatically ends up in some losing and others are gaining. The theologian contemplates some of the queries and poses them: 'Will human needs and human dependence on air, climate, food and so forth be abolished?' Certainly, his answer is clearly 'no'; that would lead to the end of the 'creation community' which lives together in harmony. Was the mutual relationship between mankind and nature only short-lived? Again, the answer is 'no' (Moltmann, 1968: 372).

He also puts forth his query in reply: 'how then should we eat and drink in God's kingdom if there will no longer be any needs of the body?'(Moltmann, 1979: 32).A simple response would be that such ideas were meant to be taken anthropologically and anthropomorphically or figuratively, or that they speak of deeds within the partly realized dominion that already exists to creation (Moltmann, 1979:33). Nevertheless, this still leaves the query on the essence of fleshly external existence for the believers in the restoration to life, a noteworthy idea in Christianity.

The key concern of Moltmann on the issue of the common future of creation is that mankind and nature are viewed as being in a journey together, and the idea of vindication of one of the entities without the other appear to be unjustified to him. The rich ideas that develop out of the concern

can be embraced for their input into the wider debate of the community and their propositions for ecological re-imagining.

3.5 A common future for Creator and creation

Moltmann tells of an eschatology that not only involves the future of creation, in a new existence, but he also anticipates a new future where the Creator and creation together find something new; a 'closer fellowship' (Moltmann, 1999:80). This 'commiseration of all things' to which he alludes to isn't basically for creation but rather encompasses God, and undeniably centres on Lord. The interconnection between creation and Trinity is that: 'Lord comes to his glory and through that, creation gets to its consummation. Creation gets to its consummation in that, Lord comes to his glorification' (Moltmann, 1999:82).

God consummates this relationship through the full reconciliation of creation to the Divine and the repair of the ruptures that have occurred throughout history (Moltmann, 1996:181). It also is a relation in which creation now completely knows and praises Lord. Possibly, however, the pre-eminent image of the Trinity together with the new creation, for Moltmann, is their integration. In this, he holds together the views of openness, relationally and care consistently through the future facet of his theology (Moltmann, 1996:181).

The concept of unification appears to sum up Moltmann's perception of the future as it highlights the relational aspect of the goal of redemption. The loving, pursuing openness of the Trinity with regard to the world finds its realization in 'the congregation and uniting of men and the entire creation with Lord and in Lord' (Moltmann, 1985: 109). Christ's mission was geared towards this objective, as is the activity of the Holy Ghost. Similarly, Moltmann portrays it as the role of the Church if it is to mirror candidly the divine love (Moltmann, 1985:111). He adds that

Lord does not yearn a future without his creation safely present too (ibid). This bond is deeper than the simple location of two distinct entities next to each other. It is a fellowship which mirrors the perichoretic relation of the Trinity itself (Moltmann, 1984: 292).

Moltmann is of the view that the openness of God is one of the foundations of redemption for creation. In reflection the Trinity's eternal perichoretic relations, he expresses redemption's dependence on the openness of the Trinity 'for the reception and integration of the entire creation' (Moltmann, 1976:121). This openness implies that 'the entire universe can find salvation, a wide space as well as its own glorification' (Moltmann, 1976:124). Lord is receptive so that all can be 'congregated' and creation and God can find the 'delight of union'. This thought brings out two outlooks: Creation in Lord and Lord in creation (Moltmann, 1985:100).

3.6 God in Creation -*finitum capax infinitii*

A frequently repeated expression of Moltmann is 'all in all', and this recapitulates, for him, the presence of Lord in everlasting life (Moltmann, 2001:37). Lord will be 'ubiquitous' and 'immediately' present in creation. One more expression which he uses regularly is the term 'dwell' (Moltmann, 2001:37). The notion of indwelling aids his interpretation sound less of a mechanical idea of Lord's location in the creation in some spatial sense and more like the relationally inclined thought that Lord makes creation the divine home (Moltmann, 2001:38).

Here, the eschatological Sabbath concept surfaces. The end shall mirror the beginning, in that the rest which God depicted in the Sabbath day in the account of creation will be claimed back; the Lord will rest in Lord's 'everlasting Sabbath' (Moltmann, 2001:38). Moltmann writes about the eschatological divine indwelling as the purpose for Lord's Shekinah, especially in The Coming of Lord (2001:38). He distinguishes between Sabbath and Shekinah: the former is 'God's

presence in the time of the created' (or the 'presence of eternity in time'), and the latter is 'Lord's presence in the space' of creation (Moltmann, 2001:39). He also relates the two through the view of rest, the *menuhah*, which is the goal of both indwelling and Sabbath. He also presents the Sabbath as the inceptive pledge and the Shekinah as the fulfilment, though this isn't to limit the notion of Sabbath away from the actualization of creation.

Further, he records of the coming of God's Shekinah at its own rest and 'everlasting Sabbath' (2001:40). This rest is a vision for him of all the lands covered with Lord's glory, and mankind to be 'at one with Lord, nature, and [it] self' (Moltmann, 2001:40).

The Creator is vibrant in creation to mould creation into a suitable home, to eliminate from the world the negatives of 'tears, evil, guilt, and death' (Moltmann, 2001:41). Here is God's work in history to perfect creation and mould it into a dwelling fit for God. In the operation and indwelling of the Holy Ghost, the creation of the Father through the Son, and the reunion of the world with Lord through Jesus arrive at their objective. The efficacy and presence of the Holy Ghost is the eschatological motive of reconciliation and creation.

All the deeds of the Lord come to conclusion in the presence of the Holy Ghost (Moltmann, 2001:42). Still, as well as the Lord's preparation of creation in preparedness of the divine indwelling, Moltmann also makes note of Lord's eschatological indwelling as the occasion that ultimately transforms creation. Creation is both readied for God's presence and eventually renewed through Lord's future fuller presence. The Lord's coming presence is that which ushers in 'meaning' and gives the leeway for creation to fully participate in Lord's meaning, and so it is indeed this presence that consummates creation, makes it the new earth and the new heaven, and makes it 'the house of the Lord' (Moltmann, 2001:42).

It is the divine presence that overcomes death. So while Moltmann tells of the readiness of creation to be fit to welcome Lord, additionally, Lord's presence empowers creation to be its candid self and be 'good, holy, beautiful, whole and glorious, and' as it mirrors the indwelling Lord (Moltmann, 2001:43). This isn't to overlook the significance of the incarnation for the renewal of creation. Even though Lord's future indwelling is crucial, Moltmann's Christ-centred eschatology still brings out Jesus' crucial role: This vision of an end of the history of torment, through the earthly indwelling of Lord in a renewed creation without lamentation, agony and death, is in no way the contradiction of the cross of Jesus in the centre of this history, but rather the perfection of his lordship (Moltmann, 2001:43).

Christian hope for the universe is not directed towards an abstract other-worldly pantheism in which all that Jesus has done to subdue the world vanishes, but rather to the fact that 'Lord will be all in all' (Moltmann, 2001: 43). Both the deeds of Jesus and the coming presence of Lord make decisive and invaluable contributions to history and the salvation of creation, for they are intertwined parts of Lord's greater relation with the universe. A perspective of Lord's indwelling as the turning point for creation's renewal doesn't overlook the work of Jesus since it is Savior's work that makes the future of eschatology possible. In Moltmann's theology this is succinct: Jesus is 'the redeemer of the entire process of creation' (Moltmann, 2001:44).

Lord comes to totally dwell in creation at the Eschaton. Yet this is not the complete case since his idea of the eschatological future, as elsewhere, portrays the perichoretic nature of his trinitarianism: To open up the circulatory movement of the divine light and the divine relations, and to take men and women, with the entire creation, into the life-stream of the triune Lord: that is the interpretation of reconciliation, creation and glorification (Moltmann, 2001:45).

Moltmann exhibits that he holds to the belief that it's crucial that the consummated relationship between creation and Lord maintains both the dynamics of creation in Lord and Lord in creation. The 'everlasting Sabbath' is 'the rest of Lord and rest in Lord' (Moltmann, 2001:46). The Trinity not only finds a dwelling in creation but also turns into a home for creation. In this way, creation comes to a totally participative relation with and in God. It is essential to take note that Moltmann does not profess that the perichoretic relation of creation and God is absolutely the same as the perichoretic relation of the Trinity. This would definitely be problematic (Moltmann; 2001:.47). He adds that the way creation indwells in the Lord and the way the Lord indwells in creation are differentiable: 'Lord's indwelling in the universe is divine in kind; the universe's indwelling in Lord is worldly in kind' (Moltmann, 2001:46).

3.7 The 'Worldly and Divine in Kind'indwelling

Moltmann plainly attempts to emphasize that Lord indwells creation most certainly as Lord, and creation indwells Lord most certainly as creation. He also underscores that the renewed creation is still 'finite and created', unlike Lord (Moltmann, 1996:11). Several commentators show some discomfort with this notion of God and creation's future since it integrates awkwardly with the use of zimsum, and the creation of the nihil, in the actual act of creation (Bowden, 1991:21).

In short, if in creation in the inception it was essential for God to pull back the divine self to allow an 'Other' to exist, can this otherness be said to persevere when Lord refills the space that was abandoned and creation fully indwells Lord? (Moltmann, 1996:14). Deane-Drummond differs and contends that as creation has always been basically different to Lord; its disparity is maintained even with God's total indwelling presence (Mckinney, 1976:122).

Deane-Drummond's argument is persuasive, particularly given the likelihood of a swing in Moltmann's emphasis to the Lord as the 'living space' of creation (Mckinney, 1976: 126). Similarly, Moltmann gets queried in relation to creation's time: if Lord restrained the divine eternity so as to give creation time, but then proceeds to derestrict it, the aftermath is the unknown status of creation's time. A similar critique could be made of the concept of the freedom of creation coming through Lord's self-restriction of the divine omniscience (ibid).

Does Moltmann put into consideration his own claim that Lord's full presence ushers in the fullness of free life to creation? One likelihood for aligning these conflicting foundations for free is that a specific kind of freedom was given through self-restriction while a fuller freedom will be realized through divine indwelling. This invites the query of why this fuller freedom was not granted in the first place. It seems better to focus on his opinion that Lord, from the inception, is the 'living space' of creation as this idea is more cogent with his deeds as a whole.

3.8 A Decent Future

This shared future is fundamentally a good future for the entire creation; it will have 'status and being', 'eternal glory, enduring continuance, and everlasting life' (Moltmann, 1979: 514). Moltmann makes a declaration earlier on which gives a great foot hold for his approach to the future of creation: 'Lord will live in creation with his quintessence, this is to say that the new creation correlates with the quintessence of God and is irradiated and transfigured by Lord's worldly presence' (Moltmann, 1979:516).

On its own, the term 'correlates with the quintessence of Lord' could easily be prone to misinterpretation. Propitiously, however, he proceeds to expound on the thought. He reveals that it implies that creation turns into that which is worthy to be indwelt by Lord. Creation finds itself

in line with aspects of Lord's quintessence, as opposed to somehow being re-made to be the same quintessence as Lord. That is, all things will share Lord's perfect communication, play, creativity and life. These effects are followed by an end to indifference and pain since all things commensurate to Lord's good quintessence. It is in this new creation that death will be unheard of. The menace of annihilation will be gone from the entire creation (Moltmann, 1985:123-124).

This depicts a succinct message of what mankind's outlook towards suffering and death should be, not just the death of mankind but the death which distresses every part of creation: mankind should 'stand in unanimity' with creation and intercede 'on its behalf' (Moltmann, 1985:126). His yearning for eschatology to appraise ecology is succinct. In the new creation, peace will rule over creation. It is to be a 'day of rest' for mankind, all things or otherwise. Moltmann is of the view that this doesn't insinuate the dissociation of the good constituents of creation from the bad, such as the wiping out of mankind out of a natural world that impedes and harms, or separation of good people from bad people. Rather, for him, it is the renewal of everything to be what it ought to be; nature to true nature; God and creation's relationship consummated; the relationships between everything made whole and healthy; humanity to true humanity; peace is found (Moltmann, 1985:129). This 'elation' of creation is also something which impacts on the present; the Holy Ghost is already at work to bring it about in creation, a work which mankind can anticipate for, correspond to, hope for and live in or already participate (Moltmann, 1985:131).

In Moltmann's view, this anticipation for an end that is miserable makes a difference for the entire creation. The entire creation is 'yoked' by death and 'transistorizes', which leads to its suffering (Moltmann, 1984:293). He even adds that nature 'is in agony', that creation 'anxiously waits' and is 'longing' for its freedom from agony. He is of course citing the New Testament,

such as Romans chapter 8 which talks of the eager waiting of creation (Moltmann, 1984:295). But these are still tough postulations to grasp; in what way do plants or other simple life-forms agonize? These aren't exigent for Moltmann alone; the entire Christian tradition has to grapple with the meaning of those quotes from Romans. He does, however, elucidate them in such a way that each part of creation finds everlasting life and bliss, which is not automatically the stand of all Christian traditions. Yet his work throws a strong challenge to take solemnly the future of the entire creation.

For him, the shared future of Lord and creation's perichoretic indwelling ushers in a cosmic adoration of Lord and devotion of Lord in everything (Moltmann, 1991:67). It also depicts the significance of the creation which is being readied to be Lord's home. This creation counts. Creation in Lord shows a future of flawless engagement, and motivates such behaviour in the present. The perception of the future inspires the actions of the present so that people seek to match creation's present with its anticipated future. The eschatological objective gives a task to mankind (Moltmann, 1991:73).

3.9 The universe coming to an end or its future already begun

Questions about the end are treated in eschatology which means 'the last things' (ta eschata). Moltmann suggests that the end will give answers to all unanswered questions and solutions to all problems experienced here on earth. The apocalyptic has portrayed with tremendous passion God's great final judgment on the world's last day. It is believed that the good will go to heaven, the wicked will go to hell eternally and the earth will be annihilated. He argues that these fantasies are apocalyptic but they are not Christian. The Christian anticipation of what is to come has nothing to do with the end of life, history or the universe but focuses on the beginning of

eternal life, the onset of the kingdom of Lord and the onset of the world to come as it is illustrated in the Nicene Creed. This is to mean that the end of the present world which is temporal creation is God's new beginning (Moltmann, 2000:129-130).

Christian anticipation of the end doesn't depend on the present and past of the universe history, to postulate a good end or a bad one. Rather, it perceives in the cross of Jesus the anticipation of the end of this world-time transgression, death, and the devil since in Christ's resurrection it believes in the starting of new life and new creation of everything. For Christians, Jesus is the real beginning of true life, the new creation of all transitory things into eternal life and the indwelling of God in the midst of life wilderness. This is the reason why Christian's expectation is not only an expectation of new beginning but also an expectation of the end in the new beginning. It is not the end of the universe that brings Lord's new beginning but it is God's new beginning that brings this depraved world to its deserved end. A new creation cannot be exhorted through the destruction of the present world (Moltmann, 2000:131).

Moltmann maintains that nothing will be annihilated, but everything will be transformed. He quotes Paul in Romans 8:18 which says, that the pains of this world's end are something like labour pains of God's new world. The Christian expectation of the end answers the apocalyptic questions though not all, by making present the crucified and risen Christ. With the fellowship and the hope of Christ who is raised, we can live with answered final questions rather than tendering hasty answers and "without sinking answerless into brooding despondency" (Moltmann, 2000:132).

The current faith in progress is a secularized form of salvation history millenarianism while the modern fears of the end of the world are secularization of the apocalyptic of the old. History is

basically a struggle for power and those in power have interest in progress and prolongation of power whereas those who are powerless and oppressed long for completion of the history of suffering (Moltmann, 2000:132).

Christian's expectation is on the Christ's kingdom of peace, Romans awaited the Golden Age, and modern men and women look for 'the end of history' in a condition without history and conflict. The first contentment of this hope was achieved during the tenure of Emperor Constantine when persecuted Christianity became the religion of the Roman state. Christ's cross of martyrdom became the cross of victory of the Christian empire.

When the church of Christ became the imperial church of the Roman Empire, it surrendered the mission of the gospel and faith to the Christian rulers who saw their religious mandate to be the conversation of the nations through their subjugation of Christ's end time kingdom of peace (Moltmann, 2000:133).

Their main concern was baptism or death, not belief or unbelief. That is the way the Saxons and Slavs were missionized in the early middle ages same as the Latin Americans at the beginning of modern times. The same idea, after the discovery of America, served to justify the violent conquests and missionizing of the Indian territories. Up to this present day, messianic quintomonarchism has remained the most influential ideology of the Christian world history (Moltmann; 2000:134). The Theo political dream of the Thousand Year's Empire of peace in which Christ and his followers will rule and judge the nations became impossible. The external and internal crisis of the 'Holy Empire' led to disappointments and apocalyptic anxieties (Moltmann, 2000:134).

In the Bible, we find ideas about the world coming to an end. For instance Isaiah 24-27, Zechariah 12-14, Daniel 2 and 7, Joel 3 and in New Testament we find apocalyptic texts in Mark 13 among the synoptic and the Revelation of John. Moltmann argues that the apocalyptic is talked about when the prophetic prophesies reach out beyond Israel's history and takes on a worldwide political scope. This is where the 'new creation' is promised in which this 'old creation' will find its end. The biblical apocalyptic about the end of the world go back to the saga of Noah's flood (Gen 6-9). According to this saga, due to wickedness of the people, God purposed to destroy humanity and the earth but because of the just man Noah, God made a covenant in which no new end to the world is envisaged (Moltmann, 2000:136).

Behind the biblical idea about eschaton, is the profound fear about God that God could be sorry for having created human beings on this earth at all and that he could withdraw his creative resolve all together. Moltmann opines that a God who judges the world's wickedness is interested in the world, but a God who turns away completely leads the world to sink in chaos. For him, judgment is a source of hope but its only downfall and end that is hopeless (Moltmann; 2000:136). The biblical apocalypses aren't pessimistic on the end of the universe contexts which escalates anxiety and terror that aim to paralyze humanity but they keep alive assurance for Lord's faithfulness to his creation in the terrors of time (Moltmann, 2000:136).

In his view, (Moltmann 2000:137), whatever may come at the end is a doctrine of hope, and has nothing to do with fantasies of the world annihilation advocated by the modern prophets and terrorists. According to the tradition of the Bible, world history does not begin with the fall and so it cannot end with a downfall. Rather it starts with primordial blessing of temporal creation and it will end with blessedness of the creation which will be eternal. This is to mean that God's last word is not a pronouncement of judgment but a word of creation. "Beyond I renew all

things" (Rev 21:5). That is the new heaven and new earth for which the first heaven and earth are to pass away (Rev 21:1). In a nutshell therefore, there is hope in the eschatological view as projected in the arguments by Moltmann especially deliberating on the view that the suffering of Christ was to bring redemption t all mankind.

3.12 How we ought to think of this new creation

The new creation is not a matter of another creation which will take place of the world we know but it is the creation we know which will be transformed. The book of Revelation does not say; 'beyond I create (Hebrew *bara*) something new' but it says; 'beyond I make (Hebrew *asa*) all things new'. This is to mean that all creatures will be made new at the eschaton (Moltmann, 2000:138).

3.13 What will be different?

The relationship between God and his creatures will be different. The creator will come to his dwelling place in his creation. His Shekinah will enter heaven and earth and make them God's cosmic temple. Then God's glory will dwell in all things and will illuminate and transfigure all created beings. The idea of the indwelling of God in all created beings leads on to the idea of transformation of temporal and mortal creation into eternal and immortal (Moltmann, 2000:138).

Moltmann argues that it is not creation that will be annihilated but its only sinful, temporal and mortal form. The created being will be transfigured and the finite being will participate in the infinite being of the indwelling God. The eschaton transformation process is the transmission from contradictions to correspondence and from mortality to immortality. This is because "God's righteousness and justice is the foundation for an eternal world that is in correspondence to him, it must first be made to prevail in all things, in the final judgment" (Moltmann, 2000:138). This

is the reason why Christian expectation of the new creation is preceded by the last judgment. That divine righteousness is retributive, punitive justice but it is the justice which both the victims and evil doers of human history creates justice and justifies. God does not come to destroy but He comes to make things right (ibid).

3.14 Critiques on Moltmann's view of universal salvation

This common school of thought evokes level of criticism from McIlroy even when Moltmann applies it, for instance, precisely to his belief in the salvation of all mankind: 'in Moltmann's account, Lord's creative righteousness becomes a law which Lord is obliged to obey' (Mckinney, 1976:119). Chester's deliberation of MiroslavVolf's writing also triggers applause against the idea that Lord's love demands vindictive actions. Chester questions whether there are negative connotations for Lord's liberty (Bowden, 1991:78).

Nevertheless, even as Chester brings this allegation, he offers an answer which is actually helpful in understanding why Moltmann can hold this notion and not undermine Lord's freedom. Chester writes: 'It is assuredly better to see the eschatological concept in terms of the fulfilment and reaffirmation of God's motive in creation' (Moltmann, 1999:80). Precisely, Moltmann does this. For him, Lord's motives are to bring the entire creation to vindication as a result of the boundless divine love. This is definitely not what Chester purposes, for he disregards universalism (Moltmann, 1999:82). Still, it affirms the proposition that Lord set out, in freedom and love, to attain creation's vindication, and therefore purposes to complete the job (Moltmann, 1999:83).

3.15 Conclusion

In this chapter we have demonstrated Moltmann doctrine is influenced by the nature of God and more specifically His loving attribute. God who is the creator cannot destroy that which He created and said it is good. Since He is all in all at the end times the entire creation and everything in it will be saved. God will dwell in the world and the world will dwell in Him.

CHAPTER FOUR

TOWARDS A DYNAMIC BALANCE

4.0 Introduction

Focusing on the third objective, this chapter neither picks on one doctrine nor dismiss the other but tries to search for a solution to the problem caused by varying perspectives scholarly raised by Calvin and Moltmann on particular salvation and universal eschatology.

As stated in its statement of the problem and in its hypothesis, this dissertation recognizes the anxiety that is caused by hermeneutics that lead to various theories about the nature of the end and the fate of the humanity. The dissertation aims at explicating those texts that have been used to arrive at variant traditions and endeavors to develop a balance theology of the end which rationalizes especially the two traditions advanced by Calvin –for particular salvation of the elect alone and damnation of the reprobates with that of Moltmann who teaches universal salvation for all humankind and the entire creation.

To achieve this task, this chapter explicates the methodology suitable for this endeavor – Dynamic Balance and goes ahead to apply it in finding a balanced theology that is true to the scriptures and Church traditions and that is also rational.

4.1 Dynamic Balance

This dissertation uses Dynamic Balance as theological hermeneutics to rationalize between two seemingly opposed doctrines that result from various hermeneutics. Dynamic Balance is an engineering principle which explains the ability of an object to balance while in motion or switching between positions. It is concerned with the effects of forces on the motion of a body.

In our application of this principle, we are arguing that theological hermeneutics have developed over a period of time as the scripture move from one region to another and as it encounters various worldviews. We have in the past had Biblical criticism as approved hermeneutics and today hermeneutics that have developed in Africa after colonialisms demand that we now read scriptures with post-colonial lenses. This therefore, by necessity demands that we find a dynamic balance between opposed doctrines that are likely to come up as a result of these new movements; this is what this methodology considers to be motion of ideas that are switching between places and time.

4.1. Justification of Dynamic Balance

If we hold that all biblical scripture is inspired and suitable for teaching, it is logical to argue that it is wrong to dismiss some texts of the Scripture whenever they seem to depart from what we already hold to as truth. For example in this dissertation, we notice that there are those who hold onto texts that teach either explicitly or implicitly particular salvation while others emphasize those texts that teach universal salvation at the expense of those that gainsay it. The Dynamic Balance argues that we could hold in tension such texts and find a way of understanding apparent contradictory texts.

One would argue that such methodology then should be a theological method and not a mechanical method. This dissertation argues that other theologians have borrowed and employed philosophical principle or engineering principles in their theologizing. For example Jesse MNK Mugambi developed a theology of Reconstruction using an engineering principle. Kiboi in his book *Assurance of Salvation: A Cumulative Case Argument* employs a philosophical principle used by lawyers in reconciling disparities in Objective-Subjective views of assurance.

4.2. A Dynamic Balance Between Universalism and Particularism

There are positive elements in Calvin and Moltmann's doctrine of eschatology; there are weaknesses too. In the dynamic balance it shall show how Calvin's fallacies could be filled up by Moltmann's strengths and vice versa. I.e. dynamic balance is realized when the strengths are juxtaposed against the weakness. The study began with highlighting the inconsistences in Calvin's particular salvation (Gutessen, 2008:78).

4.2.1 Inconsistencies in Calvin's Particular Salvation

Kiboi in his article "Inter-Religious Conflicts in 21st Century: Dialectical-Scepticism as a Panacea" (Kiboi, 2017) argues that dubious hermeneutics leads to dubious doctrines. He goes further to illustrate this point in which he notes that Calvin using his literal hermeneutics was skewed on the doctrine of election. Whereas Calvin understanding election to mean eternal election of a few favored persons for salvation, Kiboi argues that election is for specific duty. To illustrate this, he quotes Isaiah 45:13 in which God elects king Cyrus of Persia over five hundred years earlier simply to save His people although not for any personal reward. It says, "I will raise up Cyrus in my righteousness, I will make all his ways straight. He will rebuild my city and set my exiles free but not for price or reward…" From this perspective, he argues that in the same manner, if Calvin was not skewed in his doctrine of election, he should have understood election to mean election to duty.

In his book *Assurance of Salvation: A Cumulative Case Argument*, Kiboi criticizes Calvin for teaching an election in which Jesus Christ is not involved (Kiboi, 2018:83). Kiboi's criticism is based on the fact that Calvin in his exegesis of John 3:16 (…that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life) he teaches that the condition thereof is for the elect and does not include the faith by the reprobates. He also excludes reprobates from meaningful participation in

the effects sacraments of commanded by the Lord (cf. Mark 16:16 whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned). This text is clearly a conditional text that includes everyone as long as they believe. Likewise, regarding the efficacy of the Eucharist, Calvin teaches that reprobates cannot partake the body and blood of the Son of God since it wasn't meant for them. In this manner Calvin taught that the death of Christ was only meant for the elect and not reprobates.

Calvin roots the origin of the fall in the ontological eternal background. In this way, human participation is excluded. Even though human participation is excluded in the predestinating of the fate of some of the humankind, they are held responsible for the fall. This is a hermeneutical problem that needs to be liberated. Alongside this perspective, Calvin taught that "both the elect and the reprobate receive God's gifts of reconciliation and illumination of the mind, but of a different quality. For the reprobate it is a confused one and for the elect clear illumination is granted for salvation."(Kiboi, 2018:73). If it was true that such a thing happens, this would defeat the whole essence of God granting such graces. Why would God's grace serve two contradictory purposes!

Calvin's particular salvation is clearly taught in his exegesis of John 3:18that those who believe are saved as those who do not believe are already condemned (Kiboi, 2018:74). Although he teaches this, he at this point fails to root the same into the eternal election in which the non-believers are already reprobated to eternal damnation. One wonders, how could John have clearly taught conditional salvation when aware of possible pre-destination of the reprobates?

A serious contradiction observed by Kiboi about Calvin's teaching on conditional salvation is that although Calvin acknowledges human ability to reject the gospel, they do not have the ability to cooperate and participate in salvation (Kiboi, 2018:75). He poses the question, "Why

would God call people to turn to Him (cf. Malachi 3:7) if He knew they had no ability to do so?"(Kiboi, 2018:76).

Another noticeable contradiction in Calvin's doctrine of election and salvation is the exclusion of Christ in the electing of the elects and reprobation of the reprobates. Kiboi observes that "…if Christ and election are the fountains of grace, yet this grace excludes the very sinner for whom it is offered…" (Kiboi, 2018:83) then there is a problem. He goes further to state that, if election excludes Christ, that is, if human beings are not elected in Christ by his death, but in an eternal divine decree…" it becomes a problem. He further argues that, "If salvation or election is separated from the Cross, why did Jesus die?"

Calvin fails to give Christ's prayer at the Cross its rightful interpretation. At the Cross, Jesus prays, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." This prayer is not aimed at the elects but to those who were tormenting Him who were therefore sinner. If this text is understood thus, then Christ's death was indeed God's process of reconciling humanity back to Himself.

Calvin's doctrine of particular salvation rooted in the doctrine of election is faulty on the grounds that it does not make sense in the light of the purpose of the Great Commission of Matthew 28. One would ask, of what value is Christ's command to his disciples to evangelize the whole world if the proclamation would not affect genuine conversion that would lead to salvation?

Secondly, Calvin's perspective of the doctrine of election in which God elects without merit some to salvation and predestinating others to damnation undermines God's character as just. One wonders why God would do that or what joy does God derive from having some of creation suffer in hell when they were not given opportunity to participate in the choices of the divine election and predestination.

Calvin's doctrine of election and reprobation and particular salvation contradicts scriptural texts that clearly teach God's mercy enduring forever. Kiboi in article "They Shall Not Inherit the Kingdom of God"(Kiboi,2016) juxtaposes what he calls 'Texts of clemency against Condemnatory texts' and argues that God's grace overcomes God's wrath at the end and therefore everyone receives God's forgiveness. Particular texts that need to be underscored are Joel 1:1-2:11 which exhorts those straying from His right path to "Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing" and 1Chronicles 16:34 which declares that God's steadfast love endures forever. This is also echoed by the Psalmist who sings of God's mercies as enduring forever (Ps. 136:1-26). Therefore, it is possible to arrive at wrong doctrines when we emphasize some text and ignored those that seem to teach against our persuasion.

4.2.1.2 Positive Elements in Moltmann's Theology of Universal Salvation

Positive element in Moltmann's eschatology is that he roots man's origin and end in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is Christ who creates and redeems and at the end the entire creation is reconciled in Jesus Christ.

Moltmann's position that Christ's death achieved life and liberation for all creation is very consistent with scripture. This position is logical because the scripture teaches that upon the fall, creation has suffered corruption and cries for liberation and therefore, if Christ's death excludes liberation of the entire creation, then the scripture teaching that through Christ God was reconciling the universe back to himself would be meaningless.

Another positive element in Moltmann's theology of universal salvation is the position that the nature of eschatology is a process at which at the onset, the kingdom of God is setting in and the

point at which the eternal life begins. This is very pastoral although it appears to undermine the purpose of proclamation of the gospel. Besides being pastoral, it also clearly resonates with the scripture, "Behold the old is gone and the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17). The old dispensation is gradually overtaken by a new dispensation in which earthly concerns and worries are no more.

4.3.1 Rethinking the Doctrine of Election and Reprobation

There are many Biblical texts which if read literally, would imply election. For example Romans 9:14-18, which reads: "…I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion," is interpreted by Calvin to mean sovereign election by God. But Wesley on his part interprets "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, namely, on him who believeth in Jesus" (Albert, 1964:33). He explains that election here means mercy on those who believe on the son of his love. And unto to those who do not believe he hardens. This means that reprobation is as result of failure to believe.

As already mentioned above, Wesley taught that election was not unto salvation but to a particular duty for which those that have had privilege to receive the revelation, have a specific duty (cf. Isaiah 45; Romans 9:16) and responsibility to deliver it to those who haven't.

In his exegesis of Mark 16:16, Wesley teaches that "…all true believers are in scripture termed 'elect' as those who continue in unbelief are so long 'reprobates' that is unapproved of God and 'without discernment' touching the things of the Spirit"(Albert,1964:34).

Wesley rejects the idea of election in eternal plan of God and argues that since God is omniscient, He sees the future in the present (Romans 4:17) and therefore, interprets election in

these terms: “God called true believers ‘elect from the foundation of the world’ although they were not actually elect, or believers, till many ages after, in their several generations” (Albert,1964:34). Based on this perspective, Kiboi draws conclusion that “Alternatively, God has only decreed in eternity conditional election and conditional reprobation” (Kiboi, 2018:34).

Similar to this argument, St. Athanasius in his atonement theory, teaches that the curse declared in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:3), if you eat of this tree, you will surely die became automatically self-inflicting. In the same manner reprobation and election are declared in eternity, whosoever believes is called an elect and whosoever does not believe is called reprobate.

Calvin can be criticized for using Romans 9:22 “What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath – prepared for destruction” to teach that God in eternity chose in eternity those to save and those to destroy in eternal hell. Proper exegesis of the words, ‘what if’ and Calvin’s conclusion that that is what God has done shows that Calvin misread the text since Paul doesn’t say that that is what God has done but rather a mere proposition.

Therefore, the doctrine of eternal election collapses on the basis of the above facts and so to the doctrine of reprobation. Our new perspective is that in eternity God calls those who will respond to His call (gospel) the elect and those who reject reprobates. Therefore, in eternity God elects all human beings in Jesus Christ and especially in his redemptive work and reprobate those who reject this act of grace.

4.3.2 Rethinking the Doctrine of Particular Salvation

The doctrine of particular salvation is what we are referring to in this dissertation as Particularism. As already stated, this doctrine teaches that at the judgment sit, God will separate sheep from goats and the goats (sinners) shall be send to hell. Although this doctrine is backed by biblical scriptures, it fails to hold and account for texts in the same scripture that argue for God's clemency to the obstinate sinners (Kiboi, 2016:2-25).In this article Kiboi argues that since contradicting texts are taught in the same scripture, it is prudent to hold them in tension. One way to do this is to take some as crude revelation and others as explicit revelation. He therefore, proposes that condemnatory texts are forms of crude revelation i.e. before whatever God had revealed became clear to the human being. He proposes that texts of clemency should be regarded as progressive revelation. However, in this dissertation the researcher proposes that such texts should be held in tension by use of the principle of Dynamic Balance.

4.3.3 Rethinking the Doctrine of Hell

In an article "They Shall Not Inherit:" Kiboi avers that hell is not a place but a state of free choosing. He states,

> God, who is love, sets the human being who is the object of His love, free to choose. Human beings in their freedom make choices which land them either in heaven (epitome of eternal being) or in hell (epitome of eternal non-being). Thus, hell is the state of permanent rejection of God by humans and God's permanent acceptance of their rejection, while heaven is the state of a permanent choosing of God by humans and God's permanent acceptance of that human choice of choosing Him in their love and freedom. In other words, God does not designate some people to heaven or hell; for hell does not exist as a place of torment but as a state of humans rejecting their source of being and acceptance of the rejection by God (Kiboi, 2016:15-16).

It is scriptural that there is the wrath of God, but the bible does not say that it endures forever. This means that the mercies of God surpass the wrath which does not endure forever. This means that the wrath of God and hell as an epitome of God's punishment are temporal and temporary

states which happen when one has sinned against God and all these states are experienced here on earth because according to the scripture, there is no sin that will go unpunished. Therefore, if no sin goes unpunished and God's mercies endure forever, the punishment must happen in the temporal world for a period of time.

4.4 Conclusion

Lessons from Calvin remind us of our fallenness and of our loss of the image of God that would have led us to salvation in the knowledge of God. However, his teaching that from eternity God elected and predestined some humanity to salvation and others to eternal damnation is gainsaid by those texts that teach conditional salvation and Calvin is unable to explain them away as he would have wished to. Thereby, his inconsistencies giving way to our re-interpretation of the doctrine of double predestination using especially Moltmann's doctrine of election, that all humankind were elected in eternity in Jesus Christ's death that whosoever believes is from eternity called the elect and whosoever disobeys the gospel invitation to salvation is from eternity called the reprobate. However, in this new re-interpretation, the reprobate is not damned to eternal hell but reconciled with the rest of creation to God that God may be all in all. This dynamic balance gives us a new understanding of election and reprobation and a new perspective of the nature of the end.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction:

In this chapter's task is to summarize whatever has been said, evaluate the achievement and bearing challenges resulting from the assumptions and observations necessary for future study. It is also important in this chapter to consider pastoral implications of our stand. This dissertation, therefore, is called up onto constructing and drawing an inference from the premises constructed in chapters two and three and the inferences arrived at in chapter four to make a grand conclusion and further recommend on the best way forward in the future state.

5.1 Summary of the Teachings

In chapter two, we explicated Calvin's theology of particular salvation. In which we saw that according to Calvin, God in His sovereignty purposed to create two types of humanity; one that was predestined to salvation and another to eternal damnation. Calvin in his doctrine of creation anticipates eschatology in which the reprobates are damned and the elect are saved.

In the same chapter, it was observed that according to Calvin, humanity does not have a role in the salvation; their good works do not alter God's eternal purpose and decree. Secondly, in God's elective activity, sadly Jesus' work at the Cross does not alter destine of the reprobates. They will still go to hell even if they heard the gospel and worked hard for salvation, for they do not possess ability to respond to it positively but negatively.

According to Calvin, the gospel to the reprobates serves as a justification for their punishment in hell while unto the elect it serves as a joy to salvation. The elect are saved to demonstrate God's

love to them who are saved; the reprobates are damned in hell to also serve as a demonstration of God's love unto the elect still.

This position poses a challenge to the purpose of proclamation of the gospel to the entire world (Matthew 28) Great Commission. Why would the followers of Christ be commanded to go all over the world to proclaim the gospel and baptizing those who respond to it when some of them are eternally predestined to damnation? What is the purpose of Christ's death on the Cross if already in God's eternal decree the elect shall be saved anyway and anyhow?

In chapter three, it considered the opposite view to that of Calvin –Moltmann's eschatology. In Moltmann's universal salvation it was noticed that he taught that all creation shall be reconciled back into their Creator. In this doctrine of universal salvation, Moltmann argued according to Scriptures God in Jesus Christ was reconciling the entire universe back to Himself. He also argued, what was the purpose of Christ's death if not for salvation of all humankind?

However, his universal salvation as observed too undermined the purpose of the proclamation of the gospel. What was the need of proclaiming the gospel to the entire world, if all shall eventually be reconciled back to God? Nonetheless, it should be noted that Moltmann's teaching is in line with scripture that teaches that until all humanity shall bow to Christ and every tongue confess that Christ is Lord the end of the world shall not come. If this is held as true, then the work of Christ at the Cross is effectual to all humankind. This perspective rules out Calvin's doctrine of election and reprobation.

Moltmann roots his doctrine of universal salvation in the doctrine of creation. At creation God does not destine some to election or reprobation but creates all humanity equally but upon the fall He, in time, sends a savior to reconcile all back to Himself. Since it is God will and wish that

all are saved and find space in Him as their creator, He will work until all knees and all tongues confess the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

It was also noticed that upon the fall, creation has suffered corruption and through Christ's redemptive work, all creation shall be redeemed to its original status. If this is true, then truly all shall find space in their creator –*infinitum capax finitii*.

This dissertation has argued that since the entire scriptures are inspired and are true revelation, we cannot hold one over the other. Yet it is evident that there are scripture teachings that pose contradictions whichever hermeneutics are applied. It has been demonstrated that dubious hermeneutics give birth to dubious doctrines. Dubious doctrines are a recipe for conflict and anxiety among believers. Therefore, there is need to either hold them as progressive revelations or hold them in tension –dynamic balance.

If all scripture is true revelation of God, then the only way to remain objective and true to the word of God is to hold them in a dynamic balance the way this dissertation has done with the two resultant doctrines of particular salvation and universal salvation of John Calvin and Jürgen Moltmman.

If God at creation creates all and declares them as good (Genesis 1:31) and after the fall, the fall affects (corrupts) all creation and the entire creation cries for redemption, God embarks on redemption of whatever He had created as good and now corrupt, it is rational to argue that this redemptive plan is for the entire creation that had been corrupted. Observing the redemptive history of Israel, the rhythm is that of warning, punishment and redemption. At every point of redemption God recreates a new nation with intention that through that, all creation is redeemed but that redemption is followed by another fall and redemption. In these last days, God through

His Son has redeemed his creation and they are in the process of becoming fully redeemed and this will be followed by eventual redemption in which either creation will find space in their Creator or the Creator will find space in its creation (*finitum capax infinitii or infinitum capax finitii*).

5.2 Pastoral Reflections

Holding the two perspectives in a dynamic balance removes anxiety and contradictions in teaching the scripture as true revelation in that we find meaning in the Great Commission. We go all over the world to proclaim the gospel for all humankind to receive and be saved; for those who reject will still receive God's forgiveness based on his mercies that endure forever.

We thus argue that the Great Commission is indeed God's own mission, *missio Dei* and this mission is eternally anticipated in the Trinity –the Father sends the Son. From this we infer that Christ's command in the Great Commission is God's own command. Therefore, if the mission begins in God, it will have to end with God and in God and this is the reason why at the end of it all, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that the Christ is Lord; and God shall be all in all –*infinitum capax finitii*.

5.3 Conclusion

In deduction, both doctrines have the inspired biblical origin and stand to be observed by respective believers. God the creator is known to be of great love and redeemer of humanity hence difficult to assert that He predestined some to perish while other to eternal life. On the other hand, He is God who punishes and attributed to the last judgment which will see the end and perceive the destination of man.

5.4 Recommendations

Preaching the gospel of universal salvation could easily be criticized for encouraging antinomianism and don't care spirit. People will not see the need of responding to the gospel because after all they shall eventually be saved. On the other hand, teaching the doctrine of double predestination will too encourage antinomianism people will not see the need for responding to the gospel if they think their fate is already predetermined.

Therefore, there is need to hold them at tension by using the principle of dynamic balance in which eventual redemption is grounded in the work of Christ at the Cross. In the dynamic balance, Christ the creator of the universe is the savior of the same universe. In eternity, those who will respond to the gospel are called the elect and those who will reject are called reprobates. But until all knees shall bow and all tongues confess, Jesus the redeemer shall not tire nor shall his work come to vain. Any attempt to argue on the right doctrine to be believed and practiced should be approached from both perspectives to avoid biasness and achieve the balanced perspective.

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