

A true understanding of Calvin's theology of “assurance and piety” and its application within the Korean Church

KS Joo

 orcid.org/0000-0002-9452-9073

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Dogmatics at the North-West University

Promoter: Prof Hong Man Kim

Co-promoter: Prof Nico Vorster

Graduation: December 2023

ABSTRACT

The concept of assurance and piety plays a crucial role in Calvin's Reformist theology, particularly in emphasising the interdependence of justification and sanctification. This study provides a comprehensive analysis of Calvin's theology of assurance and piety and examines the relevance of such in addressing the challenges faced by the Korean Presbyterian Church (Korean Church, hereafter) to propose practical applications for its implementation.

Calvin's theology places a strong emphasis on the inseparable relationship between justification and sanctification. Furthering Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone which was instrumental in the Reformation, Calvin highlights the importance of sanctification or piety as an essential response to God's saving grace. In the Korean Church, many believers struggle to strike a balance between faith and practice, leading to a fragmented understanding of salvation.

The Korean Church has inherited Luther's doctrine of justification by faith as the crux of Reformation theology. However, the overemphasis on this doctrine has resulted in an incomplete understanding of the role of sanctification in the believer's life. This imbalance has led to a "cheap grace" mentality, where believers rely solely on the assurance of their salvation without pursuing a life of piety and good works. In contrast, Calvin emphasises the interrelated concepts of assurance and piety, aiming to harmonise justification and sanctification with the pursuit of good deeds. However, Calvin's theology is often misunderstood, leading to an imbalance where the emphasis placed on justification overshadows the importance of piety. Therefore, the Korean Church is facing challenges such as an individualistic approach to faith, moral laxity, secularism, the rise of heresy, and a lack of ethical integrity.

Thus, the study systematically and exegetically analyses Calvin's various works, including his commentaries on the books of Psalms and Romans, Institutes and other relevant writings. The objective of this close analysis is to discern Calvin's understanding and teachings on the harmony of assurance and piety. The study aims to reveal the true essence of Calvin's theology, to pose a correction of the skewed interpretation prevalent in the Korean Church. This entails recognizing the inseparable nature of justification and sanctification, pursuing a life of piety and good works, and actively engaging with the needs of society. Through the application of Calvin's theology, the Korean Church can regain its vitality, credibility, and influence, ultimately fulfilling its mission to be a beacon of light in the world.

In conclusion, a true understanding of Calvin's theology of assurance and piety holds immense significance for the Korean Church. By embracing this theology and correcting misconceptions, the thesis posits that the Korean Church can restore a balanced approach to faith and practice.

KEY TERMS:

John Calvin, assurance, piety, justification, sanctification, good works, moral laxity, Korean Presbyterian Church,

PREFACE

The motivation behind my thesis on this topic stems from the Korean film 'Secret Sunshine,' which was released in 2006 and invited to the Cannes Film Festival in 2007. This film raised questions that directly expose the reality of Korean Christianity and the errors in the soteriology of the Korean Church. Carrying these concerns, the question that has never left my mind during this research journey is, "What are the problems of the Korean Church and what is the correct approach to resolve these issues?"

Today, the core of the problems faced by the Korean Church lies in its soteriology. It is ironic that the problems of the Korean Church, which follows the tradition of religious reform initiated by the renewal of soteriology, revolve around soteriology itself. Particularly, it is disheartening to see that the Korean Church, which claims to have many aspects of Calvin's theology, distorts and misunderstands Calvin's theology, resulting in an incomplete soteriology. I fervently hope that this research will contribute to the proper restoration and renewal of the Korean Church that follows the tradition of Calvin's theology.

First and foremost, I am deeply grateful for the unwavering support of my family during this research period. I cannot help but shed tears when I think of my mother, who returned to the embrace of God on November 30th last year. She always encouraged me, assuring me of her prayers every time I called. I will never forget her love.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my beloved wife, Kim Dong Suk, who is not only my loving wife but also a librarian. Without her constant sacrifice and love, it would have been difficult for me to complete this research. Her support in sourcing necessary books and materials, and her words of encouragement have been my source of strength in times of weariness. Our three beloved daughters, Grace, Sophia, and Susan, along with my son-in-law, Ilyas Gurbuz, and my grandson Raul, for always providing me with the motivation to persevere. I would also like to thank my younger sister, Mi Kyung, and my younger brother, Ki Sik in Korea.

Above all, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Kye Won Lee, who guided me on this academic journey. If it were not for him, I would not have been able to begin my teaching ministry at Wesley Institutes. I am indebted to him for the past 16 years of my teaching ministry at the Wesley Institute, Sydney College of Divinity, and Australia College of Christianity. I would also like to extend my infinite gratitude to Prof. Hong Man Kim, my dissertation promoter, and Prof. Nico Vorster, my co-promoter. They provided meticulous guidance and valuable assistance, contributing significantly to the systematic completion of my research. I also extend my thanks to Dr. Rochester, who thoroughly reviewed my dissertation, and Tienie Buys and Peg Evans for their constant administrative support.

During my studies at UTC, Rev. Dr. John Squires demonstrated through his teaching and life what scholarship and a good life means. I would like to express my gratitude to him for the spiritual support he provided me during my MTh studies.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Rev. Kil Bock Hong, my mentor and teacher in the Sydney Humanitas Class. He has always treated me as a friend in the humanities and prayed for my research, ministry, and family. He is my role model, demonstrating through his life what it means to be a true human being. I would also like to thank Rev. Woonkyu Lim, a friend who has always been there to help me in difficult times. Additionally, I extend my gratitude to Rev. Hugh Park, who despite being my senior, has treated me as a friend and is one of the few friends with whom I can have truly meaningful conversations in Sydney. Lastly, I would like to thank Rev. Dr. Hun Kim, Dean of Australia College of Christianity, and Mr. Kwon Soon Hyung, the publisher of Christian Review magazine for their continued support.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the research and problem statement

1.1.1 Background to the research

A correct understanding of salvation can be said to be the focal element of Christian theology. Thus, the early Reformer Martin Luther (1483-1546) asserted that one could only be made righteous by faith. He regarded the issue of justification by faith alone as the crucial ‘death or life’ question in Christianity. From here, Reformation theology took root. Reformers of that time praised the reformation, holding justification by faith which emphasised God’s ‘sola gratia’ as the core doctrine of salvation. In a similar sense, soteriology can also be understood to be at the crux of John Calvin’s reformation theology. However, Calvin goes further than Luther, emphasising the close relationship between justification and sanctification, or piety. It can be said that Calvin’s theology further developed and refined Reformation theology following Luther.

Nevertheless, Luther’s doctrine of justification by faith has become the standard of faith and theology for the Korean Presbyterian Church (Korean Church, hereafter) that stands for Protestantism to this day. However, many Reformed Christians within contemporary Korean churches find it difficult to maintain a balance between faith and praxis (Chung, 1999: 17-18; Gwak and Hendriks, 2001: 55; Kim, 2006: 2-5; Lee, 2010: 5, 122-23).¹

Luther’s doctrine gave rise to inaction amongst post-Reformation believers, who did not maintain a sound balance between faith and good works. The justification doctrine that Luther established gave believers the assurance of salvation but in doing so, influenced believers, now contented with their security of their salvation to no longer actively practice good deeds or piety, resultingly becoming its weakness.

However, if many Christians have fallen into a laxity of moral fibre because of this justification by faith doctrine in today’s Korean context (Kim, 2016:10). What kind of problems are facing the Korean society nowadays? Individualisation of local churches, the collapse in authority, increased heresy, rise in sectarianism, and the deficiency of leadership amongst pastors are stated to have stunted the growth of the Korean Church (Jang, 2019:254-256). Many Korean Christians seemingly lead lives aimed for secular success, and worldly happiness.

Great emphasis is placed on earning large sums of money, and ensuring quality education for their children. Often, it seems their real goal and aim is not the glory of God, but rather to achieve worldly success. This tendency towards secular living results in neighbouring unbelievers to slander those Christians who in reality, completely resemble non-Christians, or fail to live up to

the image of Christ. Their actions include involvement in bribery, accumulation of disproportionate wealth, tax evasion, or evasion of conscription,² individualism, regionalism, drug abuse and addiction, and overall materialism.

Within the Korean Church's soteriology, an exclusive emphasis on the doctrine of justification by faith has resulted in a rampage of 'cheap grace' or 'valueless grace' and has distorted the faith of believers. This sort of theology can have the effect of instilling 'justification without sanctification' in Christians and dichotomise their faith (Chung, 1999:20-22). Such a dichotomous understanding of soteriology further deepens dualistic divisions of faith and deeds, laws and grace, the Church and the world. This results not only in aggressive and malicious criticism of Christianity by the world but also has bearing on the Korean Church's public and social influence and mission.

Whilst the Korean Church's understanding of soteriology and its doctrine of justification unequivocally asserts grace, its doctrine of sanctification tends to place a one-sided emphasis on human effort and deeds. Thus, in its entire soteriology, concepts of faith and deeds, grace and good works are often confused or separated. Another issue with the Korean Church's understanding of soteriology that raises concerns is its overemphasis on the individual's salvation at the expense of the public implications of salvation.

However, those who do not practice pious lives cannot be said to have been truly justified or fully assured, according to Calvin. Believers who claim they have been assured but do not pursue piety must distinguish whether their assurance is based on implicit faith or whether it is a false subjective assurance born out of their own belief.

This thesis seeks to explore Calvin's theological thoughts and works, which the Korean Church claims to be part of its theological base, to find a possible solution to the problem of the relationship between justification and sanctification.

1.1.2 Problem statement and arising questions

A common issue amongst many Korean churches following the Reformed tradition is their misconstruction of Calvin's theology. Christians' faith and lives are treated as separate, and by taking basis on the justification theology, they lead lives striving for secular success, as salvation has already been attained. Furthermore, faith is perceived as personal and so they are pre-occupied with pursuing individual worldly interests rather than relations with the community and society. This evinces the misapplication of Calvin's theology. It is true that Calvin as a second-generation

Reformer followed Luther and the doctrine of justification. However, Calvin also placed emphasis on sanctification together with justification. Thus, if his Institutes, commentaries and other works are investigated, it is evident that Calvin stressed the assurance of salvation but also its necessary relation to one's life of piety; Calvin referred to piety as the fruit of assurance. Thus, the central problem motivating this research is to uncover the true understanding of Calvin's theology and its application in the Korean church.

Then, the resulting questions are as follows:

- 1) What does Calvin mean when referring to piety?
- 2) What is the relationship of piety to assurance in Calvin's theology according to his commentaries?
- 3) What is the relationship of piety to assurance according to Calvin's major work, 'Institutes of the Christian Religion' (Institutes, hereafter)?
- 4) What is Calvin's theology of justification and sanctification, and how does it relate to assurance and piety?
- 5) How is this relevant to the context of the Korean Church and how can it be applied within the Korean Church?

1.2 Related research and previous studies

1.2.1 Related research

There has been a multitude of works that have dealt with Calvin's soteriology until present. Among these, many are related to the discussion of Calvin's doctrines of justification, sanctification, and the Christian life. These works will be helpful in my analysis of Calvin's piety and in application of such to the Korean Church context.

Representative works among them include:

- i) J. Todd Billings, *Union with Christ: Reframing theology and ministry for the church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011).

Billings discusses how Christ's work for us connects with his work within us via his Word and the Holy Spirit. He outlines the historical and theological significance behind the biblical truth of the union and communion with God. By insightfully connecting the concepts of adoption, participation and accommodation, justice and Eucharist, and grace and action, he discusses why union with Christ continues to be important for our understanding of the Christian life. His work is very useful and insightful as an introduction to the concept of union with Christ, and he applies this to practical ministry and justice in public life. His work is definitely related to assurance and piety, but his approach is different in that he uses 'adoption' and 'union with Christ' as expressions of assurance. Also, he constructively critiques incarnational ministry via his development of ministry in union with Christ.

- ii) Mark Garcia, *Life in Christ: union with Christ and twofold grace in Calvin's theology* (Studies in Christian History and Thought, Milton Keynes: Paternoster Publishing, 2008).

Garcia explores not only the distinctive features within Calvin's response to Romans on justification, but also demonstrates why Calvin's response must be carefully distinguished from Luther's theology. He demonstrates well that Calvin's explication on the union with Christ by the relationship between justification and sanctification highlights an emerging Reformed theology of justification that differs from that of Luther's theology. He reveals that the exegetical and theological model of union with Christ as according to Calvin, stresses the significance of the connection between salvation and Christology in the tradition of the early Reformation. Though this book does not deal with piety and the Christian's public life, its contribution to the study of the issue being deliberated in this thesis is useful.

- iii) Cornelis P. Venema, *Accepted and renewed in Christ: the twofold grace of God and the interpretation of Calvin's theology* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007).

Venema comments on Calvin's theology on the justification and sanctification of believers based on the redemptive work of Christ - what Calvin terms to be the twofold grace of God. He treats this subject as having a twofold objective. First, he researches the nature and relationship between justification and sanctification in Calvin's theology, and then he interprets it in light of Calvin's whole theology. Venema contributes to the discussion by revealing Calvin's view of the relations between the law and gospel and Calvin's understanding of the role that good works plays in confirming genuine faith. Unfortunately, he does not discuss the full practical implications of sanctification for the Christian life.

- iv) Kwang R. Kim, *Salvation and sanctification in Christ* (Seoul: Chongshin University

Press, 2000).

Korean theologian specialising in dogmatics, Kim examines in relation to sanctification, the Lutheran tradition, the view of Wesleyans, the Reformed perspective, the view of the American Holiness Movement, the Keswick, the definitive sanctification according to John Murray, and the view of Pentecostal Church (Kim, 2000:28-43). Kim unfolds the biblical doctrine of sanctification in view of our union with Christ. Though the structure of his book varies in structure to the above listed texts, Kim similarly stresses the Reformed view on sanctification, and specifically, the correlation between biblical and systematic theology. He suggests that the doctrine of sanctification be educationally applied to the Korean Church (Kim, 2000:357-388). This study is helpful to the analysis of the relationship between salvation and sanctification in Reformation theology and its application to the Korean context.

- v) Jonathan R. Pratt, “*The relationship between justification and sanctification in Romans 5-8*,” (unpublished Ph. D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1999).

Via the perspective of Reformed theology, Pratt’s thesis deals with the link between justification and sanctification centring on Romans 5-8. He concludes as follows. First, justification necessarily and inevitably (Pratt, 1999:226, 250) results in sanctification. To reiterate, if justification is the indicative, it is the “basis and motivation” for the imperative, sanctification (Pratt, 1999:253). Second, sanctification is the Spirit’s work in development that allows for the believer’s gradual growth in holiness (Pratt, 1999:242). Thirdly, perfection is not possible (Pratt, 1999:242-243). Fourth, perseverance is intimately a part of the Christian life (Pratt, 1999:250). I generally agree with Pratt’s views. This thesis also motivated me to include Calvin’s commentary on Romans for analysis of Calvin’s assurance and piety through the concepts of justification and sanctification.

As seen above, Calvin’s theology on sanctification has been extensively explored. However, there are not so many works which have dealt with Calvin’s assurance or Calvin’s piety. It is especially difficult to find works that deal with Calvin’s theology of assurance and piety together. Thus, my research intends to find Calvin’s view of the relationship between assurance and piety, in light of his theology of justification and sanctification. It is therefore also important to review previous studies on Calvin’s piety. It is valuable to see how other scholars have understood Calvin’s piety and how this understanding can guide future research.

1.2.2 Previous studies on Calvin’s piety

To understand the conception of Calvin's piety, it would be helpful and meaningful to look at previous studies of Calvin's godliness.

- i) Battles, F. L. *The Piety of John Calvin The Calvin 500 series* (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing Company, 2009)

Battles is widely recognised as one of the foremost scholars regarding Calvin of his era. His academic achievements on Calvin's piety has been generally recognised in Reformed scholarship. Though Beeke has recently done excellent work on Calvin's piety, Battles is to be called a peerless scholar on Calvin's piety and at the end of the 20th century, he had written the brilliant book about Calvin's piety including his research and translated and edited Calvin's primary source of piety.

In the article "True piety according to Calvin" in his book, we can see that Battles even traced Seneca's commentary on "*De Clementia*" to understand Calvin's concept of godliness. In this long article, he seeks clues to Calvin's understanding of godliness as mirroring Calvin's life. This novel way of interpreting Calvin's theology seems not to be a trend for other scholars studying on Calvin's piety. However, this can be a key element to understanding Calvin's piety.

The other characteristic of Battles' view of Calvin's piety is that he has examined obstacles to piety according to the Polemical Tracts to understand Calvin's piety correctly. It can be seen that this is a very different attempt from other scholar's approach on Calvin's piety. He published an in depth study of Calvin's piety by exploring Institutes, many commentaries, and refutation papers posing as obstacles to Calvin. This book consisted of his research article and he translated and edited Calvin's work related to godliness directly.

One missing element that makes Battle's work short of being all-encompassing is that there is no specific mention of his research and writing on Calvin's piety that must go beyond the church to include the neighbour, society, and the world. As will be discussed in this present paper, an integral aspect of Calvin's piety is his emphasis on living a life of piety, in respect of the wider community. A thorough discussion of Calvin and his doctrine requires an understanding of this crucial principle which underlies the significance of piety (Battles, 2009).

- ii) McKee, E.A. *John Calvin: Writings on Pastoral Piety* (Mahwah, N.J: Paulist Press, 2001)

Another good resource in relation to Calvin's piety is McKee's "John Calvin: writing on pastoral piety". This book is structured similarly to Battles's book, "The Piety of John Calvin". This book includes an introduction which is a brief article from McKee and is then followed by chapters 1-5 which consists of selected works of Calvin which is particularly

related to Calvin's piety, sorted thematically. A characteristic of this book is that Mckee tried to thoroughly understand Calvin as a pastor. Therefore, the contents of the book are also organised from a pastoral perspective and a teacher's standpoint to help pastoral care. For this reason, Chapter 3 consists of materials from a Liturgical and Sacramental practice view and Chapter 4 selects texts intensively from Calvin's prayer or relating with prayer from Calvin's work. It is noteworthy to consider to "Piety in the Christian life, ethics and pastoral care" in Chapter 5.

However, including much of her own research about Calvin's piety in this book would have been much more beneficial. Mckee has focused on Calvin's piety, which she wants to establish, is a special emphasis on focusing on pastoral care in this book.

- iii) Beeke, J. R. Calvin on Piety. In: Mckim, D. K., ed. The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.125-152.

Beeke, J. R. Calvin's God-Exalting Piety living for God's glory: An Introduction to Calvinism (FL: Reformation Trust a division of Ligonier Ministries, 2008), pp.173-188.

Beeke, J. R. Piety: The Heartbeat of Reformed Theology (New Jersey: P&R Publishing, 2015)

Beeke is known for the theme of 'Calvin's piety' in the current Reformation era and is known as a scholar of having published many writings related to Calvin's piety. Beeke wrote many articles about 'Calvin's piety' and made several presentations. However, if you look at the contents, it can be said that particular elements of Calvin's piety in 'The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin (McKim, 2004b)' in 2004 are partially modified or reduced or enlarged. The structure, subtitle and format are quite similar. Beeke, like a Systematic theologian, examined Calvin's piety according to a theological theme. First, he discusses the importance and definition of piety and unfold the theological centre for God's glory by assuming Calvin's supreme goal of godliness as 'Soli Deo Glory'. Beeke (McKim, 2004b:127-145) classified Calvin's godliness as "Theological Dimensions, Ecclesiological Dimension, practical Dimension" and by examining this subject in detail, it can be regarded as a characteristic of his research. Beeke's study of Calvin's godliness, organised systematically, and as an in-depth study into the subject is very helpful.

However, since Calvin's godliness was studied in accordance with the systematic theological system, there is a lack of a logical understanding of the background of Calvin's godliness. Moreover, in the practical dimension of 'Calvin's godliness', it is a pity that the Christian life is filled only with church-centred content, and there is no practical application in the Christian's worldly life (Beeke, 2008; Beeke, 2015; McKim, 2004b).

- iv) Serene, Jones. *Calvin and the Rhetoric of Piety* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox press, 1995)

If one chooses this book based only on the title of the book, people will soon find that this book is not related to Calvin's piety. Jones tried to understand Calvin with a new perspective through this book. It was from the viewpoint of classical rhetoric that Jones attempted to understand Calvin. According to Jones, to pay attention to rhetoric is a key to understanding the writings and teachings of John Calvin and it can be called 'rhetorical theology'. Jones insists that Calvin is dealing with rhetoric consciously and skilfully to persuade and challenge his diverse audience. Jones provides a rhetorical reading of the first three chapters of Calvin's Institutes. Through this work, we can find that original interpretation of Calvin and his work.

In the next two works, "godliness" is not included in the title, but there is much about godliness in the content, and it is Calvin's godliness that the content aims to discuss. Therefore, I think the two writings are important resource for Calvin's piety (Serene, 1995).

- v) Michael Horton, *Calvin on the Christian life: Glorifying God and Enjoying God forever* (Weaton, Illinois: Crossway a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers, 2014)

As you can see, the word 'godliness' does not appear in the title of the book. Nevertheless, this book is, above all, a compelling recent handbook on Calvin's piety which describes Calvin's godliness in its content. Horton reveals in detail Calvin's theology, which is compressed by godliness based on clear primary sources about Calvin's circumstances and other scholars' studies of Calvin. According to Horton, godliness for Calvin encompasses both faith and practice, doctrine and life. Hence, Horton discusses Christian life which Calvin says to treat all knowledge of God, Christ, the Church and the world. From here, Horton tries to show how to live a true Christian life with an open mind in viewing the whole of the realm of the Christian life, which is another characteristic of this book.

As mentioned before, due to the concept of Calvin's piety being dispersed throughout the whole book, there is no part that defines 'Calvin's piety' systematically or schematically. It comes in contact with the heart, but it may not be clear in actually defining 'Calvin's piety'. Nevertheless, this book proves that for Calvin, 'godliness' is "the actual life of Christian" (Horton, 2014b).

- vi) Ferguson, Singlair. B. Calvin's Heart for God. In: Parsons, Burk., ed. John Calvin: A Heart for Devotion, Doctrine, and Doxology (Lake Mary, FL: Reformation Trust a division of Ligonier Ministries, 2008), pp.31-42.

Ferguson's article also doesn't have the word "godliness" in the title. Nevertheless, Ferguson briefly outlines how Calvin came to the world as a godly Christian and focuses on the subject of godliness. This research centres mainly on Calvin's personal godly journey and what Calvin pursued: 'godliness,' focusing on Calvin's life as a subject and discovering examples in Calvin's work. There are similar parts to Horton's work, but the content is concise and not lengthy, so it is not enough to capture the whole journey of 'Calvin's piety.' Even so, the theme of 'Calvin's godliness' is not organised systematically, but it is only present to reveal that Calvin was a person who pursued a godly life. As noted above, many scholars have studied Calvin's piety. There are some articles in the book that have not been mentioned because they have no direct relationship (Parsons, 2008).

Beeke and Horton have approached 'Calvin's piety' in different methods as seen above. By combining the two and synthesising them, Calvin's pursuit of godliness can be revealed. However, scholars who have studied Calvin's godliness, including Beeke, show the limitations of discussing Calvin's godliness and only discussing personal faith. Because of the nature of Reformation era's scholars, there is an unfortunate trend that study of Calvin's godliness seems to remain only in the sphere of the church.

Several scholars' important studies of Calvin's piety have been examined. Each scholar has their own emphasis, and you can see different approaches to Calvin's characteristics of godliness. The lesson learned from the above studies is that first, Calvin's piety should extend from worship and church-centredness to the Christian's broader life. Secondly, in order to understand Calvin's piety precisely rather than via a systematic theological approach, it is necessary to understand Calvin in his historical background and in his circumstances.

1.3 Aim, objectives and benefits of research

1.3.1 Aim

The aim of this thesis is to gain a genuine understanding of John Calvin's theology of 'assurance and piety' and its practical application within the Korean Church. By exploring Calvin's theological perspectives and teachings, this research seeks to address the existing challenges faced by the Korean Church, such as the laxity of moral fibre, the individualisation of local churches, trend towards sectarianism, collapse of authority, increased heresy, and deficiencies in pastoral leadership. The aim is to provide insights and potential solutions to reconcile the dichotomy between justification and sanctification, and to foster a more holistic approach to faith and Christian living within the Korean Church. Thus, this research is to explore Calvin's soteriology and his theology of assurance and piety so that the true construction of Calvin's theology can be applied to the Korean Church. Therefore, the thesis aims to overturn the soteriological self-indulgence that has resulted from emphasis on the justification doctrine and stress instead the significance of piety as the touchstone to measure the assurance of one's justification by faith.

1.3.2 Objectives

- i) To analyse and comprehend Calvin's theology of 'assurance and piety': The first objective of this thesis is to conduct an in-depth analysis of Calvin's theological writings, including his Institutes and exegetical commentaries, to gain a thorough understanding of his theology of assurance and piety. This objective aims to unravel the theological foundations, concepts, and principles that Calvin espoused regarding the relationship between justification and sanctification.
- ii) To identify the challenges faced by the Korean Church: The thesis aims to identify and assess the challenges faced by the Korean Church in the present context, including the laxity of moral fibre, individualisation of local churches, sectarianism, the collapse of authority, the rise of heresy, and deficiencies in pastoral leadership. Understanding these challenges will provide a context for examining the applicability of Calvin's theology of assurance and piety within the Korean Church.
- iii) To explore the practical application of Calvin's theology within the Korean Church: This objective seeks to explore how Calvin's theology of assurance and piety can be practically applied within the Korean Church to address the identified challenges. It involves examining how Calvin's teachings can contribute to the transformation of individual believers, the strengthening of church community, and the influence of the church in Korean society. The objective aims to propose practical strategies and approaches for

integrating Calvin's theological principles within the Korean Church's framework.

- iv) To foster a holistic understanding of salvation and discipleship: This objective aims to bridge the gap between justification and sanctification within the Korean Church's soteriology. It seeks to challenge the dichotomous understanding of faith and deeds, grace and good works, and emphasise the inseparable nature of true assurance and pious living. By exploring Calvin's teachings, this objective purport to foster a holistic understanding of salvation that encompasses both personal transformation and the public implications of faith.
- v) To provide recommendations for theological reformation and participation in society: Based on the findings and analysis, this thesis aims to provide practical recommendations for theological reformation within the Korean Church. These recommendations may include adjustments in practices, and pastoral leadership to align with Calvin's theology of assurance and piety. The objective is to stimulate and encourage genuine piety and enhance the Church's influence within Korean society.

By pursuing these objectives, this thesis seeks to contribute to a true understanding of Calvin's theology of 'assurance and piety' and its practical application within the Korean Church. Ultimately, it aims to address the challenges faced by the Korean Church and promote a balanced and transformative approach to faith and Christian living.

1.3.3 Benefits of research

A true understanding of Calvin's theology of 'assurance and piety' can contribute to a theological reformation within the Korean Church. By delving into Calvin's writings, this research aims to challenge and correct the prevailing misconceptions and distortions of theological concepts, particularly in relation to justification, sanctification, faith, grace, and good works. This can lead to a more accurate and balanced theological concept that aligns with Calvin's original teachings. Also, by applying Calvin's theology of assurance and piety, the Korean Church can foster genuine spiritual transformation among its members. This research aims to illuminate the inseparable connection between justification and sanctification, emphasising the importance of living a pious life as an outworking of true faith. Through a deeper understanding and application of Calvin's teachings, believers can experience personal growth, strengthen their relationship with God, and reflect Christ's character in their daily lives.

Above all, Calvin's theology of assurance and piety has the potential to address the prevalent

issues of individualism, secularism, and the pursuit of worldly success within the Korean Church. By focusing on the cultivation of a pious life and the pursuit of God's glory, this research aims to promote a sense of community, unity, and shared purpose among believers. It seeks to encourage believers to live for a higher calling beyond personal interests and contribute to the flourishing of the Church. Therefore, ultimately deeper understanding of Calvin's theology can equip the Korean Church to have a more significant impact on society and fulfil its mission effectively. By emphasizing the public implications of salvation, this research aims to bridge the gap between personal faith and social responsibility. It seeks to inspire believers to actively engage with the needs of the world, promote justice, and demonstrate the transformative power of the Gospel. The application of Calvin's theology within the Korean Church can contribute to its credibility, relevance, and positive influence in the larger society.

In conclusion, this thesis aims to provide a genuine understanding of Calvin's theology of "assurance and piety" and its application within the Korean Church. By addressing the existing challenges and reconciling the dichotomy between justification and sanctification, this research seeks to foster theological reformation, spiritual transformation, a strengthened church community, and a meaningful social impact for the Korean Church.

1.4 Central theological argument

The central theological argument of this research is that Calvin's doctrine of assurance and piety can be helpful to the Korean Church. The thesis opposes the bulk of the Reformed tradition which has over-emphasised the justification doctrine, resulting in moral waywardness. Instead, it draws on Calvin's theology of the relationship between piety and assurance to highlight true justification and sanctification. Through examination of Calvin's doctrines and works, it will reaffirm that faith that does not pursue piety cannot be called assurance; those who have true assurance of justification must lead lives that pursue piety. This thesis will argue that Calvin's assertion that assurance is the root of piety can be seen as true.

1.5 Research methodology

The research method of this thesis will predominately consist of an extensive literary study of the doctrines of assurance and piety in the works of Calvin. This thesis will use a historical and integrative method which combines the deductive study of Calvin's commentaries and a systematic review of Institutes to reach a correct understanding of Calvin's theology of assurance, piety, justification and sanctification. In Chapter 2 of this research, the material draws heavily on a journal article I previously published (Joo, 2016).³

Calvin was generally considered to be closer to being a systematic theologian than a biblical theologian. However, it is hard to define or describe Calvin as one type of theologian. Nowadays, rather than being considered a systematic theologian, Calvin is regarded to be a biblical theologian. J. Todd Billings (2009:429) pointed out that Calvin did not follow the model of a 'systematic theologian' who centres one article of doctrine, and from this point of doctrine, deduces the rest of his theology. Calvin practice as a theologian was exegetical, organising his teaching from exegetical expositions of scripture through his commentaries. We will define justification and sanctification, and assurance and piety through the works of Calvin and examine his biblical (exegetical) approaches to elucidate his theology.

1.5.1 Systematic research into Calvin's exegetical works

Assurance and piety will be defined at the beginning of the study. Then, works related to assurance and piety (for example, Calvin's commentaries on Psalms and Romans) will be collected and analysed exegetically and systematically.

Calvin, widely known to be a theologian and biblical commentator, was also a minister. The Bible occupies an absolutely central position in his ministry. Moreover, Psalms and Romans have a particular significance for Calvin. Through Psalms, Calvin viewed his whole life and pastoral ministry in the grace of God. James Anderson, an English editor who edited Calvin's commentary on the Psalms, notes in his preface that "its whole tone evinces it to be the fruit of a soul which felt the deep workings of piety" (Calvin, 1996a:xv), but Calvin (1996a:xxxvii) himself confessed the Psalms to be the "anatomy of all parts of the soul." In all of Calvin's commentaries, there is no other book where Calvin acknowledges piety and God's grace more than in his commentary on the Psalms. Above all, Calvin loved the Psalms and Psalms can be said to be a book that clearly demonstrated the assurance of salvation and pious life for Calvin. With regards to Romans, as Calvin (1996f:xxiv) declared in his commentary on Romans, "when anyone understands this epistle, he has a passage opened to him to the understanding of the whole Scripture." Romans can be called the treasure that uncovers the entirety of the Bible. In addition, there is no other book that reveals the doctrine of justification and sanctification as well as Romans. For these reasons, Psalms and Romans have been particularly chosen from the Bible and Calvin's commentaries for systematic research into Calvin's exegetical work.

1.5.2 Calvin's Institutes

The methodology will involve a detailed analysis of Calvin's magnum opus, Institutes. If Calvin's commentaries provide his exegetical explanation of biblical themes, his Institutes consists of a

more systematic and in-depth presentation of his theology. Therefore, Calvin's great work, *Institutes*, will also be systematically examined. This will include a thorough study of the sections relevant to assurance and piety, particularly those addressing the relationship between justification and sanctification.

As various editions of *Institutes* have been published, this thesis will also consider how Calvin further refined his theology throughout the span of his life, which is evident through the amendments made in his doctrinal teachings contained in different editions of *Institutes*.

1.5.3 Analysis of Calvin's other works

In addition to *Institutes*, this research will encompass an exploration of Calvin's other writings, such as letters, and treatises. These works will provide supplementary insights into Calvin's theology of assurance and piety, offering a broader perspective on his teachings and their practical application and will be integrated throughout the chapters, to support analysis of Calvin's exegetical works or his *Institutes*. Although also a theologian, Calvin was foremost a minister. His theology can be seen to have been sharpened through his ministry, and his ministry was a practical application of his understanding and biblical exegetical works. So, the methodology will involve a critical examination of these additional sources to extract relevant information and to discern any nuances or developments in Calvin's theological thought.

1.5.4 Application to the Korean context

To address the specific challenges faced by the Korean Church, the methodology will involve applying Calvin's theology of assurance and piety to the Korean context. This step will require a contextual analysis of the issues highlighted in the background, such as the laxity of moral fibre, individualisation of local churches, sectarianism, and deficiencies in pastoral leadership. The research findings will be contextualised to apply Calvin's theology of 'assurance and piety' within the Korean Church.

1.6 Ethical risk

This study primarily consists of a literature review for its methodology as identifies above. No human participants are involved in this research. Hence, the ethical risk in this respect is low. Furthermore, the research has also been conscious of ensuring there are no other ethical issues including any conflicts of interest and plagiarism.

NOTES

¹ Sung Wook Chung emphasises that the situation amongst many current Korean churches is similar to that of the ethical corruption that existed amongst European Churches in Middle Ages just prior to the birth of the Reformation Period (Sung Wook Chung, 1999. *Reformation & Reformation: 16th century protestant reformation and 21st century Korean Church's reformation*. Seoul: The Revival & Reformation press: 27).

A significant issue for Korean churches that have stopped developing 2000 years later is, "How to recover the unethical Korean Church?" This question is often the subject of many Korean churches' newspapers, journals, and forums. In addition, Johnstone and Mandryk in their 'Operation World', indeed criticise the issue, presenting various problems within the Korean Church. First of which is the ethical teaching neglected in churches. Biblical truths are seen to be not applied to society and remain at a low ethical standard. Second, is spiritual pride. Johnstone and Mandryk point out that the Korean Church instils a belief that success and prosperity to be measures of God's blessing; rather than pursuing the taking of the cross, leaders encouraging success, wealth and degrees. Thirdly, the Korean Church is identified as too divided doctrinally, regionally and organisationally with the authors praying for humility and reconciliation to remedy such discord. The fourth concerns the Korean Church's leadership as being characterised as too authoritative. The high status and regard given to ministers is seen to interfere with the service and distorts their relationship with God, instead propagating division, legalism and formalism amongst the congregation. Finally, inappropriate discipleship. Recognising the influence of Buddhism, Confucianism and Shamanism due to Korean history, Johnstone and Mandryk stress that there is no adequate leadership to guide the congregation to proper understanding of the Gospel and of the Christian life (Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk, 2006. *Operation World*. Harrisonburg, VA: Donnelley & Sons: 388).

² Korean males between 18-35 are required to complete compulsory military service in South Korea due its war with North Korea which despite the armistice in 1953, is still technically ongoing. Draft evasion is heavily criticised in the Korean community, particularly in cases where families have used wealth and connections to avoid conscription.

³ This journal article was written alongside the early stages of this doctoral research and explored the nature and meaning of Calvin's conception of piety, which also served as a pivotal framing question for Chapter 2 of this thesis.

Chapter 2 What does piety really mean for Calvin? An exploration of the nature and characteristics of Calvin's piety (Joo, 2016:155)

The whole life of Christians ought to be a sort of practice of godliness,
for we have been called to sanctification of practice
(I Thess. 4:7; cf. Eph. 1:4; I Thess. 4:3)
(Institutes 3.19.2)

2.1 Introduction

The terminology “piety” is rarely used in modern times. Bouwsma (Raitt *et al.*, 1987:318-333) described "The Spirituality of John Calvin" instead of "piety" which is an inappropriate choice of term to discuss Calvin's piety. As Horton (2014b:17) insists, ‘piety’ (*pietas*), as opposed to spirituality, is the all-encompassing term that captures the Christian faith and practice for the Reformer. In the age of the Reformation, ‘piety’ was a holistic word covering both doctrine and life. Calvin assumed a holistic view of the term. For Calvin, doctrine, worship, and Christian life are all part of one concept. It can be seen that Calvin stated his purpose for writing in the preface to his 1559 edition of Institutes as follows:

God has filled my mind with zeal to spread his kingdom and to further the public good. I am also duly clear in my own conscience, and have God and the angels to witness, that since I undertook the office of teacher in the church, I have had no other purpose than to benefit the church by maintaining the pure doctrine of godliness (Calvin, 1960a:4).

For Calvin, his theology and piety were not separated. His theological work was to teach godliness, and piety is the most important subject in his works. I will thus examine Calvin's piety first in this chapter.

First, I will study what godliness is for Calvin. As many scholars acknowledge, Calvin is a theologian in the service of piety. Many theologians have been studying Calvin's piety⁴. Their emphasis may be different, but what they all have in common is that Calvin emphasised godliness in his theology. Calvin stressed that piety is the most significant topic of how a redeemed believer

should live in this world. Thus, examining the meaning of Calvin's godliness will not only reveal the mark of Calvin's theology, which the Korean Church claims to follow (Park, 2014:10) but also helps us realise where we stand.

In fact, Calvin's piety is closely related to his life. His godliness does not mean unrealistic 'religious sentiment.' For Calvin, godliness was very practical. Therefore, to correctly understand Calvin's piety, we need to understand his existential background during the 16th century of the Reformation. This will help us to reach a true meaning of Calvin's piety.

Secondly, I will explore why Calvin focused on piety in his theology. This is to clarify that Calvin's emphasis on godliness in all his works is related to the sanctification of the believer when Calvin mentions godliness. Piety is the attitude that those who are first assured of God's salvation have towards God and the world.

Godliness is the journey of life for believers those believers who are saved through the Holy Spirit wherein their confessed God is the Father. This attitude is not limited to the Triune God, and Calvin shows concrete details about how a believer should live in this world. For Calvin, we can see that godliness is an integrated process of life that shows how believers who have already become children of God ought to live the life of sanctification within the church as well as in the wider world.

Through this work, I will address my key question, "What does really piety mean for Calvin?" and this can be applied to the Korean Church that strives to follow Calvin's theology as a standard and mark. To understand the conception of Calvin's piety, it would be helpful and meaningful to look at previous studies of Calvin's godliness.

2.2 The nature and background of Calvin's piety

Although this chapter will focus on Calvin's thoughts and expressions with respect to piety as contained in his most representative works such as Institutes, but in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of Calvin's piety, it is of significance to also understand that this doctrine of piety was inherently the result of the context in which Calvin lived (Joo, 2016:165)⁵. This is particularly evident through study of Calvin's context in relation to godliness.

2.2.1 Calvin was a pastor more than he was a theologian

A core significance of Calvin's theology is that it is dynamic and produces spiritual benefits as opposed to merely being the construction of systematic theology (Joo, 2016:157). Calvin's pastoral passion and the reflection of his beliefs of piety as demonstrated via his Institutes and other works not only contains informative value, but importantly, it also inspires and challenges believers (Hesselink, 2004:75; Joo, 2016). In that light, Calvin purported for his Institutes to be practical rather than speculative (Hall & Lillback, 2008a:9). McKee (McKee, 2001:1) states that John Calvin was a pastor and the teacher of pastor. Godfrey also emphasises Calvin to be a pilgrim and pastor.

The real Calvin was not in the first place man who lived to influence future generations. Rather he was a spiritual pilgrim finding anew the apostolic Christianity expressed in the Bible and serving as a faithful minister of that Word in the church of his day. The influence that Calvin would have regarded as most important was as a purifier of the Christian religion and a reformer of the church for his day. The essential Calvin was a pilgrim and pastor. From that reality all his influence flowed. Calvin saw the importance of his life as a pastor in his own day and did not focus on his influence in years to come (Godfrey, 2009:8).

Contrarily, Calvinism founded and developed from Reformed Scholasticism has had the effect of weakening Calvin's theology including the doctrines of 'Reality of Christ's Grace' and 'Christ's Spiritual Dynamics' (Joo, 2016:157).⁶ According to Clark, 19th and early 20th centuries and even today among some Lutheran scholars, Calvin is claimed to be a rationalist and dogmatic theologian, however there is an increasing portrayal of Calvin as a pastor and reformer (Hall & Lillback, 2008a:97). Lee (Elsie, 2011:199-200) even goes to say that Kingdon and his research team have restored and translated the Geneva Consistory, and this strengthens the perspective of Calvin as a pastor. However, Calvin's theology predominately concerns itself with practising and demonstrating the 'tasting' of God's grace, in contradiction of the view of Calvin as a systematic theologian (McKim, 2004a:75).

The concept of Calvin's piety was not separated from his existence. His notion of piety can be recognised when we understand his life, his suffering, and the background context of his time. That is why in order to correctly understand the notion of Calvin's piety, we need to know his biography and the historical circumstances of the time in which he lived. Godfrey (2009:272-273) claims that Calvin's exegesis on Hebrews 11:1 is not an abstract idea, but a reflection of his actual wrestle with his suffering. That is to say that Calvin's life, indeed his existence, faith and theology all centred on piety (Joo, 2016:158). Then, Calvin's piety can be studied in relation to his portrayal of his context.

2.2.2 Ungodliness and godliness – exploring Calvin’s historical context

The notion of godliness and ungodliness as per Calvin is a clear illustration of the importance of his context in shaping his doctrine of piety (Joo, 2016:165). Battles (2009:36-40) argues that Calvin's theology was shaped by 1) comforting his French evangelical members who suffered under a hostile government because of their sharing of the Gospel, and 2) Calvin himself was surrounded by those who opposed the Gospel he was convinced of. As Battles said, it is true that Calvin’s thoughts about piety was developed by the context surrounding him during this period.

Although Calvin’s definition of ‘piety’ is varied, it is apparent that one use of the term can be understood through his depiction of those opponents who persecuted Reformers, whom Calvin refers to as ungodly (Joo, 2016:165):

But here is not the place to tell how it has come about: certainly, our cause lies afflicted. For ungodly men have so far prevailed that Christ’s truth, even if it is not driven away scattered and destroyed, still lies hidden, buried and inglorious. The poor little church has either been wasted with cruel slaughter or banished into exile, or so overwhelmed by threats and fears that it dares not even open its mouth. And yet, with their usual rage and madness, the ungodly continue to battle a wall already toppling and to complete the ruin toward which they have been striving (Calvin, 1960a:11).

As per Calvin, these “ungodly men” defied God due to their misled understanding of the scriptures and doctrines, persecuting Reformers despite declaring themselves to be serving God (Joo, 2016:166).⁷ In that context, Calvin purported for his theology to reform those ungodly of his time to recognise the truth and doctrine of piety as per the Bible, as well as to guide all believers in practising piety throughout their lives (Joo, 2016:166).⁸

Thus, the intricate connection between Calvin’s notion of piety to his historical context is clear. The social and historical conflicts he endures is illuminatory with respect to why this doctrine of piety was so central to Calvin’s theology. In a sense, it is not possible to fully understand Calvin’s doctrine of piety as he intended without also contemplating the historical background against which it was developed (Joo, 2016:166).

In addition, Calvin’s Reformation reveals a break away from the Reformation doctrines held by the first-generation Reformer, Luther. Whereas Luther held ‘justification by faith’ as the crux of the gospel, and the principle to ignite the Reformation, this was in the context of Luther finding

faults and corruption within the medieval Roman Catholic Church (Joo, 2016:166-167). Having practised his theology against a different historical background as part of the newly established Reformed church, Calvin faced a different struggle, being set against the battle between the Roman Catholic Church, and the new radical Reformers, the Anabaptists (Joo, 2016:167). This context resulted in the need for Calvin to criticise the misguided theologies of both groups, while defending the Reformation by developing a precise biblical perspective (Joo, 2016:167). Contrary to the radical Anabaptists, Calvin protected the biblical doctrine of faith while simultaneously carrying out his mission of criticising the misguided theology of the Roman Catholic Church, as well as protecting those who found themselves persecuted by either side. Therefore, Calvin's life can be described to be one of "maintaining the truth" and "proclaiming the right piety" by upholding the biblical doctrine against two 'ungodly' groups (Joo, 2016:167).

Bedecking the grossest ignorance with this term, they ruinously delude poor, miserable folk. Furthermore, to state truly and frankly the real fact of the matter, this fiction not only buries but utterly destroys true faith. Is this what believing means-to understand nothing, provided only that you submit your feeling obediently to the church? Faith rests not on ignorance, but on knowledge (Calvin, 1960a:544-545).

Hence it is clear that, Calvin's intention behind using true piety to enlighten the ungodly so that they may recognise their own wickedness. This focus is evident as per the preface to his 1560 French edition of Institutes. 'Subject Matter of the Present Work' purported to depict the biblical core of the Gospel to all. Calvin's intention and desire was that by doing so, the ungodly, and the misguided and erroneous understanding of the Bible would not prevail (Joo, 2016:168).

Similarly, the purpose of his book can be understood via his dedication to King Francis I of France in the prefatory address contained in his Institutes.⁹

Thus, I exhort all those who have reverence for the Lord's Word, to read it, and to impress it diligently upon their memory, if they wish to have, first, a sum of Christian doctrine, and, secondly, a way to benefit greatly from reading the Old and New Testament (Calvin, 1960a:8).

As per the above, it clear that the term 'godliness' that Calvin favours is due to its relationship to those ungodly people who surrounded Calvin. Thus, the term 'ungodliness' can be understood to have meant for Calvin, those who distorted the gospel, practised idolisation and dishonoured God. It follows then that 'godliness' refers to the opposite. These terms, as contextually developed by Calvin, are fundamental to his conception of 'piety'.

2.2.3 Suffering and piety

It is also important to consider the nature of Calvin's life itself when discussing his historical context and its relation to piety; Calvin's life was full of adversity. According to McKim (1984:197-204), these experiences, particularly during his life of asylum were instrumental in the development of Calvin's theology and his thoughts matured through such hardships (Joo, 2016:168). Indeed, this is evident through his continued revisions of his work, *Institutes*.¹⁰ This is to say that Calvin's theology developed in suffering (Joo, 2016:169). Calvin's words as contained in the biography by Parker (1975:105) vividly testifies to how much Calvin struggled being surrounded by horror, "Rather would I submit to death a hundred times than to that cross on which I had to perish daily a thousand times over."

The challenge to Calvin was indisputable. In another letter to Farel, Calvin wrote in greater detail:

Whenever I call to mind the wretchedness of my life there, how can it not be but that my very soul must shudder at any proposal for my return? I will not mention the anxiety by which we were continually tossed up and down and driven to and for from the time I was appointed your colleague... When I remember by what torture my conscience was racked at that time, and with how much anxiety it was continually boiling over, forgive me if I dread the place as having about it something of a fatality in my case (Parker, 1975:105-106).

Hill also shows how Calvin was burdened with suffering through his book 'John Calvin, Suffering: Understanding the love of God.'¹¹ Thus Calvin's understanding of hardships and suffering was not merely theoretically but intimately personal due to his various experiences with adversity throughout his life. These related to his health and family life, but can also largely be attributed to his relationship with the Roman Catholics and Anabaptists (Joo, 2016:169).¹² During Calvin's life spent in Geneva, he also suffered politically. The dictator Perrin terribly bothered Calvin (Parker, 1975:127-129). By the various facets of his suffering, a greater insight into his theology can be gained (Joo, 2016:169).

In order to examine Calvin's suffering, reading his commentary on the Psalms is highly recommended. In the next chapter, the relationship between his piety and assurance through Calvin's commentary on the Psalm will be examined. This vividly shows how severely he suffered from the opponents surrounding him. Through Calvin's exegesis on the Psalms, it can be seen that he enjoyed projecting himself to David. This is because the Psalms contains a vivid depiction of the suffering of David. As Calvin (1996a:257-259) annotates in his introductory

commentary of Psalms 18, David's whole life itself consisted of sufferings and was ultimately a life of bearing the cross. Before he became a king, he lived in fear, being chased by Saul, in danger of death on numerous occasions and hope defying experiences. However, Calvin emphasises that we will learn the godliness and holiness needed for Christian life in the Psalms, but above all, we will be trained to bear the cross, claiming,

the Psalms are replete with all the precepts which serve to frame our life to every part of holiness, piety, and righteousness, yet they will principally teach and train us to bear the cross (Calvin, 1996a:39).

Calvin dedicates parts of chapters 7 and 9 Book III of his Institutes under 'The Denial of Ourselves' and 'Bearing the Cross' to summarise the pious life (Joo, 2016:169). Calvin's efforts to deliver the doctrine in its true form to those passionate about religion and opposed to Reformers (differentiated from those against piety, whom Calvin expressed as the ungodly) so that they understand the true doctrine in a right manner and to present an honourable model of the Church in pursuit of piety. Moreover, according to Calvin, adversity not only shapes but also gives way to a pious life as believers are humbled by their difficult experiences (Joo, 2016:169). For Calvin, this suffering must be 'borne as a cross', serving as the proof of sharing in Christ (Calvin, 1960a:708); one must face torment in the name of the Lord to share Christ's suffering.¹³

In sum, for Calvin, piety is the defence of truth as well as being practical principles that demonstrate how believers should live as Christians. In opposing both the ungodly Roman Catholics and the Anabaptists, Calvin believed that believers must practise a godly adherence to explicit faith (Joo, 2016:170). Furthermore, he recognised the need for true knowledge, and importantly, true knowledge of divine will and held that adherence to such truth led to a pious life (Calvin, 1960a:545).

Through the above, Calvin confesses that he has suffered numerous times by the enemies surrounding him, but through the hardship, he has learned how to bear the cross and trust God more. The difficult life journey and suffering surrounding Calvin was an instrument to further shaping his piety. For this reason, to understand Calvin's piety properly, we cannot actually understand it without understanding his suffering and the difficulties he has suffered.

Having established the knowledge on Calvin's piety, the following section will examine Calvin's definition of piety as being Calvin's life goal which he pursued as a motif of his theology and significant foundation of faith.

2.3 Piety as Calvin's life goal

The term 'pietas' (piety, godliness) is not used anywhere more than as it is used by Calvin across his various works. Calvin's Institutes, exegetical as well as other pieces of writings demonstrate his affinity to this term, 'pietas' (Joo, 2016:159).¹⁴ The subtitle to his 1536 Latin edition of Institutes proves the core significance of pietas for Calvin:¹⁵ "Basic instruction (institution) in the Christian religion, known in the doctrine of salvation; a work very well worth reading by everyone zealous for godliness" (Hall & Lillback, 2008a:foreword ix).

Thus, as defined by many scholars, Calvin's theology is a theology of piety.¹⁶ However, for Calvin, piety is not only or merely a motif recurrent throughout his theology. Piety is also the foundation that grounds his belief (Joo, 2016:159). Indeed, due to this core belief and principle that guides Calvin as explicated in his work, Institutes, this is referred to as '*Summa Pietatis*'. Furthermore, the piety that Calvin so pursued is clear not only within his works but also through his life (Joo, 2016:160).

This is emphasised in McNeil's introduction to Calvin's Institutes,

One who takes up Calvin's masterpiece with the preconception that its author's mind is a kind of efficient factory turning out and assembling the parts of a neatly joined structure of dogmatic logic will quickly find this assumption challenged and shattered. The discerning reader soon realizes that not the author's intellect alone but his whole spiritual and emotional being is enlisted in his work... He was not, we may say, a theologian by profession, but a deeply religious man who possessed a genius for orderly thinking and obeyed the impulse to write out the implications of his faith. He calls his book not a *summa theologiae* but a *summa pietatis*. The secret of his mental energy lies in his piety; its product is his theology, which is his piety described at length (Calvin, 1960a:li).

His Prefatory Address to King Francis I suggests that the basis of Calvin's purpose in Institutes was to help people reach true piety:

When I first set my hand to this work, nothing was farther from my mind most glorious King, than to write something that might afterward be offered to your Majesty. My purpose was solely to transmit certain rudiments by which those who are touched with any zeal for religion might be shaped to true godliness (Calvin, 1960a:9).

Calvin therefore emphasises the importance of Christians practicing and training to obtain piety throughout the course of their entire life (Joo, 2016:161): “The whole life of Christians ought to be a short of practice of godliness, for we have been called to sanctification” (Calvin, 1960a:835).

In his First Timothy’s commentary, Calvin (2009:109-110) goes as far as to assert that piety is the main purpose in pursuing God throughout out lives; calling piety, the “beginning, the middle and the end of Christian life.” Calvin asserts that only piety can bring forth perfection, “leaving God unwanting from us” (Joo, 2016:161).

In this way, Calvin’s purpose for writing Institutes was in the pursuit of piety for all believers who have been called to practise piety and receive sanctification (Joo, 2016:161). This then raises the question, ‘What is the definition of ‘piety’ that Calvin refers to?’ The next section will discuss this concept of piety as was intended by Calvin.

2.4 Piety as Calvin intended

Living in an ungodly era, and surrounded by unrighteous people, Calvin warns that those unrighteous and ungodly will be met with God’s wrath (Joo, 2016:161). Hence, Calvin opposed the ungodly times and committed to being a witness to God’s words. As he reflect in his ‘The Author’s Preface’ to his commentary on the Psalms, Calvin was by nature, private and a withdrawn individual (Calvin, 1996a:xli). However, Calvin made it his mission to actively oppose unrighteous and ungodly people out of his love for God’s word and compassion for fellow men with the aim to free those who had fell into the wrong knowledge of God (Joo, 2016:162).

This is to say that for Calvin, as God invites us to His abundant love, true piety therefore gives people freedom. Thus in his Institutes, Calvin (1960a:47-49 & 544-547) includes much critique of the Roman Catholics who spread their false doctrine and corrupted people. For Calvin, piety begins by recognising God’s fatherhood and His abundant love for humankind and the believer’s attempt to emulate such love. This is thus why Calvin distinguishes between the ‘knowledge of God’ and ‘knowledge of ourselves’ in his Institutes, to emphasise the importance of ‘true knowledge of God’. For Calvin, truly understanding God is to recognise His love, His grace and fatherhood and to understand that He is pleased to bless us with all good things that He has prepared (Joo, 2016:162).

This I take to mean that not only does he sustain this universe (as he once founded it) by his boundless might, regulate it by his wisdom, preserve it by his goodness, and especially rule mankind by his righteousness and judgment, bear with it in his

mercy, watch over it by his protection; but also that no drop will be found either of wisdom and light, or of righteousness or power or rectitude, or of genuine truth, which does not flow from him, and of which he is not the cause. Thus, we may learn to await and seek all these things from him, and thankfully to ascribe them, once received, to him. For this sense of the powers of God is for us a fit teacher of Piety (Calvin, 1960a:40-41).

In that sense, piety is born from that true knowledge of God, and importantly, His love and His sacrifices for us as well as our knowledge of how to revere this grace He has bestowed. Accordingly, Calvin defined piety as our reverence of God under the His love with the knowledge of “His benefits induced” (Joo, 2016:163).

In his sermon on First Timothy, Calvin (1830:21-33) preaches about the ‘mystery of godliness’ where he expresses this to be Christ’s appearance in human form. Here, Calvin emphasises that first, God’s love for us is so great that He took on human form and joined us on Earth, to ensure our salvation. Second, it is this fatherly love and through Christ, that our recovered relationship and the unity between humankind and God is possible. Finally, that Christ as proof of God’s love, ultimately, is His promise and words itself (Joo, 2016:163).

Hence, essentially, piety is the correct and true knowledge of God (knowledge of God also being linked to the knowledge of ourselves, particularly our depravity), His words within this knowledge (His words being Christ, the Gospel), and our acceptance of his words through faith and with the Holy Spirit’s help (Joo, 2016:163). From this, it is also evident that the Trinity is also highly relevant to the doctrine of Calvin’s piety.¹⁷

Furthermore, it is important to understand that as abovementioned, Calvin’s doctrine is merely comprised of logical statements or doctrinal. Rather, Calvin is concerned with a piety that deals intimately with the human soul, the state of the human spirit, and matters of the human mind. In addition to exploring real and practical benefits of piety. Thus, the doctrine of piety as per Calvin, is one that is applicable for living practice and sets expectations for real transformations through living such pious lives (Joo, 2016:164).

Then, Calvin’s purpose can be also understood as to be synthesised as follows: piety is the knowledge of God’s grace, His granting us salvation recognised to be His actions as our father and in following, our knowledge of the benefits of this, which also incorporates our love and reverence for God (Joo, 2016:164).

Furthermore, Reformation scholars who have researched Calvin have discussed his concept of piety with a primary focus God with particularly clear emphasis being placed on the relationship between humans and God, the fear and reverence believers have for Him, acknowledgement and recognition of His sovereignty, and our worship and prayers to Him. Although this is not to say that the relationships between neighbours has not been explored or that the concept of piety had only been explored with sole focus on God, in understanding Calvin's piety, the predominate concept has always been to place God as first priority (Joo, 2016:164). However, a close study of Calvin's Institutes, reveals that Calvin's approached piety to piety is in such a way that God's love that is not shared with neighbours, cannot be called piety. Thus contrary to wide belief or understanding of Calvin's doctrine, and though it may seem that Calvin's piety is God-centric, Calvin also held the relations between humans to be immensely significant to his theology (Joo, 2016:164-165). The following section will discuss further relevant characteristics of Calvin's doctrine.

2.5 The characteristics of Calvin's piety: duplex frame

There is no one agreed manner in which Calvin's theology can be considered. However, his *duplex cognito Dei* (God as creator and redeemer) is considered to be a key element which some scholars emphasise to be a fundamental principle by which to understand and approach Calvin's theology (Joo, 2016:170).¹⁸ Moreover, it is not an easy task to uncover not only a logical structure and methodology, but also the theological characteristics that are consistent within Calvin's theology.¹⁹ Calvin's concise literary style and his repeated utilisation of dual frameworks however, can be said to be a key characteristic of his theology according to a close study of his works and this logical 'duplex' structure also reveals a discourse of his notion of piety (Joo, 2016:170-171). The first of these dual frames to be discussed below is the twofold nature of knowledge.

2.5.1 The knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves (Calvin, 1960a:35)

Calvin begins his Institutes with stating the 'Knowledge of God' and the 'Knowledge of Ourselves'. As noted by Oliphint, K. Scott (Hall & Lillback, 2008a:19) study of Institutes under the thesis of Romans reveals the interrelated knowledge of God and of ourselves in a duplex framework (Joo, 2016:171-172). Calvin further stresses that in order to live a life of righteousness, the imperative need to recognise the knowledge of ourselves through the knowledge of God in that humans were created in God's image (Joo, 2016:172). This duplex notion is fundamental to understanding the structural framework of Calvin's doctrine of piety. As mentioned above, a primary purpose behind Calvin's Institutes was so that it could serve as a call for believers to lead

lives that are pious and righteous. Thus this dual frame of ‘Knowledge of God’ and ‘Knowledge of Ourselves’ can be regarded as significant to understanding Calvin’s piety (Joo, 2016:172).

Further, as noted by Hesselink (1997:46-47 & 191), it is critical to distinguish between a misunderstanding of God and the piety that takes root in believers. As pointed out by Calvin (1960a:47), true piety cannot exist without a true knowledge of God. This relationship is not of simple matter. Rather, it is one of the most widely quoted statements in all theological declaration. That Calvin holds our relationship with God as integral to piety is evident, as demonstrated through his declarations of the basic correct conduct that humans to demonstrate to God (Joo, 2016:172). Calvin (1960a:35) in this way demonstrates the knowledge of God and of ourselves to be closely interrelated.

Furthermore, Calvin categorises the knowledge of God itself in two parts. As discussed above, the knowledge of God is inherently implanted into humans but the knowledge of our *saviour* God, is revealed to us through Christ (Joo, 2016:172). Calvin (1960a:43) asserts that the knowledge of God to has been naturally implanted into our minds. However, knowledge of God alone only allows for the initial fear of His judgement; it does not result in the knowledge our out recognition of His dignity, reverence, and majesty. Therefore, it is necessary to gain a true knowledge of ourselves, so that this knowledge of Him may be transformed to true piety (Joo, 2016:173). However, Calvin also expresses this knowledge of ourselves to be divided into two parts. Firstly, “for what purpose he was created” and secondly, “his own abilities- or rather, lack of abilities” (Calvin, 1960a:244).

For the knowledge of God is the beginning of life and the first entrance into godliness. In short, spiritual gifts cannot be given for salvation, until, being illuminated by the doctrine of the gospel, we are led to know God (Calvin, 1996:369).

From this, we can deduce that piety can be used as a way of measurement so that we may correctly recognise God. It is only when we realise our own waywardness and recognise our creator God and Him as saviour that we truly recognise and serve Him as our God and that we enter into the right relationship with Him (Joo, 2016:174). Our knowledge and recognition of our own impropriety and wickedness discovered through the gospel then becomes our faith of knowledge, in which knowing God allows for us to be correctly established in a true and faithful relationship in Him. Thus, more so than the ‘Cognitio Dei’ of God, piety is expressed to be the knowledge of faith. Hence, knowledge is “experiential, not theoretical” (Joo, 2016:174). As Calvin (1960a:39) notes in his Institutes, it is not just our knowledge of knowing God but “grasp what befits us and

is proper to his glory” and “what is to our advantage to know of him.” In defining those with the knowledge of faith and those pursuing piety, Calvin (1960a:42) expresses that “the mind always exercises the utmost diligence and care not to wander astray or rashly and boldly to go beyond his will”. It therefore recognises God because it knows that He governs over all things and thus trusts that He is its guide, its protector, and therefore completely gives itself over to trust in Him (Calvin, 1960a:42). This then defines our relationship with God; in our trust in our father God, we completely trust and have faith in Him, His unconditional love towards us, His continued acts of salvation for us (Joo, 2016:174).

In that regard, it is also of critical to note the way in which we must know God; Calvin emphasises God as our Father. Hence Calvin notes that for humans to practise true piety or godliness is to acknowledge of God as our Father with our truest and most sincere hearts (Joo, 2016:175). Calvin thus reiterates the significance of developing an understanding from the heart rather than from our head. That is, a genuine piety above all else is evidenced by a personal relationships and knowledge of God without hearts and in love that underpins our reverence and faith more so than ‘intellectual’ (Joo, 2016:175).

For Calvin, piety originated from the faith in regarding God as our Father and it is this experience of faith that leads to conversion and true belief. Piety is realising this grace, and the joy that comes from this voluntary response to God. Thus, this duplex knowledge of God and our knowledge of ourselves obtained from the word of God and via the grace of the Spirit can be then expressed to be the root of piety from which faith is born (Joo, 2016:175).

2.5.2 Fatherhood and faith

Another important concept in Calvin’s piety is fatherhood. This is closely related to his personal experience and historical background. Battles (1977:20) advised that Calvin emphasised three images of God from seeking God in the depravity of humans. The first of image is God's fatherhood. Stetina (2016:37) also stress that fatherhood is a key issue in Calvin’s personal life as well as in his theology.²⁰

Calvin’s piety also reveals the importance of the intimately related characteristics between faith and fatherhood. As confirmed above, Calvin’s relationship with God was a personal and interactive faith as he faced all his sufferings throughout his life. This is evident not only by his definition of faith in his Institutes (Calvin, 1960a:551 & 562-577), but also in his demonstration of faith in the way he reflects through his life and that manner in which he comes to personally face God when he faced difficulties arose. Thus, Calvin expresses that a life of faith will not

always be plainly peaceful and that believers will still encounter adversities and challenges throughout their lives. However, Calvin also asserts that no matter what conflicts one comes across, in no way will the assurance granted by God's mercy through faith, be taken away nor will He abandon us (Joo, 2016:176).

As aforementioned, Calvin (1960a:545) stresses the fundamental role of 'knowledge in faith' in defining the basis of faith to lie upon knowledge and not on pious ignorance (Joo, 2016:176).²¹ In addition, for Calvin, this knowledge is not merely empty speculation but a core belief and faith that a believer must uphold in their heart (Calvin, 1960a:61-62). Moreover, Calvin (1960a:545) particularly refers to not mere knowledge but specifically to knowledge of God and His heavenly will. Here, Calvin explains in dept about knowing God's will, defined as, - because of our reconciliation with God through Christ²² - to know God as our merciful Father, and the imperative to realise and know the truth that Christ is our righteousness, sanctification (Joo, 2016:176) and our new life (Calvin, 1960a:545). In that way, this truth does not only concern the knowledge of God but is also knowing the knowledge of ourselves – the significance of such examined above. As aforementioned, it is thus why Calvin begins his Institutes with the relationship between knowledge of God and knowledge of ourselves (Calvin, 1960a:35). Then, this "true knowledge"²³ according to Calvin's theology,²⁴ can be summarised to be the recognition that God is our Father, and the implications of such recognition.

Calvin reiterates the paramount nature of the 'fatherhood' of God throughout his Institutes, his repeated use of the term in reference to God indicating his core belief that God is first and foremost, a father (Joo, 2016:177). Adam as the first man, was originally created to be the son of God. Thus, the separation between humankind and God due to human sin is an indescribably tragic affair. However, despite our wretched state, He has adopted us as a favour of His immense grace (Calvin, 1996a:548). Thus Calvin in describing this deliverance in reference to repairing our relationship with God, particularly makes use of the term, "reconciliation" (Joo, 2016:177).

Due to human sin, the relationship with the Father was broken and turned hostile, indicating our forfeiture of being His children. However, by the Father offering His hand, we though undeserving of his grace, were again accepted to be His children (Joo, 2016:177). Therefore, as per Calvin, the fatherhood of God is the foundation, and the starting point of one's true faith. To reiterate, Calvin (1960a:347) asserts that discovering God as our father is our first step towards achieving piety.

Hence why Calvin (1960a:136-137) often expresses faith in terms of the relationship between Father and His children, this relationship particularly made explicit in his Institutes

Briefly, he alone is truly a believer who, convinced by a firm conviction that God is kindly and well-disposed Father toward him, promises himself all things on the basis of his generosity; who, relying upon the promises of divine benevolence toward him, lays hold on an undoubted expectation of salvation (Calvin, 1960a:562).

As Calvin emphasises, our knowledge of ourselves is closely related with God's knowledge. There can be no one without the other. That is, our starting point relies wholly on God: all knowledge derives from God and only when we solely rely on him are we able to realise our own identity (Joo, 2016:178). This link between God's fatherliness and faith is a core tenet of faith (Joo, 2016:178). In this way, Calvin asserts God's ultimate purpose to be to show mercy and nurture in his primary role as a father, and faith represents the father-child relationship between Him and mankind (Selderhuis, 2007:247-249).

However, Calvin notably also demonstrates an ambivalent portrayal of fatherhood (Joo, 2016:179). Examining Calvin's definitions, his concept of piety in relation to fatherhood can be understood; Calvin (1960a:41) expresses it as "reverence joined with love". However, though the two are equated and combined to be the true worship of God, this contains within it, a paradoxical element. Notably, Calvin evokes fear as well as love in contemplation of 'father', illustrating the multifaceted nature of His fatherhood (Joo, 2016:179). In following, it is understanding that despite, or in spite of this fear, we owe our every happiness and every being to God as our father who is the reason for our every good which becomes the love we bear for Him (Calvin, 1960a:41). From here a fundamental truth is revealed; no matter whether Calvin deals with faith or is treating piety, there remains an emphasis on God's fatherhood. The question then arises, 'Why does Calvin emphasise the significance of fatherhood of all of God's attributes? (Joo, 2016:179)'

Firstly, consideration of Calvin's context again sheds light on the appeal of the concept of fatherhood for Calvin. As abovementioned, Calvin in experienced persecution, sufferings, and distress all throughout his life (Joo, 2016:179).²⁵ Understanding this, it can be deduced that for Calvin, God astutely represented reliable, fatherly attributes of protection, being his safeguard, and enclosure. In that sense, his greater connection to the concept of fatherhood moreso than motherhood can be understood. Secondly, his personal context particularly highlights the great extent to which why fatherhood as opposed to motherhood was of such paramount significance for Calvin. Throughout his life, Calvin's father yielded more influence on Calvin more so that his mother (Joo, 2016:179).²⁶ In his preface to his Commentary on the Psalms, Calvin notes that as per the advice of his father, Calvin studied law before making a sudden transition to study theology, this decision again prompted by the advice of his father (Joo, 2016:179-180). In that

light, it is suggested that throughout his life, Calvin had had a closer relationship with his father who had wielded greater influence on him (Calvin, 1996a:Author's Preface, xl).

Therefore, it is understandable how the distinct imagery of God as Father became so embossed for Calvin. In following, it is critical to recognise that his piety did not develop merely speculatively but was heavily impacted by his tumultuous experiences and sufferings (Joo, 2016:180). Hence, for Calvin, piety was born out of his experience with suffering whereby through this experience, he held fast in his belief and trust in God to be a faithful Father. Through this faith, Calvin was able to taste God's living word and experience His grace.

2.5.3 Faith: the Word of God and the Spirit

As above, for Calvin, knowledge of God as our father is important and foundational to faith and this knowledge relies upon the word of God, which enlightens us by Holy Spirit, as well as the assertion of the gospel. In that sense, faith contains the word of God and the work of Spirit. The first is the word of God sourced from the knowledge within the scripture. According to Calvin (1960a:548), faith first rests upon God's word. The word of God is God's promises that he gives us the true knowledge of Christ as our Saviour. Moreover, Calvin (1960a:544) emphasised that apart from Christ we can't obtain the true knowledge of God.

In fact, the knowledge of true faith arises from God's promises of grace in Christ. When referring to this knowledge, Calvin refers not to mere historical facts, but rather a knowledge based on the sincerity of the freely given Christ's promise that allows us to taste God's love (Joo, 2016:183). Calvin (1960a:547) particularly emphasises that in contrast to the vague or implicit faith of the Roman Catholics, faith must be experienced in order to be obtained. In that sense, Calvin rejects the notion that faith is formed by mere knowledge of God's law and reading the scriptures and rather asserts that true faith is when it becomes engraved deep into our hearts (Calvin, 1960a:409).

Moreover, though by human consciousness we may receive God's word, it is only when the Spirit applies it that we are able to experience that true faith (Joo, 2016:180). Secondly, Calvin discusses the work of Spirit in relation to faith. Only within the Spirit, we come to enjoy Christ and all his benefits (Calvin, 1960a:537). Parker (1995:78-79) discusses how the only way we receive Christ's grace is through the relations with the Spirit and faith. He also summarised Calvin's thought that the Holy Spirit makes the saving work of the mediator efficacious to men. This can be said that faith is assurance of God's promise in Christ applied by the Spirit. As Parker points, Calvin described that the faith involves the word and the work of Spirit.

...a right definition of faith if we call it a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Calvin, 1960a:551).

Since faith takes its character from the promise in Christ on which it rests, faith takes on the infallible seal of God's word. It contains assurance in its very nature. Therefore, assurance is the essence of faith. This is mistakenly dichotomised to be the Scripture and assurance by Dowey (1965:182). Rather than being the authority of Scripture, Dowey (1965:182) asserts assurance to be the centre of Calvin's faith doctrine. However, for Calvin, God's word cannot be separated from His assurance. God must ensure in us the assurance of his Word through the Spirit (Joo, 2016:183). This assurance is the Holy Spirit's gift of saving faith. Horton (Parsons, 2008:207) also agrees that Calvin believes that faith is essence of assurance. As Horton mentions, Calvin describes that faith and assurance to be inseparable.

But there is a far different feeling of full assurance that in the scriptures is always attributed to faith. It is this which puts beyond doubt God's goodness clearly manifested for us (Col 2:2; 1 Thess 1:5; cf Heb 6:11 and 10:22). But that cannot happen without our truly feeling its sweetness and experiencing it in ourselves. For this reason, the apostle derives confidence from faith, and from confidence, in turn, boldness (Calvin, 1960a:561).

From above, we know that faith comes through the Holy Spirit and the Word of God and it is clear that faith and assurance are joined in Calvin's thoughts. Then, true faith accompanies assurance. Calvin also describes that faith ought to bring believers pious life:

For even assent rests upon such pious inclination – at least such assent as is revealed in the Scriptures. But another much clearer argument now offers itself. Since faith embraces Christ, as offered to us by the Father (cf. John 6:29) – that is Institutes, since he is offered not only for righteousness, forgiveness of sins, and peace, but also for sanctification (cf. 1Cor. 1:30) and the fountain of water of life (John 7:38 ; cf. ch.4:14) – without a doubt, no one can duly know him without at the same time apprehending the sanctification of the Spirit. Or, if anyone desires some plainer statement, faith rests upon the knowledge of Christ. And Christ cannot be known apart from the sanctification of his Spirit. It follows that faith can in no wise be separated from a devout disposition (Calvin, 1960a:552-553).

This is similarly also presented in his commentary on the Psalms:

...certainly, where there is no godliness, there is no sense of the works God. It is also to be observed, that he attributes to the faithful *the knowledge of God*; because from this religion proceeds, whereas it is extinguished through the ignorance and stupidity of men (Calvin, 1996a:120).

Calvin clearly states that assurance, the essence of true faith accompanies pious life. For Calvin (1960a:Introduction II xxxiii-xxxv), the Christian life in pursuit of godliness is indeed sanctification. Therefore, the one who has assurance is living a life that seeks piety, a life of sanctification. However, Calvin (1960a:809) distinguishes between the doctrine of good deed, piety and saving faith, assurance. Assurance is the assessment of the existence of faith based on the goodness present in a believer. The correlation with faith and assurance is with the promise of God, in Christ, that is, the knowledge of God's goodness to us, not within ourselves and good deeds.

Then, faith becomes our faithful attitude towards God as our Father; reverence for Him as well as love and gratitude for the mercy and grace He bestowed upon us. Furthermore, as will be further discussed below, this piety that takes root in our recognition of and love God and our knowledge of him and ourselves as deliberated above, must extend to others (Joo, 2016:183-184).

2.6 Piety and its expansion

As seen in previous study, scholars who have studied Calvin's piety, including Beeke, are satisfied when they speak of Calvin's piety to put an end to piety as merely related to church and worship. However, when Calvin speaks of piety, it can be seen that it goes beyond the personal, but also includes the social attitude and responsibility to live as a Christian not only in the church, but also society, and the world. Wallace's 'Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life',²⁷ known for its classics on Calvin, has a shortcoming in that it only deals with church and worship-oriented religious piety (Wallace, 1982).

For Calvin, piety is primarily our reverence of God as our father, abiding by His will and Word as revealed in Christ through reliance on the Spirit which is therefore intrinsically related to the lives of believers as those who solely have reverence for God have been called to his greatness to practice a pious life (Joo, 2016:184). In addition, piety may be expressed through various forms of the religious life; worship, prayer, praise, obedience, and glorification of Him²⁸ (Joo, 2016:184).

However, furthermore, Calvin's notion of piety intrinsically necessitates love for neighbours (Joo, 2016:184). That is to say, although Calvin emphasises that piety first requires devotion to God, he also declares that true piety also commands believers to embrace their neighbours with earnest affection, and insists that love is not easy to maintain in all respects unless humans sincerely revere God – therefore love is proof of a believer's piety (Calvin, 1960a:416).

Hence, piety includes humility and love towards other humans in addition to our reverence of God. True piety requires a firm stance in faith, righteous actions, mercy and self-restraint; “the ability to endure unrighteousness committed by others and thus the ability to maintain peace between neighbours” (Joo, 2016:185).

For Calvin, does the neighbour only refer to fellow believers in the church? Or does it include neighbours living outside the church? Calvin sees that there are different areas in the concept of neighbourhood. However, God's command to love our neighbours accepts it as a command to love everyone, even those who oppose it. He (1960a:419) claims that we ought to embrace the whole human race without exception and everyone should be seen in God's image, not in people, regardless of whether the neighbour is a barbarian, civilised, worthy, unworthy, or friend, enemy. This implies that for Calvin, those who do not demonstrate love for neighbours, cannot be said to have made a true confession of faith.

There is not growing among us the real fruit of the gospel unless we exercise mutual love and benevolence and exert ourselves in doing good. Though the gospel is at this day purely preached among us, when yet we consider how little progress we make in brotherly love, we ought justly to be ashamed of our indolence (Calvin, 1984b:263-264).

Furthermore, piety is explored through the Second Table of Law as Calvin (1960a:416) interprets the term ‘faith’ as “truthfulness toward men” as opposed to “piety toward God” (Joo, 2016:184). Calvin even asserts that love is born out of true piety:

Now the perfection of that holiness comes under the two headings already mentioned; ‘that we should love the Lord God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength’ (Deut.6:5p; cf. ch 11;13), ‘and our neighbour as ourselves.’ (Lev.19; 18p; cf. Matt. 22;37, 39). First, indeed, our soul should be entirely filled with the love of God. From this will flow directly the love of neighbour. This is what the apostle shows when he writes that ‘the aim of the law is love from a pure conscience and a faith unfeigned’ (1 Tim. 1; 5p.). You

see how conscience and sincere faith are put at the head. In other words, here is true piety, from which love is derived (Calvin, 1960a:415).

It is clear that Calvin emphasises the responsibility Christians have for the wider society, one in which faith must involve a life serving and loving one's neighbours. This is to say that for Calvin, true faith must be accompanied with social responsibility and action, wherein the Christian life must look beyond the Church.

Hence Calvin posits that to embody piety, one must demonstrate equal respect to one's neighbours as well as to God. In that sense, justice, mercy, faithfulness and love between humans are as equally important as one's sincerity toward God (Joo, 2016:185): Following the understanding of piety with respect to human's relationship with God, that same piety can be applied to interactions and relationships between humans. That is to say that piety is explored as being directly related to the attitude towards God but love between humans is the proof of piety. Simultaneously, humans can only truly revere God when they are able to also maintain love in all respects to fellow humans (Joo, 2016:185).

2.7 Conclusion

Through close study of Calvin's theology, it is evident that it is difficult to succinctly define the complex discourse on piety as contained in Calvin's works. Further, his frequent preference for employment of the term and its both comprehensive and practically applicable nature has been elucidated.

Recognising the complexities of Calvin's theology, and the intricate build of his concept of piety, Battles (1997:190) goes as far as to say that the term 'pietas' as Calvin intended, is "untranslatable" unless we are to make use of Calvin's own words. In fact, as has been revealed through the contemplation of Calvin's piety thus far, it is impossible to surmise Calvin's piety to simply mean one thing. Rather, the nature of Calvin's conception of piety can be understood via various characteristics (Joo, 2016:186).

Rather than the systematic approach taken to the study and understanding of his concept of piety, as has been the case by most scholars, Calvin's doctrine must be understood in a ministerial manner along the lines of ethics and practical application (Joo, 2016:186).

Furthermore, Calvin's concept of piety cannot be separated from his personal and historical context;. Calvin's theology is intrinsically related to the background and circumstances of his time. It is therefore critical to contemplate these core elements within his theology. In that sense more so than understanding Calvin's concept of piety as merely speculative, doctrinal, or conceptual, the dynamic and practical qualities of Calvin's piety as resulting from his personal struggles and adversities can be found (Joo, 2016:187). Hence, in explanation of piety and faith, rather than any other element, Calvin heavily emphasises and takes comfort in the 'fatherhood' of God.

There has not been as of yet, an agreed approach to Calvin's theology as some understood Calvin's theological method in Institutes to be a dialectical system while others, the Duplex Cognito Dei (Joo, 2016:187). However, as discussed above, the duplex frame to explore his logic is evident in his work. In the same way, Calvin employs the duplex frame to discuss the concept of piety in order to iterate its notion and highlight its practical application. This characteristic within his theological method is also demonstrably present in his logic and explanation of his doctrine of piety (Joo, 2016:187). Calvin's concept of piety is intricately related to knowledge. Moreover, this existential knowledge is the knowledge of God and knowledge of us. Furthermore, the knowledge of God involves not only regarding Him as creator, but also necessitates our recognition our own pitiful state, and therefore Him as also a redeemer God (Joo, 2016:187). This knowledge is also not to be merely comprehended in the head but rather, is related to the heartfelt belief in Him as a good Father and involves our faith and obedience to his words. The 'Knowledge of God' and 'Knowledge of Ourselves' serves as an entrance into Calvin's piety via his duplex frame wherein this true knowledge is linked to God's fatherhood and faith. In turn, this is related to His Word, and the Spirit which ultimately produces within us, our reverence for God and our love for neighbours which as follows, is the proof of true piety (Joo, 2016:188).

Historically, from the perspectives of the Reformed Church, the concept of piety was primarily focused on our attitudes towards God (Joo, 2016:188). As such, most Reformed scholars' study on piety related to religious oriented worship and the Church life. However, Calvin emphasises that piety is not merely the reverence humans uphold for God in a worship-oriented life. In fact, Calvin goes as far to state that the absence of love for one's neighbours displays the absence of piety. Thus, needless to say, the basis for social responsibility of the Christian life is the very nature of the assurance itself. Loving neighbours and social action flows from true faith as a stream from its fountain. In that light, the love for neighbours and the relationship between humans becomes the test for the touchstone of true piety.

NOTES

⁴ Many scholars have studied Calvin's piety, including Battles, F. L. 1978. *The Piety of John Calvin*. Grand Rapids: Baker; idem. 2009. *The Piety of John Calvin: The Calvin 500 series*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing Company; Beeke, J. R. 2015. *Piety: The Heartbeat of Reformed Theology*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P & R Publishing; idem. 2008. *Living for God's Glory: An Introduction to Calvinism*. Lake Mary: Reformation Trust Publishing; idem. 2004. *Calvin on Piety*. In: Mckim, D. K., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp.125-152; Bouwsma, W. 1987. *The Spirituality of John Calvin*. In: Raitt, J. ed. *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*. New York: Crossroad. pp. 318-333; McKim, D. K. 1984. *Readings in Calvin's Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Co; Calvin, J. 2001. *Writings on Pastoral Piety*. edited and translated McKee, E.A. John Calvin: *Writings on Pastoral Piety*. Mahwah, N.J : Paulist Press; Serene, Jones. 1995. *Calvin and the Rhetoric of Piety*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox press; Kim, Jae Sung. 2012. *Calvin: I offer my heart to the Lord*. Seoul: Kingdom Books; Kim, Eun Soo. 2011. *John Calvin & Reformed Faith*. Seoul: SFC Press.

Amongst these, especially Beeke has written a large number of pages about 'piety' and has written a book on piety recently, titled "Piety: The Heartbeat of Reformed Theology". In this book, Beeke first discusses Calvin's piety and explains the definition and importance of 'godliness'. He reveals that the purpose is the 'glory of God'. Secondly, he explains Union with Christ as the root of piety and this can be with Holy Spirit and faith. Thirdly, he stresses Justification and Sanctification to be double purity. Then, he explains that piety is prayer, repentance, obedience in relation with the Church. Then finally, he proves Calvin's work on piety one by one until its last pages.

⁵ Steinmetz's 'Calvin in context' discussed Calvin's views on various topics in light of Calvin's own world. Cf. Steinmetz, D.C. 1995. *Calvin in context*. New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁶For a detailed discussion, see Muller, R. A. 2000. *The Unaccommodated Calvin*. New York: Oxford University Press.

⁷ In his commentary on Colossians, Calvin warns of the difference from Papists as although we are both called Christians, and claim to believe in Christ, they picture to themselves one that is torn, disfigured, divested of his excellence, denuded of his office, in fine, such as to be a spectre rather than Christ himself. Cf. John Calvin's commentaries on the Epistle of Paul the Galatians and Ephesians, trans. William Pringle. Grand Rapids, Baker books: 2009. p.134.

⁸ Calvin mentioned it his purpose of piety in preface of Psalm's commentary that.

⁹ Calvin lists the 8 topics of Institutes in 'The Prefatory Address to King Francis I of France' as below;

1. Circumstances in which the book was first written
2. Plea for the persecuted evangelicals
3. Charges of antagonists refuted: newness, uncertainty; the value of miracles
4. Misleading claim that the church fathers oppose the reformation teaching
5. The appeal to "custom" against truth
6. Errors about the nature of the church
7. Tumults alleged to result from reformation preaching
8. Let the king beware of acting on false charges: the innocent await divine vindication

¹⁰ Cf. Battles emphasises the repeated development and progress that Calvin's theology underwent as he continuously added to his Institutes.

¹¹ Hill treats suffering and the Christian life practically through commenting on and exegeting all of Calvin's texts: Institutes, Commentaries, Theological treatises and letters containing text related to Suffering. Cf. Hill, J. 2005. John Calvin, Suffering: Understanding the Love of God. Darlington, England: Evangelical Press.

¹² Cf. Thomas J. Davis in his 'John Calvin', expresses the era as the "age of anxiety". See Davis, T.J. 2005. John Calvin. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers.

¹³ Also see, 1 Peter, 4:12-13.

¹⁴ Comparing these, when considering the Subject Index of Calvin's Institutes, it is clear that the term 'piety' often appears after 'God' or 'Christ'. Aside from this, piety is also often seen being used throughout Calvin's many commentaries and other works. This affinity to the term is particularly clear when examining Institutes, which was written alongside his Commentary on the Psalms.

¹⁵ Cf. '*Christianae religion is institution total fere pietatis summam et quidquid est in doctrina salutis cognitu necessarium complectens, omnibus pietatis studiosis lectu dignissimum opus ac recens editum.*'

¹⁶ Calvin's theology can be simply defined to be the theology of piety (*theologia pietatis*) in just one sentence. Indeed, many have defined Calvin's theology as such as per below; Battles, F.L.

1978. *The Piety of John Calvin*. Grand Rapids: Baker; Beeke, Joel R. 2008. *Living for God's Glory: An Introduction to Calvinism*. Lake Mary: Reformation Trust Publishing; Hesselink, I. J. 2004. Calvin's Theology. In: Mckim, D. K., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp.74-92; Gerrish, B. A. 1981. Theology within the limits of piety alone: Schleiermacher and Calvin's Doctrine of God. In. *Reformatio Perennis: Essays on Calvin and the Reformation* ed. Gerrish in collaboration with Robert Benedetto. Pittsburg: Pickwick. Pp. 67-87; Witvliet, J. D. 1997. Spirituality of the Psalter In: *Metrical Psalms in liturgy and life in Calvin's Geneva*. Calvin Theological Journal 32. pp. 273-297. Also, Hotrop, Philip C; Berkouwer, G.C; Bakker, J; Rossouw H.W; Jonker, W.D. interprets Calvin who not only individually, but also socially practised piety before God.

¹⁷ Cf. Hesselink, I. John., Parker, T. H. L. Butin, Walker. P and Holtrob, Philip. C have applied the theological structure of the Trinity in relations to Institutes.

¹⁸ See, refer to Dowey Jr. Edward. 1994. A as a representative argument in his 'Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology''Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company. Here, Dowey contemplates the difference between Calvin's fundamental two-fold knowledge of God as the Creator and as of the Redeemer, alongside the the interrelated relationship within this *duplex cognition Domini*. Gamble, Richard. C agrees that *duplex cognition Domini* is a significant doctrine within Calvin's theology. Wallace, Ronal. S stresses Christ as redeemer in the twofold nature of *duplex cognition Domini* (God as Creator). However, Parker, T.H.L as explained by Oliphint, K. Scott places emphasis on the duplex nature of 'Knowledge of God' and 'Knowledge of ourselves' as opposed to the *duplx cognitive Domini* to be the crux of Calvin's Institutes. Bauke, Herman and Ganoczy, A attempt to find Calvin's theology within its Dialectical structure. Refer to H. Bauke's *Die Problem der Theologie Calvins* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1922), Ganoczy, 1987. *A Young Calvin*, tr. Foxgrover, D and Provo, W (Philadephia: Westminster). Nevertheless, it is evident that Calvin's works clearly demonstrates his preference for using a duplex frame to present his thesis. Cf. Oliphint, K. Scott. 2008. "A Primal and Simple Knowledge" in Hall, David. W and Lillback, Peter. *Theological Guide to Calvin's Institutes*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing Company

¹⁹ Refer to the below essays that present Calvin's theological methodology:

Battles, F. Lewis. 1984. "God was Accommodating Himself to Human Capacity", in *Readings in Calvin's Theology* edited McKim, D. Grand Rapids: Baker; Hoitenga, D. 1992. "Faith and Reason in Calvin's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God", in *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism*, edited by Richard Gamble., New York: Garland; Gamble, Richard. 1988. "Calvin's Theological Method.

Word and Spirit – A Case Study”, in *Calviniana: Ideas and Influence of Jean Calvin*, edited Craig, R. (Ann Arbor: Edward Brothers,); Leith, John. H “Calvin’s Theological Method and the Ambiguity of his Theology” in *Reformation Studies: Essays in Honor of Roland H. Baintoni* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1962).

²⁰ Stetina especially studied fatherhood of God in John Calvin in-depth. Her study gives us a thorough exploration of Calvin’s thoughts on the fatherhood of God. Stetina observed thoughtfully, Calvin’s own experience of fatherhood and she focuses on Calvin’s trinitarian theology and on the ways that Calvin’s context may have shaped his exegetical and theological conclusions about divine fatherhood. cf. Stetina, K.S. 2016. *The father-hood of God in John Calvin's Thought*. Milton Keynes: Paternoster.

²¹ Here, it is clear that Calvin is conscious of scholastic scholars who self-righteously believe in their ‘pious’ acts to be following God. However, he asserts that due to the veil they have put upon Christ, such ‘believers’ do not have true knowledge and therefore considers their faith to be blinded. cf. Calvin, John. 1960. *Institutes of the Christian religion*. Philadelphia,: Westminster Press. p. 544.

²² Cf. Calvin clearly emphasises that we believe in God through Christ (1 Peter 1:21).

²³ Battles, F. Lewis translates this “true knowledge” to be just “truth”.

²⁴ Here another significant element of Calvin’s theology is revealed. The first edition of his *Institutes* (1536) uses the exposition of the Apostle’s Creed to explain faith. In that sense, the basis of faith is being introduced to us in greater detail by explaining the creed confessed by the apostles. In addition, when examining at the catechisms (1538) that Calvin published for use to teach at his Geneva church, only two years after the first *Institutes* edition, ‘faith’ is placed first in the table of contents. This demonstrates the significance that the concept of faith was for Calvin, so much so that ultimately faith was again placed before his doctrine of Salvation in the last edition of his *Institutes*, whereas generally, systematic theologians, order repentance and regeneration before faith in their doctrine of salvation. Calvin however does the opposite and places faith in front, thus demonstrating the extent to which he held faith to be crucial within his theology. Furthermore, in his last edition of *Institutes*, the faith he stresses is ultimately “knowledge”; knowledge of truly knowing God as well as knowledge of one self. Calvin moreover stresses the interrelationship between the two and emphasises that Faith is not “pious ignorance”, nor “implicit faith” but true knowledge. Like this, it can be expressed that throughout the whole of Calvin’s theology, including his *Institutes*, his doctrine of faith is centralised like the diamond

of a ring., To reiterate, the focus of “faith” is a common trait that can be found not only in his Institutes but across all of his works.

²⁵ As noted above, throughout his life, Calvin faced continuous distress and suffering with the Roman Catholics and the Anabaptists.

²⁶ Calvin’s works do not refer to his mother to a great deal, particularly in comparison to the number of times his father and the influence wielded by his is mentioned.

²⁷ Cf. Wallace, R.S. 1982. Calvin's doctrine of the Christian life. Tyler, TX: Geneva Divinity School Press.

²⁸ This thesis will not further contemplate this matter given the large number of scholars and discourse surrounding this point in relations to piety.

It is thus that they are led to surrender themselves to him,
to be governed according to his good pleasure.

Faith, then is the root of true piety
(Calvin's Commentary on the Book of Psalms 67-92, p.245)

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will examine the concept and relationship of assurance and piety in Calvin's commentary on the Psalms. As Parker (1993:6-7) pointed out, in order to fully understand Calvin's thought, character, and theology, it is not only crucial to study his Institutes but also all his many other works including sermons, letters and commentaries that he spent his life devoted to. Although Calvin wrote many works outside of Institutes, his interest in Psalms compared to all his other works is notably large. In fact, the book of Psalms held a very special meaning for Calvin.²⁹ This was due to the fact that not only was Calvin able to reflect about his ministry under the grace of God but also his whole life and ministry through Psalms. Calvin talked little about his life publicly. However, in the preface of his commentary on and exposition of the Psalms, one can find his personal story, although it is fragmented. This shows how much he loved the Psalms and wanted to share with his readers, his practical story of faith.

Save for his Institutes, it is hard to find any other of Calvin's works that vividly expresses his deepest emotions or explicitly reveals the relationship between piety and assurance as his commentary on the Psalms. In that sense, studying Calvin's commentary on Psalms is very worthwhile.

Thus, the aim of this chapter is to establish the theological concept of the assurance and piety of Calvin by analysing Calvin's Commentary on the Psalms. However, as it is known, the book of Psalms does not directly contain the doctrine of saving faith as David and other psalmists did not mention assurance, and therefore makes it difficult to find this concept within Psalms. Despite this, a characteristic can be found in Calvin's Commentary on the Book of Psalms. This is the attribute that provides a different approach in exploring the assurance of faith in Psalms through

his commentaries. First, this chapter will explore the characteristics of Calvin's Commentary on Psalms, and how this interlinks with the doctrines of saving faith or assurance as they appear in his Institutes. Following that will be the examination of how Calvin's saving faith and assurance is implicit to his commentaries. Finally, after analysing the traits of assurance in Calvin's commentaries, its application to his piety will be explored.

3.2 Characteristics of Calvin's commentaries on the Psalms

It is a widely accepted truth that Calvin showed special partiality towards Psalms in comparison to all his other commentaries.³⁰ Only in his commentaries on the Psalms does Calvin reveal his innermost thoughts and experience, allowing readers to gain a deeper insight into the theologian's own experience.

Now, if my readers derive any fruit and advantage from the labour which I have bestowed in writing these Commentaries, I would have them to understand that the small measure of experience which I have had by the conflicts with which the Lord has exercised me, has in no ordinary degree assisted me, not only in applying to present use whatever instruction could be gathered from these divine compositions, but also in more easily comprehending the design of each of the writers (Calvin, 1996a:34).

In that light, one could call his works on Psalms a book of interpreting his own self. Calvin's Institutes and systematic thoughts were formed through his meditation and the expositional work on Psalms. Calvin's commentaries on Psalms were published seven years before his death. The last edition of his Institutes was published two years after the publishing of his Psalms Commentaries. It can be therefore said that by this time, his analysis of Psalms had deepened, and his theology was at its peak, which led to the systematic doctrines in Institutes. Throughout all his life, Calvin held a love for Psalms and amidst his meditational reading of Psalm, he developed his theology.

3.2.1 Calvin's commentaries on Psalms is closely connected to his Institutes

First, I will explore the connection between Calvin's Institutes and his commentaries on Psalms. As mentioned above, though Calvin's commentary on Psalms (1557) was published two years prior to his last edition of Institutes (1559), it can be seen from the cross-linking between the two works that they were likely written in conjunction with each other, rather than separately. Calvin had revised Institutes numerous times, creating and editing it over his entire life span. In fact, it

is known that in between editing his Institutes, he had been simultaneously working on his commentaries.³¹ In fact, recognising that Institutes and his commentaries were not created as isolated works is paramount in understanding Calvin's theology. Thus, through his revision of his Institutes and commentaries throughout Calvin's life, we can discover the inter-relationship between his papers and commentary works.

... for I believe I have so embraced the sum of religion in all its parts and have arranged [the Institutes] in such an order, that if anyone rightly grasps it, it will not be difficult for him to determine what he ought especially to seek in Scripture, and to what end he ought to relate its contents. If, after this road has, as it were, been paved, I shall publish any interpretation of Scripture, I shall always condense them, because I shall have no need to undertake long doctrinal discussions, and to digress into commonplaces (Calvin, 1960a:4-5).

Therefore, it can be seen that in the writing of his commentaries and Institutes, he had written such works with a firmly established opinion and understanding of the relationship between them.³² If Institutes can be regarded as an in-depth study of doctrines, his commentaries must be treated as the scriptural knowledge component of the content of Institutes, serving to reiterate its essential points and practical applications rather than repetitions of the doctrines. In particular, with his commentary on Psalms, published just before the last edition of Institutes, not only is it clear that the two have a very closely connected relationship, it can also be seen that the commentary on Psalms had been written with a portion of the Institutes' content already premised. Selderhuis (2007:38) also described Calvin's commentary on the Psalms as a practical amplification of his Institutes. As Selderhuis notes whilst Calvin in Institutes presents his thoughts in a doctrinal order, his work in the Commentaries is presented in a pastoral manner, suggesting that his Commentaries are the practical approach to his doctrinal Institutes.³³

That is to say that Calvin provides the practical application and revalidation of the key points he presents in his Institutes. This can be seen in the many references that Calvin (2007:16) indeed makes to the Book of Psalms in his last edition of Institutes (1559).³⁴

In that sense, the doctrines of saving faith and sanctification included in his Institutes have been metaphorically smeared into his Commentaries, providing untrained people with practical applications of his theology (Calvin, 1996a:xxxvi). In the following, I will highlight the connection between Calvin and the psalmist David as Calvin viewed it.

3.2.2 Calvin's comparison between himself and David

Through various points in Calvin's commentary on Psalms, it is evident that he found consolation in David and was able to develop his faith whilst working on his commentaries.³⁵ As per his own expression, through his study of the Psalms, he was inspired by David's sufferings and circumstances, furthermore, feeling it to have been a mirror image of his own life.

I have no hesitation in comparing myself with him (David). In reading the instances of his faith, patience, fervour, zeal, and integrity, it has, as it ought, drawn from me unnumbered groans and sighs, that I am so far from approaching them but it has, notwithstanding, been of very great advantage to me to behold in him as in a mirror, both the commencement of my calling, and the continued course of my function; so that I know the more assuredly, that whatever that most illustrious king and prophet suffered, was exhibited to me by God as an example for imitation (Calvin, 1996a:preface xl).

Calvin had viewed his torments – both tortures faced inside due to the Anabaptists and out with Catholicism – to be similar to the torment David had previously endured. He believed the situations faced in his then present Geneva church to be the same as the troubles David had been presented with in the past (Calvin, 1996a:preface xlii-xliii). Furthermore, he believed that this suffering was used by God to train them in faith.

But that I may not become tedious to my readers by a waste of words, I shall content myself with repeating briefly what I have touched upon a little before, that in considering the whole course of the life of David, it seemed to me that I have experienced no small consolation. As that holy King was harassed by the Philistines and other foreign enemies with continual wars, while he was much more grievously afflicted by the malice and wickedness of some perfidious men amongst his own people, so I can say as to myself, that I have been assailed on all sides, and I have scarcely been able to enjoy repose for a single moment, but have always had to sustain some conflict either from enemies without or within the Church (Calvin, 1996a:preface xliv).

Calvin in his commentaries not only compares himself to David and shares his own experiences but also regards David to be a model for the people of God. This becomes clear in his admiration of David's faith and the consolation he found through David.³⁶ Not only did he find strength and support through David's good faith, but through David's mistakes and sins he was able to mature in his own spiritual belief.³⁷ It can therefore be seen through Calvin in his practical annotations

of all the cases and circumstances faced throughout Christian life in his Commentaries on Psalms. Selderhuis also stresses that David was a model for Calvin's faith.

David is the model ("specimen") who shows all of the faithful how God's favor leads them. Particularly in the Psalm where David, because of his enemies and pains, cries to God from the deepest distress, Calvin remarks that David is the representative of the whole church and is describing the lot of all of the faithful (Selderhuis, 2007:36).

When viewed from this aspect, it is therefore evident that Calvin's commentaries is the practical, completed work of his Institutes. The doctrinal theology systematically presented in his Institutes is flawlessly and practically laid out in his commentaries. Calvin's doctrines presented in his Institutes are made applicable to Christian life through his commentaries. Calvin does not introduce his doctrines robotically but rather as an existential view with God through David's faith. In that sense, it is right to define that Calvin's commentaries are the pastoral form of the theology contained in his Institutes. Next, the educational and theological features of Calvin's commentaries on the Psalms will be discussed to highlight the significance of Psalms in understanding Calvin's assurance and piety.

3.2.3 The educational and theological aim in Calvin's commentaries on the book of Psalms

Before delving into Calvin's doctrine of assurance and piety, one must understand how significant Calvin's commentary on Psalms is, containing all his integral teachings and theologies smeared into his practical teachings. As Selderhuis (2007:37) expresses, Calvin's whole life of study and discussion was integrated in his commentaries on the Psalms. Calvin displayed his practise of his theology and the observation of his teachings throughout his own pious life. He was a reformer, practitioner, and pastor during the sixteenth century in Geneva. Following this, he was also a theological pastor who remained in the practical field. Therefore, through this, we are able to assume that his Institutes and Commentaries were not only works written through just speculative methods and doctrinal aims. The Preface provided in his Commentary on Psalms reveal that he wrote this work in the hopes of aiding less educated followers to achieve an understanding of the Psalms through plain teachings (Calvin, 1996a:preface xxxvi). Also, Calvin had hoped to write instructive teachings in the French language for his countrymen so that they would be able to understand while reading the book.

Through this, it is clear that Calvin had written his Psalms commentaries not for the erudite or those with profound knowledge, but at its core and from the heart, for those untrained. However,

in saying that, this was not a work that was written poorly or regarded the importance of the truth and theology of salvation in a coarse manner.

Calvin was in the last stages of life whilst writing his commentaries on Psalms. The last edition of his Institutes was also published in the last stage of his life. When looking at Calvin's life journey, whilst he may not have been able to produce all his theological loci through his commentaries on the Psalms, he did, however, without doubt, present all the important and focal theological doctrines (Selderhuis, 2007:37). In addition, Anderson continually points out and stresses with every opportunity Calvin's two focal teachings in his commentaries:

There are, however, two principles of evangelical truth which he is at pains to inculcate, whenever a fit opportunity presents itself – the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ without the works of the Law; and the necessity of personal holiness in order to salvation (Calvin, 1996a:translator's preface 8-9).

3.2.4 The 'asylum concept' in understanding Calvin's commentary on the Psalms

Another concept within Psalms that is critical to be introduced and understood prior to the discussion of Calvin's treatment of assurance is the concept of asylum. Calvin, who studied law, incorporates the idea of asylum into his theology, and teaches that the Church must be an asylum from persecution. This is to ultimately find asylum with God. Thus the 'asylum motif' is an important theological theme indispensable to Calvin's commentary on the Psalms (Selderhuis, 2007:34-35). This motif provides a deeper insight into Calvin's theology as well as into his comparisons with David through the corresponding similarities between his own and David's life while experiencing exile.

Going one step further, the concept of asylum is integral for Calvin, particularly due to the eschatological nature of Calvin's theology, together with the prevalence of persecution in his works. Calvin's belief that adversity is essential for followers of Christ is apparent in his work. Particularly due to his own experiences of hardship and exile, Calvin applies the belief that God uses asylum experiences as a melting furnace in shaping one's faith into his theology. Therefore, Calvin viewed the earthly sufferings that believers endure as a step in the pilgrimage towards Heaven. This can be seen through the situations Calvin endured as well as that of the Geneva Church community. Both Calvin and the Geneva church had been faced with turmoil, in and out, and he paralleled these to the worldly sufferings of Jesus. Calvin had been a refugee, unable to reside in his hometown, thus similarly viewed earth as such, setting out the ultimate goal of believers to be to return to their eternal home of Heaven.

The suffering of believers, in Calvin's opinion, was related to the materialistic products of the world. He had been convinced that God had placed a limitation on the enjoyment of earthly pleasures for his believers (Calvin, 1996c:378); such limitations were in order to ensure that Christians would not depend or rely on worldly figures, but would, as refugees on earth, find asylum only in God, viewing themselves as visitors, foreigners, and pilgrims. What is more, in regard to election, Calvin had believed that a mark of being chosen is to be subject to pressure, slander and expulsion.

One mark by which God distinguishes the true from false disciple is, that of his being ready and prepared to bear the cross, and waiting quietly for the Divine deliverance, without giving way to fretfulness and impatience (Calvin, 1996d:21).

Those who are elected, in the process of suffering and seeking asylum, hold the sincerity of God, and through their journey of overcoming hardships experience the righteousness and grace of God. Calvin's own existential experience displays the belief that God will show his love to those who are genuine and righteous. Thus, for Calvin, affliction is a fundamental feature of encouraging perseverance in faith as he (1996a:494) describes "this is the chief advantage of afflictions, that while they make us sensible of our wretchedness, they stimulate us again to supplicate the favor of God."

He also points out in his :

The chief assurance of Faith rests in the expectation of the life to come, which has been placed beyond doubt through the word of God. Yet whatever earthly miseries and calamities await those whom God has embraced in his love, these cannot hinder his benevolence from being their full happiness (Calvin, 1960a:574).

From this, we can see Calvin's perspective on suffering. Calvin maintained that affliction had allowed humans to see their wretched lives whilst at the same time these afflictions serve to motivate faith to long for the deliverance of God. Thus, Calvin in his commentary on Psalms, through deliberation of the asylum-seeking David, shows how faith is applied in the midst of suffering as well as the experience of God's deliverance.

Though the doctrine of faith or assurance that Paul taught cannot be found in the Psalms, the practical applications of this doctrine have seeped into the commentaries of Calvin and are made especially prevalent in his work on the Psalms.

3.3 Faith and assurance in Psalms and for Calvin

Now having an understanding of the key features of the commentary on Psalms, the doctrine of faith and assurance can be explored. Faith and assurance obviously do not take the form of systematic doctrines in Psalms; however, Calvin (1996a:preface xxxvi) states that Psalms contains the most recordings of the salvation of humans in comparison to all other books of the Bible. Moreover, he claims there are no other books that record the magnitude of God's tolerance and mercy towards us or that teach us the right way to praise Him as Psalms does. Calvin again believes there are no other books holding the proof and experience of God's fatherliness and care towards us, which is so celebrated with such perfect expression in comparison to Psalms.

Similarly, Calvin (1996a:preface xxxix) finds that Psalms is a book full of deliverance, furthermore magnifying the recovering of the relationship between God and humankind, providing the priceless peace of remission from sins; through the reading of Psalms, the full knowledge of eternal salvation is made accessible without want. So as Calvin proclaims, one's understanding of the Psalms, leads to one's knowledge of the most important of heavenly doctrines, and belief and faith in God's promises. Through Calvin, detailed and real instances of faith in Psalms are vividly introduced to us. When closely looking at Calvin's commentaries, the systematics of Calvin's understanding of assurance found in Institutes can also be found in Psalms though in a different manner. Calvin in his Institutes explains faith and assurance to have the same conception.

Now we shall possess a right definition of faith if we call it a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Calvin, 1960a:551).

It can be seen that Calvin (1977:38) says that faith means the assurance of our hearts as a means of bringing us a certain rest in the mercy of God, promised to us through the Gospel. However, before analysing Calvin's concept of the link between faith and assurance, it is necessary to understand Calvin's background thoughts regarding faith.

3.3.1 Starting ground of faith

Calvin emphasised that understanding the nature of Adam's fall more clearly is a task that should precede the analysis of assurance and saving faith. This is because the theological background of saving faith is clearly explained only when a clear understanding of human total depravity

precedes it. To reiterate, Calvin (1960a:244, 251-252) argues that the background of the assurance of believers lies in the complete fall of humanity and the loss of the image of God's perfection due to human total depravity.³⁸ However, through the grace of the cross of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit proves that salvation was accomplished by means of faith.

As discussed above in Chapter 2, in his theology, Calvin repeatedly stressed the importance of God's fatherhood. This is perhaps most evident in his commentary on the Psalms. Given the intimate nature of the book of Psalms, it is understandable that examination of Psalms prompted Calvin to undertake much consideration and reflection on the father-child relationship between God and humankind. For Calvin (1996d:136), this relationship is critical to our faith as only when believers can totally rely on Him and trust in Him as a loving and merciful protector, can true faith be derived.

Furthermore, this relationship bears influence on our knowledge of ourselves, which as explored above, is an integral part of Calvin's duplex frame. Through recognition of God as father, do we also recognise our own position (Calvin, 1960a:35). It is only through understanding of God, as benevolent and almighty God as well as our unworthy selves in relations to God that faith and salvation takes root.

Having delivered me from the tyranny of Satan, he adopts me into his family, washes away my impurity in the blood of Christ, regenerates me by his Holy Spirit, unites me to his Son, and conducts me to the life of heaven (Calvin, 1996d:288).

As can be seen, Calvin's saving doctrine describes not only the reconciliation between father and child, the washing away of sins by Christ's blood, union with Christ, and regeneration through the Holy Spirit, but also that through salvation we have become one in God's family and have become united to his son, the Christ. Here, Calvin defines salvation to be the reconciliation of the relationship between God and us as his children, repairing the father-child relationship, while holding Christ as the first Son.

To trust in the salvation of God is to lean upon his fatherly providence, and to regard him as sufficient for the supply of all our wants. From this we learn not only how hateful unbelief is in the sight of God, but also, what is the true nature of faith (Calvin, 1996c:245).

Calvin also holds that God, who has chosen mankind as his children, is sincere and constant in his promise (Calvin, 1996b:152). He maintains that we humans not only need to rely and have faith in God but remember the truth that God has loved and saved humankind; therefore we hold the responsibility of relaying the doctrine of salvation to future generations (Calvin, 1996b:152). In what follows, Calvin's concrete definition of faith will be explored.

3.3.2 Definition of faith according to Calvin

In extension, this true knowledge of God and ourselves is deeply connected to God's words, or promises. That is, the gospel that has been given to us. Calvin (1996a:416) in his Psalm Commentaries emphasises that faith is oriented to God's promises³⁹ and that His promises and faith are deeply related.

Furthermore, whilst Calvin states the importance of God being faithful to his promises, for faith to come to us, at the same time, he asserts the importance of God's merciful fatherliness:⁴⁰

... for it would not help us at all to know that God is true unless he mercifully attracted us to himself. Nor would it have been in our power to embrace his mercy if he had not offered it with his word... (Calvin, 1960a:550).

Calvin holds an exhaustive belief that the object of faith is Christ (this is the connection that God's word conclusively reveals, and God's promise is also ultimately Christ himself). Calvin (1960a:550) states that faith is given to us through the grace that God has promised in Christ. Calvin's commentaries often link faith and the promise of God; even to the extent of presenting Him as our debtor, Calvin emphasises the faithfulness of God (Calvin, 1996d:444). Hesselink in his commentaries on Calvin's First Catechism states the following about Calvin's faith:

Thus, according to Calvin, faith is not merely knowledge of various historical facts and fundamental doctrines, it is above all a certain confidence of heart in God's gracious promise (Hesselink, 1997:101).

What we must also not forget is that we acquire faith through the Holy Spirit: the word of God, or the true knowledge, is made effective through the Holy Spirit for our faith (Calvin, 1960a:580).

Thus, Calvin proves the definition of his doctrine of faith from Institutes in his commentary on Psalm 143:10, stating,

God therefore must be master and teacher to us not only in the dead letter, but by the inward motions of his Spirit; indeed there are three ways in which he acts the part of our teacher, instructing us by his word, enlightening our minds by the Spirit, and engraving instruction upon our hearts... (Calvin, 1996e:256).

For Calvin, the Holy Spirit testifies in the hearts of believers that they are children of God, and ultimately creates faith in their hearts as the bond that unites us with Christ Himself. Thus, Calvin summarises and defines faith to be in his Institutes as

... a right definition of faith if we call it a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Calvin, 1960a:551).

From the passages above just quoted, it is clear that Calvin gives the correct definition of faith in that it refers to the Holy Spirit who engraves in our hearts the assurance that God as our merciful Father has given us through Christ (Calvin, 1996b:101).⁴¹ With the definition and concept of faith established, its link to assurance will now be explored.

3.3.3 Relationship between faith and assurance in Calvin's commentaries on the Psalms⁴²

As mentioned before, on one side, Calvin's faith holds firmly on the faithfulness of God and his promise but on the other side leans on the mercy of God. Thus he says that faith is to look upon God's mercy (Calvin, 1960a:573).⁴³ From here, we must ask the question, "What is God's mercy to us?" which is essentially "What is God's goodness towards us?" God's mercy to us is the love that God has for us, expressed in fatherly love, even to the point that he sacrificed his only begotten son in order to save us. Therefore, as a merciful father, He gives us salvation and an eternal life (Calvin, 1960a:573). Just as God's goodness towards us will never be lacking whilst he shows mercy to us, when we are assured of His love, we will also receive an abundance of assurance of salvation (Calvin, 1960a:573-574). Similarly, when one's faith is based on God's mercy, an unshaking saving faith can be achieved (Calvin, 1996b:431).

Calvin in his commentary on Psalm 80:3, says that whole salvation is achieved only through the grace of God, and is certain that through His mercy, without fail we will obtain salvation if He looks upon us even once. Therefore for Calvin (1996c:298), faith is realising God's mercy, obtaining all of His promises, and the confirmation that through all worldly adversities and

through all suffering, He will never leave us. Furthermore, in his commentary on Psalm 12:6, Calvin (1996a:176) declares God's promises to be sincere, certain and steadfast. In addition, through his commentary on Psalm 18:30, Calvin (1996a:290) urges us to remain faithful to God and that He has promised to be the protector and guardian of our wellbeing and therefore, His promises being unfailing and constant, through whatever circumstances, His truth will remain certain. Calvin (1996a:263) remains certain that not only will those who God has planned to protect be safe from whatever harm, but they will be surrounded by ramparts from all directions and even through the countless dangers of death that appear in front, they will have no reason to fear them. In his commentary on Psalm 34:7, Calvin (1996a:562) confirms David's affirmation that the servants of God are protected by angels and holds their defence. So Calvin (1996a:562) affirms that the will of psalmists is to show that though believers may encounter many dangers, we are assured that God as their faithful guardian will protect our lives. Calvin thoroughly expresses this confirmation in his exposition of Psalm 16:8:

David then reckons himself secure against all dangers, and promises himself certain safety, because, with the eyes of faith, he beholds God, as present with him. From this passage we are furnished with an argument which overthrows the fabrication of the Sorbonists, that *the faithful are in doubt with respect to their final perseverance*; for David, in very plain terms, extends his reliance on the grace of God to the time to come. And, certainly, it would be a very miserable condition to be in to tremble in uncertainty every moment, having no assurance of the continuance of the grace of God towards us (Calvin, 1996a:228-229).

Calvin not only includes assurance in his doctrine of faith, but also asserts that if one has complete faith, assurance will surely and naturally follow; furthermore, he urges others to believe so. In addition, he (1996b:101) affirms that this assurance is made possible as the Holy Spirit engraves the words of God in our hearts. Moreover, as shown in Institutes, in Calvin's determined belief of the assurance of salvation being the same as faith, in many instances, he uses the word "faith" in place of "assurance" (Calvin, 1960a:561).

Thus, for Calvin, faith is accompanied by certain assurance, which he affirms through his Institutes and his commentary on Psalms. To clarify, it is known that faith holds its foundation on the words of God. All Christian belief and salvation likewise is based on faith. However, faith is always reliant on the word of God and His promises are certain and thus the Holy Spirit confirms that despite the harsh circumstances, He will fulfil his promise. In following, those who achieve a saving faith, will also receive the logical necessity of assurance. This is what Calvin's basic

theology is grounded on: “Faith is a firm and solid confidence of the heart, by means of which we rest surely in the mercy of God which is promised to us through the Gospel” (Calvin, 1977:38).

3.3.4 Faith based on the Word of God and the true experience of his promise through the Holy Spirit

As noted, before, for Calvin, knowledge is imperative in the discussion of faith.

... certainly, where there is no godliness, there is no sense of the works of God. It is also to be observed, that he attributes to the faithful the knowledge of God; because from this religion proceeds, whereas it is extinguished through the ignorance and stupidity of men (Calvin, 1996a:120).

The knowledge of the divine favour, it is true, must be sought for in the word of God; nor has faith any other foundation on which it can rest with security except his word (Calvin, 1996b:146).

However, it is important that this knowledge, rooted in the sincerity of God’s promise that has been graciously given to us, is personally and practically experienced in order to truly grasp faith. Calvin is able to further examine and develop his concept of the living, active faith that allows us to ‘taste’ God’s mercy through the Psalms which by its nature contains within it the personal experiences of the Psalmists:

The Psalmist indirectly reproves men for their dullness in not perceiving the goodness of God, which ought to be to them more than matter of simple knowledge... David’s meaning, therefore, is that there is nothing on the part of God to prevent the godly, to whom he particularly speaks in this place, from arriving at the knowledge of his goodness by actual experience (Calvin, 1996a:563).

It is indeed true that, without his word, the benefit which he has conferred upon us would make a faint impression upon our hearts; but when experience is added to the testimony of his word, it greatly encourages us (Calvin, 1996c:302)

To whatever subjects men apply their minds, there is none from which they will derive greater advantage than from continual meditation on his wisdom, goodness,

righteousness, and mercy; and especially the knowledge of his goodness is fitted both to build up our faith, and to illustrate his praises (Calvin, 1996d:133).

Importantly, Calvin also simultaneously contemplates that while having true, living faith is evidence of the Holy Spirit, whose presence is necessary for confirmation of God's assurance to us, and yet being called to Him is done out of our own volition (Calvin, 1996b:101).

Here two points are particularly deserving of our notice, first, that God deals bountifully with men, when he invites them to himself by his word and doctrine; and secondly, that still all this is lifeless and unprofitable, until he governs by his Spirit those whom he has already taught by his word (Calvin, 1996e:14).

The Prophet confesses that it is to no purpose for him to read or hear the law of God, unless his life is regulated by the secret influence of the Holy Spirit, that he may thus be enabled to walk in that righteousness which the law enjoins (Calvin, 1996e:14).

Calvin's affirmation of the role that the Spirit holds is clear. Put differently, the foremost work of the Holy Spirit is to strengthen our faith. Thus, Calvin often uses the word 'faith' and its related words in order to stress the power and role of the Spirit, for only through faith is the Spirit able to lead us to salvation.

The faith that Calvin puts emphasis on leads to salvation, so it can be otherwise called a 'saving faith'. Therefore, whenever Calvin mentions faith, its implication and link to assurance naturally appears.

Henceforth, we are able to discover the structure of Calvin's cycle of faith. Faith is based upon God's words and His promises. The object of this is to show God's favour, the confirmation of His promise, Christ. The Holy Spirit who has recorded His word applies the subject of this promise, Christ, not into our heads but opens the hearts of those whom God has chosen. (We are made to believe the truth of God's words through our experience of the meanderings of life). Those who have obtained Christ through their faith are assured of their salvation and through whatever circumstance will be able to trust in God's promises until the end.

This circulation of faith is made apparent through the model of David in Calvin's commentary on Psalms. Through his model David, Calvin asserts that we must remember the grace and benefits that have been presented to us from God, and in future instances of hardship, we must refer back

to these moments in order to confirm and develop our faith in Him. And so Calvin (1960a:577-578) points out that in cases where it seems He has abandoned and forgotten us, it is crucial for us to widen our thoughts and to remember his acts of love and his generosity towards us from the past to recover our faith.

But David proposed a different end than this to himself and gathered confidence from the past mercies of God. The very best method in order to obtain relief in trouble, when we are about to faint under it, is to call to mind the former loving-kindness of the Lord (Calvin, 1996e:253).

Again, in exposition of Psalm 77:11-12, Calvin stresses that remembering God's countenance upon us is an important point of faith.

Having then, as it were, obtained the victory, he [the psalmist] triumphs in the remembrance of the works of God, being assuredly persuaded that God would continue the same as he had shown himself to be from the beginning (Calvin, 1996c:217).

Similarly, those who have experienced faith can confirm, through their faith and through remembering past favours given to them by God, the certainty of His faithfulness and goodness towards them.

Therefore, Calvin's theology on faith can be understood to have been founded on the analogy of faith: it is the dis-entangler of the tangled thread comprised of Creator God, fallen humans, the Father's mercy and favour, God's promises and word, the subject of favour; Christ, the Holy Spirit, and salvation. It is right then to express that for Calvin, and unlike Luther, faith is not only an instrument of bringing justification by faith, but also the root of all relations regarding the faith of believers. So Calvin ultimately introduces faith as the root of obeying God sincerely, and that which leads to a pious life: "Faith, then, is the root of true piety" (Calvin, 1996c:245).

3.3.5 Perseverance in faith through hardship

Calvin's commentary on the Psalms further elucidate that many of his core doctrines and approaches to theology developed alongside his reading of Psalms. Thus, again, his personal and interactive journey of faith becomes relevant as his commentaries reveal the development of his theology of faith through suffering in his reflections on David (1960a:551). Through this

reflection, Calvin is able to conclude and take heart in the knowledge that even those with assurance and those faithful should expect to continue to face hardship, yet believers can be emboldened by the assurance that God will never leave them:

We are here warned that the guardianship of God does not secure us from being sometimes exercised with the cross and afflictions, and that therefore the faithful ought not to promise themselves a delicate and easy life in this world, it being enough for them not to be abandoned of God when they stand in need of his help (Calvin, 1996e:92).

Calvin (1996a:256) thoroughly reveals this conviction through his commentary on Psalms. It can be found that faithful servants of God, like David and even other Psalmists, are confronted with suffering and persecution.⁴⁴ Calvin (1996c:497) even goes on to state that believers are in some instances made to bear a cross. Thus in his commentary on the Psalms,⁴⁵ Calvin (1996d:21) frequently mentions the cross which God uses to train believers, and for Calvin, the cross is a ‘mark’ that distinguishes the true disciples from the false.

For Calvin, God disciplines us through the cross to test our faith. He imposes the cross with the intention of teaching believers to practice in faith, patience, and hope. This is so that we humans will be led away from the temptations of the world and instead stay closer and be drawn towards God’s truth and His righteousness. So then, when coming across such situations, God’s children must learn to maintain a calm composure of the heart, waiting for the helping hand of God, and even through the pressure of suffering, keeping trust in the faithfulness of God (Calvin, 1996d:20-21). Furthermore, the truth must be confirmed that all adversity will ultimately bring assurance, Calvin believes it is through this that God is able to distinguish true believers from false.

One mark by which God distinguishes the true from the false disciple is that of his being ready and prepared to bear the cross, and waiting quietly for the Divine deliverance, without giving way to fretfulness and impatience (Calvin, 1996d:21).

Thus, assurance is, through whatever difficulty one encounters, keeping the grounds of trust in God and waiting for Him until the end for his deliverance and experiencing this salvation through faith.

God may succour us more slowly than we desire, but, when he seems to take no notice of our condition, or if we might so speak, when he seems to be inactive or to

sleep, this is totally different from deceit: for if we are enabled by the invincible strength and power of faith to endure, the fitting season of our deliverance will at length arrive (Calvin, 1996b:90).

Therefore, according to Calvin, it can be confirmed that faith is the cornerstone on which the experience of God's salvation is enabled, and ultimately, that saving faith is linked to assurance.

3.4 Conclusion on assurance in Calvin's commentary on the Psalms

Calvin's commentary on Psalms is a practical application of his views expressed in the Institutes. Thus, through his commentary, we can apply the doctrine of saving faith into our lives in a concrete way. Above all, Calvin found affinity with David and in their mutual experiences of suffering, he found not only consolation but actually also gained deeper belief and further matured his faith and his understanding of faith.

Therefore, for Calvin, faith (reflecting upon David's life of seeking refuge, which had revealed his belief) was applied into his own sufferings. This restructured his beliefs, and thus faith became a practical doctrine. Furthermore, Calvin maintained that faith is realising God's love, trusting in His promise in all times of worldly suffering and hardship whilst believing that God will save us. Thus, for Calvin, faith, put in other words, could be expressed as the love for God because of His steadfast mercy and goodness towards us. It is thus why voluntary love towards God is revealed to be the 'roots of true piety'. The attitude humans should have towards God would be best expressed as 'reverence' and it is the faith that is revealed to be a pious life. In addition, we can confirm that through this saving faith, believers are given perseverance. Furthermore, they will be led to pious and fruit-bearing lives. The doctrine of piety that Calvin reveals in his commentary on Psalms will be explored in the following section.

3.5 Piety in Calvin's commentary on the Psalms

3.5.1 Introduction

With faith and assurance established in Calvin's commentary on Psalms, the doctrine of piety that Calvin reveals must then also be explored. When Calvin's introduction to his commentaries on Psalms is studied carefully, the benefits of Psalms can be found, as the book establishes the foundations in living a pious life once assurance has been attained. The book of Psalms teaches the basis on which one can practice piety in one's serving of God, confirming saving faith. First, not only will it open ways to lead us on a path closer to God, but also, having been given

assurance, we will be allowed the freedom and permission to freely confess our weaknesses, something which we are often too ashamed to do before God. Secondly, we will realise the right way to offer praises and sacrifices to God through Psalms. Calvin actually used Psalms and its songs to teach the members of the Geneva Church the right way to praise God. Thirdly, Psalms set the frame of a pious and holy life for believers with the ultimate goal of teaching believers to bear the cross (Calvin, 1996a:Author's preface xxxix).

Calvin had held the book of Psalms very close, and from that point it is vital for many reasons to study Calvin's commentaries on Psalms in order to understand his piety, just as it was vital for examining assurance. Through his commentary, Calvin not only developed his ministries but experienced the rehabilitation of his spirituality and it also contributed to the sophistication of his followers in Geneva through his weekly sermons on Psalms. In the following, the ways in which followers who have confirmed God's assurance can live a life of piety will be established.

3.5.2 Knowledge and piety in Psalms

Acknowledging the intricate relationship between Calvin's Institutes and his commentaries on Psalms, we see that his belief in the relationship between humans and God is integral in understanding piety, just as it was when exploring assurance. In Institutes, Calvin (1960a:35) mentions that "without the knowledge of self, there is no knowledge of God". For Calvin, the concept of humans whilst separate from God, to state our knowledge of God to be separate from perceiving ourselves was impossible. Additionally, Calvin believes the relationship between humans and God to be the focus of Psalms and therefore he is able to find the deposit of his theology in the Psalms. From there, he starts Institutes with the confession:

Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But while joined by many bonds, which one precedes and brings forth, the other is not easy to discern (Calvin, 1960a:35).

The dual knowledge found in —the knowledge of self and knowledge of God so closely interwoven—is similarly depicted in Psalms: the knowledge of God and knowledge of humans have an integral relationship with each other. As aforementioned in Chapter 2, Calvin stated in his introduction of his Psalm commentaries that Psalms therefore set the pious frame for believers to train them into carrying the weight of the cross.

The Psalms are replete with all the precepts which serve to frame our life to every part of holiness, piety, and righteousness, yet they will principally teach and train us to bear the cross (Calvin, 1996a:Author's preface xxxix).

Calvin's commentary on Psalm 1:1 asserts that the standard of piety must be taken from God's words. Yet, he states in the commentary of the second verse that "the study of the law" is true piety, and he naturally explains that "God is only rightly served when law is obeyed" (Calvin, 1996a:Author's preface xxxxi).⁴⁶

In his commentary on Psalm 119:79, he (1996d:459) writes that "the fear or reverence of God" is linked to "the knowledge of Divine truth" and teaches that the two have an inseparable relationship with one another. In other words, only those who are pious, those who have been taught at the school of God, can rightly serve God, and these are the ones who hold the true evidence of the Lord. That is, Calvin's piety is the human knowledge of God. That is, knowing the words of God and the *true* knowledge of God is the voluntary human obedience to God, and this is what Calvin explains to be piety. Calvin (1996e:283) continues in his interpretation of Psalm 145:20 that "they submit themselves to him voluntarily, which again is the effect of faith".

In summary, the book of Psalms is a book that teaches believers true piety so that they may voluntarily serve God in their love for him, with its definitive goal to teach them to carry and bear the load of the cross in their training of true piety. Through the intricate study so far of the three goals of Calvin in Psalms, we find that Psalms is first a very significant book in the teaching of piety for humans; when meditated on and deeply studied, it teaches the right ways to pray (Calvin, 1996a:Author's preface xxxvii), teaches the right ways to praise and offer sacrifices (Calvin, 1996a:Author's preface xxxxi), and provides the strength in order to bear the load of the cross as believers acquire their faith through voluntary service of the Lord. Through the Book of Psalms, we are able to find many affirmations of faith and a focus on assurance along with many other key points.

Therefore, Psalms can be viewed as a basis for piety; it sheds profound light upon the subject of prayer. Additionally, Psalms provides instructions for the right ways to praise and worship as well as the way to serve God. This shows the relevance of piety and practice in Psalms. Thus, Psalms ultimately shows through the book the way of carrying the cross through obedience and love for God, and the relevance of faith and assurance. This concept of Calvin's three goals in his reading of the Psalms will be explored in the following.

3.5.3 Three-fold knowledge of Psalms

3.5.3.1 The opening of the way into becoming closer to God through Psalms: Prayer

Psalms is a book that provides true believers with joy and consolation and reinforces their faith. Calvin (1996a:Author's preface xxxvii) comments in the introduction of his commentaries on Psalms that the book of Psalms is “An Anatomy of all the Parts of the Soul.” Psalms’ record of human emotions is like a mirror image of the human soul, and Calvin says that there are no feelings that have not been depicted in Psalms.

I have become accustomed to call this book, I think not inappropriately, “An Anatomy of all the Parts of the Soul,” for there is not an emotion of which any one can be conscious that is not here represented as in a mirror. Or rather, the Holy Spirit has here drawn to the life all the griefs, sorrows, fears, doubts, hopes, cares, perplexities, in short, all the distracting emotions with which the minds of men are wont to be agitated (Calvin, 1996a:Author's preface xxxvii).

Calvin describes Psalms as a book leading into life, for people of conflicting thoughts and confused emotions of agony, joy, pain, sadness, and passions (Calvin, 1996a:Author's preface xxxvii). He even goes to say that we are able to learn to freely express our true thoughts without faults and to explore our innermost thoughts in the Lord’s presence. Calvin (1996a:Author's preface xxxvii) sees that reading the book of Psalms is a phenomenal and singular advantage for readers. At times in life where we can’t describe feelings of jubilation, or when we feel immense sorrow and discouragement, it is often very difficult to go to God. However, God gives us Psalms so that we may be able to see the state of our soul and to open a way leading to God in Christ. We are always able to go to God with prayer as Psalms teaches us and can confess weaknesses and sins to God despite the shame and embarrassment we would feel if we spoke it out to others. In the Geneva Psalms hymnal, created in 1562, an index was listed where it directed people to different sections depending on their emotions, ranging from times of difficulties, despair, discrimination, and temptations, based on the book of Psalms.⁴⁷ The book of Psalms was to be used as a reference for members of the church as they were being led into a pious life. This is as believers are able to realise the different approaches and experiences of facing God through Psalms. To sum up, Calvin expresses in his commentary on Psalms a guide for us on how to pray.

However, the right way to pray (Calvin expresses it as experiences of consolation) is a pure and truthful prayer (Calvin, 1996e:281-283). Pure and truthful prayers first allow us to recognise our flaws and weaknesses, and these prayers lead to the way in which we put faith in God’s promises (Calvin, 1996a:Author's preface xxxvii). However, for us to acknowledge and find our own flaws is very difficult. This is because humankind was first created with free will and integrity; however,

it was in fact free will that caused the ‘fall’, and ever since, we have become stuck with the “genetic transgressions” passed on through all generations from the original sin (Calvin, 1996b:290-291). However, Calvin (1996b:290-291) holds and stresses the theological premise that the reason why God has created mankind in this way is a secret that only God knows.

It is, therefore, as Calvin understood, that the human race has always needed the help of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in order to become closer to God. Therefore, humans were destined to be trained to crave for their absence of free will after the fall. Calvin (1960b:851-853) wrote that humans were designed with the need to pray and created for their “existence to pray” in order to survive. However, Calvin (1960b:851) also held a basic belief that “for humans to pray, they must themselves realise the advantages”. His philosophy of prayer was that it was only through the foundation of “grace and blood through the redemption of Christ” (1960b:850), the assurer, the preparer of prayer that humans are able to become closer to God. So Calvin (1996a:336) believed that for our prayers to be accepted by God, Christ’s sacrifice was crucial so that we may be cleansed and made holy through the shedding of Christ’s blood.

Hence it follows that all our prayers will vanish in smoke, unless they are grounded upon the mercy of God. The case of Christ was indeed a peculiar one, inasmuch as it was by his own righteousness that he appeased the wrath of his father towards us (Calvin, 1996d:288).

Therefore, humans were understood to be unable to escape their corrupted tendencies without the help of God and His mercy. However, it was also understood that mankind are to remember the reasons of God’s nature to rejoice. As Calvin points out in reference to Psalm 86:5,

It would avail the afflicted nothing to have recourse to him, and to lift up their desires and prayers to heaven, were they not persuaded that he is a faithful rewarder of all who call upon him (Calvin, 1996c:383).

It is believed, therefore, humans must hold on to God’s confirmations based on the basic doctrines of God’s nature (1996c:383). In that sense, people are further able to be led to God’s confirmations when they remember and hold on to His promises. It was stated in his commentaries on Psalms, “Let us learn that God, in all his promises, is set before us as if he were our willing debtor” (Calvin, 1996d:444).

In prayer, it is God's promises that help and spur us on into his confirmations of our prayers. In this, it is important to recognise the significance of the certain grasp of God's words. Our holding of His words is what can be called faith and belief. It is crucial that prayers be based on the words of God through faith. Our prayers are expressed from our faith, and true faith is acquired by attentive listening and recognition of God's words. It is that our prayers stem from the words of God, and our words that have originated from true faith are what controls and enriches the contents of our prayers. Therefore, it is only then we are able to receive God's promises through Christ's intercessions when we offer our faithful prayers.

To synthesise, Calvin's understanding of the relationship between humans and prayer was the premise that the corrupt mankind would not even be allowed to pray to the mighty God to see his majestic throne. Only with Christ's redemptive arbitration was His throne made graceful and we are allowed access to the Father. Calvin (1960b:874) refers to Jesus as our only advocate and mediator, Christ being the only one we can trust to intercede for us. Christ was the 'Incarnate Word,' and therefore without being led by this 'Word,' and our prayers not being based on these 'Words,' actions become self-serving, without relevance to the words of God, and ultimately, wrong prayers. On the other hand, true and positive prayers based on the 'Word' are achieved with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Since no man is worthy to present himself to God and come into his sight, the Heavenly Father himself... has given us his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, to be our advocate (Calvin, 1960b:874).

Calvin believes the 'objective possibilities' of prayer depend on Christ, and the 'subjective possibilities' of prayer are achieved by the Holy Spirit's help on the effect of prayers, based on the righteousness of Christ. However, Calvin concludes that Christ is the only way and the only mediator for humans to gain access to God (Calvin, 1960b:876).

3.5.3.2 Finding the True Way to Give Praise through Psalms: Praise and Worship

An integral part of Calvin's understanding of Psalms was its use in leading followers on how to pray. However, he also found Psalms to be a guide for those on how to praise God in order to express their thanks for his replies to their prayers. Through the book of Psalms, we are able to see the benefits of Psalms and learn true prayers and confessions. In addition, another part of Psalms is the recognition of God and praise of Him for our experiences with his prayer and confessions. Calvin expresses this in his introduction:

This book makes known to us this privilege, which is desirable above all others – that not only is there opened up to us familiar access to God, but also that we have permission and freedom granted us to lay open before him our infirmities, which we would be ashamed to confess before men. Besides, there is also here prescribed to us an infallible rule for directing us with respect to the right manner of offering to God the sacrifice of Praise (Calvin, 1996a:Author's preface xxxviii).

Calvin's basic understanding of Psalms – opening and leading ways to a closer relationship with God through its many teachings on true prayer – is definitely a central point of the book, but another key focus starts off in Psalms as it guides Christians on the path of righteous worship and faith. While these two points may seem different from each other, in reality they are linked like the two faces of the same coin. Actually, studying Calvin's statements seems like his views on the relation between prayer and praise was not fully developed or mentioned. However, if the concept of prayer can be described as the act of humans asking God for their substantial needs, at the same time, the result of prayers can be defined as the praise of God's for His answers to our questions, consolation of our grief, presence at times of worry, and His constant looking after us. Therefore, our actions in response to his answers, our praise and worship, can be defined to be the result of prayers. Calvin writes that the book of Psalms instructs us to depend only on the Father and derive happiness only from Him, but Calvin's understanding of praise is led by God's answers to prayers where believers are able to rejoice.

Not only will we here find general commendations of the goodness of God, which may teach men to repose themselves in him alone, and to seek all their happiness solely in him; and which are intended to teach true believers with their whole hearts confidently to look to him for help in all their necessities... (Calvin, 1996a:Author's preface xxxix).

Studying this, it is evident that Calvin would link praise and prayer together and not use the two together without distinguishing between them.

In his introduction to the commentaries on Psalms, Calvin (1996a:xxxviii) would regulate that Psalms opened up an access to the right manner to offer our praise to God, which He finds to be the sweetest odour. It is not with human strength alone that we are able to give glory to the Father and not our words that we are able to sing praises to Him. However, our almighty Father knows all our weaknesses and has prepared and given to us the right ways to offer our "sacrifices of praise" (Calvin, 1996e:319). It was the 150 Psalms given to us so that we may learn the ways to

praise Him. And so it was through these Psalms that we were given access to sing the glories of God, to praise Him, and to enter His throne of grace.

In addition, Calvin also states that it was for the glory of God and salvation of humans that God created the world. Therefore, Calvin (1996d:319) expresses and emphasises humans' existence as in glory for God and the need to praise Him. In other words, there are no better causes for humankind than to live to worship God and to honour Him. All humans were created and born with the purpose to praise the Lord's name and to continue to honour Him throughout their lives (Calvin, 1996e:273). It is therefore the wish of God for humans to not only enjoy the kindness and almightiness of God but to praise His name and pray to Him (Calvin, 1996d:356-357).

Following Calvin's logic, praise alongside its relation to prayer is a fundamental part of piety. If the Psalms are able to lead the people into true and righteous prayer, believers will similarly be led through Psalms into learning the right way to praise and offer their worship to the Lord. This being said, according to Calvin's beliefs, believers reading Psalms are led into life, learning the true prayer so that in the midst of difficulties and suffering they would be able to find refuge in the book whilst also teaching others to praise the Father, leading them into this way. Therefore Psalms was a book of guidance on how to worship and serve the Father.

Hence Calvin (1996a:445) emphasises God as the focal centre of worship and therefore the need for humans to accept His blessings and worship His goodness. If humankind was sincerely in awe of and revered God, it would be possible only to praise Him. Calvin (1996a:380) associates revering the Lord and praising Him as one. If people are sincerely in awe of God, they would not only join in service at Church, but they would remember and renew the grace of God's salvation and then increase their piety and faith in Him so that they would praise the blessings received from Him and find that it is necessary for them to subsequently learn to give thanks to Him from their hearts (Calvin, 1996c:312). Through this, Christians will be able to grow in their ways of praising God and in their faith in Him. It was for these reasons Calvin (1996a:Author's preface xxxix) wrote, "The Psalms are replete with all the precepts which serve to frame our life to every part of holiness, piety, and righteousness."

Calvin actually added rhythm and melodies to some of the poems about wisdom, and poems about confession from Psalms and created hymns to use. This was especially during the time Calvin was preaching at his church in Geneva, where he would use his own hymns based on Psalms during his service. In particular, during the prayers of confession, Psalms 124 was a fixed item Calvin used. It was through the Psalms that Calvin was able to understand his obstacles and

difficulties by comparing himself to David. In times of trial, he was able to meditate with the book of Psalms.

We are able to see from Calvin's introduction to his commentaries on Psalms the relevance and connection he found with the book of Psalms:

But since the condition of David was such, that though he had deserved well of his people, he was nevertheless bitterly hated by many without a cause, as he complains in Psalm 69:4. 'I restored that which I took not away', it afforded me no small consolation when I was groundlessly assailed by the hatred of those who ought to have assisted and solaced me, to conform myself to the example of so excellent a person (Calvin, 1996a:Author's preface xlviii).

He even states that through his and David's experiences of suffering and difficulties, he was offered much consolation and was actually able to gain a better understanding of Psalms because of his experiences. This is to say that it was not through his academic and scholastic endeavours but his personal experiences that he was better able to understand Psalms. These experiences also allowed him to understand the intent of the Psalmists and discover the dispensation of God. Calvin, through reading the book of Psalms, was able to see it in regard to others and himself as well as to feel the personal experiences of Psalmists as his own. These shared experiences are particularly shown through David as an example. This could be due to David being regarded as one of the more significant figures out of the other Psalmists, even described to be very much like God and the advocate of sincere faith: 'a man after my own heart' (1 Samuel 13:14).

3.5.3.3 Setting the Frame of a Pious and Holy Life with the Ultimate Goal to Teach Believers to Bear the Cross

What is the form of a true believer that Calvin tries to depict? It is not easy to simply describe with one answer about the correct life of a believer that Calvin tries to portray. However, Calvin consistently emphasises in his commentary on Psalms that the true life of a believer is to ultimately bear the cross (Calvin, 1996a).

Calvin was sure that Psalms would set the frame for believers to lead a holy and pious life. In that sense, going one step further, Calvin hoped that the teachings of Psalms would fundamentally train us to learn to bear the cross in our own lives. In his commentary's preface to the Psalms, Calvin (1996a:Author's preface xxxviii) asserts that the Psalms are filled with all the doctrines

that lead the lives of believers towards holiness, piety, and righteousness. Moreover, he firmly believes that the Psalms will teach and train believers to bear the cross.

So then, how can the goal of ultimately learning to bear the cross that Calvin continued to stress to believers be concretely understood and defined? Calvin (1960a:702-712) thoroughly describes in the last edition of his Institutes the fundamentals and workings of bearing the cross. A focal point that Calvin emphasises is that true followers of the Lord are necessarily made to carry the load of the cross, which is also the will of the Heavenly Father. This will of our Heavenly Father was put into effect foremost by His only son and applied to all his children thereafter. As we will forever remember, the Christ's earthly life itself was to carry the cross. His incarnation in human form itself foresaw the suffering of a life of bearing the cross, and His life itself was carrying the weight of a cross of a never-ending series of trials. However, through his obedience to the Holy Father in which He was committing Himself to harm and obedience to suffer the load of the cross, He redeemed all mankind. Similar to Calvin's comparison and explanation of the likeness between David's life and Christ's life (Calvin, 1960a:702-703),⁴⁸ the life of a believer is not made indifferent to Christ's suffering and cross. Calvin explains and understands the cross to be a tool to humble believers, and bring perfect trust in the power and grace of God (Calvin, 1960a:702-703).

As Calvin exegetes in his introductory commentary on Psalm 18, David's whole life was characterised by suffering and adversity. Before he became a king, he lived in fear, being chased by Saul, in danger of death on numerous occasions and hope defiling experiences.

However, despite his circumstances, he remained true to his beliefs and hopes that God would deliver him. Even after he became king, David was afflicted with many disturbances and harassments from his subjects (Calvin, 1996a:256-259). Calvin explains that David was made to suffer through his torment so that he may be lowered and humbled in order to rely only on the grace of God. Furthermore, Calvin (1996a:362) states that through David as an example, believers may be assured that the suffering of the cross can be overcome by the grace of God. In that sense, true believers may be actually able to continue in a stable and firm faith through the trial (Calvin, 1996a:260-262). Furthermore, Calvin (1960a:705-706) understands the cross to be a tool to aid the spiritual diseases and illnesses of humans.

If only they were able, humans have the tendencies and temperament to leave God and live in their nature of flesh. So then, Calvin (1960a:705) compares these vitalities of humans to "mettlesome horses."

For the same things happens to it that happens to mettlesome horses. If they are fattened in idleness for some days, they cannot afterward be tamed for their high spirits; nor do they recognise their rider, whose command they previously obeyed (Calvin, 1960a:704).

For this reason, the Lord uses a cross⁴⁹ himself to break the pride and arrogance of humans and cures their spiritual illness. As per Calvin (1996e:92-93), it is at these times when God allows crosses for humans that He uses them in various ways to his purpose. Calvin (1960a:704) states that God afflicts humans with the main intent to test their patience and to train them to obey God's word.

But as there is in us naturally a will, which, however, is depraved by the corruption of our nature, so that it always inclines us to sin, God changes it for the better, and thus leads it cordially to seek after righteousness, to which our hearts were previously averse (Calvin, 1996b:101).

Calvin uses extracts from Psalms as examples for training believers into willingly and happily obeying God through the cross.⁵⁰ He even states that there would be instances where God intentionally did not save his believers from distress or the load of the cross (Calvin, 1996e:92-93). Even so, Calvin understands that God would not leave his subjects in torment for no legitimate reason and so, as his true followers, we can only remain patient and in trust of Him.

One mark by which God distinguishes the true from the false disciple is that of his being ready and prepared to bear the cross, and waiting quietly for the Divine deliverance, without giving way to fretfulness and impatience (Calvin, 1996d:21).

Calvin (1996e:93) goes so far as to say that though God might create anguish in the lives of believers, the weight of the cross is always beneficial. Moreover, for one to not be able to overcome their sufferings and therefore ultimately not realise the grace of God working in the midst of all their troubles is a rather bigger infelicity. Calvin is confident that God is not monotonous in his dealing with humans but rather uses different approaches of the trials of the cross for each believer so that they may on their own accord, and free will, obey Him.

Calvin therefore holds that we, as true believers and disciples of Christ, should not be afraid to bear the cross. He reasons that we must keep in mind the truth that we were called to be His people, separated from the rest of the people in the world, so that we are encouraged to live in

blessed peace with both truth and righteousness (Calvin, 1996d:20-23). It is hence that although the cross may produce anguish, it can be used also as a way to differentiate true followers from false. Calvin (1996d:21) believes that false believers and true believers can be distinguished by their willingness to bear their cross.

Looking at this in depth, it can be found that the cross and true disciples are in exquisite interaction with each other. Whilst the cross trains believers into voluntary obedience to the Lord, it is also that true believers will gladly receive and accept the cross with support and consolation from the Holy Spirit and through familiarity and becoming accustomed to the cross (Kendall, 1979a).

3.6 Conclusion on piety in Calvin's commentary on the Psalms

Faith for Calvin is knowing God, relying wholly on God and revering God. Through this, David maintained his belief in God through all situations, no matter the affliction and adversity, that He would save him, and it is this that is being proven in the book of Psalms. Calvin, therefore, understands faith first of all, to be a gift of the Spirit. True knowledge finds its orientation.

Thus, those with assurance prove this faith in their living of pious lives; this faith can be expressed in various ways of revering God. The first testimony to faith is prayer and praise. Here, prayer is the way in which one remains faithful in whatever circumstance and recognises God's mercy. Praise is not only a liturgical attitude but also a medium through which believers can express their joy and thanks for God in their lives. It is only when we rely on God and praise Him that despite our lacking nature and all our faults and the troubles of our circumstances, we build our trust in Him and our faith and security in Him, that we are able to taste the sweetness of the Lord.

Above all, those with assurance prove their reverence for God through their willingness to bear the load of the cross in their lives. The cross teaches us to give up our own emotions and obey God; through this we are able to taste the sweetness of following Him. Calvin insists this is not merely our own cross, suffering, and affliction, but instead, includes the load of the cross of others in which those who recognise God's love must be eager and willing to bear the load of others. Calvin also considered self-denial, cross-bearing and meditation on the future life as the three essential elements of a Christ-like life. These concepts are closely related in his thoughts on the themes of 'union with Christ' and sanctification. These will be examined in detail later.

NOTES

²⁹ Erwin Mulhaupt finds three reasons why Calvin liked the Psalms more than any other book. The first is that the Psalms were of special affection to Calvin personally. Calvin discovered much about himself in David and in difficult times he found comfort and strength in the Psalms. Secondly, Psalms was the only Old Testament book Calvin dealt with in his sermons every Sunday. The New Testament was preached on Sunday and the Old Testament was reserved for weekdays, with the exception of the Psalms. It was the only book Calvin preached on Sunday. Thirdly, it was Calvin who made the singing of Psalms from the Old Testament in worship widespread. Eire also remarked that Geneva itself was a city “in which the Psalms were the language of communication with God.” This is the extent of how much Calvin loved the Psalms. (C. Eire. 2003:285-91). Many scholars, including Selderhuis, agree that Calvin loved the Psalms more than any other Bible book (Selderhuis, Herman J. 2007: 14).

³⁰ Calvin in his preface to his Psalms commentaries explains in detail his journey through life and what adversities and hardships he has encountered until his then present moment. In no other works has he revealed such intimate details of his thoughts and his life, but here he shares his deepest inner heart and, surprisingly, even the truth about his sudden conversion is made known. Many scholars on Calvin have not only been able to use his preface to the Psalms commentaries to gain a better understanding of Calvin and his life but have also been able to discover his true and deep love for the Book of Psalms (Calvin, J. 1996a, Authors Preface).

³¹ Cf. In order to examine the time period in which Institutes was written compared to the commentaries, below is a table outlining their publication dates.

NB: Calvin’s commentary works will be referred to solely by the name of the book.

	Publication Dates	Works
Hosea	1536 / 8. 1	
Joel, Amos, Obadiah	1539	
Jonah, Micah, Nahum	1539/ 10. 18	Commentary on Romans
	1543	
Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Malaki	1546/ 1. 24	Corinthians I
	1546/ 8. 1	Corinthians II
Haggai, Zachariah	1548 / 2. 1	Galatians
Psalms	1549/ 5. 23	Hebrews
	1549/ 11. 29	Titus, James
Daniel	1550	
Genesis	1550/ 2. 17	Thessalonians I
Genesis, Deuteronomion	1550 / 11.25	Isaiah
Jeremiah	1551/ 1.24	Peter I
Lamentation	1553/ 1. 1	John
Joshua	1555/ 8. 1	Synoptics
Ezekiel	1556/ 7. 20	Timothy I, II

1557/ 2.13					1557/ 7.22	1559	1561/ 8.27	1563 / 6.30		1563/ 7. 23		1563/ 11.30	1565/ 1.18
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³² Calvin had written this prior to his first commentary (Romans, dedicated 1539, published in 1540) and appears in his second edition of Institutes published in August 1539.

³³ According to Ford Lewis Battles, there were two motivations behind Calvin's writing of Institutes First, Calvin felt there was a need for catechism for those following the Reformed Church. Also, he had felt the need to defend his Christian brothers from persecution by revealing the truth and thus he produced his Institutes with these purposes in mind. Following ' first edition in 1536, it was slowly but steadily revised and enlarged. A few important editions of these include the editions of 1536, 1539, 1543 and 1559. The edition of 1559, as the last edition, is particularly significant in terms of the context and order of its doctrine. Produced as 80 chapters, this last edition is paramount in understanding Calvin's viewpoint. The catechism prevalent in the first edition of 1536 cannot be found in the last 1559 edition. The last edition is set up in the following divisions: Lib. I. *De Cognitione Dei Creatoris*. (Book One: The Knowledge of God the Creator), Lib. II. *De Cognitione Dei Redemptoris in Christo. Quae patribus sub Lege primum, deinde & nobis in Evangelio patefacta est*. (Book Two: The Knowledge of God the Redeemer in Christ, First Disclosed to the Fathers under the Law and Then to Us in the Gospel), Lib. III. *De Modo Percipiendae Christ Graiae & qui inde fructus nobis proveniant & qui effectus consequantur*. (Book Three : The way in which We receive the Grace of Christ : What benefits come to us from it, and What effects follow.), Lib IV. *De Externis vel Asminiculis quibus Deus in Christ societatem nos in ea retinet*. (Book Four: The External Means or Aids by which God invites us into the society of Christ and Holds us Therein). Calvin had continuously lived with a consciousness of God's presence and wrote of God in his relationship with us and the world. He had maintained a concern for God in his dealings with his community, neighbours and the world.

³⁴ In the last edition it is quoted more than any other of his works with the one exception of the epistle to the Romans. Also F. L. Battles points out that in the final Latin edition of the Institutes (1559) "Romans" is cited 598 times, and "Psalms" 580 times. The next most quoted book is "Matthew" with 542 references. Furthermore, in Institutes, there are often instances where his Commentary on Psalms is used as a reference of practical examples for the doctrines featured in Institutes.

³⁵ This can be found in Psalms 2; 18:1,19,21; 41:9;64:4; 88:1; 89:20-21; 101:2; 106:16, 31; 116:14; 118:22.

³⁶ Cf. Edward Dowey comments Calvin was able to find self-identification in David (Dowey, 1952:194).

³⁷ See Commentaries on the Book of Psalms, Chapter 7, 26, 39, 51.

³⁸ Nico Vorster comments that for Calvin, total human depravity does not indicate that the human is dehumanised, or stops being human, but rather that all parts of a person's humanity is affected. (Vorster, 2011:13).

³⁹ *Fides salvifica*, saving faith, refers that embraces God's promises and truths, leading to the believer's salvation. (Richard A. Muller, 1985:115).

⁴⁰ See, Commentary on the book of Psalms, 89:14, 24, 92:2, 98:3, 100:5, 108:4, 115:1.

⁴¹ Calvin comments that the unique role of the Holy Spirit is to engrave the Law of God onto our hearts.

⁴² Here the dispute, "Does faith include assurance?" arises, though that is not the purpose of this part and is not what will be explored. However, the saving faith and assurance that Calvin explains in his commentaries will be clarified. Related to this issue, regarding Calvin's thought of assurance included in faith and the interpretation of Puritans who distinguish assurance from faith (stemming from the discontinuity between Calvin and Puritans), three views are still in dispute. William Cunningham, Robert Dabney, and Charles Hodge understand the separation of assurance from faith that the Puritans have distinguished to be a developed interpretation of Calvin's doctrine. R.T. Kendal and Antony Lane believe the Puritans' differentiation of faith and assurance to be breaking away from Calvin's thoughts on assurance. Paul Helm and Joel Beeke criticise Kendal and Lane and hold the belief that the view of faith including assurance and the idea of the division of faith and assurance are actually the same thing but place emphasis on different points and thus the disputes have risen. For further reference, see the following: R.T. Kendall, 1979; Paul Helm, 1982; Joel R. Beeke, 1999; Anthony N. S. Lane, 1992; Randall C. Gleason, 1995; Jelle Faber, 1989.

⁴³ There are numerous instances where God has mercy on believers in the Scriptures. "For thou O Lord, art good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on thee" (Ps. 86:5);

“The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love” (Ps. 103:8);
“The Lord is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made” (Ps. 145:9).

⁴⁴ See also p. 258. Calvin states, “This is a point which it is highly useful for us to know, in order that we may not expect to be exempted from all trouble, when we follow the call of God, but may rather prepare ourselves for a condition of warfare painful and disagreeable to our flesh.”

⁴⁵ Calvin, in several of his commentaries on the Psalms, mentions that God prepares the cross for the training of believers. Psalms 23:4 (1996a:395); 30:8 (1996a:493-494); 79:5 (1996c:286); 92:5 (1996c:497); 94:12 (1996d:20); 106:48 (1996d:245); 125:3 (1996e:92-93).

⁴⁶ See also Calvin’s Commentary on the Book of Psalms 1:1-2, p.4.

⁴⁷ Riemer A. Faber. 2002. “John Calvin on Psalms and Hymns in Public Worship” in *Clarion*, p.388.

⁴⁸ Refer to Calvin’s Commentary on the Book of Psalms 2:1-3, 7-9; 5:9; 17:15; 108, Intro; 18:37-40, 43-44; 20:1-2, 9; 21:13, 22: Intro; 41:9; 57:8-9; 68:18; 69:Intro, 9; 89:26-28, 35-38; 109:1-4, 8-11, 22-23; 122:4.

⁴⁹ Calvin rejects the idea that suffering means that we are displeased. Rather, Calvin emphasises that God needs the cross to keep us awake to not yield too much to the cravings of the flesh (1996e:92).

⁵⁰ Refer to Calvin’s Commentary on the Book of Psalms 92:6, 94:12, 125:3.

Chapter 4 Systematic research into assurance and piety as in Calvin's first commentary on the epistle to the Romans

It is indeed true, that we are justified in Christ through the mercy of God alone;
but it is equally true and certain, that all who are justified
are called by the Lord, that they may live worthy of their vocation.
Let then the faithful learn to embrace him, not only for justification,
but also, for sanctification, as he has been given to us for both these purposes.
lest they rend him asunder by their mutilated faith
(Calvin's Commentary on the epistle to the Romans, p.294)

4.1 Introduction

Although it is his Institutes that is universally recognised, in truth, Calvin spent as much effort in his work on his commentaries as he did on Institutes and it was as equally an important aspect of his ministry⁵¹. Of these, Calvin chose Romans as the first book of the bible to write his exegetical work. As Calvin asserts (1996f:Dedicatory, xxiv-xxvi) Romans was a book favoured by scholars from early commentators to those in Calvin's era. It was considered a treasure of the Bible to the extent that scholars of the Reformation, including Calvin, all strived to commentate on it first. However, as Calvin notes (1996f:xxv), it was not the intention of scholars through time from the early church, the middle-ages to his generation to be in competition.⁵² Rather, Romans can be regarded to have been attractive for its delineation of the true doctrine of salvation and its upright teachings on the Christian life and ethics.

In this chapter, it will be revealed of the significance of Romans, equivalent to that of Psalms,⁵³ as well as analyse Calvin's theology on assurance and piety through his commentary, renowned for its doctrines on the Bible and theology and the great extent to which his theology of justification has been integrated in his commentary. The Epistle to Romans was of particular importance for Reformers due to it containing theological themes and doctrines, more frequently and explicitly than in Psalms. Even so, Calvin heavily focuses on an exposition of the text in his commentary and refers his readers to his Institutes for further doctrinal discussions.⁵⁴

McKee cites (1990:147) Kraus to have emphasised that Calvin's commentary research profoundly supported and formed his Institutes and in turn, his theologies created his

commentaries. In my agreement to Kraus, this chapter believes and asserts that Calvin's theological notions have been directly integrated into his commentary. In that light, Calvin can be regarded as an important commentator and his exegesis on Romans as his first exegetical work can be considered to express Calvin's position towards the doctrines of Justification by Faith and Sanctification stressed by Paul.

This chapter will not only draw out Calvin's perspective that the core doctrine of the gospel in Romans is that assurance will be brought from true faith but also to reveal that piety is the natural offspring of assurance. Thus, this chapter will entail demonstrating Calvin's argument that those who receive justification will also continuously attain sanctification as Piety is another form of a sanctified life (Calvin, 1960a:593, 685, 688).

Like Luther, Calvin emphasised that faith induces justification that is imputative, forensic and external. However, conversely to Luther who emphasises solely on Justification by faith, Calvin asserted that justification does not neglect the good deeds of believers (Calvin, 1960a).⁵⁵

Actually, the discourse regarding whether the good works of believers has impact on their assurance amongst scholars has been much debated. Wilhelm Niesel puts forward that Calvin has asserted the irrelevance of the deeds of believers to their assurance of salvation. Niesel (1980:169-171) particularly emphasises the absence of 'practical syllogism' (*Syllogismus Practicus*) within Calvin's work. R.T. Kendall (1979a:28) also states Calvin to have held an opposing doctrine than in holding good works to have an impact on assurance, and thus shares Niesel's view that Calvin rejected the doctrine of practical syllogism.⁵⁶ In addition, F. H. Klooster (1977:52) has also emphasised that for Calvin, practical syllogism is not a logical conclusion brought from the good deeds of believers.

On the contrary, Ronald S. Wallace (1982:301) has stated there exists a condition of "integrity of conscience" that becomes evident from our good deeds thanks to the grace of God which he asserts to be evidence of our election if we lead pure lives. This is also affirmed by Alister E. McGrath (1990:240) who holds that Calvin stated good deeds to be the result of the works of the Spirit and serves as assurance of one's faith. Paul Helm (1982:81), also opposes the views of Niesel and Kendall in consideration that Calvin has taken the view of later Puritans and asserts the view that good deeds to assist in the assurance of salvation. This is further emphasised by John H. Leith (1989:103-106) who maintains that Calvin asserted good works to hold award and worth for those who have been regenerated. In view of this, it becomes evident that the opinion towards the relationship between good works and the assurance of salvation has been divided.

This chapter will put forward that alike the view of Calvin and Luther (Luther too, did not ignore good deeds; his statement “Good trees brings forth good fruits”, in one way is to say those who have regenerated and bears good fruits is related to the glory of God and in this sense, no different from the perspective of Calvin),⁵⁷ although good deeds cannot bring forth justification, it can be assured that those who have received justification will bring forth lives of piety and good deeds. Though this has been the focus of debate for many scholars and despite Calvin’s Institutes and his commentaries having been included in their study, it can be regarded that they have taken a deductive method by focusing only on texts mentioning good works and justification by faith. Most representative of this can be seen through the works of John Leith⁵⁸ and Ronald Wallace.⁵⁹ Both of these works highlight the deductive approach being employed by focusing on Biblical verses within Calvin’s Institutes or commentaries that deal expressly with deeds and justification. On the contrary, the aim of this chapter is to take an inductive approach in dealing with Calvin’s commentary on Romans to analyse deeds (piety) and assurance to signify the exploration of the relationship between the two doctrines as being extremely significant.

It is Calvin’s statement that through His double grace, those whom God has made justified has also simultaneously made holy.⁶⁰ That is to say, it is a premise held by Calvin that those who are justified will concurrently live out lives of sanctification. This then highlights Calvin keeping in mind that assurance of justification has a closely interrelationship with piety in pursuit of sanctification. As such, in this chapter, it is my intention to reveal Calvin’s emphasis on piety as the absolute fruit of assurance through a study of his commentary on the epistles to the Romans.

4.2 Calvin and Romans commentary

Before delving into the theology of Calvin, it is necessary to attain insight into the significance of the epistle to Romans as well as the process in which Calvin’s exegesis was created. Like Luther and other reformers,⁶¹ Calvin (1996f:29) recognised the need to correctly introduce the book of Romans to the people as it contains core principles and doctrines of reformation theology such as ‘justification by faith’ as well as its ability to explain the secret to the attainment of salvation existent in the whole Scripture. For this reason, Calvin prioritised the exegesis of Romans over any other scripture books.⁶² Moreover Romans was the first book of the Bible of which Calvin exercised an exegesis and as emphasised in Calvin’s dedication to Simon Grynaeus (1996f:24), he held that Romans offered a way in which the whole Bible could be understood. In addition, he again reiterates the significance of Romans in the preface of his argument in that if the epistles to Romans can be truly understood, one has found the “hidden treasures of Scripture” (Calvin, 1996f:29)

4.2.1 Characteristics of Calvin's commentary on Romans

Calvin's commentary on Romans was published in 1540 but this work started whilst he was in Geneva and was the offspring of the Pauline epistles on which he continued to lecture in Strasbourg.⁶³ It is much more likely that Calvin's exegesis was created naturally as a result of his own Biblical studies and lectures whilst in Strasbourg rather than with the prime intention to provide commentary on the scripture for future generations (Selderhuis, 2009:182).

In that light, his commentaries were composed primarily from a ministerial standpoint. Despite this, Calvin receives much admiration for the scholastic depth that is apparent in his exegetical work (Selderhuis, 2009:185). It has been commented that in general, Calvin's commentaries are more historical as well as containing a greater level of academic depth in comparison to that of Luther's as well as not as focused on explanations of difficult passages as prevalent in Phillipp Melancthon's works. Melancthon's commentaries have lacked an exegetical basis, being more like a series of essays regarding the doctrines prevalent in the book (Parker, 1975:98). On the other hand, Martin Bucer's commentaries on the book of Romans have been regarded as too verbose and too extreme in his translation, paraphrase, explanation of amplification, exposition and *loci communes* – as a result becoming too large in volume (Parker, 1975:98). As established in Calvin's dedication to Simon Grynaeus, he asserted that "the chief excellency of an expounder consists in 'lucid brevity' (Calvin, 1996f:23). Like Luther, Calvin's commentary on Romans is the basis of true faith and as such has become a work that explains the secret to the salvation contained in Calvin's theology. In this work, Calvin has doctrinally analysed the argumentum of Romans and explicated its theological meaning. In addition, Calvin's actions in referring to not only the *Vulgate* by St Jerome but also and more heavily basing it on Erasmus' 1527 fourth edition of the Greek Testament amongst others can be viewed as revolutionary (Parker, 1975:101).

In the following section then, the relationship between his exegesis of Romans and his Institutes will be revealed.

4.2.2 Romans commentary and Institutes

As it has been seen above, Calvin's literary work was a fundamental part of Calvin's ministerial life. His written works are the product of his constant study. Moreover, through his compositional works, Calvin developed his theological standpoint and carried out the integral role of publication and dissemination of his theology. During his time in Strasbourg, one of Calvin's most crucial works was the revision of his Institutes (1536) and thus the subsequent publication of the second edition in 1539.

The second edition of *Institutes* was published in Latin in 1539 and in French in 1541. In particular, Calvin constantly had the French church in mind in his *Institutes* work (Selderhuis, 2009:205). This edition was expanded to become three times the length of the first *Institutes* and of the seventeen chapters, six were completely new whereas another six were extensively revised or extended. The remaining five chapters were expansions of two chapters contained in the 1536 publication of *Institutes* (Breukelman & Reeling Brouwer, 2010:117). When viewed as a whole, the second edition of *Institutes* can be regarded to be a revision and expansion that was grounded on the 1536 edition. In spite of this, there is evidently a major difference in the overall structure of the book (Breukelman & Reeling Brouwer, 2010:117).

The 1540 publication of Calvin's commentary on Romans was decisive in the formation of the overall structure and content of his second edition of *Institutes* (1539).⁶⁴ Despite *Institutes* undergoing many revisions since 1539, the continued structure throughout future editions which was first established in the second edition exemplifies the significance of his exegetical work on the Romans that regulated the core principles of systematic theology to Calvin.⁶⁵ If not for Calvin's close study of the Scriptures during his revision of *Institutes*, the subsequent revised editions would not have been possible.⁶⁶ In that light, Calvin's second edition of *Institutes* can be regarded as the explanation of the theological doctrines and themes found in his commentary on Romans that was revealed to him during his concurrent composition of *Institutes* and his exegesis.

As seen above, a characteristic of Calvin's theology is his treatment of theological doctrines and themes in his *Institutes* whilst his commentaries present brevity, clarity and persuasiveness through his exegesis and direct discussion. As Calvin has intended, his *Institutes* cannot be understood in isolation from his commentaries. In that light, simultaneous study of both Calvin's *Institutes* and his commentaries is required for a holistic and correct comprehension of Calvin's thoughts. This is the result of the characteristic of Calvin's theology which is the intimate relationship between Calvin's exegesis work and his doctrinal thoughts.

In the introduction of *Institutes*, it is recognised that as containing the theology of Calvin, *Institutes* is composed as an introduction that enables understanding of the themes found in the Bible. If the term '*Institutes*' is considered for its Middle-Ages legal essence to mean 'condensation,' it can be seen that Calvin understood his theology to be a surmise of the Bible. In addition, his commentaries were not merely fragmentary pieces of work but were rather developed in consideration of the instructions in the whole of the Bible explained in *Institutes*. This is exemplified through Calvin's referrals to his *Institutes* in his commentary works, highlighting his constant consideration of the holistic doctrines even during his exegesis work on

the Scriptures. In particular, in study of Institutes, it is evident that Calvin's *locus* on faith and prayer has been facilitated by passages from the epistles to the Romans (Muller, 2000:148-149).

In this way, Calvin employed the method of separating his exegesis work from dogmatic disputations. Though exegesis of the Bible requires doctrinal explanation, in order to prevent the dispersion of readers' interest due to the tedium of lengthy explanations, Institutes has taken on this role and thus the two works' characteristics have been distinguished. In that light, the doctrine of predestination which would have been required to be addressed in his commentary on the Romans as it being prevalent in Romans chapter nine is rather dealt with in the second edition of his Institutes (1539) through the addition of a new chapter that deals with the background and theological outlines of predestination. As such, the following will examine key doctrines held by Calvin in his understanding of the theological themes prevalent in Romans.

4.2.3 Calvin's view on the theology of Romans

In the section, 'The Argument' of his commentaries, Calvin deals with the main themes prevalent in Romans under the order in which they appeared in the Roman epistles. If this is explored, it becomes evident of what theme Calvin was considering in his treatment of Romans whilst writing his commentaries.

4.2.3.1 The argument

Traditionally, the epistle to the Romans has been read as Paul's great arguments regarding salvation by faith as opposed to works. That is, Romans outlines that it is not through merely following the laws of Judaism that brought salvation but through Christ's faith that salvation is attained. In following of Calvin and Paul's thesis, the focal theme of Romans is then recognised to be the doctrine of justification by faith (Calvin, 1996f:29).⁶⁷ This theme is explained to be exemplified through God's fulfilment of his promise to Abraham and his successors, achieved through the sacrifice of Christ (chapters 3-4). Calvin explains that Paul in the beginning of Romans at Romans 1:17 "For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.'" has revealed the theme of the whole of Romans. Here, by introducing the gospel, faith is naturally brought for disputation and thus Calvin deals with the issue of faith.

According to Pitkin (Selderhuis, 2009:293), Calvin holds priority for faith that brings forth righteousness due to the focal role of Paul for him. It is undoubtable that the doctrines contained in the Pauline epistles have been fundamental bases for Calvin's understanding of faith. As Pitkin

notes (Selderhuis, 2009:293), Calvin did not only attain the notion of saving faith from Paul but Paul has also served as the greatest authority on the subject, referred to most often in Calvin's explanation of faith.

As seen above, the 1539 edition *Institutes* and his *Commentary on Romans* has a very closely related relationship. Thus, the views expressly contained in his *Institutions* (1539) has been directly reflected in his explanations of faith in his *Romans commentary* (1540). In his commentary on Romans, he holds faith led justification (justification by faith) as the key point of Romans. Furthermore, in commenting on Romans chapters three and four, Calvin explains his understanding of faith in Romans,

Faith then is not a naked knowledge either of God or of his truth; nor is it a simple persuasion that God is, that his word is the truth; but a sure knowledge of God's mercy, which is received from the gospel, and brings peace of conscience with regard to God and rest to the mind (Calvin, 1996f:171).

In this light, Calvin studies the whole of Romans under this lens of justification by faith (Calvin, 1996f:29)'.

4.2.3.2 Guilty of Impiety

As asserted by T.H.L. Parker (1995:96) in view of Calvin's understanding of Justification, it is evident that it has been underpinned by Romans chapters 1-3 and this has been consistently reinforced in his *Institutes* from the beginning.

In development of this theme, Calvin emphasises the need for the restoration of the relationship between God and the whole of humankind, including the Jews and the Gentiles. This is as humanity has fallen under the power of sin. He (1996f:30) explains that humankind's degeneration from God is exemplified through the presentation of all kinds of "filthy and horrible" sins evident in the epistle to Romans. Thus Parker (1995:96-97) here claims humanity to face trial before God. Moreover, humans are left in a state unable to make excuses, "Anapologetos" which is to say, stipulated as beings without defences or explanations.

Calvin notes this as being guilty of impiety. Regardless of being a Gentile or a Jew, no one has freedom from God's judgement. Thus, Calvin emphasises that the only way for the restoration of a relationship with God is through the faith in Jesus Christ. This is the 'Justification by Faith', the core doctrine of Romans. In his commentary of chapters three and four, Calvin explains the

meaning of faith and how it is through faith that the righteousness of Christ is attained. In explanation of this, Calvin (1996f:31) points to Abraham as exemplary of the attainment of righteousness and justification through his faith.

In this sense he speaks so clearly in the fourth chapter of Romans that no place is left for cavils or shifts: "If Abraham," says Paul, "was justified by works, he has something to boast about." He adds, "Yet he has no reason to boast before God" (Rom4:2). It follows, therefore, that he was not justified by works. Then Paul set forth another argument from contraries, when reward is made for works it is done out of debt, not of grace (Rom 4:4). But righteousness according to grace is owed to faith. Therefore, it does not arise from the merits of works. Farewell, then to the dream of those who think up a righteousness flowing together out of faith and works (Calvin, 1960a:743-744).

In this light, in his Institutes, Calvin uses Abraham as an exemplification that we cannot turn to ourselves for the promise of justification but rather that it requires our acceptance that it is Christ, as God's truth that offers salvation.

Similarly, Pitkin (Selderhuis, 2009:297) warns salvation will be ultimately reduced to be uncertain if we begin to rely on ourselves, as reliance on our works or even the strength of our faith as the basis of assurance and that this will result in ruin. Thus David Willis-Watkins (Graham, 1994:484-485) emphasises that it is only when one is united with the body of Christ as one that the recognition of their focus is solely on Christ that assurance will be brought forth.

In following then, it becomes necessary to examine the reconciliation with the Father as the way to assurance.

4.3 Justification and Reconciliation as Assurance

For Calvin (1996f:188), for us the children of wrath, the restoration of our relationship with God rests on Christ. As the only beloved Son of God, the Father has endowed the secret of the gospel in Christ. Thus, the grace of God that allows our reconciliation with Him is transferred to us through the gospel. This is as the gospel is the mediator to our reconciliation with God. In addition, Calvin states that it is through faith that the gospel – God's goodness towards us through Christ - is accepted without doubt. In that sense, God's grace that is emphasised by Calvin is Christ. In following, it is by faith in which Christ through the Spirit is accepted. Then, it is when Christ is accepted through faith that justification is attained through Christ's merits. This then is

the doctrine of justification by faith. Thus, Calvin clarifies this to be the ‘justification by faith’ in his Institutes.

But we define Justification as follows: the sinner, received into communion with Christ, is reconciled to God by his grace, while, cleansed by Christ’s blood, he obtained forgiveness of sins, and clothed with Christ’s righteousness as if it were his own, he stands confident before the heavenly judgement seat (Calvin, 1960a:811).

Here, Calvin mentions various results of justification, but it is evident through his commentary on Romans that his doctrine of justification by faith emphasises it to mean the acceptance of sinners through union with Christ and the entry into reconciliation with God.

In regard to Calvin’s theology of “Union with Christ”, John Milbank (Smith & Olthuis, 2005:29-33) has criticised his emphasis on the forensic nature of his justification doctrine that has thus weakened the ontological concept of ‘participation in Christ’ which has been made ambiguous. To reiterate, due to Calvin’s focus on the ‘forensic logic’ in justification, the role of human participation in Christ has been weakened and furthermore, has excluded love as a focal point.

However, J.T. Billings (2007:3) conversely emphasises that union with Christ, justification, is a dynamic and practical case of active participation of humans. Billings states that Calvin’s concept of ‘union with Christ’ progresses further than the notion of ‘participation’ to assert life in salvation and in Christ can match the focus of believers’ actions.

As Billings’ asserts, it becomes evident that Calvin (1996f:187,319) in his Roman commentary enjoys the use of the entering into communion with Christ and the reconciliation with God as active participation of believers in order to provide explanation of the concept of justification.⁶⁸

Hesselink (Selderhuis, 2009:307) also stresses that although Calvin defines justification through the perspective of expiation, it is rather a dynamic reality that is brought forth through union with Christ.

What must be of particular note here is that Calvin in explanation of justification, particularly emphasises that believers become placed in a relationship with God’s reconciliation in his Romans commentary. It is evident that Calvin comprehends and uses the concept of justification

and reconciliation with God to be the same notion: “Doubtless, he means by the word “reconciled” nothing but ‘justified’” (Calvin, 1960a:729)

4.3.1 Reconciliation is justification as assurance

This has been recognised by Pitkin (Selderhuis, 2009:295), who finds that Calvin actually explicitly takes the view of justification to be reconciliation in his third edition of his Institutes (1543).

Pitkin (Selderhuis, 2009:297) states that, in following Calvin, Christ and the benefits of Christ born through faith leads to double grace, allowing reconciliation with God (justification) and the regeneration into new life (Sanctification). Moreover, this double grace, the freedom in reconciliation with God and the regeneration of repentance is the result of union with God and the consequences of faith.

Thus, we can find that Calvin, rather than using the doctrinal term of justification, employs the narrative concepts ‘reconciliation’ or ‘peace with God’ to explain his theology in Romans.⁶⁹ This then highlights that contrary to criticisms regarding his supposedly solely forensic approach as mentioned above, Calvin in actual affirms his understanding of the concept to be practical and dynamic.

In addition to this, Calvin affirms again that we have been reconciled with God through the sacrifice of Christ and it was this that became our justification in his commentary on the Corinthians,

I now return to these two leading points that are here touched upon. The first is – that God *hath reconciled us to himself by Christ*. This is immediately followed by the declaration- Because God was in Christ and has in his person accomplished reconciliation. The manner is subjoined – *By not imputing unto men their trespasses*. Again, there is annexed a second declaration – *Because Christ having been made a sin-offering for our sins, has procured righteousness for us*. The second part of the statement is –that the grace of reconciliation is applied to us by the gospel, that we may become partakers of it (Calvin, 1996h:235).

Thus, there is cause to examine the notion of reconciliation with God to which Calvin places so much value. In reality, Christ died as a sacrificial offering to secure our reconciliation. His death

on the cross was not simply a means of propitiation. Christ died as a sacrifice on behalf of humankind. Calvin asserts that it was in order to break through the wall formed between humans and God so as to restore the peace with the Father. Thus Calvin (1996i:113) exerted in his commentary on Hebrews 5:1 that Christ became the appropriate mediator to achieve reconciliation between God and humans due to his own human form.⁷⁰ Calvin emphasises in his Romans commentaries that the righteousness attained through faith brings forth reconciliation with the Father. If righteousness is attained through faith, our soul is also then allowed peace and stability in enjoyment of the restoration of our relationship with God.

4.3.2 Righteousness from faith brings reconciliation

As we see above, the reconciliation with God is born from the righteousness of faith (Calvin, 1996f:187). To stress in other words, our restoration with God is the fruit and the effects of faith. So then to Calvin (1996f:187), ‘reconciliation’ refers to the peace and tranquillity of our conscience which in turn is born from our realisation that restoration with God has been attained.

Our entry into reconciliation with God which was enabled through the merits of Christ, has meant no need for fear of any judgement. Our justification as reconciliation can be then explained to be nothing less than the guarantee of our salvation. That is to say, it is the unwavering assurance of salvation. So then in following, this is why in his Institutes, Calvin interchanges ‘reconciliation’, replacing it instead with ‘assurance’ and explains reconciliation to be the equivalent of assurance.

Here, indeed, is the chief hinge on which faith turns: that we do not regard the promises of mercy that God offers as true only outside ourselves, but not at all in us; rather that we make them ours by inwardly embracing them. Hence, at last is born that confidence which Paul elsewhere calls “peace (Rom. 5:1), unless someone may prefer to derive peace from it. Now it is an assurance that renders the conscience calm and peaceful before God’s judgement (Calvin, 1960a:561).

From this, it is expressed by Calvin (1960a:561) that an experience of God’s sweetness is brought from faith and through it, a tranquillity that enables us to stand boldly in front of God is born. It is moreover the priceless reconciliation with the Father that allows boldness in front of Him. Then, it is this boldness that serves as proof of the absolute assurance of God’s mercy and thus, our salvation.

In following, Calvin explains that faith brings forth a new relationship with God and further goes to emphasise that this opens a new life in which a union with Christ can be entered. From here

Calvin (1996f:195) presents the bounty of love that can be expected from God due to our redemption and reconciliation with the Father. The love that God had shown was when we were unworthy of God and yet it was for us ungodly beings that Christ died on the Cross. It is acceptance of this faith that then marks the beginning of piety (Calvin, 1996f:195).

Calvin points out that it was through God's grace and love as well as Christ's merits that salvation was attained when we were enemies with God and it was Christ that facilitated our reconciliation with the Father that we were able to be reunited with Him. Calvin thus emphasises that there is much evidence of the assurance of redemption (Calvin, 1996f:198). The bounty of God's mercy that did not even spare his only begotten Son, Christ, is proof of the assurance of God's love for us that has granted us salvation.

for we do not know the gratuitous mercy of God otherwise than as it appears from this — that he spared not his only-begotten Son; for he loved us at a time when there was discord between him and us: nor can we sufficiently understand the benefit brought to us by the death of Christ, except this be the beginning of our reconciliation with God, that we are persuaded that it is by the expiation that has been made, that he, who was before justly angry with us, is now propitious to us (Calvin, 1996f:198).

From this, we can affirm the concept of reconciliation with God that is presented by Calvin to be the doctrine of Justification by Faith in his commentary on Romans. Moreover, it is illustrated by Calvin (1996f:187) that the tranquillity in conscience achieved through the entry into reconciliation with God is the guarantee of the assurance of salvation.

In that light, in the same essence of Institutes, it is God's acceptance of us and the restored relationship with the Father enabled by Christ that becomes the security of our salvation. In his exegesis of Romans, justification is exemplified to be the reconciliation with God. Moreover, Calvin, in his commentaries, emphasises that justification becomes the premise for sanctification which will be delved into below.

4.4 Justification and sanctification in Romans

In general understanding of Calvin's notions of Justification and Assurance, Calvin emphasises the characteristics of justification to be its imputational and forensic nature. Thus, the sacrifice of Christ is objective evidence of the assurance of God's love for us.⁷¹ Then, does Calvin only emphasise on justification's objective, external and forensic nature? And is there really no relevance between assurance and internal evidence of one's justification and essential changes?

And what is the relationship between our assurance of God's love for us and our sanctification? The answers to these queries will elucidate the relationship between justification, sanctification and assurance.

4.4.1 Calvin's emphasis on justification and sanctification

Both Calvin and Luther held justification by faith as the fundamental doctrine of reformation theology in opposition to the Roman Catholic's doctrine of merits. In contrast to Luther, who focused more on 'justification by faith', Calvin emphasised the importance of not only justification but also sanctification. Between chapters six and eight of Calvin's commentaries on Romans, it is evident of the difference between Calvin's theology to that of Luther's. Though of course Calvin does not directly comment on Luther's theology, Calvin's doctrine of sanctification and law undoubtedly varies from Luther. It can be found that Calvin was supplementing the doctrine of 'justification by faith' through his comments on sanctification and law for which Luther, faced criticisms for his doctrine of justification from the Roman Catholics, Anabaptists and even some reformers.

Whilst Luther was criticised for his focus on the doctrine of justification, Calvin (Calvin, 1996f:32-33), in chapter six of his commentary asserted that without the right understanding of sanctification, righteousness in Christ could not be attained.

In particular, in Calvin's exegesis of Romans 6:1-8, he stresses that for those who have received justification, sanctification will be naturally brought forth in their lives. Calvin, similarly, to Luther, explains that faith results in justification and sanctification. However, Calvin (1960a:553) emphasises that in faith, it is not only justification that naturally follows thereafter, but also sanctification. That is as salvation by faith cannot be differentiated with 'devout disposition.' In criticism of the Roman Catholic's false perspective on faith that opposed the doctrine of 'Justification by Faith', Calvin noted of the inseparable relationship between faith and sanctification. He (1960a:552-553) further emphasised that "Christ cannot be known apart from the Sanctification of his Spirit." The characteristic of faith simultaneously brings out justification and sanctification but the work of faith that leads to righteousness is to begin a pious life.

Why, then, are we justified by faith? Because by faith we grasp the righteousness of Christ, by which alone we are reconciled to God. Yet you could not grasp this without at the same time grasping sanctification also; for he "is given unto us for righteousness, wisdom, sanctification, and redemption" (1Cor 1:30). Therefore, justifies no one whom he does not at the same time sanctify. These benefits are joined

together by an everlasting and indissoluble bond, so that those whom he illumines by his wisdom, he redeems; those whom redeems, he justifies; those whom, he justifies, he sanctifies (Calvin, 1960a:798).

It is evident that the work of faith that makes us righteous is to start a pious life. This is as the true saving faith essentially contains the spirit of sanctification and thus leads naturally to piety. In finding of this, this is to refute the argument that Calvin completely dismisses the relevance of works and deeds as has been proposed in the popular debate as discussed above.

In that light, Calvin does not assert that sanctification must be attained after justification is obtained – if this were the case, justification would hold priority – and thus is restoring sanctification from its dullness in its part in Justification by Faith through the concept of union with Christ that explains Justification and Sanctification in a parallel manner.

Thus, it is stressed by Calvin in his exegesis on Romans chapter six through illustrations of engrafts that those who have been unified with Christ (justification) will become disposed to follow Christ (sanctification) (Calvin, 1960a:686).

The similitude which he mentions leaves now nothing doubtful, inasmuch as grafting designates not only a conformity of example, but a secret union (*arcanam coniunctionem*), by which we are joined to him; so that he, reviving us by his Spirit, transfers his own virtue to us. Hence as the graft has the same life (Calvin, 1996f:222).

For between the grafting of trees, and this which is spiritual, a disparity will soon meet us: in the former the graft draws its aliment from the root, but retains its own nature in the fruit; but in the latter not only we derive the vigour and nourishment of life from Christ, but we also pass from our own to his nature (Calvin, 1996f:223).

However, Calvin (1996f:226) notes that this is not achieved in one occurrence like justification. Rather, this process is explained to be gradually progressive until its final advancement. In this way the process of sanctification is shown to be one that takes a whole lifetime. This is as sanctification is a significant area of God's plans for redemption; God has assigned sanctification to minister the development of pious characters in His people. Calvin understands Sanctification to first signify repentance and regeneration which is then followed by the continued maturation of believers in their faith.⁷²

4.4.2 Regeneration as sanctification

In that sense, for Calvin, the term “regeneration” is one used to encompass the whole Christian life. As Edgar (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:322) notes, in contrary to the tendencies of our contemporary world where regeneration has been rendered to allude only to a moment of our new birth, for Calvin, regeneration is a continual process through which believers become removed from their sins into eternal life.

In regards to the progression of Sanctification, William J. Bouwsma (1988:11) agrees that Calvin emphasised progression over the instant conversion. Alexander Ganoczy (1987:251) also takes the view that whether repentance has been personal or communal, it has progressed in general, gradually. Lane (1987:20) further says in Calvin’s portrayal of his own conversion, has mentioned it to be a “sudden conversion”, but notes this cannot be considered as canonical for the nature of conversions. In following Calvin (1960a:601), regeneration is the recovery of God’s image that was lost by Adam allowed through the grace of Christ. This repentance is the face of piety that must be practiced throughout one’s whole life.

And indeed, this restoration does not take place in one moment or one day or one year; but through continual and sometimes even slow advances God wipes out in his elect, the corruptions of the flesh, cleanses them of guilt, consecrates them to himself as temples renewing all their minds to true purity that they may practice repentance throughout their lives and know that this warfare will end only at death (Calvin, 1960a:601).

For Calvin, repentance does not refer only to a simple shift in sentiments or change in attitudes. This is to mean it requires not merely outwardly changes but transformations within one’s life. Simultaneously, repentance, alike sanctification does not happen in one moment but is a lifelong process. From this light, Calvin distinguishes (1960a:595) repentance to be mortification and vivification. Like this, Calvin views the believer’s sanctification as a journey of lifelong piety.

In addition, Calvin emphatically stresses that those who have attained justification must display a mark of participation in Christ’s death. It is then the crucifixion of our flesh and desires on the cross in a repentant bearing of fruit to mark our participation in His death (Calvin, 1996f:227). It is through the nailing of flesh on the cross and the life given by the Spirit that believers can display the likeness of Christ (regeneration). The crucifixion of bodies should be accomplished once and for all whilst the spiritual life does not stop and is continuous (Calvin, 1996f:227). This can be

seen to a greater extent in the section, 'Bearing the Cross' in his Institutes⁷³ which will be dealt with in greater detail in later sections.

4.4.3 Union with Christ, justification and sanctification

Calvin (1996f:221) further explained baptism to be the way in which one becomes unified with Christ (*per quem in Christi participationem initiamur*). It is expressed that baptism allows our participation with Christ and to wear Christ's righteousness (Galatians 3:27). Thus, those who have not been reborn cannot wear Christ's righteousness. It is on this ground that Calvin urges that those who have received Justification must lead pure and holy lives (sanctification).

If this is to be amplified, the process of baptism symbolises our death with Christ and then our resurrection with Him. Thus, Calvin (1996f:220) iterates that it is only through Christ's death which bears fruit in our souls that we are truly united into the body of Christ. This is explained in detail in his Institutes to be the theme of 'union with Christ' (Calvin, 1960a:736-738). Calvin states that the union with Christ that faith brings forth is not only based on both justification and sanctification but also through this union, justification and sanctification will occur simultaneously. This is as through union with Christ, participation with the Spirit that enables the union is initiated and thus sanctification will concurrently begin. Calvin opines,

He teaches us that newness of life is to be pursued by Christians as long as they live; for since they ought to represent in themselves an image of Christ, both by crucifying the flesh⁷⁴ and by a spiritual life, it is necessary that the former should be done once for all, and that the latter should be carried on continually (Calvin, 1996f:227).

Through engraftation with Christ enabled by faith, our sins are transferred to Christ and Christ's righteousness is imputed to us so that we are made righteous in front of God. This means that justification is for once attained. In that sense, entry into a reconciled relationship with God is granted. In following, union with Christ (engraftation) simultaneously allows us to partake with the Spirit that facilitates the purification of our new lives. Moreover, Calvin affirms that the life that the Spirit gives is continuously transformative so that it is exemplary of a true union with Christ.⁷⁵

Christ was given to us by God's generosity, to be grasped and possessed by us in faith. By partaking of him, we principally receive a double grace: namely, that being reconciled to God through Christ's blamelessness, we may have in heaven instead of

a judge a gracious Father; and secondly, that sanctified by Christ's Spirit we may cultivate blamelessness and purity of life (Calvin, 1960a:725).

In that light, as Christ was given to us, we can be objectively assured of God's love for us. Moreover, our union with Christ signifies our spiritual engraftation with Him. Through this graft, believers not only attain Christ's virility and nourishment but also move naturally from our own form into His character (Calvin, 1996f:223).

So then to surmise, through this, it is evident of Calvin's thoughts that those who have become unified with Christ (those who have entered a reconciled relationship with God) through faith will lead out pious and holy lives. It is emphasised of the imputable and forensic characteristics of justification attained through Christ that Calvin asserts. However, as examined, unlike Luther, Calvin did not focus solely on justification. Rather, Calvin not only presented the union between believers and Christ achieved through 'justification by faith' but also the origination of the steady assurance. At the same time, it is asserted that through a life of unification with Christ, sanctified by His Spirit, a pure and holy life may be cultivated (Calvin, 1960a:725). Calvin alludes that his notion of justification exists not only on an external, forensic level but also takes effect in our internal lives. This is then to refute Millbank's criticism mentioned above of Calvin's 'union with Christ' to be overly biased on forensic nature of justification and thus having made believers passive and their ontology ambiguous.

To reiterate, it becomes evident of Calvin's incorporation of deeds in his doctrine of sanctification. Whilst it is not deeds that gives birth to the assurance of forgiveness, one who has been justified is likewise sanctified and thus, intrinsically made to lead lives of piety. This inseparable nature of piety from Calvin's justification then contradicts the views of the irrelevance of works in Calvin's works. Moreover, this can also serve to counter argue those criticisms that early reformation theology and often now in modern age, Protestantism faces for its reliance on justification by faith as following Calvin, true believers who have received assurance of justification, are simultaneously made holy.

However, Calvin does not mention that sanctification is the result of justification not that it is justification's offspring. This is as if this were to be the case, Calvin's theology would then lose Christ as the root of sanctification. Also, it would impede the recognition of the significance of our union with Christ that enables sanctification through the delivery of the Lord's ability.

Then to reiterate, what Calvin is stressing in his commentary on Romans is that justification not only leads to external, forensic righteousness but also that the justification that gives assurance is internal and causes desire for essential changes to lead holy and pious lives.

This highlights that assurance that we have been made righteous pursues a life of piety. As such, Beeke (McKim, 2004b:103) states justification satisfies the conditions of salvation and thus not only draws out the glory of God but also bring forth in the conscience of believers', "peaceful rest and serene tranquillity." Going further, he affirms in view of Romans 5:1, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" is the crux and the essence of piety (McKim, 2004b:103).

To reiterate, piety is the assurance that believers through Christ have been placed in a reconciled relationship with God and have become His children and the goal of our creation is to live, seeking God's glory. As Calvin (1960a:801) stresses, the purpose of piety is in the recovery of God's likeness. This begins not simply though practicing the appearance of piety but as the children of God who have received salvation (justification), is recovered into God's image (regeneration).

However, Calvin asserts that sanctification is brought by the Spirit of sanctification. Also, God bestows sanctification upon those called to be His children. It is thus those who lead sanctified and pious lives can be assured they have been unified with Christ, that they have become God's children (Calvin, 1996f:295).

Then, in the following section, the relationship between assurance and the substantial work of the Spirit in bringing forth sanctification will be revealed.

4.5 Spirit and grace of sanctification

As seen above, in consideration of particularly the relationship between justification and sanctification, Calvin states that God's grace is connected to the two continuous bands, and as such, it is emphasised that 'justification by faith' does not contradict the notion of sanctification. Believers who have received justification by faith must lead pious lives. Those who have been justified hold Christ and where there is Christ, the Spirit of Sanctification also resides. In following, it is through the Spirit of Sanctification that believers work towards purification and piety. If it is not for sanctification, Christ is rendered asunder by their false faith.

It is indeed true, that we are justified in Christ through the mercy of God alone; but it is equally true and certain, that all who are justified are called by the Lord, that they may live worthy of their vocation. Let then the faithful learn to embrace him, not only for justification, but also, for sanctification, as he has been given to us for both these purposes. lest they rend him asunder by their mutilated faith (Calvin, 1996f:294).

For Calvin, in the same way that Christ and the Spirit is always in accompaniment, so too then is Justification and Sanctification unable to be separated. In that sense, whilst the condition for Justification is faith, it is not faith alone but also the carrying out of Sanctification in life. It is in following that Calvin (1996f:290) concludes that those who do not fall under the reign of the Spirit do not belong to Christ. This is as the unification with Christ (justification) is by faith through the Spirit and thus Christ resides within those who have received justification: “For as by the Spirit he consecrates us as temples to himself, so by the same he dwells in us”(Calvin, 1996f:291).

It can be known that the union with Christ brings justification and sanctification, and this double grace, justification and sanctification is applied to believers’ lives by the Spirit. It is through the Spirit washing us with Christ’s blood that we are not only absolved of our sins of guilt but also truly cleansed and purified, affirming our sanctification (Calvin, 1996f:276). Furthermore, Calvin (1996f:295) stresses that the Spirit of God is essential for sanctification. For the Lord grants this grace of sanctification only to His chosen people and sets them apart as children of God.

4.5.1 Sanctification and lifelong journey

In that way, Calvin’s notion of justification and sanctification can be studied from a Christ-centred standpoint as well as from a dynamic, pneumatological perspective.⁷⁶ Thus Calvin particularly emphasises that the dynamic work of the Spirit is the lifelong process of our sanctification. It becomes evident Calvin rejected the notion of sanctification as an instantaneous transformation and rather understood it to be a believer’s continuous journey of opposing sin to attain holiness and the restoration of the image of God in us.⁷⁷

that as Christ once died for the purpose of destroying sin, so you have once died, that in future you may cease from sin; yea, you must daily proceed with that work of mortifying, which is begun in you, till sin be wholly destroyed: as Christ is raised to an incorruptible life, so you are regenerated by the grace of God, that you may lead a life of holiness and righteousness, inasmuch as the power of the Holy Spirit, by

which ye have been renewed, is eternal, and shall ever continue the same.” But I prefer to retain the words of Paul, *in Christ Jesus*, rather than to translate with *Erasmus*, *through Christ Jesus*; for thus the grafting, which makes us one with Christ, is better expressed (Calvin, 1996f:229).

From here, it can be seen that for Calvin, the doctrine of regeneration and sanctification is not momentary but based on the principle of the Spirit dwelling in us and the union with Christ and thus a lifelong spiritual warfare for repentance and piety as abovementioned. Thus, Calvin asserted that regeneration was a simultaneous process of the Spirit residing in us as well as requiring our practice of repentance. Such views held by Calvin can be further seen to be different to the generally held perspective of Calvin as emphasising the sovereignty of God and holding God-centred theology rather than a focus on human responsibility.

For Calvin, sanctification is not a doctrine in its own separate entity and rather, he explains it to continuously develop with justification as the practice of repentance. Calvin’s notion of Justification and Sanctification is not merely a synthesis of doctrinal spheres but is a dynamic theology. Calvin emphasises the dynamics in the endless process of our lives and souls being returned to God in our relationship with the living Father as aided by the Spirit which he shows to be the continuous practice of repentance (sanctification). In this light, Edgar (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:320) is correct in his assertion that for Calvin, it is through the secret works of the Holy Spirit that Christian life is born.

4.5.2 Sanctification and Evidence of Assurance

Continued repentance and sanctification in believers’ daily lives is only possible as the Spirit of God lives and works within believers. This then gives Calvin cause to assert that the presence of the Spirit within us serves as proof of the assurance that we are the children of God.⁷⁸ In following, Calvin evinces that only those who are ruled by the Spirit of God are recognised as God’s children. It is then the children of God that inherits His everlasting life. Thus, he iterates that those who are led by the Spirit of God can be assured of their attainment of eternal life (Calvin, 1996f:295). This is as the Holy Spirit living within us assures that we are the children of God.

It can be then said that those living sanctified lives are proof of their union with Christ and sanctification, as significant as justification is exemplary of God’s salvation of humankind. Conversely, if applying the perspective of union with Christ, the principle that humans cannot become justified without becoming holy becomes true. This then brings to light another characteristic of Calvin’s theology.

Then, for Calvin, the Spirit is secure evidence of the leading of a pious life and becomes the root of the strength and consolation of believers in their life. In that sense, Calvin (1996f:313) expresses that in actuality, when we pray through the Spirit, God hears our prayers and this truth is a clear exemplification of our place as God's children. Moreover, according to Calvin (1960a:786), the fruits born from the Spirit who dwells within us again elucidates our assurance. Through this, it is clear that Calvin does not deal with the doctrine of sanctification that leads to piety in an abstract manner but rather concretely in our Christian lives.

In sum, it can be seen that for Calvin, justification and sanctification is an inseparable grace of God and those who are justified are also concurrently led to life-long penitence through the grace of the Spirit that makes them holy. Also, it is revealed that the Spirit assures believers who pursue repentance that they are unified with Christ and are thus the children of God. Thus, it is elucidated that 'justification', 'sanctification' and 'assurance' are all interlinked, and assurance not only leads to pious lives but also bears the fruit of holiness.

Next, I will focus on suffering as a concrete process of sanctification. For Calvin, hardship plays a key role in the process of sanctification. Calvin stresses that God allows suffering for believers in the process to sanctification as a lesson in piety.

4.6 Practical approach to assurance and piety

As it has been revealed, for Calvin, sanctification means regeneration and repentance. This furthermore has an inseparable relationship with justification. In addition, it is evident that the unification between believers and Christ brings forth the double grace of justification and sanctification. It is important however to note that a believer's piety is not produced through their own efforts or voluntary deeds but because of the power of the Spirit that results from the union with Christ. Thus, Calvin stresses that our assurance in God's sovereignty and grace towards believers. This is to say, the force that drives piety and sanctification does not lie with the spiritual disposition or efforts of humans but with the communication and interaction with Christ allowed by mystical union (*unio mystica*).

In following then, for Calvin, it is of foremost importance that believers gain the assurance that we are the children of God, able to call him our Father, and only able to do so by becoming indebted to the Spirit and unified with Christ, thus wearing His righteousness; and it is this assurance that is critical Calvin's piety. To reiterate, the piety that Calvin discusses is living in the assurance of salvation to bring glory to God the Father, which in so doing, we are indebted to Christ's righteousness, and must follow His example with the guidance of the Spirit. For Calvin,

Christ was the true model of piety. Through presentation of Jesus Christ's life on earth, Calvin reveals the attitude Christians should hold and lives we should live. In so saying, Calvin highlights the suffering that was interspersed in Christ's life and presents this to be a necessary element in the lives led by believers.

4.6.1 Suffering, assurance and piety

Calvin (1996f:316) even goes to emphasise that our salvation is deeply interrelated to bearing the cross. In actual, Calvin himself as a refugee experienced much suffering and many hardships throughout his life. Calvin's comparison of himself to David who had also lived in exile and faced much suffering in his commentary on the Psalms highlights the extent to which hardships penetrated Calvin's life.⁷⁹

Battles stresses that the period of refuge for Calvin in Strasbourg must be evaluated to have been a significant time where the ministerial, practical and ritual meanings of his pietas were fully integrated. It was during this period that through study of the suffering of David and other patriarchs that he was able to reflect on his own sufferings. It was through witness of their severe troubles and pain and endurance of their suffering to lead lives of pilgrimage that Calvin was able to find consolation for his own difficult experiences. Moreover, view of their hopes for the future gave strength for his journey (Battles, 2009:31).

Sinclair Ferguson (Burk Parsons, 2008:31) notes that Calvin is a man who has experienced much hardships in his life. As Ferguson further presents, after marrying in 1540, in less than 10 years since his wedding, Calvin lost his wife and son, Jacque. Calvin in his letter to his friend, Pierre Viret, wrote movingly about his son's death in brevity, "But He is Himself a father and knows what is good for His children" Calvin (1980:I:344). Moreover, at the end of his ministry, Calvin was afflicted with various diseases that extremely weakened his body and soul (Calvin, 1980:IV:320-321).

Thus, Calvin does not find it surprising that Paul accepts suffering to be a natural characteristic of life for Christians in Romans (Calvin, 1996f:317-318). Moreover, Calvin (1996f:316) emphasises that the suffering believers experience is a process undertaken in following Christ. He (1996f:316-317) even goes to say in his that the suffering of believers is evidence of believers being chosen in light of Paul's doctrine of election. Calvin (1960a:828) in his Institutes describes suffering to be a mark of believers who follow Christ.

That is to say, in Calvin's belief, God wants believers to become like Christ through their experience of hardship and thus not only should there be no cause to despair when facing suffering but also view such difficult times as a way in which they can become restored in the image of God and attain sanctification. Thus believers are expressed not to reach piety through their own works or deeds but through God's hands as He guides us through suffering as a process of attaining true piety (Calvin, 1996f:316).

As such, Calvin (1996f:323) emphasises that the true attitude of those who are pious amidst adversity is that of being clearly assured of God's mercy is extremely significant. This is to say that there is no need for fear in any grave circumstance, the reason being of the relationship between us and God. For believers who uphold God as the almighty Father whom no earthly or heavenly being can resist, it is firm that God will not forsake us. Thus Calvin (1996f:322) teaches the importance of being clearly assured in the Father's love for us. As a result, Calvin stresses that we must remember the price that was paid to ensure our redemption in order to assure us of God's love. We can stand firm in face of any adversity in our assurance of God's great love for us that did not even spare his Son. Calvin emphasises that Christ's mediation not only eliminates our sure death but also absolves away our sins so that we can be assured and have faith that our sins will not be taken account.

This so great an assurance, which dares to triumph over the devil, death, sin, and the gates of hell, ought to lodge deep in the hearts of all the godly; for ours and that the Father is in him propitious to us. Nothing then can be devised more pestilent and ruinous, than the scholastic dogma respecting the uncertainty of salvation (Calvin, 1996f:325).⁸⁰

In view of this, it is again revealed of the close relationship between assurance and piety. Assurance brings forth the strength to defeat suffering. As a result, Calvin stresses that believers do not rely on outward earthly things in times of trial but to hold on to the inward assurance of the Spirit in God whose love for us was so great that he even went to the extent of sacrificing his son.

In actual, God's children are to inherit the Kingdom of God in Christ. As such, until believers inherit the Kingdom of God, there exists and will continue to exist, much struggle in battles with sin and with the world. God has even allowed for those pious to continuously suffer unwarranted hardship at the hands of those ungodly (Calvin, 1996f:328).

This is however not to say that suffering is a cost that must be paid to attain salvation. On the contrary, Calvin emphasises that if Christ through his suffering on the cross has secured out inheritance, rather than expecting to avoid suffering, believers must regard the bearing of the cross as a natural and obvious step until we reach God's kingdom.

God's inheritance is ours, because we have by his grace been adopted as his children; and that it may not be doubtful, its possession has been already conferred on Christ, whose partners we are become: but Christ came to it by the cross; then we must come to it in the same manner (Calvin, 1996f:301-302).

Therefore, the apostle teaches that God has destined all his children to the end that they be conformed to Christ (Rom 8:29). Hence also in harsh and difficult conditions, regarded as adverse and evil, a great comfort comes to us: we share Christ's sufferings in order that as he has passed from a labyrinth of all evils into heavenly glory (Acts 14:22)....., How much can it do to soften all the bitterness of the cross, that the more we are afflicted with adversities, the more surely our fellowship with Christ is confirmed! By communion with him the very sufferings themselves not only become blessed to us but also help much in promoting our salvation (Calvin, 1960a:702).

Even Christ entered glory through suffering. Thus, Calvin firmly states that believers must not attempt to avoid such adversity. This is to say in order to cultivate believers' piety, God has made them subject to pass through suffering. As such Calvin views adversity to be a natural rite of passage that those who are pious must pass through. As Christ experienced hardship, so too must the children of God. In the same light, as Christ entered glory through the cross, so will those pious believers enter glory after passing through suffering. For Calvin actually, hardship that appears in the path to follow Christ is one process in the way to enter glory. Moreover, Calvin (1996f:301) affirms Paul's argument that such suffering that believers may face is nothing in comparison to the extent of the grand glory that will follow.

Thus, for Calvin, piety is the process of relying on God, praying to God and holding faith in Him in the midst of suffering itself. Believers in their participation of Christ's bearing of the cross and death can learn to control their body and overthrow their own self-centred mindset through their suffering. Through facing adversity, believers gain patience and learn obedience and as such, lead lives holding faith only in God. Such patience of believers is not the same patience of that of

unyieldingness that philosophers put forward. Rather, it is those obedient and gentle minds of the faithful who have had a taste of God's goodness and love (Calvin, 1996f:517).

In light of this, Calvin firmly holds that the way of bearing the cross is a fundamental process in the attainment of sanctification and one that must be passed to become truly pious. Not only this, but in taking part of Christ's suffering through our own trials, in the same way that Christ received glory through bearing of the cross, faithful believers too will ultimately be raised to glory. Thus, for Calvin, tribulations are rather evidential of being the children of God and is the experience of being nailed to the cross and as such, the assurance of salvation and thus, a Christian's honour.

Those whom God now, consistently with his purpose, exercise under the cross, are called and justified, that they may have a hope of salvation, so that nothing of their glory, decays during their humiliation; for though their present miseries deform it before the world, yet before God and angels it always shines forth as perfection... That the afflictions of the faithful, by which they are now humbled, are intended for this end-that the faithful, having obtained the glory of the celestial kingdom, may reach the glory of Christ's resurrection, with whom they are now crucified (Calvin, 1996f:320).

Through the above, it is revealed that Calvin's discussion of suffering, assurance and piety through his commentary on Romans is not merely speculative knowledge but rather from a character who has actually passed through suffering, is stressing on true experiential knowledge that comes from his own life. To sum in short, the suffering of believers is evidential of being elected by God. As such, for believers, trials must be definitely passed through in the process of sanctification. Through such adversity, believers increasingly rely on God, and are restored in God's likeness and are regenerated to lead lives of repentance. We can then affirm suffering is the process that leads to piety and sanctification. In addition to this, believers not only attain the spiritual fellowship with Christ by partaking in his suffering through their own adversity but also through this, will enter glory as Christ did through bearing of the cross.

In the next chapter, I will reveal the relationship that suffering as a process in the attainment of piety has to prayer. As such, in examination of prayer as Calvin emphasises it, the following section will present how prayer is related to assurance and piety according to Calvin.

4.6.2 Prayer, assurance and piety

As aforementioned, for Calvin, suffering for believers, is a sign of God's election. As such, Calvin holds firm that regardless of what happens, believers are able to remain stout in faith that God's love and embrace for us will never cease. Going further, Calvin (1996f:326) emphasises that our faith is given assurance by God's promises and gives birth to strength that can obliterate through any obstacles that separate us from Him. Moreover, as God's love exists within Christ, Calvin (1996f:327) states that we are not to attempt to find the love of God outside of Christ. That is to say, in trusting Christ as the guarantor of God's love, and by faithfully remaining with God through Christ, we can be assured of God's love for us. This is as love, from the Father who is the root of all love, flows through Christ to us.

Calvin (1996f:327) affirms Christ to be the mediator between God and believers.⁸¹ Moreover, Christ is also the intercessor on our behalf. Calvin (1996f:325) expresses Christ's death and resurrection to be our eternal hope and has the ability to make the Father heed to our prayers and the power to achieve reconciliation between believers and the Father. For Calvin, Christ is not only the unique and integral path to salvation for believers but also believes that without going through Christ, God will not listen to our prayers.⁸² As all that we needed is contained within Jesus, we must recognise this and find God through prayer only within Christ. In that light, Christ can be expressed to be the key that brings forth the treasures of prayer.⁸³ However, when considering prayer, Calvin recognises that it is integral we are not remiss of the fact that God does not always respond immediately when we pray. That is why we can see in his commentary of Romans 8:26, Calvin addresses prayer in relations to suffering.⁸⁴

that we are taught by the same Spirit how to pray, and what to ask in our prayers. And appropriately has he annexed prayers to the anxious desires of the faithful; for God does not afflict them with miseries, that they may inwardly feed on hidden grief, but that they may disburden themselves by prayer, and thus exercise their faith (Calvin, 1996f:312).

This is to say, we must not lose faith or become discouraged when our prayers go unanswered but rather remain steadfast in patience and be assured in his love for us as a Father who did not even spare his Son, Christ out of love for us (Calvin, 1996f:314). For Calvin, suffering and prayer are touchstones in which piety can be practised.

Here, Calvin puts forth two points about assurance in relations to prayer. The first, to remain hopeful and faithful with patience even when facing trials and prayers are not answered, rather than becoming discouraged, remembering instead God's mercy and grace.

It may be added, that we have here a remarkable passage, which shows, that patience is an inseparable companion of faith; and the reason of this is evident, for when we console ourselves with the hope of a better condition, the feeling of our present miseries is softened and mitigated, so that they are borne with less difficulty (Calvin, 1996f:310).

Calvin (1996f:312) has stressed that even when it seems as though suffering is continuous and thus God has not responded to our prayers, as God rules over all things, even if from the perspective of the world, it may seem harmful for those in trial, we must hold firm in the faith that all will ultimately result in the benefit of believers. Going further, Calvin (Calvin, 1960a:862-863) states we must be confident in our hopes for an eventual answer to our prayers. This is as when believers pray with faith, hope of God's mercy is brought forth and can liberate us from anxiety and fear which can hold us in absolute assurance and keep us in God's sweet love.

Secondly, in circumstances when our prayers are unanswered or appears to have not been heard, believers must not be disheartened. This is as believers in the act of faithfully praying with reliance on the Spirit in itself are ultimately tasting the grace of Heaven.

Though really or by the event it does not appear that our prayers have been heard by God, yet Paul concludes, that the presence of the celestial favour does already shine forth in the desire for prayer; for no one can of himself give birth to devout and godly aspirations (Calvin, 1996f:312-313).

Those who do not have trust in God are unable to willingly and sincerely pray in pious manner. On the contrary, the prayer of true and pious believers in itself is possible only because of the grace of the Spirit (Calvin, 1996f:313). As such, true prayers made in assurance and with unyielding faith in God through the Spirit can only be made by the children of God.

Calvin highlights this to elucidate the closely interrelated connection between prayer and the Spirit. In actual, those who are pious pray. This does not refer to insincere and vague prayers but pray with the help of the Spirit. The Spirit encourages our faith, and alongside with our spirit, proves that we are the children of God and guides our boldness in declaring God as our Father (Calvin, 1996f:299).

Prayers with the Spirit, unutterable groaning and wordless expressions supersede our own intellectual ability. Without the help of the Spirit, true prayers are not made possible. Thus, Calvin

(1996f:313) iterates that the Spirit encourages and ignites the innermost prayers and thoughts within our hearts and takes them to God.

In that light, the fact that God listens to our prayers when it is sincerely prayed with the guidance of the Spirit is remarkable proof that assures believers that we are the children of God (Calvin, 1996f:313). This is as the Spirit knows intimately the mind and thought of God and thus guides believers to pray what God favours and desires.

As such, for Calvin, the Spirit is the teacher of prayer. Calvin holds that the Spirit given to be our mentor in prayer teaches us how to truly pray and controls our emotions.

Therefore, in order to minister to this weakness, God gives us the Spirit as our teacher in prayer, to tell us what is right and temper our emotions. For, ‘because we do not know how to pray as we ought, the Spirit comes to our help,’ and ‘intercedes for us with unspeakable groans’ [Rom. 8:26]; not that he actually prays or groans but arouses in us assurance, desires, and sighs, to conceive which our natural powers would scarcely suffice. And Paul, with good reason, calls ‘unspeakable’ these groans which believers give forth under the guidance of the Spirit; for they who are truly trained in prayers are not unmindful that, perplexed by blind anxieties, they are so constrained as scarcely to find out what it is expedient for them to utter. Indeed, when they try to stammer, they are confused and hesitate. Clearly, then, to pray rightly is a rare gift. These things are not said in order that we, favoring our own slothfulness, may give over the function of prayer to the Spirit of God, and vegetate in that carelessness to which we are all too prone. In this strain we hear the impious voices of certain persons, saying that we should drowsily wait until he overtakes our preoccupied minds. But rather our intention is that, loathing our inertia and dullness, we should seek such aid of the Spirit. And indeed, Paul, when he enjoins us to pray in the Spirit [I Cor. 14:15], does not stop urging us to watchfulness. He means that the prompting of the Spirit empowers us so to compose prayers as by no means to hinder or hold back our own effort, since in this matter God’s will is to test how effectually faith moves our hearts (Calvin, 1960b:855).

The Spirit makes us realise prayers that must be given to God and thus causes us to give prayers that move the mind of the Father. This is why all the sincere prayers given by a pious believer can be indebted to the grace of the Spirit.

In addition, prayer is closely related to faith. True faith will produce prayer. Through Christ we are reconciled with God and having then become the children of God, can through the Spirit, pray boldly to God of our needs.

Thus Calvin (1960b:850) emphasises that sincere faith will naturally lead to diligent prayer to God.

David B. Calhoun (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:347-348) stresses that from his early works, prayer was emphasised as a central point of Calvin's thoughts. The emphasis on prayer is evident in the first edition of his Institutes. In chapter 3 of his first edition, following extensive explanation of the Lord's Prayer as well as discussion on general prayer, the practice of prayer is presented. Not only this, in the last edition of Institutes, it becomes evident of the great extent to which Calvin held prayer to be significant in view that his chapter on prayer was one of the longest chapters.⁸⁵ Wallace (1982:271) affirms Calvin in that prayer is the evidence, and moreover the "chief exercise of faith (Calvin, 2020)." Moreover, it is furthermore asserted that as from one's heart, prayer is an inevitable consequence of faith (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:356).

As he revealed in the title of chapter 20 in his Institutes, "Prayers, which is the chief exercise of Faith, and by which we daily receive benefits", (1960b:850) prayer is the most critical exercise of faith and the path to receive the grace of God.

As such, for Calvin, prayer cannot be considered in isolation to faith. To pray without faith is a hypocritical act and nothing can be produced through such prayers. Prayer is not the offspring of coincidence but rather, Calvin (1960b:863) firmly states it requires faith as a guide to fit the principle of a true prayer. As a result, Calvin expresses true prayer in front of God to be the 'prayer of faith' (James 5:15). This is as all we receive from God in response to our prayers is the produce of believers' faith (Calvin, 1960b:865).

Calvin stresses the deep connection between faith and prayer that is evident in Romans 10:14, 17 ("Faith comes from hearing the gospel and in turn, what is heard comes from the Word." Romans 10:17 NRSV). As examined above, we have seen on several occasions of Calvin's firm belief in the closely interconnected relationship between faith and the word. Even so, Calvin again emphasises here of this significant relationship between faith and prayer. For Calvin, prayer is not the act of pursuing one's own thought or achieving one's own desires and ideas. Such prayers do not follow the Word. Believers must not present themselves to God in any manner but rather prayer requires them to thoroughly keep the word of God. Thus, Calvin (1960b:887) has

expressed faith founded upon the Word to be the bearer of rightful prayer. In that sense, for Calvin, prayer without faith is no different to prayer without the Word.

However, in Romans 10:14, a reverse order is presented (the gospel → hearing the Word → faith → prayer) whereby it is demonstrated that it is due to the spread of the gospel that others may hear the word of God in so that faith is planted and ultimately, it is this faith that will bring forth prayer that calls for God (“But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?” Romans 10:14 NRSV). What Calvin stresses here is to call God wholeheartedly (prayer), stems forth from sincere and absolute faith. Here, Calvin maintains that faith is the assurance that through the Word, we have been reconciled with God and embraced in His paternal love as his children.

Thus, the faith and assurance of His grace towards us and that we are reconciled with God and became His children through the Gospel are critical forces that drive prayer. As follows, Calvin emphasises that it is this assurance that propels us to pray to Him.

By this confidence only we have access to him, as we are also taught in Eph3:12. ... (But, on the other hand) learn that true faith is only that which brings forth prayer to God; for it cannot be but that he who has tasted the goodness of God will ever by prayer seek the enjoyment of it (Calvin, 1996f:398).

Moreover, Calvin does not display merely speculative doctrines of his theology in his Romans commentary but can be seen to stress practices that exist in believers’ lives that are alike prayer.⁸⁶ Beeke (Burk Parsons, 2008:231) also affirmed that for Calvin, rather than the principles of prayer, its practice was held more significant.

Therefore, prayer is an integral virtue in believers’ lives and faith, and we can see prayer must be at the centre of believers’ lives to be pious.

As explored above, though humans were creatures that could not dare to call God our Father but through the reconciliation attained through the mediation of Christ, we have gained the boldness to call God, ‘Father’. Thus, Calvin maintains that prayer is a natural interaction with God as the children of God who have achieved reconciliation through Christ’s intercession. In that sense, Calvin’s notion of prayer can be viewed to be Christ-centred. Parker can be therefore regarded to be appropriately defining the theology of prayer centrally in Christ, “it is, then, not simply a matter

of praying through Christ, but rather with Christ, of our prayers being united with his intercession for us (Parker, 1995:110).”

In this way the dynamics that propel us to stand before God lies with our assurance that God has reconciled us to Him through faith and have adopted us as His children. In that light, for Calvin, prayer is the natural expression that flows from the children of God who have been reconciled with Him.

In addition, Calvin holds that prayer is possible due to the works of the Spirit. As the Spirit knows the mind of the Father, the Spirit works within us to help us rightfully pray. In that way, the Spirit becomes the teacher that has been sent to guide our prayers. Furthermore, the fact in itself that God listens to our prayers when believers pray rightfully with the help of the Spirit, serves as the guarantee to assure us that we are the children of God.

Furthermore, for Calvin, prayer is related to suffering. Even in times of trial, children of God must pray, keeping trust in God without losing hope and in being unyielding in this faith. Even if our prayers do not seem to receive immediate response, believers must not be discouraged. We must keep patient with the hope that He who even gave up His son for us will also give us all benefits. This elucidates the interrelated connection between prayer and suffering for Calvin. Whilst it is evident that Calvin places emphasis on suffering, he also presents prayer as the as practical piety that can overcome suffering. Not only this, but Calvin stresses also that God’s promise (Word) brings forth faith and this faith naturally gives birth to prayer and in so doing, highlights the cyclic relationship between the Word, faith and prayer. Therefore, for Calvin, true prayer that follows the Word is the real and practical method of piety that can overcome suffering and bring forth hope and patience.

We have then revealed for Calvin, piety is the practical exercise of life that is developed from faith (assurance) founded on word. According to Charles Partee (Neuser, 1988:246), Calvin’s theology is not solely of academic principles. This is to say, prayer has to be experienced in one’s life and must be practiced, and in itself, is piety. As such, it was emphasised amidst Calvin’s many works and prayers’ significance as a practice of piety for Christians can be seen.

In the following section, the idea of loving one’s neighbour that appears following Romans chapter 12 as a concrete form of piety which Calvin emphasises will be explored.

4.6.3 Piety and ‘loving our neighbour’

As Calvin examined through prayer, he holds firm that piety for believers should not only be internal thought but must be expressed practically in our lives. As Calvin surmised in Institutes III 'Christian Life', the book of Romans until chapter 11 can be called a discussion of the doctrine that is the origin of salvation (Calvin, 1960a:688-689). However, Calvin's doctrine of Salvation does not cease at this point, but rather, Calvin (1960a:688) holds firm that this doctrine must enter our heart and become our daily living so that we are transformed into it in so that the results of faith are evident in us. Thus, Calvin's commentary after Romans chapter 12 discusses a 'worthy' life for one who has been saved or to reiterate, discusses in detail, the doctrine of salvation and how it applies to Christians' lives. Calvin is seen to interestingly interpret the ministry of deacons in two ways in his commentary of Romans 12:8. The first is as a relief (μεταδιδουντοις), the other as one who is compassionate (ελεουντοις). Here, it is evident Calvin (1960b:1061) is stressing the responsibility of the church in fulfilling its duties of acting as relieves, and in loving their neighbours. In this way, Calvin emphasised loving our neighbours to be a practical face of piety that must be practiced by the church and believers who have attained salvation.

This section will discuss from piety in particular, the concept of 'loving our neighbour'. The reason for this section's particular discussion of 'loving our neighbours' out of piety in following Romans chapter 12, it can be seen much of Calvin's commentary deals with this concept. In addition, another reason for focusing on 'love our neighbour' is because many Christians when considering piety often prioritise the relationship with God and so have the tendency to limit piety to only the relationship with God. Moreover, as noted by David W. Hall (2008:15), the fact that Calvin during the Reformation held a high interest for and gave much help to those impoverished and indigent is not widely known has also contributed to the choice of topic. In actual, social welfare and its system that exists presently originated with and developed from Calvin, Bucher and other reformation theologians.⁸⁷ As such, this further showcases the fact that Calvin indeed held high regard for practical deeds. In following Calvin's theology, we are then shown of the significance of the practice of piety in our Christian lives.

Of the contemporary research regarding Calvin's "loving our neighbour", Bonnie L. Pattison (2006) reveals that poverty was a significant issue that faced the reformation theologians and thus understands the standpoint of Calvin's concern with regards to this problem.⁸⁸

Our purpose, as held by Calvin, for our lives on earth is not for our own welfare. Rather, Calvin maintains it lies with sacrificing our own lives for our neighbours. In a sense, to live only for oneself is to live no different to an animal.

For Calvin, God reveals Himself to us through our neighbours. Ultimately in the law, there are two commandments, 'Love God' and 'Love your neighbour' but to love our neighbours is also to prove our love for God.

That the whole law is fulfilled when we love our neighbours; for true love towards man does not flow except from the love of God, and it is its evidence, and as it were its effects (Calvin, 1996f:485).

Thus, for Calvin, love for neighbours is proof of love for God and can be called the touchstone of piety. In this way, Calvin considers loving neighbours as a fundamental virtue of holiness and piety that the children of God having been reconciled to Him must hold.

However, Calvin (1996f:450) firmly declares that such a pious and holy life must not be a type of obedience forced upon through fear such as was the way of the Papists. On the contrary, Calvin argued that for those who have experienced and realised God's grace and love, a holy and pious life will naturally follow. That is to say, piety comes naturally after tasting and meditating God's goodness and in thanks of his grace that saved us from our misery.

Where then are they who think that all exhortations to a holy life are nullified, if the salvation of men depends on the grace of God alone, since by no precepts, by no sanctions, is a pious mind so framed to render obedience to God, as by a serious meditation on the Divine goodness towards it (Calvin, 1996f:450-451).

Thus, Calvin's (1960a:770-771) argument no good deed or works of humans are right until we are reconciled to God can be regarded as true. Calvin does not accept that by nature, there is love within humans. Love exists firstly with God and flowed through Christ to us. As the foundation of love is such, love is not simply showing kindness or only actions of lending help. True love flows through those who are in thanks for His grace, having been reconciled to Him and having experienced His love, so the love of God will naturally flow through towards neighbours. Thus, Calvin (1996f:449-453) firmly states that for humans to display piety, reconciliation with God must first be achieved so we can be in a position to act in good will. This is then evidential of the closely interrelated connection between assurance and piety.

As such, Calvin puts forth that self-awareness of belonging to God as those chosen beings is the beginning to the right process of demonstrating piety. Here, Calvin presents two things to consider. Firstly, it is important to realise the fact that we are God's and for that reason, must be

holy (Calvin, 1996f:451). It can be seen that Calvin deals within specific detail of the crux of Christians' lives in his Institutes III, Chapter 7 in parallel to his commentary on Romans chapter 12.

Even though the law of the Lord provides the finest and best-disposed method of ordering a man's life, it seemed good to the Heavenly Teacher to shape his people by an even more explicit plan to that rule which he had set forth in the law. Here, then, is the beginning of this plan: the duty of believers is "to present their bodies to God as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to him," and in this consists the lawful worship of him [Rom. 12:1]. From this is derived the basis of exhortation that "they be not conformed to the fashion of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of their minds, so that they may prove what is the will of God" [Rom. 12:2]. Now the great thing is this: we are consecrated and dedicated to God in order that we may thereafter think, speak, mediate and do, nothing except to his glory. For a sacred thing may not be applied to profane uses without marked injury to him. If we, then, are not on our own [cf. I Cor. 6:19] but the Lord's, it is clear what errors we must flee, and whither we must direct all the acts of our life. We are not on our own: let us therefore not set it as our goal to seek what is expedient for us according to the flesh. We are not our own: in so far as we can, let us therefore forget ourselves and all that is ours. Conversely, we are God's: let us therefore live for him and die for him. We are God's: let his wisdom and will therefore rule all our actions. We are God's: let all the parts of our life accordingly strive toward him as our only lawful goal [Rom. 14:8; cf. I Cor. 6:19] (Calvin, 1960a:689-690).

As the core of Christians' piety is self-denial, if this is not prioritised, all seemingly pious acts that follow will ultimately be hypocrisy. In that same sense, true love for neighbours must originate from here. Thus, it is evident that Calvin discusses self-denial in connection to attitudes towards neighbours in his Institutes. Self-denial is related to relationships with our neighbours and this in turn is connected to our relationship with God (Calvin, 1960a:693). As such it is necessary to focus particularly that Calvin has categorised love for neighbours in self-denial in discussion of this in his Institutes. This self-renunciation is not simply blind. Self-denial prioritises love for neighbours as the goal. Moreover, self-denial is the premise for love for neighbours. Calvin has identified that the love for neighbours that Jesus talks about stemmed from a selfless mind.

According to Calvin (1960a:693), self-sacrifice will lead to having the rightful attitude towards others (neighbours).⁸⁹ As Calvin notes, to sincerely love our neighbours, we must prioritise others above ourselves in interpersonal relationships (Philippians 2:3) and genuinely desire and ensure good for others (Romans 12:10). This is to obtain benefits for our neighbours and planning the crash of our own self-love. Thus, without discarding ourselves, wholehearted love for neighbours cannot exist. As such, Calvin (1960a:695) reminds believers to recognise we belong to God and to remember the fact that all the grace we have received from God has been entrusted to us so that we may serve others. This is as all the grace we received and was bestowed by God was on the condition we distribute it for the benefit of our neighbours.

For Calvin, piety is primarily the attitude believers hold towards God. However, Calvin maintains that though piety prioritises God, if despite having tasted His love and in revere of Him, the voluntary love for our neighbours does not follow, it is not true piety. In addition, the notion of loving our neighbours that Calvin (1960a:418-419) teaches does not only refer to those within Christ. Rather, this extends to non-Christians and the whole of humanity.

Put again, for Calvin, ‘neighbours’ does not refer solely to people we have relations with, blood, or relatives but in general, the whole human race. For Calvin, ‘neighbour’ refers to all humans regardless of nationality, race or religion and holds the principle we must love and accept everyone. Calvin’s concept of ‘neighbour’ and the scope of people that ‘neighbour’ includes can be considered radical. This shows that for Calvin, piety does not only mean personal sanctification. For Calvin, in macroscopic view of the Kingdom of God, piety is the mercy of God bestowed upon the whole world.

Calvin’s scope of love for neighbours has a deep interrelationship to his doctrine of humanity. Calvin maintained that as all contained the ‘image of God’, no matter how much others despised us or seemed worthless, believers must see the likeness of God within that person and thus love them.

But here Scripture helps in the best way when it teaches that we are not to consider that men merit of themselves but to look upon the image of God in all men to which we owe all honour and love...Assuredly there is but one way in which to achieve what is not merely difficult but utterly against human nature: to love those who hate us, to repay their evil deeds with benefits, to return blessing for reproaches (Matt :44). It is that we remember not to consider men’s evil intention but to look upon ‘the image of God’ in them which cancels and effaces their transgressions, and with its beauty and dignity allures us to love and embrace them (Calvin, 1960a:696-697).

Calvin states that this image of God was not wholly obliterated, even by Adam's sin. As follows, Calvin (1960a:404-405) even goes to say that to insult a neighbour or to inflict harm on another is to be blasphemous. Thus the piety and love for neighbours that Calvin (1996f:468-469, 473-473) emphasises requires believers to pray even for enemies and persecutors. This ultimately becomes the sign of piety that distinguishes believers from those who are unholy (Calvin, 1996f:468).

Calvin emphasised that to love, all hypocrisy must be discarded, and it must come from pure and sincere hearts. Calvin's thought of true piety is not to expect anything but serve love to those who are weighed down by extreme poverty and the subject of utmost contempt. In addition to this, he stresses to give love to even those without worth, having been ignorant to God's grace. Calvin (1996f:467) expresses that it is at such times that our love proves to be sincere.

Moreover, Calvin notes that for love to be diligent and not lazy, believers require the assistance of the Spirit. From this view, in order to serve true love, believers require not only for the Spirit to open our hearts but also to kindle the passion in our hearts so as to avoid becoming lazy in our love for neighbours (Calvin, 1996f:465). As such Calvin stresses that love for neighbours involves the help of the Spirit. In actual, a believer is incapable of piety without the spirit. It is revealed that the root of true love for neighbours comes from those who have experienced reconciliation with God through His grace and demonstrate good will with the Spirit (Calvin, 1996f:486).

Calvin states that even the commandments that God gave ultimately fall under the word, 'love', and as Paul surmises the all the guidance of the commandments to be love, he argues we are able to keep the commandments when we have loving hearts. Furthermore, in addition to this, he declares "love is the fulfilment of the law" (Calvin, 1996f:486). Calvin (1996f:536) even goes to synecdochically express that realising the destitution of others and providing help is to offer fragrant sacrifice to God.

In that sense, a faith without love for neighbours cannot be called true faith and so even if we do not commit injustices towards others, to not display and act in love for our neighbours is to neglect God. God called us despite our miserable existence to be reconciled to Him and in doing this, He entrusted us with the act of reconciliation with others. As such, those who out of kindness and selflessness work for the benefit of others are the true servers of God (Calvin, 1996f:508). Only those who have experienced the reconciliation with God can act in true piety.

Through this, it has been revealed of Calvin's belief that at the crux of piety is love for neighbours. He emphasises that in 'loving our neighbours', those who have truly experienced the peace of God have a responsibility to go beyond our own personal sanctification and spread that peace and reconciliation to the whole of humanity.

This highlights that for Calvin, personal welfare and personal spiritual development are not the sole purposes of his theology. On the contrary, he elucidates that loving our neighbours, all humans regardless of blood, race, or nationality is ultimately what Christ intended in bringing the kingdom of God to Earth.

Finding of this is then to further emphasise the significance of the relationship of piety and assurance. With the concept of 'loving our neighbours' key to a pious life, and one that is only sincerely brought about when one has achieved reconciliation with God and going further, is intrinsically interrelated to self-denial (Sanctification), this goes to further showcase the relevance of Christians' practical living as pious hearts serves as proof for one's assurance.

4.7 Conclusion

Through his commentary on Romans, we have examined and further reinforced Calvin's theology of assurance and piety.

As noted above, Calvin's exegesis on Romans was completed earlier than all of his other commentaries (1540). The choice to complete his commentary on Romans rather than any other book of the Bible showcases his commitment to disseminate the true doctrine of salvation to others in that period of turbidity and in consideration of those who were suffering. As he revealed in his exegesis on Romans, Calvin maintained that understanding of Romans is an imperative to the understanding of the Bible as whole and in addition, will lead to an unveiling of the treasures of the Bible.

As part of the second generation of the Reformation movement, Calvin was aware that Luther's justification theology faced attack from the Roman Catholics who argued that the notion of sanctified life was absent in Luther's doctrine. In opposition of the Roman Catholic theology of merits, Luther presented his doctrine of 'justification by faith' in attempt of reformation, but the Roman Catholic Church instead criticised the lack of sanctification. Calvin in his commentary on Romans discusses that Justification attained through faith definitely brings forth sanctification. To reiterate, he argues that as the double grace of Justification and Sanctification are received when reconciled with Christ, those who have been justified can only also live out lives of

sanctification. For this reason, it can be seen that the structure and content of his second edition *Institutes* (1539) displays the influence of his commentary on Romans and thus discusses sanctification prior to justification. For Calvin, sanctification is repentance and regeneration.

Put again, it is through daily repentance that we can live holy and live new lives. This is the piety on which Calvin places much emphasis. However, such piety is the natural result of those who have been justified and those who have entered righteousness by God. In his exegesis on Romans, Calvin enjoys explaining in a narrative concept that justification is reconciliation with God and peace with God. If justification is largely to discuss the concept of ‘forensics’, in his Romans commentaries, Calvin focuses on the concept of ‘relationships’ through explanation of reconciliation with God. Thus, in his *Institutes*, Calvin presents assurance in discussion of reconciliation with God and explains this peace to come forth from a faith of full trust in God’s promises and in assurance of the trust in God’s paternal love.

Such a relationship of reconciliation with God reveals the state of justification and salvation. Moreover, the work of the faith that reconciles us with God produces pious lives. This is as all true faith that achieves salvation essentially contains the spirit of sanctification. Thus, Calvin in his Romans commentaries places emphasis on the fact that justification does not simply make us forensically righteous but the assurance that justification gives leads us to wish for internal and essential transformation and thus pursue repentance and pious lives. Calvin also explains that the reconciled relationship with God (justification) is the concept of being union with Christ. Those who have unified with Christ through faith have been engrafted with Christ.

Those who have received this spiritual engraftation naturally receive Christ’s nourishment and become in His likeness. Thus, for Calvin, Christ is not only the foundation of salvation but is also the basis of sanctification. It is however also stressed by Calvin that in order for believers to live in piety, we are in need of the Spirit’s grace. The sanctification of believers, unlike justification, is not achieved at once but is understood to be a lifelong process in becoming restored in God’s image through reliance on the Spirit. However, those who have attained assurance lead lives striving daily for repentance and piety upon the basis of unification with Christ and the Spirit dwelling in us.

As such, for Calvin, justification and sanctification are inseparable and it can be discovered of the characteristic of Calvin’s theology that those who have been justified have simultaneously been made to lead lives in pursuit of holiness and piety.

Another feature of Calvin's theology is that of his focus on suffering. Moreover, this suffering is revealed to have deep relations to assurance and piety. Being a refugee himself, Calvin experienced much adversity in his life, surrounded by enemies. Calvin however places emphasis that Christ entered glory through suffering. As such, for Calvin, suffering is the sign of God's election. In saying that however, this is not to argue that suffering must be experienced in order to be saved. On the contrary, God's intention for His chosen people (the children of God), is to draw out from believers' character, the likeness of Christ through suffering. This is why when in trial, believers must be assured that have been chosen by God.

It is through this assurance that we gain the strength to overcome suffering. In addition, suffering is a fundamental process that produces pious believers, in which by passing such trials, we are able to reach God's glory. Therefore, Calvin's notion of suffering is the proof of being God's children and the assurance of salvation.

Calvin is moreover a minister who places firm emphasis on prayer and loving our neighbours. This elucidates the practical and dynamic nature of his theology. In the latter half of his Romans commentary, Calvin emphasises the models of piety to be 'prayer' and 'loving your neighbours'. However, even with 'prayer' and 'loving your neighbour', Calvin states that these will ultimately flow naturally as the practices of piety from those who have assurance having entered a reconciled relationship with God. Prayer has an inseparable relationship to the children of God. Indubitably, for those who have entered reconciled relationships with God and have tasted his paternal love, the attitude of truly loving your neighbour will be natural. In that sense, Calvin points out that the special concepts that represent piety, 'prayer' and 'loving your neighbour' would not be possible without the assurance of being a child of God.

For Calvin, Justification and Sanctification is the double grace received through union with Christ. As such, for true believers, attaining justification but not sanctification is not possible. It is revealed that for those who are justified, a sanctified life must also follow. Those who have are assured they been accepted by God (reconciliation with God) constantly pursue righteous lives (piety). This then, is revealed to be what Calvin is discussing in his commentary on Romans.

Then, in following Calvin, it becomes clear of the significance of the dynamic and practical faith. To be assured of our justification, one can gain this in view of one's own life; the leading of pious lives which has been revealed to include endurance through suffering, sincere prayer and loving our neighbour all serve as proof of one's assurance as this holiness will have been brought about from a true reconciliation with God.

NOTES

⁵¹ John Murray stresses that Calvin was not only a commentator of the Reformation period but created astounding exegesis work that transcends time. In addition, Gregg Singer has referred Calvin to be the ‘king of biblical commentaries.’ Cf. Crampton, W.G. 2002. What Calvin Says: An Introduction to the Theology of John Calvin. Unicoi, Tennessee: Trinity Foundation. p.48.

⁵² Also refer. Parker, T.H.L. 1993. Calvin's New Testament commentaries. 2nd. Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd. p.15.

⁵³ Calvin's exegesis on Psalms studied above can be said to have been his longest commentary, and in addition, so significant to the extent it was regarded an “anatomy of all the parts of the soul”, Calvin having written with all of his “heart's blood”, Cf. Calvin, J. 1960a. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. p.37.

⁵⁴ T.H.L. Parker emphasises that it was held by Calvin that “the chief virtue of an interpreter lies in clear brevity.” In actual, Calvin achieved such ‘brevity’ by separating issues in to two books that can be understood simultaneously alongside each other. Institutes, however, is representative of the *Loci Commune* of the whole bible rather than a certain book.

⁵⁵ Luther having led the Reformation Theology was circumstantially forced to emphasise the doctrine of justification by faith in order to oppose the doctrine of merits held by the Roman Catholics. However, Luther still held the significance of deeds included in his “The Freedom of Christians”. It is therefore of imperative to note the context of Luther's theology in view of his emphasis of doctrine of Justification by Faith over the theology on good deeds which was out of necessity when considering Luther's radical opposition of the Roman Catholics. Cf. Methuen, C. 2011. Luther and Calvin: religious revolutionaries. Oxford: Lion.; Luther, M. & Dillenberger, J. 1962. Martin Luther, selections from his writings.: Doubleday.

⁵⁶Cf. Holtrop, P.C. 1983. Theologia pietatis: Notes on selected passages in Calvin's Institutes. Grand Rapids, MI: Calvin College Copy Center.

⁵⁷ Keeping in mind that Luther's “The freedom of a Christian” was published in 1520, it can be inferred Calvin had read his thesis. In the way that Luther did, Calvin in his Institutes III, 19, 2-8, titled “Christians' Freedom”, establishes the point of the problem of adiaphora and deeds. See. Calvin, J. 1960a. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. p.834-840.; Parker, T.H.L. 1995. Calvin: an introduction to his thought. London: Geoffrey Chapman., Calvin takes Luther's doctrine of justification by faith and establishes and further refines the thought justification in his Institutes. Whereas the historical context of Luther in his

opposition against the Roman Catholics did not allow for a greater focus on deeds, Calvin being of the succeeding generation, in facing criticism that Reformation Theology lacked the doctrine of Sanctification, sought to emphasise Sanctification, explaining it first in his Institutes, then explaining Justification to establish the correct theology in face of attacks from the Catholics. It can be seen in the order of Institutes III, Sanctification is dealt with before the discussion of Justification. See, Institutes III, 3-10: Sanctification, Institutes III, 11-18: Justification. William Edgar in his “Ethics: The Christian Life and Works According to Calvin” finds that in the chapters 3-10 in his Institutes III, Calvin deals with regeneration and the lives of Christians who have been reborn whilst chapters 17-19 looks at deeds but in between these doctrines, Calvin presents an explanation of justification and thus Edgar asserts that in so through Calvin’s extensive treatment of sanctification before addressing justification, he prevented Roman Catholics’ criticisms of Antinomianism. See, Hall, D.W. & Lillback. 2008. A theological guide to Calvin's : essays and analysis. Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R Pub.p.321.

⁵⁸ Refer. Leith, J.1989. John Calvin's doctrine of the Christian life. Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox Press.

⁵⁹ Refer. Wallace, R. 1982. Calvin's doctrine of the Christian life., TX: Geneva Divinity School Press.

⁶⁰ Calvin also explicitly states in his commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians 1:30, “He calls him our *sanctification*, by which he means, that we who are otherwise unholy by nature, are by his Spirit renewed unto holiness, that we may serve God. From this, also, we infer, that we cannot be justified freely through faith alone without at the same time living holily. For these fruits of grace are connected together, as it were, by an indissoluble tie, so that he who attempts to sever them does in a manner tear Christ in pieces. Let therefore the man who seeks to be justified through Christ, by God’s unmerited goodness, consider that this cannot be attained without his taking him at the same time for *sanctification*, or, in other words, being renewed to innocence and purity of life.”, Cf. Calvin, J. 1960a. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.p.552.

⁶¹ Augustine, Chrysostom, Aquinas amongst Reformation theologians, Luther, Melancthon, and Bucher all stress the significance of Romans and have written commentaries on the book. Dillenberger cites Luther, in his 1522 preface to Paul’s Epistle to the Romans who writes, “This epistle is in truth the most important document in the New Testament, the gospel in its purest expression ... it is a brilliant light, almost enough to illumine the whole Bible”.,Cf. Luther, M. & Dillenberger, J. 1962. Martin Luther, selections from his writings.: Doubleday. p.19.,

Melanchthon also expressed his high regard for Romans, asserting it to be “by far the deepest of all the letters and [serves] as the scopus in the entire Holy Scripture.” Melanchthon & Scheible, H. 1977. *Melanchthons Briefwechsel: kritische und kommentierte Gesamtausgabe*: Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, p.68.

⁶² Steinmetz stress in his book “Indeed, the first biblical commentary that Calvin ever wrote was a commentary on Romans (1540), a work which he twice revised and expanded (1551, 1556). Furthermore, Romans plays a significant role in Calvin’s other theological writings, particularly in the successive editions of the Institutes. In the first edition of the Institutes in 1536, Calvin cites Romans 162 times; by 1559 and the last Latin edition of the Institutes, the list has grown to 573 citations.” Cf. Steinmetz, D.C. 1995. *Calvin in Context*: Oxford University Press.p.65.

⁶³ Cf. It was September 1538 when Calvin arrived in Strasbourg. From then for three years until the August of 1541, Calvin continued his ministry in Strasbourg. It is evinced of the immense influence that his ministry, study and writing has had on Calvin’s life during this period. This period of ministry and study allowed an erudite understanding of the Bible, contributed to his theological depth and development of a pious faith as well as shaping him into a mature leader. In particular in Strasbourg, through his fellowship with Bucer and other reformers, Calvin learnt many things, most notably in areas of liturgy and ecclesiology. It has been recognised by scholars that during his three years in Strasbourg, Calvin learnt many things (unendlich viel) and that his development and maturity almost transformed him into another person. See. Bouwsma, W.J. 1988. *John Calvin: a sixteenth-century portrait*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.; Greef, W. 2008. *The writings of John Calvin: an introductory guide*. Expanded ed. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox; Edinburgh: Alban [distributor].; Parker, T.H.L. 2006. *John Calvin: a biography*. Oxford: Lion.; Selderhuis, H.J. 2009a. *The Calvin handbook*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans.; Selderhuis, H.J. 2009b. *John Calvin : a pilgrim's life*. Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press.; Zachman, R.C. 2006. *John Calvin as teacher, pastor, and theologian : the shape of his writings and thought*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

⁶⁴Selderhuis asserts that it was Paul's particular epistle to the Romans that determined the content and structure of the 1539 edition of the Institutes., See. Selderhuis, H.J. 2009. *The Calvin handbook*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans.p.203. C.f. de Greef claims that Calvin’s second edition of Institutes was largely influenced by Bucer’s commentary on Romans. He has particularly emphasised of the prominence of Bucer’s views of predestination in Calvin’s Institutes (1539). See. Greef, W. 2008. *The writings of John Calvin: an introductory guide*. Expanded ed. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox; Edinburgh: Alban [distributor]., Moreover, Jean D. Benoit comments that in comparison to Calvin’s first edition of Institutes

(1536), the second edition contains greater consideration of repentance and justification by faith. Cf. (Duffield, 1966:100).

⁶⁵ See. Selderhuis, H.J. 2009. *The Calvin handbook*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans. p.182-182.

⁶⁶ Parker affirms that Calvin had simultaneously worked on his commentary on Romans during his revision of Institutes. See. Parker, T.H.L. 2006. *John Calvin: a biography*. Oxford: Lion.

⁶⁷ In this light, Calvin's doctrine does not seem incongruent to the theology of Luther. However, through close study of Calvin's commentary on Romans, it is evident of the difference between Calvin's doctrine of Justification by Faith to that held by Luther is Calvin's stronger emphasis on sanctification.

For detailed discussion of this, refer to the following. Garcia, M.A. 2008. *Life in Christ: union with Christ and twofold Grace in Calvin's Theology*. Milton Keynes: Paternoster.; Gerrish, B.A. 1982. *The old Protestantism and the new: essays on the Reformation heritage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; Holder, R.W. 2013. *Calvin and Luther: The Continuing Relationship* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. Particularly refer to the following essays in Hoder's Book: Todd Billings, J. *The Contemporary Reception of Luther and Calvin's Doctrine of Union with Christ: Mapping a Biblical, Catholic, and Reformational Motif*. 165-182; Helmer, Christine. *United and Divided: Luther and Calvin in Modern Protestant Theology*. 202-218; Latini, Theresa F. *The Church as Mother: The Theme of Union in Christ in Calvin's and Luther's Ecclesiology*. 183-201; Wengert, Timothy J. *Philip Melanchthon and John Calvin against Andreas Osiander: Coming to Terms with Forensic Justification*. 63-90.

Tom Wright asserts a varying attitude towards Roman's focal theme of justification by faith. Wright holds the theology of 'final justification' for believers where believers' justification will be attained during vindication upon the basis of their lives. To reiterate, though justification is initially attained in the presence through faith, the final justification will be decided during Christ's Second Coming based on believers' obedience. For further details, refer to (Wright, 1997), Also refer to Lusk, R. 2002. N.T. Wright and Reformed Theology: Friends or Foes? *Reformation and Revival*, 11(No. 2 (Spring)):35-47.

⁶⁸ Calvin in his commentaries likes to interchange the concept of justification with reconciliation with God and union with Christ.

⁶⁹ In his commentary on Romans chapter 5, the terms ‘reconciliation’ and ‘peace with God’ has been used 22 times to allude to justification. Cf. Calvin, J. 1996a. Commentary on the epistle of Paul the apostle to the Romans. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.p.186-216.

⁷⁰ Cf. Christ has accomplished his office and work through his incarnation that distinguishes Him from the Father and Spirit and as emphasised in the Bible, the integral purpose of this was to become the sacrificial offering in order to reconcile the relationship between God and humankind. This then highlights the Old Testament’s concept of sacrifice in the background of Calvin’s justification (Lev, 3:1, 7-12, 16, Rom 5:1, Col 1:20).

⁷¹ This is to state the objective evidence of assurance only in Christ as emphasised by Karl Barth and Niesel. Cf. Niesel, W. 1980. The theology of Calvin. Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Book House.p.169-171.

⁷² Elias agrees and express that Sanctification is a major part of God’s redemptive plan and the primary work he does to develop a godly character in his people. The word has been used in a variety of ways, but Calvin understood it as primarily pertaining to Christian conversion, and secondarily to growth in the Christian life. Cf. Chung, S.W.E. 2009. John Calvin and evangelical theology: legacy and prospect: in celebration of the quincentenary of John Calvin. Milton Keynes, England: Paternoster Press.p.138.

⁷³ In his Institutes, Calvin emphasises in the chapter, ‘Bearing the Cross’ is the way in which Christians, those who have received justification, must lead out their lives. See. Calvin, J. 1960a. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.p.702-712.

⁷⁴ Calvin in his commentary on Romans 6:5 examines our engraftation with Christ and finds that we are either engrafted in “the likeness of Christ’s death” or simply engrafted in Christ’s likeness. Nevertheless, regardless of either model of engraftation, both highlight our union with Christ. See. Calvin, J. 1996a. Commentary on the epistle of Paul the apostle to the Romans. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. p.223.

⁷⁵ See. Calvin, J. 1960a. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.p.57-571, 686-687, 702.

⁷⁶ See. Calvin, J. 1960a. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.p.731-733; Calvin, J. 1996a. Commentary on the epistle of Paul the apostle to the Romans. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. chapter VII.

⁷⁷ Calvin understood regeneration to be the restoration of God's image. See. Calvin, J. 1960a. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. p.189,601, 807.

⁷⁸ Calvin notes of the two-fold spirit which Paul mentions. Whilst the first is regarded as the "Spirit of Bondage" given to instil fear and born out of law, the second is the "Spirit of Adoption" and produced from the gospel. It is this latter Spirit that gives assurance. Cf. Calvin, J. 1996a. Commentary on the epistle of Paul the apostle to the Romans. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. p.296.

⁷⁹ See Calvin, J. 1960a. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. The Author's preface, p.40, 44, 48., In his "Calvin's Theology of the Psalms", Selderhuis well demonstrates how through the theme of suffering, Calvin identified himself with David. See Selderhuis, H.J. 2007. Calvin's Theology of the Psalms. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Bakeracademic.p.30-37.

⁸⁰ Calvin stresses his doctrine of assurance in greater detail in his commentary of Romans 8:38. Cf Calvin, J. 1996a. Commentary on the epistle of Paul the apostle to the Romans. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.p.331. "This declaration is clearly against the schoolmen, who idly talk and say, that no one is certain of final perseverance, except through the gift of special revelation, which they make to be very rare. By such a dogma the whole faith is destroyed, which is certainly nothing, except it extends to death and beyond death. But we, on the contrary, ought to feel confident, that he who has begun in us a good work, will carry it on until the day of the Lord Jesus."

⁸¹ Calvin states "Therefore that foreshadowing ceremony of the law taught us that we are all barred from God's presence and consequently need a Mediator, who should appear in our name and bear us upon his shoulders and hold us bound upon his breast so that we are heard in his person. Further, that our prayers are cleansed by sprinkled blood-players that as has been stated, are otherwise never free of uncleanness. Cf. Calvin, J.1960a. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.p.875.

⁸² Calvin states, "Hence it is incontrovertibly clear that those who call upon God in another name than that of Christ obstinately flout his commands and count his will as nought-indeed, have no promise of obtaining anything." Calvin, J. 1960a. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.p.875.

⁸³Cf. Calvin expresses, “For in Christ he offers all happiness in place of our misery, all wealth in place of our neediness; in him he opens to us the heavenly treasures that our whole faith may contemplate his beloved son, our whole expectation depend upon him and our whole hope cleave to and rest in him.” Calvin, J. 1960b. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 2. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. p.850.

⁸⁴ Focus particular attention on his commentaries on Romans 8:15,16,19,34, 26. Calvin emphasises the point that in times of tribulations, it is through patience received by the guidance of the Spirit that we are able to overcome suffering and for these pious believers, God will hold firm. In addition, we can see that Calvin reveals prayer to be connected to suffering as he comments on the relations between the Spirit who hears our cries during times of trial and lends us His support. Calvin illustrates this in greater detail in his Institutes III, 20:11-14.

⁸⁵ In Institutes III, Calvin’s chapter on prayer extends for 70 pages.

⁸⁶ Cf. In actual, Calvin places further emphasis on prayer as seen in his Institutes III, sparing a whole chapter on prayer in Chapter 20. See also, Calvin, J. 1960b. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 2. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. p.850-920.

⁸⁷ See the following for in-depth discussion. Kingdon, R.M. 1971. Social Welfare in Calvin's Geneva. *American Historical Review*, 76 (1 February):50-69.; Kingdon, R.M. 1982. Calvinism and Social Welfare.” Calvin Theological Journal *Calvin Theological Journal* 17(2):212-230.; Kingdon, R.M. 1985. Church and Society in Reformation Europe London: London: Variorum Reprints.p.85-91.; Forell, G.W. & Lindberg, C. 1984. Piety, politics, and ethics: Reformation studies in honor of George Wolfgang Forell. Kirksville, Mo.: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, Northeast Missouri State University.p.135-158, 160-180.; Freudenberg, M. 2009. Economic and social ethics in the work of John Calvin. *HTS Theological Studiew*, Vol 65(n.1):1-7.; McKee, E.A. 1984. John Calvin on the diaconate and liturgical almsgiving.; McKee, E.A. 1989. Diakonia in the classical reformed tradition and today. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.E. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Innes, W.C. 1983. Social concern in Calvin's Geneva. Allison Park, Pa.: Pickwick Publications.; Mollat, M. 1986. The poor in the Middle Ages: an essay in social history. New Haven: Yale University Press.; Olson, J.E. 1989. Calvin and social welfare: deacons and the Bourse, Pa.: Susquehanna University Press; London: Associated University Presses.p.81-90.; Tierney, B. 1959. Medieval poor law: a sketch of canonical theory and its application in England. Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁸⁸ Aside from Pattison’s work, there does not exist much works that directly deals with Calvin’s notion of “loving our neighbour”.

⁸⁹ Cf. Self-denial gives us the right attitude toward our fellow men.

Chapter 5 Calvin's piety and assurance examined through the Institutes of the Christian Religion (1559 5th Edition)

Christ was given to us by God's generosity, to be grasped and possessed by us in faith. By partaking of him, we principally receive a double grace: namely, that being reconciled to God through Christ's blamelessness, we may have in heaven instead of a Judge a gracious Father; and secondly, that sanctified by Christ's spirit we may cultivate blamelessness and purity of life. Of regeneration, indeed, the second of these gifts, I have said what seemed sufficient... and what is the nature of the good works of the saints, with which part of this question is concerned? Therefore, we must now discuss these matters thoroughly. And we must so discuss them as to bear in mind that this is the main hinge on which religion turns, so that we devote the greater attention and care to it. For unless you first of all grasps what your relationship to God is, and the nature of his judgment concerning you, you have neither a foundation on which to establish your salvation nor one on which to build piety toward God. (Institutes 3.11.1)

5.1 Introduction

So far, Calvin's key doctrines of 'assurance' and 'piety' have been explored by examination of Calvin's commentary of the Psalms and Romans. As previously studied, Calvin does not systematically explain the doctrines of assurance and piety in these commentaries. However, by deductively studying the commentaries on the Psalms and Romans through the focus of 'assurance' and 'piety', which had the greatest influence in Calvin's life, Calvin's theological intentions for his expression was analysed and the relationship between piety and assurance was discussed.

In this chapter, Calvin's central thoughts of piety and assurance will be explored through a focused examination of the final edition (1559) of Calvin's Institutes. This edition has been chosen as it contains the final revision of Calvin's theology and thoughts.

Parker (1995:Preface, ix) argues that Calvin's Institutes systematically integrates the lessons presented throughout his sermons, commentaries, letters and fragmented pieces of writing, thereby containing all of Calvin's thoughts. In addition, Parker (1995:Preface, ix) emphasises that upon study of his Institutes, the reason behind why Calvin broke away from the Roman Church, tried to reform the church, and in what form he carried out the Reformation can be understood at a glance. As per Parker, Calvin's Institutes is a book that contains the essence of Calvin's theology and reflects his thoughts and mind. In addition, it is possible to grasp the theological errors that surrounded Calvin at the time, including those of the Roman Catholic Church.

Up till now, many scholars have explored Calvin's doctrine of 'assurance'⁹⁰ or 'piety' as separate concepts.⁹¹ However, there is a lack of studies into the interrelationship between Calvin's assurance and Calvin's piety, or research that has been conducted through a link between these two doctrines.

Although of course, there have been instances where Calvin's 'faith' and his central motto, 'piety' have been mentioned together throughout his works, including in his Institutes, Calvin did not deliberately use these ideas to prove the logical relationship between his doctrine of assurance and thought of piety.

However, although Calvin did not directly explain the relationship between his doctrine of 'assurance of salvation' and 'piety', it can still be said that these concepts are indispensable, central themes in Calvin's theological thought.

Leith (1989:87) emphasises that no doctrine in Calvin's Institutes stands alone, and that one doctrine must be understood in light of other central doctrines. In other words, this is to express each doctrine being closely connected to other doctrines, like cogs in a wheel. Here, Leith (1989:87) gives an example that the knowledge of justification by faith cannot be separated from the knowledge of regeneration (sanctification). In fact, not only the doctrine of justification and sanctification, but Leith's argument of the close relationship between Calvin's other doctrines as well, as will be discussed henceforth, can be said to demonstrate Leith's understanding of Calvin's theology.

Therefore, in this chapter, through a focus on Institutes, Calvin's 'assurance' and 'piety' will be examined in light of other prominent topics within Calvin's theology, such as 'knowledge', 'union with Christ', 'justification' and 'sanctification'. In general, it is known of the close organic connection that exists between 'justification' and 'sanctification' and 'faith' and 'justification' in Calvin's theology. However, in this chapter, through additional study of also 'knowledge', 'union with Christ', 'justification' and 'sanctification', in connection with the key themes the centre of this thesis, 'assurance' and 'piety', the deeper theological meanings behind Calvin's 'assurance' and 'piety' can be further clarified and understood. Through this study, we will be able to taste the essence of Calvin's theology, discover the central theme of Calvin's thoughts, and ascertain the goals behind his theology.

5.2 The Characteristics of Calvin's theology: piety and assurance

Calvin scholars⁹² have made different claims about the characteristics and central doctrines of Calvin's theology in his Institutes (Calvin, 1960a; McKim, 2004b:74-92). Parker and Dowey (McKim, 2004b:78) assert that the twofold of knowledge of God is the main topic of Calvin's Institutes. Meanwhile Barth and Niesel (McKim, 2004b:79) argue that it is 'Christology.' Warfield (McKim, 2004b:79) claims it is the theologian of the Holy Spirit while Krusche emphasises the work of the Holy Spirit. Butin (McKim, 2004b:79-80) emphasises the Trinitarian aspect of Calvin's theology which was marked by a focus on God, Christ and the Holy Spirit.

In contrast, Walter Kreck (McKim, 2004b:80-84) in his thesis 'John Calvin: his life and character' points out several themes of Calvin's theology, all of which display a different approach to and connection between dealing with Calvin's understanding and approach to the Word of God. The first theme is that of unity and inseparability of the Word and Spirit. The second is the importance of the eternal incarnated Word. The third is the Word which both gives and commands. Finally, the fourth is the Word which both elects and rejects. Selderhuis studied Calvin's commentary on the Psalms to newly construct various theological themes from his commentary via a deductive method. This thesis similarly applied Selderhuis' methodology and point of view towards Calvin's works.

Hesselink (McKim, 2004b:89) believes that the reason behind the steady influence of and appeal to Calvin's theology are due to "the catholicity of Calvin's thought", "harmony of intellect and piety", "usefulness of his doctrine", "simplicity and brevity" and "his passion for the glory of God". In this way, the characteristics of Calvin's theology is not only diverse, but difficult to identify as just one subject. However, as has been emphasised hitherto, the themes of 'assurance' and 'piety' are undoubtedly important doctrines within Calvin's theology that makes Calvin's

Reformed theology distinct from other Reformers.

5.2.1 Background and importance of ‘piety’ and ‘assurance’ in Calvin’s theology

The characteristics of Calvin’s piety and the goals he pursued through his piety through his various works has already been examined in chapter 2 of this thesis. Calvin’s piety is not only closely related to his life through which he embodied the glory of God but is also extremely practical in nature. Calvin tried to personally practice piety throughout his lifelong journey. For example, despite the great burden and difficulty returning to Geneva posed following Farel’s letter in 1541, Calvin still obeyed and prepared for martyrdom, if it was God’s call. Future generations call this determined decision of Calvin as “the great charter of godliness” (Kim, 2012:369-370).

As to my intended course of proceeding, this is my present feeling: had I the choice at my own disposal, nothing would be less agreeable to me than to follow your advice (to return to Geneva). But when I remember that I am not my own, I offer up my heart, presented as a sacrifice to the Lord . . . Therefore I submit my will and my affections, subdued and held-fast, to the obedience of God; and whenever I am at a loss for counsel of my own, I submit myself to those by whom I hope that the Lord himself will speak to me (Calvin et al., 1983:Vol 4. 149).

In this way, Calvin’s life was a life of pursuing piety. Calvin’s piety is an integral term which is connected to Calvin’s entire life trajectory. Boulton (2011:50) defines that for Calvin, the practice of piety is itself a divine gift from God and a gracious way for disciples to engage in a life of fellowship with Christ. He further states that Calvin’s use of the term piety refers to a holistic and integrated way of life that connects disposition and action, doctrine and practice, piety and righteousness.

For Calvin, ‘piety’ was a condensed manifestation of a core theme, a goal and doctrine of theology, inseparable from his actual life. His piety is difficult to define in one word, but it can be defined to be the centre and the whole of Calvin’s life. Rather than being a common theme within Calvin’s theology, it can be viewed to be the direction and goal of his theology as a whole, and for Calvin, the idea of ‘piety’ flows as a large theological stream inside of him. John McNeil expresses “Calvin’s theology is piety described at length” (Gamble, 1992:215-216). As McNeil points out, Calvin’s theology can be said to be his thoughts, life and faith; in a sense, a detailed explanation of piety.

Above all, Calvin’s piety is a concept that cannot be accurately grasped without understanding the

context of the time in which Calvin lived and his entire theological thought.⁹³ It can be said that it is a comprehensive term preferred by Calvin, which is God-centred and yet includes a correct knowledge of human beings. In a sense, it is a term contains some ambiguity in defining it. However, Calvin took enjoyment in using this term, ‘piety’. Calvin’s piety can be expressed to be ‘the best form through which humans with salvation can reveal God’s glory’, ‘the best life attitude of a child who has experienced God’s saving grace to voluntarily repay the Father’s fatherly care’, and ‘the integrous life attitude that justified humans should have towards both God and one’s neighbours.’

Calvin’s doctrine of ‘assurance’ must also be taken in light of the historical background of the Reformation which opposed Roman Catholicism’s doctrine of good works and merit.⁹⁴ Therefore, his doctrine of ‘assurance’ was a central theme as an extension of the doctrine of ‘justification by faith’ representing Reformed theology in the early days of the Reformation. Calvin (1960a:727) emphasised that the doctrine of justification by faith is the hinge of the religious life and that more attention should be paid to it. In addition, unless this doctrine of justification by faith upheld, there is no foundation upon which salvation nor piety can be build. In this way, the doctrine of justification by faith for Calvin was an important theme interrelated to piety and assurance.

Moreover, as Calvin (1960a:755) reveals in his Institutes, the incorrect doctrine of salvation of the Roman Catholic Church was proved via a Biblical, logical explanation to the Roman Catholic Cardinal Sadoletto’s criticism of the doctrine of justification by faith (Calvin *et al.*, 2000). In this way, we can see that Calvin’s doctrine of justification was established by debating and contradicting the wrong doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church through his astute study of the Bible.⁹⁵

In the first edition of Institutes published in 1536, Calvin included a short chapter on the subject of faith. However, by the final edition, published in 1559, this was expanded to a large chapter comprising of 43 sections. This reflects the importance of the themes of ‘justification’ and ‘assurance’ in relation to ‘faith’ which Calvin held to be very significant issues as he struggled with these themes throughout his life (George, 2013:233). In addition to this, it can be thought that the expansion can also be attributed to the distortion of the doctrine of justification by Lutheran scholars like Osiander, thought to be of the Reformation camp which misled people at the time, having a similar effect as the Roman Catholic Church’s wrongful criticism of the doctrine. For Calvin, who was a pastor before he was a theologian, witnessing believers following into a wrong faith by falling into a distorted doctrine must have been heart-breaking. Thus, in his Institutes, Calvin’s clear and certain refute of the errors of the Roman Catholic Church and Osiander’s justification doctrine, and his establishment of the correct doctrine of justification

based on the Bible is visible.

Furthermore, Calvin (1960b:1660-1661) in his final edition of Institutes, deals with as many as 53 sections subtitled in relation to 'faith', and as many as 20 sections subtitled in relation to themes of "assurance of faith" and "assurance of salvation." (Calvin, 1960b:1638, 1644)⁹⁶ With regard to the subject of 'piety', it can be seen that the term has been mentioned in Institutes as many as 77 times (Calvin, 1960b:1687-1688) and the fact that the term was mentioned as many as 180 times should not come as a surprise, evincing the extent of Calvin's affinity to the concept of piety.

This can be seen as proof that Calvin deeply scrutinised the themes of 'faith', 'assurance' and 'piety' in his theological work.

5.2.2 The common element that binds "piety" and "assurance" in Calvin's theology

Above all, Calvin wanted his theology as contained in his Institutes to be a theology based only on the teachings of the Bible (*sola scriptura*) and wanted to teach people the correct theology by correctly reading and interpreting the Word of God. Calvin clearly emphasises the purpose of writing Institutes in his prefatory address to King Francis I:

My purpose was solely to transmit certain rudiments by which those who are touched with any zeal for religion might be shaped to true godliness. And I undertook this labor especially for our French countrymen, very many of whom I knew to be hungering and thirsting for Christ; but I saw very few who had been duly imbued with even a slight knowledge of him. The book itself witness that this was my intention, adapted as it is to a simple and, you may say, elementary form of teaching (Calvin, 1960a:Prefatory Address to King Francis I of France. 9).

The first is elucidated to be to help people lead a life of true piety, and the second is to inform those who do not have true knowledge of the Bible about Christ and Salvation.

As Hessellink (McKim, 2004b:76) emphasises, the constant concern of Calvin's theology, emphasised through his Institutes, is always to promote piety or the usefulness of piety and true doctrine. For Calvin, Institutes is a book that contains all the core doctrines necessary for the whole of piety, and the knowledge of salvation. Therefore, Calvin regarded Institutes to be the most valuable book to be read with enthusiasm by all who wish to live in piety.

As per the main purpose of Calvin's Institutes, 'piety' and 'saving faith' are not only main themes contained within the text but is the main message that Calvin enthusiastically conveyed to people of his time.

Upon close study of the main themes of piety and assurance contained in his Institutes, other common interrelated themes can also be uncovered. Of these are 'knowledge of God', 'union with Christ', 'justification' and 'sanctification'. These concepts are significant co-themes which Calvin deals within connection to discussing the doctrines of assurance and piety. Moreover, these themes can be said to be what clearly distinguishes Reformed theology in contrast with Roman Catholicism.⁹⁷

In addition, there is the theme of the 'Spirit' which can be seen to be discussed together, but this will be briefly dealt with when discussing 'union with Christ', 'justification' and 'sanctification'. In the next section, Calvin's doctrine of assurance and piety will be discussed in connection with the theme of knowledge.

5.3. 'Knowledge' is a component of Calvin's 'piety' and 'faith'

For Calvin, 'knowledge' was such an important concept to the extent that future generations of scholars have been involved in debates about whether Calvin's theology was that of an intellectualist, or a voluntarist. Calvin emphasises 'knowledge of God' in his theology more than anyone else. This can be seen to be the reason why Parker (McKim, 2004b:78) concludes the central theme of Institutes to be that of the knowledge of God. As Parker (1995:13-21) emphasised, Calvin opens fire with the theme of knowledge of God in his Institutes. 'Knowledge' is the obvious first theme that is related to Calvin's piety and assurance.

5.3.1 True piety and Cognito Dei as per Calvin

In chapter 1 of Book I of his Institutes, Calvin states that the knowledge of God and knowledge of ourselves is interrelated.⁹⁸ This is the premise of religion and the true knowledge that the Bible clearly testifies. Thus Calvin (1960a:39) emphasises that knowledge of God in separation from religion and piety is impossible immediately states piety to be the "requisite for the knowledge of God." This is to mandate the knowledge of God and piety are inseparable, as the starting point of piety is the knowledge of God.

Boulton (2011:48) states that the "reverence for God's love" that makes true piety is induced by the knowledge of God who is the maker of all good. Parker (1995:15) defines 'piety' as per Calvin

to mean “the reverence and love of God brought about by the knowledge of God's blessings.” Selderhuis (2007:15) argues that Calvin distinguishes between knowing God as the Creator and knowing God as the Saviour in our perception of God, and this can be seen through his commentary of Psalms which serves as an outline for these themes.⁹⁹

There are preconditions that precede acquiring a true knowledge of God. This is the recognition of God as the beginning of all wisdom, only upon which can true knowledge of God can be obtained (Parker, 1995:13-14). In other words, it is to know that the source of righteousness, goodness, mercy, truth, power and life, as well as the Creator, who created all things in heaven and earth for His own glory, all began with God.

Calvin (1960a:41) states in his Institutes that the first step to achieving piety is to know God as our Father. This is to say that God becomes the object of faith. Here, “to know God” for Calvin means to know God in a religious relationship, not as God as an objective being or cognise object.

In this ruin of mankind no one now experiences God either as Father or as Author of salvation or favorable in any way, until Christ the Mediator comes forward to reconcile him to us. ...” Piety” that reverence joined with love of God which the knowledge of his benefits induces. For until men recognise that they owe everything to God, that they are nourished by his fatherly care, that he is the Author of their every good (Calvin, 1960a:40-41).

Calvin (1960a:39-40) also clarifies that no one would know God as the Father or the creator of salvation unless Christ, the mediator, reconciles us to God. In order for the knowledge of God to be realised in a relationship of faith, we must first realise and recognise the miserable condition of human beings who have fallen due to sin (Calvin, 1960a:36-37).

Thus Calvin (1960a: 241-247) states the knowledge of humans in relation to God, is not knowledge of humankind in general (*cognitio hominibus*) but the knowledge of oneself (*cognitio sui*). This means that such true knowledge which humans realise is not achieved by human speculation but must be accepted by faith. This is the very foundation of piety.

Here, we can see that the starting point of piety is to have the correct knowledge of God (Calvin, 1960a:39). The knowledge of God is a twofold knowledge of God (*duplex cognitio dei*); that is, the recognition of God as Creator, and as Redeemer (Calvin, 1960a:40-41). This knowledge of God the Creator and of God the Redeemer immediately recognises that we are powerless to truly

do anything by ourselves. It is to see oneself not only shaken and startled, but almost exterminated by fear of death upon recognition of His glory (Calvin, 1960a:39).

One's lowly state is visible in comparison to the dignity of God. When one stands in front of the reflection of God's majesty and glory, true recognition of oneself begins. In that respect, the correct knowledge of oneself is the basis of piety that leads one to God.

Until we understand that we owe everything to God, that we are nurtured by God's paternal love, that God is the source of all their blessings, and that we should not seek anything apart from God, we cannot voluntarily obey and revere God (Calvin, 1960a:41).

The knowledge of discovering oneself correctly through realising and knowing the grace of God becomes the starting point of piety for God. Therefore, a person with piety longs for God's love with inner fear of their self-portrait in front of God.

Calvin states that all the wisdom we have, true and sound wisdom is also of two parts: the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of ourselves. However, although these two bases of knowledge are linked, it is not easy to distinguish which one comes first and gives birth to the other (Calvin, 1960a:35).

Calvin (1960a:41) argues that piety consists of a combination of love and respect for God that arises from the realisation of God's grace. The knowledge of piety is to know that all human beings are of God's grace, nurtured by God's care and that God is the creator of all our blessings and that apart from Him, we will find nothing.

Therefore, true faith focuses on knowing 'God's will for us' rather than knowing about the existence of God Himself. That is to say, knowledge of God is more important in the sense of knowing God's will for us than knowing about God's nature. This means that our relationship with God should be understood as a relationship of faith through 'true knowledge' being the medium. Thus, piety is the knowledge of faith, and faith is the goal of *cognitio dei*. Knowledge of God is not merely *cognitio dei* but can be defined to be the 'knowledge of God's goodwill towards us' based on the faithfulness of the promise in Christ.

Calvin (1960a:98) states that as a result of this knowledge, we are able to learn to worship God with the pure innocence of life and unaffected obedience, while at the same time relying entirely on His goodness. All this knowledge can be learned from the Bible. Ultimately, knowledge about

God and humankind is the basis for piety and faith, and this can be said to be the central content of Institutes. Therefore, the faith of the true knowledge of God becomes the motive power of piety that enables humans to live in reverence and obedience of God. Thus, for Calvin, faith is piety, and piety is also faith.

Though the above, it can be confirmed that the 'true knowledge of God' is the mother of piety, and 'true knowledge' is the combination with piety in faith.

5.3.2 Calvin's 'assurance' and 'knowledge'

In his Institutes, Calvin defines faith as the following.

Now we shall possess a right definition of faith if we call it a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Calvin, 1960a:551).

Upon analysis of Calvin's definition of faith, firstly, faith is 'solid and certain knowledge'. Secondly, the content of such knowledge is God's benevolence towards us. Thirdly, Calvin states that the foundation of this knowledge is in the truthfulness of Christ's freely given promise. Fourthly, the process of having such a solid knowledge is that God's promise is revealed to us in our minds and sealed within our hearts, and this is the work of the Holy Spirit.

According to Calvin, faith is 'knowledge'. Calvin (1960a:544-545) places great emphasis on faith being based on knowledge, not ignorance, and this faith is based on our knowledge of Christ. Again, as examined above, the knowledge that Calvin deals with here is not merely of knowing God's existence, but of knowing God's will for us. Therefore, this knowledge refers to the knowledge of God and Christ, specifically the knowledge that God is our merciful Father due to the reconciliation afforded to us and accomplished by Christ and Christ is our righteousness, holiness and life, and it is by this knowledge that has been given to us that we are saved. These 'knowledges' of faith depend on the revelation of the Bible. God's will for humans can be found in the written revelation, the Word of God. However, Calvin especially emphasises the importance of 'promise' in God's Word. This 'promise' is the promise of salvation freely given to us by God via His sacrifice of Christ. Faith, therefore, is inseparable from Christ and His promises, because it is grounded in the truths of the Bible and the promises of God, and because these promises are directed to and centred in Christ.

In this way, Calvin (1960a:537-551) emphasises 'knowledge', 'words', 'Jesus Christ', 'God's promise' and 'work of the Holy Spirit' as elements of faith. However, ultimately, 'the Bible, Jesus Christ, and God's promises are all equivalent to 'knowledge', so what is important to Calvin is 'salvational knowledge'.

In recognition of Calvin's focus on faith as 'knowledge', Kendall (1979b:19)¹⁰⁰ views Calvin as an intellectualist. Conversely, as Calvin emphasised 'knowledge' rather than human action is faith, later Calvinists took a voluntarist position that defined faith as 'will' rather than 'knowledge'. Kendall's stance is not an accurate understanding of Calvin's conception of knowledge. Although Calvin obviously emphasised knowledge, as will be explained further below, Calvin's 'knowledge' can be said to be experiential, volitional, and Christ-centred soteriological 'knowledge' that emphasises 'affection' and 'heart' rather than speculative knowledge.

Muller (2000:161-167) also argues that when Calvin spoke of faith, he did not simply emphasise 'intellectual knowledge' nor did he emphasise only 'will' either. Rather, Calvin emphasised the 'fiducial aspect of faith' more than the 'cognitive aspect of faith', and here 'heart' - the true 'knowledge of God' that is rooted in the 'heart' is claimed to have been added.

However, I argue that the part that needs greater emphasis here is that the 'heart' used by Calvin should be read as an expression closer to 'will' which is 'the whole range of affections', rather than simply the 'mind'.

Beeke (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:266) similarly points out that Calvin's faith is not merely one of assent. He points out that Calvin's faith included both elements of knowledge (cognition) and trust (fiducia) and insisted that this 'knowledge' and 'trust' correspond to the saving dimension of a life of faith rather than being mere conceptual issues.

In this respect, it more appropriate to understand Calvin's faith as being holistic and soteriological rather than classifying it as 'intellectual' or 'voluntaristic'.

For Calvin (1960a:559-560), "faith is not historical knowledge plus saving assent, but a saving and certain knowledge joined with a saving and assured trust." Therefore, when Calvin (1960a:552) discusses the characteristics of faith, he argues that faith as knowledge is closer to the assurance of the heart than the comprehension of the head. In other words, assent to truth is about the heart rather than the brain; a disposition rather than understanding (Calvin, 1960a:552).

In defining faith, Calvin uses the Latin term '*cognito*'. Here, '*cognito*' as used by Calvin is sometimes translated as knowledge, but this does not mean a simply intellectual understanding, but the holistic knowledge which combines intellective knowledge and affective knowledge (Muller, 2000:163-170). Therefore, the knowledge of faith defined by Calvin can be summarised to be the conviction of the heart by the persuasion of the Holy Spirit while including intellectual knowledge and will.

Thus Calvin (1960a:560) concludes that our knowledge of faith consists not in understanding but in conviction and assurance. The knowledge of faith that Calvin claims is not a mere comprehension of sound doctrine or an intellectual assent to biblical knowledge but includes more than an objective certainty about God's promises, that is, a personal and subjective 'assurance'.

Beeke (1999:39) understands Calvin as seeing assurance as the essence of faith. Lane (1979:32) also states that assurance of salvation was an essential part of Calvin's faith rather than an additional option in Calvin's commentary on 1 John 5:13. Warfield (1956:76) expresses that for Calvin, faith is the concept of "true faith" (1.7.5), "sound faith" (1.7.4), "firm faith" (1.8.13), "the faith of the pious" (1.7.3), "the certainty of the pious" (1.7.4), "the assurance which is essential to true piety" (1.7.4), "saving knowledge" (1.8.13), and "a solid assurance of eternal life" (1.7.1) which can all be used interchangeably. Here, we find that Calvin used 'faith', assurance, 'piety' and 'knowledge of salvation' to have the same meaning, such as true faith, sound faith, firm faith, pious faith, certainty of piety, and knowledge of salvation.

Through the discussions above, we can see that Calvin includes assurance as an essential element of faith when discussing 'faith'. It turns out that this 'assurance' is not simple knowledge but is connected to a solid and clear knowledge of God's loving kindness towards us.

5.3.3 Summary: 'knowledge' is an essential element that binds Calvin's piety and assurance

As per the discussion above, we know exactly what 'knowledge' Calvin is emphasising when discussing his piety and assurance. In addition, the knowledge emphasised by Calvin is not only an important factor applied to both piety and assurance but ultimately, piety and assurance is found to be tied together through the knowledge of God. Hence, this 'knowledge' is the common denominator between piety and assurance.

Also, the knowledge emphasised in faith is a solid knowledge of God's goodwill toward us. It is because the Holy Spirit seals God's promises within our hearts that we have assurance through

this knowledge. Faith, therefore, includes the functions of the heart, and not just the head. Thus, when faith is called knowledge, it can be said that knowledge is the assurance of the heart, rather than the comprehension of the head.

To summarise this, Calvin's knowledge of faith is the goodwill that God has towards us, that is the certain knowledge of salvation, and also the pious knowledge rather than just a speculative or theoretical knowledge which occurs through the persuasion of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and is therefore a practical knowledge that is directly connected to true practice in life.

From this, we can see that the knowledge of God, defined by Calvin is neither a speculative knowledge of the nature of God, nor a simple agreement with the historical knowledge of Jesus Christ. Rather, the knowledge that Calvin emphasises is an experiential, religious knowledge that can only be received through faith, in which one participates¹⁰¹ in God's goodwill through the sealing of the Holy Spirit and the soteriological knowledge based on the promise of Jesus Christ.

In addition, Calvin shows that knowledge of God or *cognito dei* as used in his Institutes, is a term that can be used instead of faith and piety:

Knowledge of God involves trust and reverence

Our knowledge should serve first to teach us fear and reverence; secondly, with it as our guide and teacher, we should learn to seek every good from him, and having received it, to credit it to his account. the pious mind does not dream up for itself any god it please, but contemplates the one and only true God. And it does not attach to him whatever it please, but it content to hold him to be as he manifests himself. It thus recognizes God because it knows that he governs all things; and trusts that he is its guide and protector, therefore giving itself over completely to trust in him. Because it acknowledges him as Lord and Father, the pious mind also deems it meet and right to observe his authority in all things, reverence his majesty, take care to advance his glory, and obey his commandments. For the pious mind realizes that the punishment of the impious and wicked and the reward of life eternal for the righteous equally pertain to God's glory. Besides, this mind restrains itself from sinning, not out of dread of punishment alone; but, because it loves and reveres God as Father, it worships and adore him as Lord. Even if there were no hell, it would still shudder at offending him alone. Here indeed is pure and real religion: faith so joined with an earnest fear of God that this fear also embraces willing reverence and carries with it such legitimate worship as is prescribed in the

law (Calvin, 1960a:42-43).

Calvin (1960a:41) emphasises that knowledge of God inspires reverence (piety) and trust (faith) towards God. Ultimately, knowledge of God brings forth reverence towards God and this piety will awaken faith. Like this, the true knowledge of God is eventually the meeting of piety and assurance.

In this way, Calvin (1960a:41-43) argued that true knowledge of God is the foundation of piety and faith and that through true piety, true teachings of the Bible becomes ours, and we can truly love God and worship Him properly. It follows that piety and faith in God is the Christian religion, and in Christianity, it is impossible to worship and glorify God without talking about the faith of piety. Our theology and all our lives must be made up on a complete belief that is founded on this assurance of salvation and piety.

In the next section, the core doctrine of the Reformation, the doctrine of justification and the doctrine that brings about the doctrine of justification, union with Christ, will be examined. These doctrines will be examined in light of their interrelationship with piety and assurance, and how this reveals Calvin's theology.

5.4 Union with Christ as the foundation of piety and justification as the sum of all piety

Luther (1955:455) stated the justification doctrine to be the article by which the church either stands or falls, whereas Calvin (1960a:726) expressed justification as the "hinge on which religion turns". In this way, the doctrine of justification was the hottest issue of the Reformation and the watershed which distinguished Reformation theology the most in comparison with the theology of the Roman Catholic Church of the time. Calvin accepted most of Luther's theology of justification by faith, but at that time, in order to defend Reformation theology from the criticism of the Roman Catholic Church that the doctrine did not encourage good works, Calvin further developed the relationship between justification and sanctification in greater detail than Luther. In Calvin's theology of justification and sanctification, the characteristic of the double grace obtained through 'union with Christ' distinguishes him from the other characteristics of Reformed theology of his time. To reiterate, it is a characteristic that can be said to distinguish Calvin's theology from the theology other Reformation theologians. Therefore, before examining 'justification' which is the core theme of Reformed theology, it is necessary to first explore 'union with Christ' which per Calvin, brings about justification. Then, in discussing Calvin's doctrine of justification, its relationship and revelation of Calvin's piety and assurance will be discussed.

5.4.1 The foundation of piety: union with Christ¹⁰²

In Book III of his Institutes, Calvin first discusses faith in chapters 1-3, and then regeneration (sanctification) in chapter 4-10 prior to dealing with the doctrine of justification. It is not until chapter 11 that Calvin first discusses the doctrine of justification which continues until chapter 18. However, before he discusses the doctrine, he first summarises the matters discussed above. His summary is of great assistance in understanding the overall structure of Calvin's theology.

Let us sum these up. Christ was given to us by God's generosity, to be grasped and possessed by us in faith. By partaking of him, we principally receive a double grace: namely, that being reconciled to God through Christ's blamelessness, we may have in heaven instead of a Judge a gracious Father; and secondly, that sanctified by Christ's spirit we may cultivate blamelessness and purity of life (Calvin, 1960a:725).

Before explaining his doctrine of justification, Calvin introduces the dual grace of life which is received through faith. Gaffin (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:250) also emphasises that this summary contains significant implications for Calvin's doctrine of justification.

What Gaffin pays attention to in this summary is firstly, the focus on Christ, on his person (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:252). The importance of the person of Christ here is to emphasise the believers' union with Christ. The second is justification and sanctification which are the double grace that believers obtain through their union with Christ.

Gaffin (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:253) explains that justification, sanctification and union with Christ can be described as a triangulation through the medium of union with Christ. All three of these elements are pointed to serve as points of reference for determining the frame of Christ's thought concerning the application of redemption via Christ.

As per Calvin's description, believers receive the double grace by being unified with Christ, that is, by partaking of him. This double grace being justification and regeneration (sanctification).

Therefore, that joining together of head and members, that indwelling of Christ in our hearts-in short, that mystical union- are accorded by us the highest degree of importance, so that Christ, having been made ours, makes us sharers with him in the gifts with which he has been endowed. We do not therefore, contemplate him outside ourselves from afar in order that his righteousness may be imputed to us but because

we put on Christ and are engrafted into his body- in short, because he deigns to make us one with him (Calvin, 1960a:737).

Here, Calvin (1960a:737) especially regards the mystical union with Christ (*unio mystica*) which brings about justification and sanctification by faith itself, which is declared to be because having been clothed and grafted into Christ's body, we share all gifts given to Him.

In addition, according to Calvin (1960a:732), justification and sanctification obtained through *unio mystica* are inseparable and though they can be distinguished, cannot be detached.

Dantas (Chung, 2009:138) argues that for Calvin, the sanctification process which follows justification is a direct result of the union with Christ, and if justification and sanctification were previously understood to be independent from one another prior to Calvin, then Calvin's great contribution was to establish a doctrine that connected justification and sanctification through the common ground of union with Christ.

The reason why Calvin emphasises the inseparability of justification and sanctification is that these fruits received through union with Christ, are all given by the one Christ. Therefore, if we take hold of the righteousness of Christ by faith, then we cannot help but also take hold of His holiness. Calvin insists that justification and sanctification are inseparable, and furthermore, sanctification must follow without delay to those who are justified.

God justifies not only by pardoning but by regenerating – he asks whether God leaves as they were by nature those whom he justifies, changing none of their vices, This is exceedingly easy to answer; as Christ cannot be torn into parts, so these two which we perceive in him together and conjointly are inseparable-namely, righteousness and sanctification (Calvin, 1960a:732).

Yet you could not grasp this without at the same time grasping sanctification also. For he “is given unto us for righteousness, wisdom, sanctification, and redemption” (1Cor, 1:30). Therefore, Christ justifies no one whom he does not at same time sanctify. These benefits are joined together by an everlasting and indissoluble bond, so that those whom he illumines by his wisdom, he redeems; those whom he redeems, he justifies; those whom he justifies, he sanctifies (Calvin, 1960a:798).

Gaffin (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:253) emphasises two things in Calvin's union with Christ. Firstly,

that union with Christ must precede the double grace of justification and sanctification, and that this double grace is received by partaking of him. Secondly, that through the double grace of union with Christ, justification and sanctification are inseparable.

Garcia (2008:2-4, 218-219) also emphasises that justification and sanctification are “distinct, inseparable and simultaneous” graces that come from union with Christ. Furthermore, he shares Gaffin’s view that union with Christ must come before justification and sanctification.

However, Garcia (2008:146) states that sanctification does not flow from justification. That is, sanctification does not come as a result of justification, nor is piety the cause of sanctification, but sanctification comes only as a result of the double effect of the union with Christ.

This is a key part of Garcia’s argument as it affects the way in which sanctification, good works and obedience is grounded in the Christian life.

According to Garcia, in the Lutheran tradition, salvation tends to be reduced to the grace of justification and sanctification is seen to be the fruit or result of faith (Garcia, 2008:105) and he argues that for Calvin, sanctification is not the result of justification, but the union with Christ is demonstrated to be the root of the believer’s sanctification (Garcia, 2008:255-256).

What Garcia emphasises is the inseparability and simultaneity of justification and sanctification, especially in the believer’s union with Christ. Thus, it is emphasised that sanctification is not given as a result of receiving justification but is the grace of God obtained at the same time through the reality of union with Christ.

In contrast, Fesko (2005:108-109) argues that justification precedes sanctification in Calvin, and that justification is the cause and basis of sanctification. Fesko further argues that union with Christ is logically grounded in justification. Wenger (2007:316) supports Fesko’s perspective, and emphasises union with Christ, calling those such as Gaffin who deny the ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ interactions between justification and sanctification “a new perspective on Calvin’s studies.” Selderhuis (2007:195) also asserts that for Calvin, sanctification comes from justification; “justification is the cause and sanctification the effect.”

In Calvin’s soteriology, the view that denies the logical priority of justification while insisting on the simultaneous effect of justification and sanctification through union with Christ contradicts the view that asserts that justification logically precedes union with Christ and sanctification. In

depth discussion of these conflicting views is outside the scope of this thesis. However, to briefly summarise my views, Calvin held the double grace of justification and sanctification received through union with Christ achieved through faith through the work of the Holy Spirit to be very important. In Calvin's discussion of justification and sanctification, 'union with Christ' plays a key role in Calvin's logical discussion. According to Calvin, justification and sanctification are graces of God obtained at the same time through union with Christ, which can be distinguished but cannot be separated. However, from the viewpoint of the opponents surrounding Calvin at the time, it seems more reasonable to interpret Calvin as expressing the logical sequence of justification and sanctification rather than emphasising the causal relationship that sanctification comes as a result of justification. Nevertheless, what is important in the relationship between justification and sanctification is that justification and sanctification, obtained through the believer's union with Christ, cannot be separated, and the justified person must be sanctified, for to divide the two is to tear Christ apart (Calvin, 1960a:732).

Billings (2011:46) emphasises that in the double grace obtained through union with Christ, justification causes believers to look at Christ, but the grace of sanctification also causes believers to look at only Christ as sanctification too comes through union with Christ. Justification was accomplished by Christ, and sanctification will also be accomplished by Christ.

Billings' view insists that the work of sanctification is much safer and more God-centred to put in Christ than to place it in our efforts. In addition, Billings (2011:65) states that the believer, through union with Christ, participates not only in the grace that Christ gives, but directly in Christ himself. This discussion can be seen to have been taken directly from Calvin.

That Christ is not outside us but dwells within us. Not only does he cleave to us by an indivisible bond of fellowship, but with a wonderful communion, day by day, he grows more and more into one body with us, until he becomes completely one with us (Calvin, 1960a:570-571).

Billings' discussion of direct participation in Christ Himself in relation to his subject of deification is discussed in detail in his book "Calvin, Participation, and the Gift" (Billings, 2007). Billings (2007: 42-64) makes it clear that the essence of Christ is not dwelling in the believer as per Osiander regarding Calvin's discussion of deification, but 'participation' in God through Christ by the Holy Spirit who dwells in the believer.

The 'union with Christ' that Calvin emphasises is that believers participate in Christ Himself, and the other is that we participate in all the blessings Christ has done for us. The former is a

participation in the person of Christ itself, and the latter is a participation in the grace of Christ. The two are again distinct but inseparable. However, Christ is now in heaven when humans are on Earth. So how can participation be possible? According to Calvin, it is possible only through the secret work of the Holy Spirit. According to Calvin (1960a:538), Christ and all his benefits are enjoyed by the operation of the Holy Spirit, and Christ effectively connects us to Himself through the Holy Spirit.

Beeke (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:272) emphasises that the purpose of piety is to glorify God, and that glorifying God is more important than personal salvation for every truly pious person. This goal of giving glory to God is said to be only able to be achieved where the believer is united with Jesus Christ through experiential faith. Therefore, it is emphasised that God-glorifying piety is markedly manifested by believers who recognise that they have been accepted in Christ and have been engrafted into Christ's body. In other words, we can see that 'union with Christ' is the foundation of a life that glorifies God. In addition, Beeke (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:272) quotes Hageman on piety and union with Christ. According to Senn, "For Calvin, piety is rooted in the believer's union with Christ, this union must be our starting point in understanding salvation" (1986:61).

In summarising the above discussions, it can be seen that Calvin's doctrine of 'union with Christ' is an important subject of Calvin's discussion that deals with justification and sanctification simultaneously. Calvin demonstrated his doctrine of justification and sanctification that is achieved through 'union with Christ' to his opponents such as the Roman Catholic Church and Osiander. The 'mystical union with Christ' plays a key role in clearly developing Calvin's discussion of justification and sanctification. In other words, justification and sanctification, which are the double graces obtained through 'union with Christ' through the Holy Spirit by faith, are inseparable, though they can be distinguished, and are graces that believers can obtain at the same time. Therefore, there is no case of obtaining justification but failing to obtain sanctification. To do so and simply seek remission of sins from God while denying sanctification in Christ would be to tear Christ apart (Calvin, 1960a:732).

In this way, the doctrine of 'union with Christ' was the starting point and foundation of piety that could directly explain the gospel to Calvin. And since for Calvin, piety is grounded on the believer's union with Christ, we must take this theme of 'union with Christ' as the starting point when we want to understand salvation correctly.

For Calvin, sanctification is neither the result nor a part of justification. Sanctification, like justification, is the result of union with Christ by faith. For Calvin, justification and sanctification

are two graces of God that have the same value, that is, a twofold grace (*duplex gratia*).

5.4.2 Justification as sum of all piety

As examined in the discussion of the previous section, union with Christ through faith by the work of the Holy Spirit can be expressed as the starting point and core of salvation for Calvin. Union with Christ through faith results in justification for the believer. This doctrine of justification was an important theme for Calvin as well as for the Reformers (Calvin, 1960a:725). Like Luther, Calvin (1960a:811-814) adheres to the doctrine of 'faith alone' as far as justification is concerned. Reid (1980:296) agrees that Calvin emphasises 'faith alone' as much as Luther in his thesis. In fact, if Luther can be regarded to have paved the foundations for the Reformation by developing the doctrine of justification by faith through 'sola fide' and 'sola scriptura', Calvin, who led the late Reformation era can be seen to have formulated the doctrine of justification in the 1540-50s (McGrath, 1993:112).

In his final edition of Institutes, Calvin combines the doctrine of justification by faith that has been developed through previous editions of his Institutes, alongside his commentaries, catechism and sermons to publish the doctrine in chapters 11-18 of Book III, under the theme of "The way in which we receive the grace of Christ" (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:249-250).

Gaffin (Hall & Lillback, 2008: 248) evaluates that these chapters can be seen to be the most complete way in which the doctrine of justification has been dealt with since the first generation of the Reformation. While there were numerous other well treated discussions, none surpassed the doctrine of justification as discussed in Calvin's Institutes.

Pitkin (Selderhuis, 2009:288) writes that the theme of faith and justification undoubtedly occupies a central place in Calvin's thoughts, and his most mature discussion of these themes are in Book III of the final edition of Institutes. In addition, Pitkin (Selderhuis, 2009: 292) argues that the source for Calvin's understanding of this faith and justification was Paul's letter to the Romans. Murray (1959:5-6) notes that the point of focus in Calvin's theory of justification is the doctrine of the imputed righteousness in Christ, and that the imputation of righteousness through union with Christ has a similar structure to the imputation of Adam's original sin as discussed in Romans 5:12-19.

As examined in the previous chapter 4 of this thesis, we can see that Calvin brings about a correct understanding of justification from Paul's argument in his commentary on Romans. In his commentary on Romans, Calvin (1996f:29) regards justification by faith to be the central theme

of Romans. His argument can be seen to be emphasised in his Institutes as well.

Therefore, we must now discuss these matters (Doctrine of Justification) thoroughly, And we must so discuss them as to bear in mind that this is the main hinge on which religion turns, so that we devote the greater attention and care to it. For unless you first of all grasps what your relationship to God is, and the nature of his judgement concerning you, you have neither a foundation on which to establish your salvation nor one on which to build piety toward God (Calvin, 1960a:726).

At the time, Calvin had to argue on two fronts in relation to the doctrine of justification. One was the doctrine of justification as held by the Roman Catholic Church, and the other was the conflict with the Lutheran Osiander. The first issue with the Roman Catholic Church related to justification can be known through his explanation contained in Institutes.

This is the pivotal point of our disputation. except that they include under the term “Justification” a renewal, by which through the Spirit of God we are remade to obedience to the law. Indeed, they so describe the righteousness of the regenerated man that a man once for all reconciled to God through faith in Christ may be reckoned righteous before God by good works and be accepted by the merit of them (Calvin, 1960a:778).

The theology of the Roman Church viewed justification as ‘the process of becoming righteous’ and ‘a certain nature that is infused into the believer’. In other words, it was considered that some substantial change occurred in the human soul (McGrath, 1993:113-118). Although not all theologians of the late Middle Ages had a common, unanimous claim on justification, the claim of the Roman Church was that preliminary work for justification was required and stated to justification to involve an ‘infusion of grace’. In other words, the Roman Catholic Church believed that grace, faith and Christ were all needed for the justification of sinners. However, although they are all certainly necessary, they are not sufficient. That is, while grace is needed for justification, this alone is not enough. Merit (to at least a moderate degree) was also deemed necessary. The Roman Church recognised faith as necessary for justification. This faith is said to be the cornerstone and root of justification. However, in order for justification to take place, good works was also considered to be needed (McGrath, 1993:75-79).

At the time, many scholastic theologians viewed human good works as meritorious (Calvin, 1960a:745). However, Calvin vehemently denied this idea. Calvin did not see justification as actually becoming holy or a process of transformation to become righteous. Rather, by our

mystical union with Christ, by partaking of Him and being grafted into His body, – that is, as He made us one with Him – His righteousness is imputed to us (Calvin, 1960a:737). In addition, Calvin (1960a:728) argues that justification is God's gracious acceptance and forgiveness of sins as based on Paul's Ephesians 1:5-6 and Romans 3:24. This is due to God willingly receiving us into His grace through Christ, and not holding our sins against us. And then, God made Christ who knew no sin, was made sin on our behalf to become the means of reconciliation (II Corinthians 5:18-19). Calvin notes (1960a:187) here that the terms 'reconciliation' and 'justified' are used interchangeably. In other words, Paul uses 'reconciliation' and 'justification' in the same sense (we have already sufficiently covered this discussion in chapter 4).

Calvin (1960a:729) also deals with Osiander's rejection of the notion of Christ's righteousness being imputed to believers. Calvin (1960a: 729) critiques Osiander to have introduced a strange monster of "essential righteousness" in the place of imputation. Osiander (Calvin, 1960a:729-730) believes that God cannot consider righteous those who are not actually or personally righteous. Therefore, we must claim that our justification is not by imputation, but by the infusion of the essence of Christ into us. Calvin's critique of Osiander's theology is that Osiander denies 'the obedience and sacrificial death of Christ' accomplished in Christ's humanity, and that justification is something that has taken place inwardly or that the divinity of Christ has been infused into the believer.

In Calvin's view, there is little difference between being justified by cooperation with an infused righteousness and being justified by the 'essential righteousness' of Christ in the believer. This is as both place the foundation of justification not on the imputation of righteousness through union with Christ but on the inward act that actually makes the person righteous.

Calvin (1960a:729) criticises Osiander's argument as abolishing freely given righteousness, hiding it in a mist, darkening piety and depriving the lively experience of the grace of Christ. According to Calvin, Osiander fundamentally misunderstands the nature of the believer's union with Christ. As Calvin (1960a:719-754) pointed out, Osiander understands the indwelling and infusion of the divine essence of the Holy Spirit ontologically, and undermines the certainty of salvation by taking the basis of union with Christ as something inherent in the believer's soul.

Also, like the Roman Catholics, Osiander confused justification and sanctification and insisted on justification by sanctification rather than justification by faith alone. In contrast, Calvin (1960a:740) argues that believers are given "a righteousness that is outside of them" and that "we who are essentially unrighteous, are regarded righteous in Christ." This regard for humans is considered an official, statutory declaration. Therefore, Calvin's justification excludes any moral

change as well as the merits of believers. However, again, justification is logically distinguished from sanctification, but it cannot be separated. Therefore, unlike the justification of the Roman Catholic Church, there is no moral change in justification itself, but in terms of the double grace of sanctification, which is inseparable from justification, sanctification must follow the justified person.

According to Calvin (1960a:741-742), the justification of sinners before God is because Christ became the righteousness and life for sinners through His death and resurrection, because He fulfilled the requirements of this law (Rom 8:3-4) by making His own flesh a sin offering (Rom. 8:3-4). By this, God the Father, instead of imputing sins to sinners, imputed them to Christ, who knew no sin (Calvin, 1960a:751-752), and the righteousness of Christ's obedience was imputed to sinners, so that they might be justified (Calvin, 1960a:753). When this righteousness and life of Christ are imputed to us, it is through Christ's righteousness that we can stand proudly before God (Calvin, 1960a:793). Thus, we are justified before God only by the mediation of Christ's righteousness.

You see that our righteousness is not in us but in Christ, that we possess it only because we are partakers in Christ, indeed, with him we possess all its riches. ... And this does not contradict what he teaches elsewhere, that sin has been condemned for sin in Christ's flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us [Rom. 8:3-4]. The only fulfillment he alludes to is that which we obtain through imputation. For in such a way does the Lord Christ share his righteousness with us that, in some wonderful manner, he pours into us enough of his power to meet the judgment of God (Calvin, 1960a:753).

In discussing justification, Calvin (1960a:754-755) first emphasises its forensic concept. Since there is judgment of humankind, and that judgment is a fact that takes place in the last days, Calvin emphasised the gospel of salvation only through Christ. The emphasis that justification is possible only through Christ's righteousness, not based on human righteousness, shows the extent to which Calvin denies human righteousness. Before God's Last Judgment, human righteousness is comparatively even more insignificant because it has no effect (Calvin, 1960a:758).

Venema (2007:71) notes of Calvin's emphasis upon the juridical or forensic nature of justification when discussing justification. In particular, Calvin interprets justification as God's "gracious judgment" that accepts believers into God's grace before His judgment seat, and as God's gracious judgment, justification is described as a "complex transaction" involving "the forgiveness of sins and the imputation of Christ's righteousness" (Venema, 2007:72).

In addition, Venema (2007:70-71) also emphasises the priority of justification. It is argued that Calvin clearly gives some priority to justification as the first aspect the double grace of justification and sanctification obtained through union with Christ. Venema advocates that justification can be affirmed in several passages of Calvin's writings that speak of it as a principal aspect of 'the double grace of God.' This is to say that Calvin gave priority to justification. However, Garcia (2008:268) contrastingly emphasises the simultaneity of justification and sanctification, and regards union with Christ that brings about the double grace of justification and sanctification as the more essential element.

Horton (2014a:95-109) asserts that both justification and sanctification is important to Calvin, but that the union with Christ that brings justification and sanctification is the key, and for Calvin, while all three elements are important, ultimately, it is our adoption by God and the Christian life as a banquet that we lead in walking with the Holy Spirit that is made possible by these three elements that is most emphasised.

In fact, while Calvin discussed sanctification before justification in order to emphasise sanctification in response to the Roman Catholic Church's accusation that there was no sanctification in Reformation theology's doctrine of justification during the controversy with the Roman Catholic Church, this certainly does not mean that the doctrine of justification was not important to Calvin. For Calvin however, both justification and sanctification, the double grace obtained through union with Christ, are important, and logically, justification precedes sanctification, but since they are inseparable and concomitant graces, it can be seen reliable to assess the priority of justification as a matter of a priority of logical order, and not a priority for justification in comparison with sanctification.

In sum, Calvin's point in justification is that God imputes rather than infuse righteousness to us via Christ. Our righteousness is in Christ, and not in us. As follows, our possession of righteousness is declared by grace because we are partake in Christ (Calvin, 1960a:753). In terms of God's acceptance of the believer, the righteousness of humans is never of value. Therefore, Calvin (1960a:763-764) argues that "free justification apart from all human works or righteousness," is the way to properly honour and give glory to God, but the righteousness of human works takes away God's honour. Furthermore, the question of assurance is raised here. In other words, the act of relying on oneself, that is, one's works or relying on the power of human faith puts salvation into uncertainty and eventually into despair.

Believers should be convinced that their only ground of hope for the inheritance of a heavenly kingdom lies in the fact that, being engrafted into the body of Christ, they

are freely accounted righteous. For, as regards justification, faith is something merely passive, bringing nothing of ours to the re-covering of God's favor but receiving from Christ that which we lack (Calvin, 1960a:768).

Therefore, we must always remember that the basis of the believer's confidence is not in our works or in our faith, but in Christ. We must always keep in mind that we have been bestowed the double grace of justification and sanctification through our union with Christ through faith by the favour of the merciful God, and that the basis of our justification lies in Christ. Thus Calvin (1960a:726) advocates that the doctrine of justification is “the main hinge on which religion turns”, the main article of the doctrine of salvation, and thus, the sum of all piety (Calvin, 1960a:794).

5.4.3 Calvin's 'justification' and 'good works' as a form of godly life

This section will explore the relationship between Calvin's notion of justification and good works. Leith (1989:87) emphasises that Calvin not only regarded justification as the central doctrine of Christian faith, but also understood it as the substance of piety.

In fact, as Leith (1989:87) points out, for Calvin, justification is the essence of piety. For Calvin, justification and sanctification, which are the double grace of Christ obtained by faith, are the true faith of the believer and the essence of piety that Calvin pursues. In addition, for Calvin, piety is right theology and faith, and piety is the practice of knowing God and the integrity of a Christian life that obeys the Word of God.

The previous section looked at justification. In this section we will consider that although Calvin gives clear theological teachings about 'justification', there is difficulty in Calvin not giving specific theological and doctrinal explanations about piety. However, Calvin mentions the holy life, good works, and sanctification of the believer in his Institutes as the life of 'piety' that the believer pursues. Therefore, by studying how 'good works' and 'sanctification' are interrelated in Calvin's Institutes which focuses on 'justification', the theology of 'piety' that Calvin pursues will be revealed.

As examined above, Calvin thoroughly adhered to the doctrine of “faith alone” when it came to justification. In addition, from beginning to end, Calvin also agreed with Luther's view that justification is the product of God's sovereign love and grace and does not involve any form of human merit. This is true before conversion as well as after conversion. It is true that believers produce good works through the work of the Holy Spirit, but that does not mean that these good works of believers serve as a basis for justification. For Calvin (1960a: 744) good works of

believers are the product of God's grace, but this is imperfect and cannot be presented as the basis for humans to be justified before God's seat of judgement. As iterated above, it is only on the merits of Christ imputed by faith that we can be justified at the judgment seat of God (Calvin, 1960a:726).

Calvin's teachings led to controversy with the Roman Catholic Church, which tried to recognise human acts soteriologically. The argument with Sadoletto¹⁰³ contains the clearest explanation of Calvin's doctrine of justification and good works. Calvin (1960a:772-773) argues that good works are totally worthless as far as justification is concerned. However, he explains that this does not mean that good works are ignored in the doctrine of justification by faith. In response to Sadoletto's question of the harm that would come to Christ if good works are neglected under an excuse of grace, Calvin gives a very clear answer.

We deny that good works have any share in justification, but we claim full authority for them in the lives of the righteous. For, if he who has obtained justification possesses Christ, and, at the same time, Christ never is where his spirit is not, it is obvious that gratuitous righteousness is necessarily connected with regeneration. (Calvin & Dillenberger, 1975:97).

Calvin gives no soteriological credit to good works in justification, but he does not devalue the value of good works. Thus, Calvin emphasises to Sadoletto that God wants to receive the good works of believers and that such works are for the glory of God.

I answer that Paul, whenever he attributes to it the power of justifying at the same time restricts it to a gratuitous promise of the divine favor, and keeps it far removed from all respect to works. Hence his familiar inference-if by faith, then not by works. On the other hand – if by works, then not by faith. But, it seems, injury is done to Christ, if, under the pretence of his grace, good works are repudiated; he having come to prepare a people acceptable to God, zealous of good works, while, to the same effect, are many similar passages which prove that Christ came in other than we, doing good works, might through him, be accepted by God (Calvin & Dillenberger, 1975:96-97).

Calvin (1960a:798) does not dream of faith without good works nor justification maintained without good works. That is why justification on the basis of faith alone is inseparable from a life of piety manifested in good works.

Calvin (1960a:811) argues that the inseparability of faith and works, or between justification and sanctification, is also based on the believer's union with Christ by faith. It then follows that he defines justification and, within such, brings up good works.

But we define justification as follows: the sinner, received into communion with Christ, is reconciled to God by his grace, while, cleansed by Christ's blood, he obtains forgiveness of sins, and clothed with Christ's righteousness as if it were his own, he stands confident before the heavenly judgment seat. After forgiveness of sins is set forth, the good works that now follow are appraised otherwise than on their own merit (Calvin, 1960a:811).

Why does Calvin suddenly bring up the subject of good works after defining justification, saying that good works that follow after forgiveness of sins are evaluated from a different standpoint, and not by their own value?

As noted above, prior to discussing justification, Calvin first dealt with sanctification and good works from chapters 3 to 10 of Book III of Institutes, and from chapters 11 through 16, he gave an authoritative opinion on justification. Then, after discussing justification in chapters 17 to 19, he returns to good works.

Why did Calvin have to emphasise the right understanding of justification and the necessity of good works? We can find that the discussion of sanctification before justification which comes down to two necessities, eventually converge as a structure to ultimately understand good works. Through this structure, what Calvin logically emphasised about good works can be discovered.

Calvin first establishes that receiving justification is not associated with good works. This eventually is used to refute the criticism of the Roman Catholic Church by showing that justification is not based on good works. However, on the other hand, it explains that justification is paradoxically linked to the problem of good works. That is, justification does not lead believers to a life without good works. Calvin tried to make it clear that although we are justified free of charge through the grace of Christ, this justification is linked to sanctification and thus causes good works. By properly defining good works in this way, Calvin also sought to block the criticism of the Roman Catholic Church that justification by faith abolishes good works.

In arguing with Roman Catholic Church, Calvin needed a right correction against their attacks that the doctrine of justification of Reformed theology excluded good works. Thus Calvin

(1960a:622-689) rightly arranges repentance (sanctification) and good works to follow the arguments against the erroneous doctrines and errors of the Roman Church. Also, Calvin (1960a:797-801) refutes the Roman Catholic Church's accusation of ignoring good works. This can be said to be a structure in which 'good works' surrounds 'justification' which is achieved by faith alone.

In consideration of this context, for Calvin, while good works do not bring justification (criticism of the merit doctrine of the Roman Church), he is highlighting that the lives of those who are justified before God necessarily accompany good works and sanctification (the refute against the claim there is no good works in justification by faith).

As such, Gaffin's claim regarding justification and good works is very convincing. Gaffin (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:255) argues that God's mercy alone justifies us freely does not amount to a lack of good works. Further, he insists that we must actively observe that the faith that sanctifies, and the faith that operates the holy life is the same faith that justifies, and simultaneously, that "this does not mean that faith justifies because it sanctifies or...functions in sanctification." (Hall & Lillback, 2008:255). Although faith as a justifying faith, and as a sanctifying faith are the same, the role of faith as an instrument through which we can receive justification is a distinct feature of Calvin's theology which Gaffin emphasises.

Thus, this is to emphasise the connection between justification and sanctification. In other words, his assertion that the faith that justifies sanctifies and operates in good works being the one and same faith, and that this faith is closely interrelated with a godly life and good deeds is to show that he has a correct understanding of Calvin's doctrine of faith and good works.

For Calvin (1960a:798), justification and sanctification are forever linked by an unbreakable bond. This is believed to accompany the whole process of the believer's life of faith. Therefore, according to Calvin, one cannot experience only justification without sanctification and cannot be saved only with justification and not sanctification. Calvin clearly teaches that our being made righteous (justification) is not through our action (good works) but this does not necessitate that our justification stands without good works, as our being made righteous (justification) through union with Christ includes a life of sanctification.

Thus, it is clear how true it is that we justified not without works yet not through works, since in our sharing in Christ, which justifies us, sanctification is just as much included as righteousness (Calvin, 1960a:798).

Calvin did not specifically talk about ‘works’ in great detail,¹⁰⁴ but when viewed in light of the Roman Catholic Church’s rebuttal to Reformed theology’s justification by faith to exclude good works, the terms of believers’ sanctification, good deeds, and piety, can all be used interchangeably without issue.

As J. O Buswell (1962:270-271) pointed out, Calvin's use of sanctification (regeneration) is different from that of other Reformed theology’s doctrines. Calvin (1960a:595) does not see regeneration as an instantaneous change, but understands it as a long journey of Christians striving to fight sin and reach holiness and to restore the image of God. Therefore, sanctification is not treated as a doctrine separate from justification, but is viewed as a continuous development of justification and a practice of repentance (Calvin, 1960a:769).¹⁰⁵ The topic of sanctification will be covered in greater detail in section 5.5. What is clear is that for Calvin, sanctification, good works, pursuit of holiness, and piety were used with the same meaning. For Calvin, although justification was the main point and core doctrine of the Reformation, it was not itself the goal of religious life, but the foundation and starting point of true piety. Calvin's practical interest was a holy life before God, that is, piety.

Through this, we can see that although good works do not constitute the merits of justification, as justification through union with Christ is inseparable from sanctification, and the two graces of justification and sanctification are bonded together through Christ, those who have been justified must simultaneously be inclined towards holiness (sanctification). In this way, Calvin’s doctrine of justification does not weaken the relevance of good works as suggested by the criticism of the Roman Catholic Church. Rather, it establishes that it is the only basis for true piety. In addition, it can be confirmed that the believer's good works are the fruit of justification, and that justification is connected with piety.

5.4.4 Summary: the position of justification as a common element of Calvin’s piety and assurance

Through the discussion above, we have seen that saving faith, that is assurance brought about through the work of the Holy Spirit and union with Christ brings justification and good works. Further, it can be confirmed that both assurance and justification are directed toward Christ. As such, it can be seen that Calvin's subjects of saving faith and justification have a structure that is clearly and logically connected in his Institutes.

Above all else, Calvin (1960a:726) states that justification, the righteousness we feely obtain through faith alone by merch of God, is the foundational basis upon which we can build piety

towards God. For Calvin, the basis of piety was the doctrine of justification. For Calvin, justification itself is not the goal of a life of faith. Calvin's practical interest can be said to be a holy life before God, sanctification and piety. Thus, justification is the foundation and starting point of true piety. It rather promotes good works and emphasises that justification alone is the only basis for true piety. Putting these things together, Calvin's piety is the goal of justification, and the fruit of believers who have experienced justification.

5.5 ‘Sanctification’: the components of ‘piety’ and ‘assurance’

In this part, the connection between ‘sanctification’ to ‘piety’ and ‘assurance’ for Calvin will be examined. In truth, for Calvin, justification and sanctification are logically distinguishable concepts yet empirically indistinguishable concepts. However, following Calvin's logic, ‘justification’ and ‘sanctification’ are examined separately. In this part, following justification, sanctification will be investigated in relation to piety and assurance which are the main themes of this thesis.

Sanctification was a critical subject for which the Reformed Church was criticised by the Roman Catholics during the Reformation. The Roman Catholic Church rejected the doctrine of justification by faith, a critical doctrine of the Reformed Church, that one can be saved only by ‘*sola fide*’ without merit and good works, under the pretext that good works are discarded. However, as established above, for Calvin, the doctrine of justification is not a doctrine which weakens sanctification and good works, but rather includes sanctification in justification, and supports good works. In following, the interrelationship between sanctification and piety and assurance will be explored.

5.5.1 Calvin’s piety and sanctification

As noted above, for Calvin, ‘piety’, ‘sanctification’, and ‘good works’ are all terms belonging to the same concept. For Calvin, good works are mainly dealt with in sanctification, and in practice, good works and sanctification are used without distinction or are used almost synonymously.¹⁰⁶ For Calvin, ‘good works’ can be understood as ‘the fruit of sanctification’, and the life of ‘sanctification’ and ‘good works’ in front of God can be said to be the life of ‘piety’ that he pursues – thus, after dealing with sanctification (regeneration and repentance) from chapter 3 to 5 of Book III of Institutes, he discusses the life of piety and the actual form of sanctification under the theme of “Life of a Christian” from chapters 6 to 10.

This section will first examine Calvin’s ‘sanctification’ theologically and analyse the lives of

believes that sanctification pursues to uncover the life of piety pursued by Calvin.

As it continues to be reiterated, Calvin distinguishes between justification and sanctification, but does not separate them. This can be said to be the most important point that shows that Calvin did not fall into the syncretism of the Roman Catholic Church and constituted a more developmental recognition of Luther's theory of justification by faith. In this context, Calvin treats sanctification as 'good works' as a continuing development of justification. The point Calvin is trying to make in 'good works' is that just as we are justified by God's grace, our good works are equally due to God. The point of Calvin's (1960a:772) argument is that since good works are possible only by God's grace, the righteousness of works cannot be asserted.

However, the emphasis on God's grace in Calvin's theory of sanctification is to reject the Roman Catholic Church's idea of merit, but by no means to neglect sanctification, including human good works, as the fruit of faith. Calvin asserts that justification and sanctification are inseparable, and that sanctification must follow without delay to those who are justified.

Yet you could not grasp this without at the same time grasping sanctification also. For he "is given unto us for righteousness, wisdom, sanctification, and redemption" (1Cor, 1:30). Therefore, Christ justifies no one whom he does not at same time sanctify. These benefits are joined together by an everlasting and indissoluble bond, so that those whom he illumines by his wisdom, he redeems; those whom he redeems, he justifies; those whom he justifies, he sanctifies (Calvin, 1960a:798).

Sanctification, like justification, is the result of union with Christ by faith. For Calvin, justification and sanctification are two graces of God that have the same value, that is, twofold grace (*duplex gratia*).

If justification is the forgiveness of our sins granted as a result of our union with Christ through faith and reconciliation with God, sanctification is repentance as a result of faith. For Calvin, sanctification is regeneration and repentance. In general, Reformed theology distinguishes between regeneration and repentance. Furthermore, in the Order of Salvation, regeneration is placed before faith (Berkhof, 2009:99-110). By distinguishing regeneration from sanctification, regeneration is seen as an instantaneous change and sanctification is understood as a process. However, Calvin sees regeneration as repentance and as a lifelong process of forming the image of God in the believer's life, including sanctification. Thus, in chapter 3 of Book III, which deals with regeneration, we can see that repentance is discussed more than regeneration.

Calvin (1960a:613) claims that the gospel is contained under two headings: repentance and forgiveness; Furthermore, he insists that the doctrines of repentance (sanctification) and forgiveness (justification) are bound together in the gospel of salvation, and that repentance is sanctification.

Now if it is true—a fact abundantly clear – that the whole of the gospel is contained under these two headings, repentance and forgiveness of sins, do we not see that the Lord freely justifies his own in order that he may at the same time restore them to true righteousness by sanctification of his Spirit? (Calvin, 1960a:618).

Repentance can be said to be a term and concept that Calvin likes. For Calvin (1960a:595), repentance is not one-off, but refers to the entire process of a sinner turning toward God and gradually becoming holy. Calvin sees repentance not only as the starting point of the Christian life, but as the whole of the Christian life. Above all, for Calvin (1960a:597), repentance is turning the direction of our life towards God, and it consists in the modification of our flesh and ‘of the old man’, and in the invigoration of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, Calvin (1960a:601) emphasises that repentance is regeneration and that the only purpose of repentance is to restore the image of God. Thus, when Calvin explains justification and sanctification, he stresses that those he accepts into His grace (righteousness) is simultaneously bestowed the spirit of adoption (Rom 8:15), and through the power this spirit, transforms believers according to His own image (sanctification).

As such, the repentance that Calvin emphasises is not simply a subjective change and simple confession of sins by lips, but a complete life change and the work of God found only in Jesus Christ through the gift of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. It is also a journey to holiness that believers must practice throughout their whole lives. Thus, Calvin stresses repentance among the elements of sanctification. Unfortunately, however, most Christians rarely experience a complete life change through repentance, and few know that repentance is God's work that comes from God Himself. In particular, the Korean Church tends to understand repentance as a subjective experience related to the forgiveness of sins due to the influence of revivalism and pietism, and there is a widespread tendency to think that confession of the lips is the whole of repentance.

Wallace (1982:95) evaluates that as the Roman Church saw repentance as an external cultivation, keeping the external aspects of repentance separate from internal renewal, keeping such circumstances in mind, Calvin emphasised the internal aspect of repentance whilst screening its external aspect. Of course, Calvin opposed the requirements of the Roman Church; that is, the external conditions and formalities such as fasting, prayer, almsgiving, and penance after

confessing to a priest. Therefore, it is true that Calvin emphasised the internal rather than the external aspect of the meaning of repentance, but Calvin's repentance is not divided into internal renewal and external discipline, but rather a lifelong process of deeply recognizing sin, turning to God, and struggling against sin with all our heart to restore God's image. Dantas understands that 'sanctification' for Calvin is primarily applied to the 'conversion' of a Christian and secondly belongs to the 'growth of a Christian' (Chung, 2009:138). In that respect, Dantas' perspective can be evaluated as having a better understanding of Calvin's discussion.

Parker (1995:87) argues that the reason why Calvin used the law to extensively deal with 'the fruit of repentance' in *Institutes* is that the 'fruit of repentance' is 'piety towards God' and 'charitas toward human' and holiness and purity in the whole life. To reiterate, the life of piety towards God and good works toward human beings is insisting that those who have truly regenerated must bear this fruit through the course of their lives. This is to show the characteristics of the fruits of repentance (sanctification) that must be pursued through all areas of the believer's life. Reverence for God, love for people, and a life that pursues sanctification and holiness in the entire life of a believer; this is the true sanctification and piety that Calvin pursues.

Leith (1989) published his Ph.D Thesis on Calvin's theology of sanctification as a book. titled "John Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life", and this publication on Calvin's sanctification theology reflects well on Calvin's intentions. There is no title that better understands and reflects Calvin's intention for sanctification; for Calvin, the life of a true Christian includes more than simple rules of conduct. Further, above all, the life of sanctification that believers truly pursue means following Christ according to His Word in all areas of life, including the home, church, society, and nation. This includes holiness in life, self-denial in dealing with God and others, patience in suffering, hope in the life to come, and the correct use of the present life. In that sense, Leith's title, "Christian life", encompasses all these things. Calvin's sanctification includes piety. Calvin's piety is ultimately the believer's life of sanctification. In this way, Calvin's piety and sanctification can be likened to fraternal twins who share the same DNA.

5.5.2 Calvin's assurance and sanctification

This section will explore 'assurance' and 'sanctification'. As seen above, primarily, sanctification is one of justification and sanctification, that is, the double grace, obtained through union with Christ through faith. Therefore, the fact that faith and sanctification are closely connected can be said to have been sufficiently discussed above without further need for explanation here. As such, this section will deal with other issues when discussing sanctification and assurance.

In Reformed theology, the predominate issue that arises in discussion of assurance and sanctification is the question of, “Can good works be the evidence of election and the basis for assurance of salvation” in relations to the life of a believer and their good works. Put more directly, that is, “Can a believer’s good works be evidence of salvation?”

The starting point of this dilemma can be seen to have been from Calvin’s discussion of correcting the errors of the scholastic theologians regarding the certainty of faith. The scholastics held that God’s favour toward humans can be known only by moral judgment, according to whether each person thinks themselves worthy of grace. However, Calvin (1960a:585) states that he will discuss this issue elsewhere.¹⁰⁷ Calvin as promised continues this discussion in Book III, Chapter 15. He asserts that the boasting of the merits of works destroys the praise of God who gave us justification and the assurance of salvation (1960a:788). Therefore, Calvin states,

therefore, when we rule out reliance upon works, we mean only this: that the Christian mind may not be turned back to the merit of works as to a help toward salvation but should rely wholly on the free promise of righteousness (Calvin, 1960a:785).

However, Calvin (1960a:785) immediately goes on to state that he does not forbid the believer from strengthening and consolidating this faith by the signs of God’s grace toward him.

This discussion from Calvin resulted in the divergence of positions that Calvin views believers can have “assurance” as evidence of salvation through good works which are signs of grace (Calvin’s theology has a practical syllogism) and conversely the view that according to Calvin, there is no practical syllogism. In fact, this issue has been the subject of inconclusive debate, beginning with the later Puritans and remaining to this present day (Muller, 2012:245-246). This problem is often called the ‘practical syllogism (*sylogismus practicus*)’. Of course, the term ‘practical syllogism’ does not appear anywhere in Calvin’s work.

It is difficult to deal with this debate in this scope of this chapter. However, the positions taken by major Calvin scholars will be briefly introduced, and through a focus on the grounds presented in Institutes, the relationship between believers’ good works and assurance will be studied in development of Calvin’s argument. Through this study, the relationship between Calvin’s idea of good works and assurance, and what he wanted to emphasise in this discussion should be naturally uncovered.

Muller (2012:244) notes that the question of how the Practical Syllogism¹⁰⁸ relates to the

believer's good works and the issue of assurance is a matter that must be reviewed, even if it is not a very urgent issue. This case was also one of the issues that later caused controversy about the relationship between Calvinism and later Reformed theology.

With respect to the believer's good works and assurance, Niesel (1980:178-181) asserts that Calvin expressed the view that good works are not conducive to assurance. He argues that Calvin never taught anything like practical syllogism, and indeed opposed ideas in which election reflected some human calculation of salvation with respect to assurance (Muller, 2012:247).

The later views of Barth also agrees with Niesel's. It is the position that syllogism prescribes good works as the basis for assurance, but the syllogism can be used as a basis for assurance that is not related to Christ (Muller, 2012:247).¹⁰⁹ Klooster (1977:51) follows Niesel's views and denies that Calvin's theology included practical syllogism but recognises that Calvin included works in the matter of assurance. Kendall (1979b:24-28) argues that Calvin only emphasised grace, and that good works were emphasised by the later Puritans, good works having not been conducive to assurance.

In contrast, Beeke (1999:67, 72) concludes that Calvin did not deny that good works are conducive to assurance because they strengthen faith. Calhoun (2016:197) argues that Calvin does not speak of faith lacking good works or of justification standing without good works. Wallace (1982:301) also argues that we can be helped to gain by the evidences of God's favour toward us as manifested by our good works. McGrath (1990:240) argues that Calvin regarded the good works to be able to be evidence of the salvation of believers, testimony that God dwells in us, and the basis of assurance.

The division between scholars on Calvin is thus visible. One group, led by Niesel is of the opinion that Calvin did not claim that assurance can be proved through good works, that is, a practical syllogism on the matter of assurance and good works. The other group, consisting of Beeke, argue that Calvin left room for the possibility of good works evincing assurance. Furthermore, in the middle, there are those who deny that Calvin had a practical syllogism, but that Calvin stood in the position that good works can help evince the basis of assurance.

As seen above, Calvin clearly states that believers do not stand justified without works, but are not justified by works; that the good works of believers necessarily follow justification but do not contribute to it. Further, Calvin reminded us that sinners cannot be justified by their works, stating we must look to God's seat of judgement in order to be sure of his justification which is given freely.

The gravity of God's judgment puts an end to all self-deception

This is the truth. Awakened consciences, when they have to do with God's judgement, recognize this as the only safe haven in which they can securely breathe. For if the stars, which seem so very bright at night, lose their brilliance in the sight of the sun, what do we think will happen even to the rarest innocence of man when it is compared with God's purity? (Calvin, 1960a:758).

Calvin (1960a:777) goes as far to say that as even stars are not pure in the sight of God, not even the works of saints before God's judgement will be met with a fair reward without being put to shame. This is to mean that there is no possibility to look at one's own actions and be sure of salvation as a result. Thus, those including Niesel, who argue that Calvin had no practical syllogism assert as such.

However, looking at Calvin's other discussions, this is not a problem that can be easily resolved. In reality, nothing we do can in itself make us acceptable and pleasing to God. Calvin (1960a:780) stresses that the act of humans itself cannot please God until we have been clothed in Christ's righteousness and obtained forgiveness. Moreover, it is Calvin's logic that believers should look only at God's mercy without looking back at their works when it comes to seeking and establishing their own salvation (Calvin, 1960a:785).

Nevertheless, Calvin emphasises that the good works of believers are given to us by the spirit of adoption,¹¹⁰ and that we can gain assurance again by looking at the "fruits of regeneration" that dwell within us (Calvin, 1960a:785).

...but are of value only when taken a posteriori, For there is nowhere that fear which is able to establish full assurance. And the saints are conscious of possessing only such an integrity as intermingled with many vestiges of flesh. But since they take the fruits of regeneration as proof of the indwelling of Holy Spirit, from this they are greatly strengthened to wait for God's help in all their necessities, seeing that in this very great matter they experience him as Father (Calvin, 1960a:786).

Further, Calvin says that when believers look back on their 'good works', they do not regard anything as coming from them, and they do not attribute any merit to their works, no matter how wonderful they are. However, he (1960a:786) follows immediately that the conduct of believers is a gift from God that recognises His goodness and is a sign of their calling to know that they are

chosen.

Based on Calvin's discussion, it can be seen that the good works of believers do not come from believers but serve as a sign of God's chosen calling. Then, following Calvin's argument, the main issue in his soteriology is "Can God's good works really be my good deeds?" Put differently, that is, "Are the good works of believers good?"

Thus, we can understand this to be why Calvin has brought about and discussed the doctrine of double justification.

Calvin (1960a:806-807) discusses the doctrine of 'twofold acceptance' and 'double justification' in Book III, Chapter 17. He asserts that believers receive the righteousness of Christ from God and enjoy two graces. One is 'justification', which is recognised as righteous by faith, and the other is a discussion of the righteousness of deeds in which one's actions are also recognised as righteous before God.

After forgiveness of sins is set forth, the good works that now follow are appraised otherwise than on their own merit. For everything imperfect in them is covered by Christ's perfection, every blemish or spot is cleansed away by his purity in order not to be brought in question at the divine judgment. Therefore, after the guilt of all transgressions that hinder man from bringing forth anything pleasing to God has been blotted out, and after the fault of imperfection, which habitually defiles even good works, is buried, the good works done by believers are accounted righteous, or, what is the same thing, are reckoned as righteousness (Rom.4:22) (Calvin, 1960a:811-812).

Here, the righteousness of a believer's works is imperfect in itself, tainted with sin, and mixed with various evils, but if the justified believer does it in faith, God accepts it as righteous.

A work begins to be acceptable only when it is undertaken with pardon. Now whence does this pardon arise, save that God contemplates us and our all in Christ? Therefore, as we ourselves, when we have been engrafted in Christ, are righteous in God's sight because our iniquities are covered in Christ's sinlessness, so our works are righteous and are thus regarded because whatever fault is otherwise in them is buried in Christ's purity and is not charged to our account (Calvin, 1960a:813).

If the believer is accepted for the sheer mercy of God, the Holy Spirit produces good works in us, and this too is accepted. Calvin's doctrine of double acceptance overlaps with the double knowledge of God and the double grace received through union with Christ. The twofold nature can be regarded as Calvin's preferred method of logical thought.

Therefore, the value of a believer's good works comes from God's grace. God gives good works to believers, calls them ours, and testifies that he not only accepts them, but also rewards them for them (1960a:790). Even the good works of believers are incomplete if they based on the works alone. However, God justifies us first by the righteousness of Christ, and then the believer's good works are justified.

Furthermore, in Chapter 18 of Institutes, we can see that Calvin continues to encourage the good works of believers.

For good works are likened to the riches we shall enjoy in the blessedness of eternal life. ... But if we believe heaven is our country, it is better to transmit our possessions thither than to keep them here where upon our sudden migration they would be lost to us. But how shall we transmit them? Surely, by providing for the needs of the poor; whatever is paid out to them, the Lord reckons as given to himself (cf. Matt. 25:40).He, as he is a faithful custodian, will one day repay it with plentiful interest (Calvin, 1960a:827).

Calvin compares the good works we do in this world with the riches we will enjoy in the future. If we do good deeds here, it is like laying up wealth in the kingdom of heaven. As a concrete practice, Calvin gives an example of helping the poor.

Calvin, a second-generation Reformer, tried to solve the problem of good works from the perspective of the theology of sanctification rather than the theology of justification. He saw that justification is not in works but in faith, whereas on the other hand, he recognised that faith and good works must be firmly combined from the standpoint of sanctification theology. For Calvin (1960a:686-687), good works are a sign of thankfulness of saved believers recognising justification as God's election. Here, Calvin asserts that humans' justification comes only through faith and through God's mercy, but that faith arouses lives that produce good works. Therefore, per Calvin's theology, good works is not a meritorious cause that brings about faith, but rather, true faith can be said to be a vehicle that induces good works (Calvin, 1960a:785).

Summarising the results of the discussion so far, firstly, in Calvin's theology, works have no place

in the basis of salvation. However, this is only as to the motive of justification, and Calvin cannot fathom a Christian life without piety and good works.

Second, good works do have an essential place in justification as evidence of true faith. Therefore, Calvin does not consider faith without good works. When there are no good works, faith is dead and does not bring justification. And God gives signs (good works) of grace to strengthen the believer's faith.

Third, since good works are given to believers by the spirit of adoption, Calvin does not forbid faith being strengthened by good works.

Fourth, the righteousness of a believer's works is imperfect in itself, but the reason why good works are counted as the believer's righteousness is that when a justified believer works by faith, God completely accepts them to be righteous.

Fifth, good works testify that the justified believer remains in Christ. However, for assurance of election and salvation, we must not rely on good works, but on Christ alone.

Sixth, Calvin urges justified believers to continue to strive for good works in their lives. Simultaneously, good deeds are regarded as wealth stored in heaven, and the example of helping the poor in particular shows Calvin's interest in social issues. Overall, it can be seen that Calvin takes a positive stance on good works.

‘Can good works be proved to be evidence of election for Calvin?’, or ‘Can good works be grounds for assurance?’ In sum of the above discussions, for Calvin, good works can be said to be positive because they testify that justified believers remain in Christ. What is certain is that for Calvin, good works are an image of piety that must come out in the lives of justified believers. For true faith does not exclude good works, and for Calvin, good works are evidence of true faith. At the same time, it can be said that it is the right practice of faith and piety that strengthens the believer's faith.

Finally, looking at Calvin's exhortations on sanctification, we can see that the process that believers must walk on throughout their lives is a long journey of piety. Two things can be found through this exhortation. The first is that the process of sanctification is difficult and slow, in which believers must constantly fight against sin. Therefore, even if the process is slow, believers should not be discouraged and give up their efforts. The second is that believers will be comforted

by the fact that they are in God's grace by seeing themselves grow and mature steadily while living a life of good works and piety with a sincere and simple heart (assurance).

But no one in this earthly prison of the body has sufficient strength to press on with due eagerness, and weakness so weighs down the greater number that, with wavering and limping and even creeping along the ground, they move at a feeble rate. Let each one of us, then, proceed according to the measure of his puny capacity and set out upon the journey we have begun. No one shall set out so inauspiciously as not daily to make some headway, though it be slight. Therefore, let us not cease so to act that we may make some unceasing progress in the way of the Lord. And let us not despair at the slowness of our success; for even though attainment may not correspond to desire, when today out-strips yesterday the effort is not lost. Only let us look toward our mark with sincere simplicity and aspire to our goal; not fondly flattering ourselves, nor excusing our own evil deeds, but with continuous effort striving toward this end: that we may surpass ourselves in goodness until we attain to goodness itself. It is this, indeed, which through the whole course of life we seek and follow. But we shall attain it only when we have cast off the weakness of the body and are received into full fellowship with him (Calvin, 1960a:689).

5.5.3 Summary: 'sanctification' - Calvin's life of sanctification as a common goal of piety and assurance

For Calvin, sanctification is regeneration and repentance. In particular, Calvin discusses repentance more than regeneration. For Calvin, repentance is not a one-time event, but refers to the lifelong process of a believer's life in which a sinner turns toward God and gradually becomes holy. For this reason, Calvin sees repentance not as a simple confession of one's sins with their lips, but as a complete change of life toward God, as well as the starting point of piety and the entire process of piety. Above all else, Calvin emphasises self-denial in the process of sanctification, which includes the attitude toward one's neighbour. This shows us how Calvin's piety extends to social responsibility. Therefore, Calvin's sanctification is connected to a life of piety toward God and good deeds toward human beings, and he insists that those who have truly regenerated (sanctified) bear fruit of piety through the process of their life. In conclusion, Calvin's theology of sanctification is a lifelong journey of pious faith that believers must pursue and follow.

In addition, in relation to the themes of assurance and sanctification, it is difficult to easily conclude that Calvin does or does not deal with practical syllogism. This is as Calvin himself does not speak of practical syllogism. However, upon study of his Institutes and his works, we can

ascertain the main points that Calvin stressed. It is an undeniable fact that Calvin's theology was shaped in the historical context and environment that surrounded him. In refutation of the merit theology that the Roman Catholic Church emphasised, the doctrine of justification by faith alone was established, but on the other hand, in response to the critique that the Reformed doctrine of justification abolishes good works, it can be seen that Reformed theology developed the theology of good works that does not neglect good works. Calvin firmly insists that good works cannot be attributed to justification. Nevertheless, Calvin insists that justification does not abolish the believer's good works, but rather that good works strengthen the believer's faith (Calvin, 1960a:784-785). And because good works occupies an essential position in justification as evidence of true faith, Calvin does not think of faith without good works. In addition, Calvin asserts that good works induce God's favour to believers (Calvin, 1960a:787-788), and even emphasises that God is pleased with the good works of the regenerated (Calvin, 1960a:801). Therefore, it can be seen that Calvin considers good works as the piety of believers born from the fruits of true faith and sanctification which those who have been justified must continue to practice throughout their lives.

5.6 Conclusion

Throughout the above analysis, Calvin's piety and assurance was examined in greater detail through focus on Calvin's final edition of *Institutes*. In this chapter, a closer look at his central thoughts, 'piety' and 'assurance', how these themes are related to his theology and life, and his claims were closely studied.

First of all, Calvin's theology cannot be accurately understood without knowing the context of the attacks and criticisms made by the Roman Catholic Church at the time. Calvin as a second-generation Reformer, confronted the criticisms of the Roman Catholic Church which refuted Luther's justification by faith, and we can see that he organised his theological work on the issues they argued in a logical, meticulous and detailed manner in *Institutes*. Calvin's theology was not merely a speculative and idealistic theology, but a practical theology. Calvin was a refugee, an immigrant expelled from the city of Geneva, and above all, his theology was shaped in the face of direct theological criticism from the Roman Catholic. Therefore, his theology can be said to be a thoroughly empirical, pastoral, and practical theology that confronts the times and reality. In addition, in the way he returned to Geneva despite the risk, it can be said that his 'piety' is not just one of the lips, but the true piety of offering his heart and his whole life. Therefore, it was once again revealed that the most important themes in Calvin's life, 'piety' and 'assurance', were concepts that have been melted into his theology.

Secondly, Calvin primarily reveals an accurate definition of faith through the true knowledge of God against the blind faith and false beliefs of the Roman Church. Calvin insists on the idea of God's 'double grace' that the right faith obtained through the work of the Holy Spirit unites the believer in a mystical union with Christ and obtains justification and sanctification. 'Union with Christ' and 'double grace' are sophisticated theological themes that Calvin refined more logically than the Reformation theology of his time. Ultimately, the knowledge of God, justification, and sanctification as emphasised by Calvin all converge into his 'piety'. Not only are all these sound doctrines closely related to Calvin's central themes of piety and assurance, but these sound doctrines have been demonstrated to be all oriented towards piety. And for Calvin, 'justification', 'sanctification', 'good works', and 'piety' are commonly used terms often referring to the same concept. In this way, Calvin's theology integrates doctrine and life, with theology and piety, and consistently illustrates the usefulness or benefits that each doctrine provides for us in the Christian life.

Thirdly, the important part of Calvin's theology that he has contributed is the emphasis on 'justification', 'sanctification' obtained through double grace received through union with Christ and 'good works'. This ultimately reveals a central thought of Calvin's that is also related to his piety. Here, it is demonstrated that Calvin's justification and sanctification can be distinguished through the doctrine of union with Christ, but logically concluded that sanctification without justification and vice versa, cannot exist. In other words, by asserting that the justified must and immediately bear the fruits of sanctification, Calvin refuted the criticisms of the Roman Catholic Church and strengthened Reformed theology. It can be said that this is still a valid application to this day. Although it will be dealt with in Chapter 6, the problem that the Korean Church is facing right now is that ethics are missing in the life of believers due to the distortion of the doctrine of justification by faith, and the life of sanctification and good works is not visible. The correct application of Calvin's theology is expected to give many insights to the Korean church.

The fourth is the scope of the doctrine of sanctification. The general idea that believers have about 'sanctification' is focused on the believer's inner, personal, and transcendent faith. However, Calvin confirms that the scope of sanctification goes beyond personal and internal faith centred on the church and includes great social responsibility. Therefore, the piety emphasised by Calvin does not stop at ascetic, personal, and transcendental faith. Rather, the regenerated believer is responsible for doing good, justice to his neighbours and society and serving them with the love of Christ. Therefore, the piety that Calvin speaks of is active participation in all creation, society, culture, and even politics and the state. This is the true image of piety that Calvin puts forth.

NOTES

⁹⁰ For a more in-depth study of Calvin's assurance, see: Beeke, J.R. 1999. *The Quest for Full Assurance: The Legacy of Calvin and His Successors*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Banner of Truth.; Gamble, R.C. 1992. *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism: Influences upon Calvin and discussion of the 1559 Institutes*. New York: Garland Pub.; Kendall, R.T. 1979. *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*. London, Oxford: Oxford University Press.; Lane, A.N.S. 1979. *Calvin's Doctrine of Assurance*. *Vox Evangelica*:32-54.; Muller, R.A. 2012. *Calvin and the Reformed Tradition: On the Work of Christ and the Order of Salvation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group.; Niesel, W. 1980. *The theology of Calvin*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.; Wendel, François. 1963. *Calvin; the origins and development of his religious thought*. New York: Harper & Row.; Sebestyén, Paul. 1963. *The object of Faith in the Theology of Calvin* (Ph.D dissertation: University of Chicago)

⁹¹ Research completed on Calvin's piety have already been discussed in Chapter 2, 'What does piety really mean for Calvin? An exploration of the Nature and Characteristics of Calvin's Piety' of this thesis. Refer to Chapter 2.

⁹² Refer to John Hesselink's "Calvin's Theology." Cf. McKim, D.K. 2004. "Calvin's theology" in *The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 74-92.

⁹³ The Catholic Church of the Middle Ages not only disregarded piety, but also distinguished between 'theologia' which is doctrine-centred, and 'devotion' which is centred on self-cultivation. It is amidst this context that Calvin pursued the Reformation of the Church by trying to distinguish between the Christian faith and life from doctrine-centred scholastic theology separated from religious existence by expressing this as '*pietas*' or '*religio*'. Calvin, John. 1960. *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion* 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. 39.

⁹⁴ Calvin discusses saving faith in Book III, Chapter 2 of his Institutes. Here, Calvin mainly refutes the scholasticism and implicit view of Roman Catholicism. Muller argues that in fact, Calvin's refutation was not a refutation of the doctrine of faith of the great medieval scholastic theologians, but merely a refutation of the views of the theologians of the Sorbonne during his time. Calvin did not read much of Aquinas, and the 'faith doctrine' of medieval scholastic theologians was in fact almost identical to what Calvin claimed. Cf. Muller, Richard. 2000. *The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 170-171. However, the Roman Catholic Church at the Tridentine Council declared that the assurance of the forgiveness of sins is an empty and ungodly assurance. Ryle,

J.C. 2008. Assurance: How to know you are a Christian. UK, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications. 19-20.

⁹⁵ For further details, refer to the correspondence between Sadoleto and Calvin. Cf. Calvin, J. Beveridge, H. 1958. Tracts and Treatises of John Calvin. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans. Vol.1. 17-72.; Calvin, J., Sadoleto, J. & Olin, J.C. 2000. A Reformation Debate: Sadoleto's Letter to the Genevans and Calvin's Reply. New York: Fordham University Press.

⁹⁶ Refer to 'assurance', 'certainty' and 'piety' in the index of Calvin's final edition of Institutes II.

⁹⁷ Calvin's discussion of 'saving faith' in Chapter 2 of Book III of Institutes consists mainly of a rebuttal to the views of the Scholastics. Here, Calvin lays several criticisms against the Roman Catholic Church's doctrine of faith. Firstly, the teaching of implicit faith. Secondly, a position that treats faith as 'assent', equating faith to be 'simple assent from knowledge' and therefore not including the confidence and assurance of the heart as the essence of faith. Thirdly, the position which denies the possibility of assurance of salvation, and judges salvation by mere 'moral conjecture'. Cf. John. Calvin. 1960a. Institutes of the Christian Religion, John McNeill, ed., trans. Ford L. Battles. Philadelphia: Westminster Press. 542-556.

⁹⁸ Eberhard Busch asserts that the centre of Calvin's theology is the knowledge of God and the knowledge of man. Cf. Busch, Eberhard. 2008. "God and Humanity" in "The Calvin Handbook". Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans. 224. Parker also acknowledges knowledge of God to be a prominent theme in Institutes. Cf. T.H.L Parker. 2015. Calvin's Doctrine of the Knowledge of God. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers. 3.

⁹⁹ Refer to Chapter 3, "Assurance and Piety" in Calvin's Commentary on the Psalms for a discussion of the doctrine of knowledge of God.

¹⁰⁰ Kendall argues that there is a fundamental difference between Calvin and the later Calvinists in "Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649". According to Kendall, Calvin had an intellectualist view of faith, while his successors were "voluntarist and experiential". Calvin is seen to have gone beyond the meaning of 'the predominance of knowledge of the will' and in fact excludes 'will'; by completely denying 'belief' as a human act, he saw Calvin as denying all voluntarism. On the other hand, later Calvinists claim to have taken a philistine position, defining faith as will rather than intellect. Cf. the following works: Kendall, R. T. 1980. Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649. New York: Oxford University Press; Reid, W. Stanford, ed. 1982. John Calvin: His

Influence in the Western World. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House.197-214;
Helm. P. 1982. Calvin and the Calvinists. Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Banner of Truth.

¹⁰¹ Billings encourages the active participation of believers through the work of the Holy Spirit in his book, “Calvin, Participation, and the Gift: the activity of believers in union with Christ”. In addition, he also depicts a believer who is united with the grace of Christ through the doctrine of union with Christ in another book, “Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry.” These arguments can be seen to emphasise Calvin’s focus on piety and assurance as the religious and practical knowledge in which believers participate through the sealing of the Holy Spirit rather than mere assent to the knowledge of God. Cf. Billings, J. Todd. 2007. Calvin, participation, and the gift: the activity of believers in union with Christ. Oxford: Oxford University Press.; Billings, J. Todd. 2011. Union with Christ: reframing theology and ministry for the church. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic.

¹⁰² For further research on the union with Christ in greater details, refer to the following: Charles. Partee. 1987. Calvin's Central Dogma Again," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 18/2 (1987): 191-99.; Dennis E. Tamburello. 1994. *Union with Christ: John Calvin and the mysticism of St. Bernard*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press. 105-106.; I. John Hesselink. 1998. "Calvin, the Holy Spirit, and Mystical Union," *Perspectives* 13, no. 1 (January,1998): 15-18.; Garcia, M.A. 2008. *Life in Christ: Union with Christ and Twofold Grace in Calvin's Theology*. Milton Keynes and Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster.; Garcia, Mark A. 2006. *Imputation and the Christology of Union with Christ: Calvin, Osiander and the Contemporary Quest for a Reformed Model*. Westminster Theological Journal 68: 219-251.; Sinclair B. Ferguson. 1996. *The Holy Spirit*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press.100-103.; Billings, J.T. 2011. *Union with Christ: reframing theology and ministry for the church*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic.

¹⁰³ The letters exchanged between Calvin and Sadoleto clearly reveal Calvin's doctrine of justification by faith and Calvin's doctrine of good works. Cf. Calvin, J. Beveridge, H. 1958. *Tracts and Treatises of John Calvin*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans. Vol.1. 17-72.

¹⁰⁴ In fact, in his Institutes Book III, chapters 14.19 “Works as fruits of the call”, 14.20 “Works are God’s gift and cannot become the foundation of self-confidence for believers”, Calvin uses the term “works” to mean “good works”.

¹⁰⁵ Calvin explains regeneration in the dimension of repentance wherein believers who have been justified through union with Christ become children of God and our hearts and lives constantly turn toward God. As per the title of Chapter 3 of Book III of Institutes “Our Regeneration by Faith: Repentance,” the text explains repentance in detail rather than mentioning regeneration.

Niesel also interprets repentance in Institutes as sanctification. Cf. Niesel, 1980. *The theology of Calvin*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House. 126-127.

¹⁰⁶ This tendency is prominent in Lutheran theology, which does not sufficiently emphasise the distinction between justification and sanctification. David P. Scaer. 1985. "Sanctification in Lutheran Theology," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 49. 181.

¹⁰⁷ The "other" place where Calvin discusses this in Institutes Book III, Chapter 15.

¹⁰⁸ According to Muller, *Practical Syllogism* has led to discussions between Calvin and later Calvinists claiming both continuity and discontinuity. Cf. Barth. Karl. 1942. *Church Dogmatics*. Eds. Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Thomas E. Torrance. Edinburgh: T&T Clark. Vol. II/2. 335ff.; Wallace, R.S. 1982. *Calvin's doctrine of the Christian life*. Tyler, TX: Geneva Divinity School Press. 301-302. Fred. Klooster. 1977. *Calvin's Doctrine of Predestination*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker. 50-51.; Kendall, R.T. 1979. *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.; Marion W. Conditt. 1973. *More Acceptable than Sacrifice: Ethics and Election as Obedience to God's Will in the Theology of Calvin*. Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt Kommissionsverlag. 106-113.; Muller, R.A. 2012. *Calvin and the Reformed Tradition: On the Work of Christ and the Order of Salvation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group. 244-276.; Niesel, W. 1980. *The theology of Calvin*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Book House.; David N. Wiley. 1971. *Calvin's Doctrine of Predestination: His Principal Soteriological and Polemical Doctrine* (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University).

¹⁰⁹ In his "Calvin, Beza, and the Later Reformed on Assurance of Salvation and the "Practical Syllogism"", Muller deals with Practical Syllogism of Calvin and the later Reformists. Here, the focus of the discussion is what good works and the internal experience of salvation have to do with the issue of assurance, and as there is continuity between Calvin and the later Reformists, he proposes that rather than approaching it as a macro-theological conflict, that the resolution should be in terms of the union with Christ and the order of salvation. Cf. Muller, R.A. 2012. *Calvin and the Reformed Tradition: On the Work of Christ and the Order of Salvation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group. 250.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Rom 8:15.

Chapter 6 Calvin's theology of "assurance and piety" and its application to the Korean Church

The Christian life is not a matter of the tongue but of the inmost heart
... We have given the first place to the doctrine in which
our religion is contained, since our salvation begins with it.
But it must enter our heart and pass into our daily living,
and so transform us into itself that it may not be unfruitful for us
(Institutes 3.6.4)

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore how Calvin's theology of assurance and piety can be applied to the Korean Church. As analysed in previous chapters, 'assurance' and 'piety' are at the core of Calvin's theology and are concepts that Calvin steadfastly held and struggled with, marking his life. Scholars who have researched Calvin have each interpreted and characterised his theology. For example, well-known characterisations of or associations with regard to Calvin's theology include 'God's sovereignty', 'glory of God', 'Calvin's theory of predestination', 'theologian of the Holy Spirit', 'union with Christ', and 'knowledge of God'. However, when considering these concepts in relation to Calvin's life, they can all be said to be characteristics of the 'piety' that Calvin has pursued. Calvin was an integral person whose content of his teachings and theology was consistent with his own life. The fact that Calvin's theology and works are still well known 500 years after his time may be a testament to how his discipline, life and teachings transformed and had a holy influence on the lives of many people during his time in Geneva and Europe. Calvin wrote his first edition of Institutes in 1539 while living in Strasbourg after being exiled from Geneva. It is likely that during this period, much time was spent self-reflecting on his first ministry in Geneva. His research and reflections of the Bible gave birth to the outstanding '*Summa Pietatis*', Institutes, and this theology became his life goal, objective and practical direction of his ministry. Following this, over the five revisions of Institutes until its final edition was released in

1559, he led his life in ministry, studies starting with his commentary of Romans in 1540 to commentary on Psalms issued in 1557, and teaching as he lives his own life in Geneva. When Calvin first arrived in Geneva, the city was one of the most depraved cities of Europe. However, through the 28 years Calvin lived in the city, Geneva of the 1550's was the stronghold of the reformed faith in Europe.

Unfortunately, the current situation of the Korean Church is similar to the Church during the time of the Reformation era. According to Loewen (1974:90-91), the Bohemian Brethren and the Anabaptists criticised Luther's justification by faith alone for bringing about the moral laxity. But It can be said that it is the Luther principle of justification by faith alone was admittedly often abused by those who had no desire to follow the Christian principles of living. Similarly, the Korean church has also emphasised justification by faith, but it can be said that it is the result of not properly understanding Calvin's Reformed theology and not properly following the Christian life.

Today, Korean church has lost trust by and is being criticised by the Korean community. Just as the Reformed Church at the time was criticised by the Roman Catholic Church for not practicing good works and sanctification, the Korean Church is also being criticised by society for not exemplifying good works and sanctification (The evidence is provided in section 6.2).

Calvin's doctrine of justification was not a doctrine without sanctification and good works. However, the current Korean Church is having a negative impact on society as Calvin's theology of justification is distorted and transformed into a strange form pursuing faith-supremacy and church growth- supremacy.

Thus, this chapter will examine why the Korean Church which is dominated by Calvin's theology and tradition has lost social credibility from a theological point of view and analyse what sort of estrangement exists between Calvin's theological thought and the theology of the Korean Church. In addition, this chapter will propose to the Korean Church theological alternatives that should be considered to regain the lost trust in Korean society based on Calvin's doctrines of 'piety' and 'assurance' which are embedded in the Church's theological foundations.

6.2 The reality of the Korean Church

For the past 100 years, the Korean Church has grown to be a world-class model for rapid church growth (Lee, 2016:1-5).¹¹¹ However, there has been a steady decrease in the growth of Christianity in the 21st century. Moreover, in recent times, the Church is no longer able to have a

social or cultural impact in Korean society and is rather being criticised. This state of the Korean Presbyterian Church which is predominately based on Calvinism (Calvin, 1960a; Dommen & Bratt, 2007:109)¹¹² is a deeply regrettable situation.

Byong-Suh Kim posits the decline of the Korean Church to be the result of the following reasons:

Understanding of the attitudes held by Koreans today helps explain the decline in the growth of the Protestant church. In response to a Gallup survey, 91.9 percent of the respondents said that there are too many pseudo-religious churches, 87.9 percent blamed church splits, 84.7 percent blamed the fights among members over the church budget and finance, 79.6 percent complained about the low quality of the pastors, 79.6 percent indicated that the church pursues expansion instead of a search for truth, 48.8 percent complained no action on the love the churches preach. The Korea Gallup study clearly indicates that Koreans in large measure have a negative attitude toward the Korean Church (Lee, 2006:327).

The Korean Church seems to be plagued by its pursuit of wrongful goals. There seems to be a lack of understanding or recognition of the true motivation for Christianity or living out the Christian life to reflect God's glory. Many Korean Christians have been instead affected by the worldly social trends, pursuing earthly happiness of wealth, and success. Thus, Christianity has been increasingly criticised in society as of late, as Korean church-goers lead lives which fail to reflect the teachings of God. What is needed is a correct understanding of Justification and sanctification, and true piety. But what is the reason behind this? There may be various causes but among these is because the theology and traditions of Calvinism has not been adopted correctly by the Korean Church, and it has lost its validity and persuasiveness when evaluated by society.

The "Korean Church Reliability Survey" results which are released every 3 years by the Christian Ethics Movement of Korea (CEMK hereafter) can be considered to be the best barometer into Korean society's view of the Korean Church.

The latest results of the survey conducted by the CEMK was released in 2020 (CEMK, 2020).¹¹³ Analysing the results, it is clear that there is noticeable decline in Korean society's trust in the Korean Church. The question "How much do you trust the Korean Church as a whole?" was asked to 1000 civilians. Only 31.8% of respondents responded that they do trust the Korean Church, while 63.9% responded as having no trust. Based on these results, this is to say that almost 1 in 3 Koreans trust the Korean Church while 2 in 3 Koreans do not have an overall trust in the Korean

Church (CEMK,2020:10).

The overall level of trust in and perception of the Korean Church seems to have become worse according to 2017 results (CEMK, 2017)¹¹⁴ and continued to decline as of 2020. This trend of declining trust over the past 10 years has resulted in the current trust levels to hit rock bottom. Thus, it can be said that the Korean society's view of the Church is a critical issue.

These results show that the Korean Church has put a lot of effort in expanding the Church but has failed to emphasise the true Christian life, and by emphasising material blessings in church, has not only failed to overcome the materialism prevalent in our society but also made the mistake of taking advantage of the moral corruption and decay of society.

The Korean Church has had no shame in showing its illegal use of church finances, or indiscriminate attempts at church succession(Bae, 2013:71-95) In addition, it has arbitrarily operated and disposed of public churches as private property, displaying the behaviour of the privatisation of the church, and have been exposed to be engaged in illegal or other ethically unsound conduct, or have responded with shamanistic comments and actions excessively out of line with the common sense of society in the face of social issues and disasters (Kim, 2013:8-13). This appearance of the Korean church can be said to be similar to the appearance of medieval Roman churches before the Reformation.

The following discusses the ways in which the Korean Church has been criticised by and lost the trust of the Korean society.

6.2.1 Both Christians and pastors lack morality and ethics

One of the main reasons behind the negative perception of the Korean Church within the Korean society is due to the perceived low level of ethics and morality of both church-goers, and their pastors.

Both pastors and believers are responsible for the low reliability of Korean churches, but the common root is immorality and secularisation within the church. The fact that clergy do not behave like clergy and believers are not like believers is what causes the low rate of credibility of the Korean Church. Korean society do not trust the church for reasons such as the lack of transparency in use of church finances, the discrepancy between the words and actions of the Korean church, and the exclusive attitude toward other religions.

The 2020 results of CEMK's Korean Church Reliability Survey revealed what areas are in most need of improvement in order for the trust in the Korean Church to increase. The number one area was 'opaque use of finances' with 25.9% responding, followed by 22.8% respondents responding about 'lives of church leaders', 'attitude towards other religions' at 19.9%, 'lives of believers' at 14.3%, and 'primal focus on church growth' at 85% (CEMK, 2020:73). To summarise these responses in a sense, it can be seen that the ethics and morality of the Korean Church and its leaders and followers is a problem.

In response to the question about what Christians need to improve first in order to gain more trust, 'lack of consideration for others' was the highest response at 26.6%, followed by 'dishonesty' at 23.7%, 'Exclusivity' 22.7%, 'materialism/church succession' 16.3%, etc.

In addition, as can be seen in below figure 1, in response to the question 'what needs to be improved first in order for Korean church pastors to gain more trust, the pastors' 'ethics and morality' was deemed most pressing at 51.5%, accounting for over half of the respondents' responses. This was followed by 'reducing material pursuits' and 'understanding and participating in social reality' (CEMK, 2020:75).

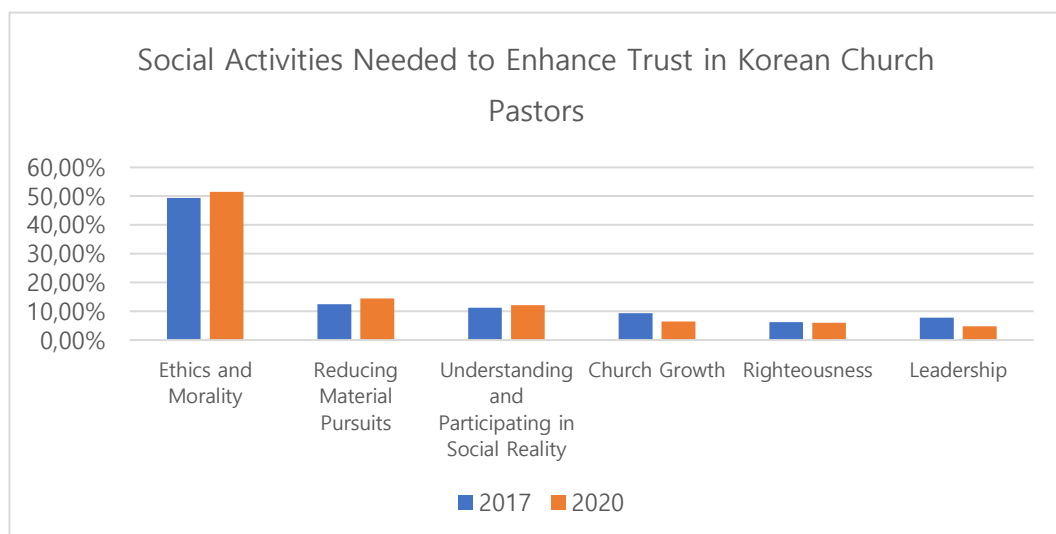


Figure 1: Social activities needed to enhance trust in Korean church pastors¹¹⁵

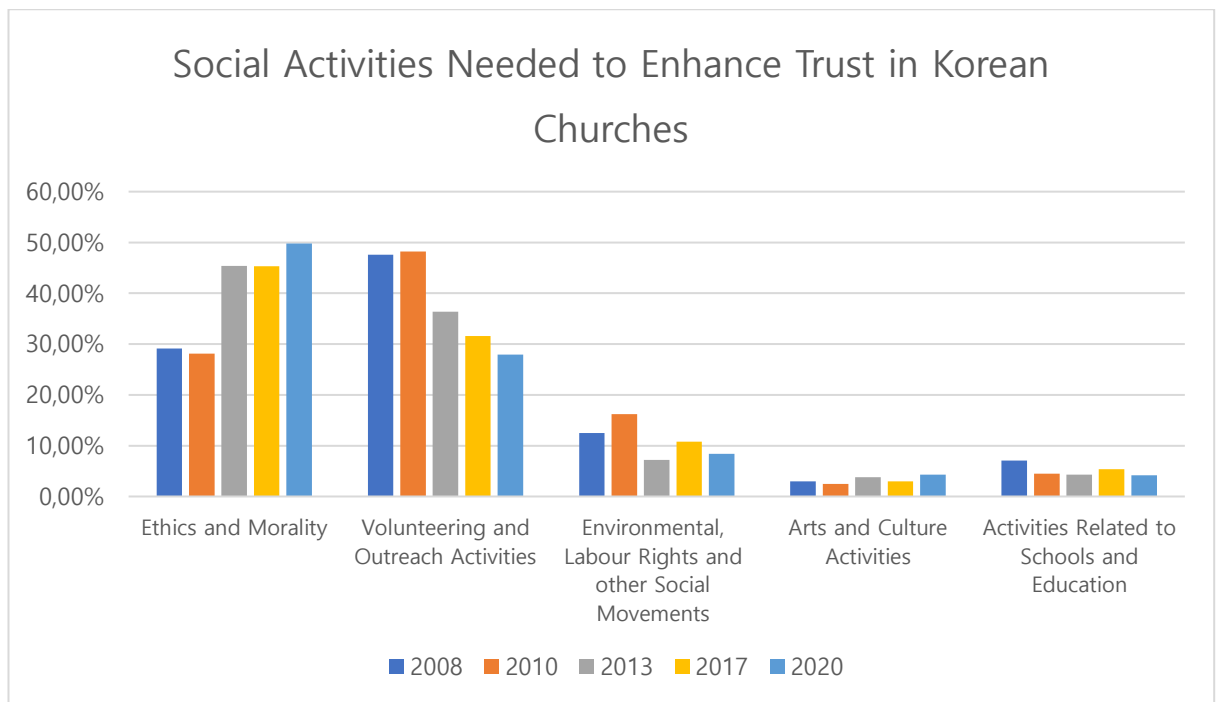


Figure 2: Improvements needed to increase the trust in Korean churches¹¹⁶

As can be deduced from the above survey results, it appears that the most important task that the Korean Church must do in order to restore trust from society is to restore the ethics and morality of its believers and pastors.

This is related to the issue of dualism which is rooted in the Korean Church. That is the thought that prayer, offerings and so on are special things for God whereas ethics is of a worldly and carnal nature. Due to this dualism, there is the result of Korean Christians focusing on religious life only in a narrow sense of prayer, participation in worship and offerings, while leaving aside religious life in the broader sense such as upholding ethics and leading a Christian life. As such, there is a large gap between the faith that Korean Christians profess before God and the faith that they actually live out in the world. While church-goers claim to believe in God, they do not possess actual biblical values and attitudes befitting of their faith, and they do not lead lives distinguished from the world; they fail to apply and practice the faith they profess in their daily lives. However, Reformation theology following Calvin is different from this dualism. Reformation theology asserts that all realms are under God's sovereignty. In that light, despite the Korean Presbyterian Church emphasising their Reformed traditions and basis, this is not the case in practice.

6.2.2 Blinded by church growth and worldly material pursuits

As seen in figures 1 and 2, the Korean Church appears to lean towards materialistic pursuits and achieving church growth rather than the essential and spiritual aspects of Christianity. Many

believers in the Korean Church place an important reason for seeking God in satisfying personal selfish desires such as material wealth, success, health, and blessings. In addition, believers regard salvation encompassing material blessings along with the salvation of the soul as the highest goal (Kim, 2013:8-11). Rather than the essential meaning behind believing in Christ, they are living a life of faith that is more interested in temporal, material blessings. This is to regard Jesus as a means to satisfy desires of material possessions, power, success and fame, rather than the purpose of living a life of faith of knowing Jesus more deeply and pursuing the kingdom of God.

In addition, pastors are hung up on church growth. As discussed above, one of the greatest issues of the Korean Church as criticised by society is the way in which churches attempt to become mega-churches in a secular and artificial way. Many pastors are obsessed with the external size of their church, displaying wrongful behaviours in trying to grow the church by any secular method (Yoo, 2015:62-64). This behaviour of mega-churches in Korea is displaying many issues and resulting in lots of criticism from the public.

First of all, this desire for large-scale churches and church growth originates from the pastoral philosophy in which pastors are focused only on external church growth. Pastors are overly focused on the outward growth of the church. In particular, Korean pastors have been influenced (Kim, 2013:26-28) by the mega-churches of the United States such as those led by Robert Schuller and Joel Osteen, and the 'Theology of Church Growth' by Donald A. McGavran so that achieving a super mega-church has become the ultimate goal for pastors. These influences have eventually changed pastors' perception of the nature of the church. Pastors are more focused on the formal and external aspects of the church than the essential and practical aspects, having lost the essence of ministry. Many large churches in Korea have been achieved through the result of horizontal movement of members from smaller churches (Kim, 2013:28) as opposed to the evangelism of new believers. For example, buses operated by megachurches are actually transporting believers from the outskirts and in each region to the mega-church chapel. In this way, the pursuit of mega-churches and large-scale church growth has been permeated by commercialism and pragmatism of American philosophy and has strayed far away from the purity and true essence of the Korean Church that once existed, and Reformism insists on.

The problems that were shown in the medieval Roman Catholic Church at the time are now being exposed in the Korean Church as well. The medieval Roman Catholic Church strengthened the authority of the church and the clergy by emphasizing the significance of salvation to the church and clergy. Rather than the authority and teachings of the Bible, the clergy were given authority of church ministry, and emphasised instead external aspects such as church traditions and institutions. The pastors of the current Korean Church also focus on external elements such as

organization and administration rather than the internal and spiritual nature of the church.

In addition, the Roman Catholic Church was criticised by Reformers for strengthening its papacy a historically and un-biblically by claiming Peter's succession. Similarly, in today's Korean context, the hereditary succession of pastors within megachurches where the church is handed down to their children is a common occurrence¹¹⁷. This is no different from the simony which occurred within the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages. In his *The Necessity of Reforming the Church*, Calvin declares that the corruption of the clergy to be the most shameful and tyrannical corruption of the church (Calvin & Beveridge, 1844:151).

6.2.3 Lack of understanding of social reality, participation and public nature

The crisis facing the Korean Church is not simply that the number of its members are declining. As examined above, the more serious problem is that the Korean Church has lost trust within society and is becoming an object of public criticism and ridicule. The report conducted by the Gallup Research Institute in Korea from 18 March to 7 April 2021 is also pessimistic. According to their statistics (Gallup Korea, 2021), the overall population of Koreans who are religious is on the decline as a result of the wave of secularisation. As of 2021, of Koreans who are religious, 17% were Protestants, 16% were Buddhist, and 6% were Catholic. However, in response to the question of what religion those non-religious Koreans felt most interested in, 20% responded Buddhism, 13% responded Catholicism and only 6% responded Protestantism (Gallup Korea, 2021)¹¹⁸. This data reveals the pessimistic attitude of Korean society towards the Korean Church.

Why has the Korean Church attained this sort of perception to become the most distrusted religion? A large part can be attributed to the Korean Church failing to participate in social reality and lost its public nature. To say that the Korean Church has lost its public nature is that the life of the church or Christians have focused only on the growth of their individual church itself, rather than pursuing public common good, or has only focused on pursuing the personal interests of individual believers who are members of the church.

Examples of the Korean Church's loss of standing in the public include pastors' embezzlement of church funds, tyranny of pastors of mega-churches, hereditary succession, priest sales and church sales (Yoo, 2015:59-66). Of these, the most representative offence is hereditary succession which suggests a consideration of the church as one's property and passing it on to one's children. Due to this trend, the Korean Church, and in particular, the hereditary succession of mega-churches is being criticised by the Korean society as being no different from the hereditary succession of leadership in North Korea since the time of Kim Il-Sung.

In addition, a recent issue is that the Korean Church has become a group that has lost public standing in Korean society due to its actions during the corona-19 pandemic. Under the name of protecting the freedom of worship, many churches ignored the government's quarantine guidelines and continued to gather secretly, resulting in criticism from wider Korean society (Kim, 2021:808-809).

The Korean Church has been absorbed in dualistic thinking and has reduced Christianity to a religion which distinguishes between "soul and body", "holiness and secularity" and limited the lives of believers to only the church. Believers have been taught that the life of faith is through the church, and that the more one escapes from world and its affairs in politics, economy and society, the better one can lead one's life of faith.

Moreover, the Korean Church ignores the values of the kingdom of God such as freedom, justice, love, and peace, and instead pursues individualistic and materialistic blessings without concern in nor responsibility for its neighbours, social ethics and history. These trends are due to the fact that the Korean Church has lost its vision of the public realm by preaching the doctrine of justification with an emphasis only on personal salvation (Kim, 2017:15-16).

As critiqued by Miroslav Volf (2011:11), the Christian life of faith has been limited to a narrow scope, restricted to matters related to the individual soul, personal ethics family life and the church. The tradition of the Korean Church has been to degenerate the gospel into an individualistic theory that is understood to only have meaning for individual salvation with no special meaning for the public realm of the world and the entirety of humanity.

6.3 The Korean Church and Calvinism

Why is it that the Korean Church which supposedly follows Calvin's theology of justification by faith and sanctification and proudly asserts its roots in Reformation theology displays a tainted reality of secularism that is separated from holy life and godliness? Why Is it that pastors who should be bringing glory to God and come forth with the banner of Calvinism in reality trample on the glory of God, pursue the privatised church growth instead of God's sovereignty, practice the most individualistic way of ministry and fail to uphold moral trust?

This is because the Korean Presbyterian Church, while claiming to follow Calvin's theology and tradition, has not properly taught Calvin's theology in the church and has taught a distorted faith by focusing only on church growth (Kim, 2015:149-150). Thus the following will first examine the key areas where the Korean Church has incorrectly taught Calvin's theology and how far apart

this understanding is from the truth of Calvin's theology. This section will also examine the characteristics of Calvin's Reformation theology and propose the godly and pious life of Christians that Calvin emphasised to the Korean Church and also clarifies this thesis is for recovering Calvin's theology in the Korean Church.

6.3.1 Distortion of the Doctrine of Justification in the Korean Church

Traditionally, as the Korean Church has taught Calvin's doctrine of justification as one that is justified by faith alone, and ultimately sanctified by faith, this has suggested that a believer's good conduct or holy life has nothing to do with salvation (Kim, 2016:190-191). Though this was not the intention behind Calvin's doctrine, Calvinism has been criticised for weakening the zeal to do good deeds, appearing to many Christians as If there should be there is no connection between salvation and good works.

The 'sola fide' justification doctrine of the Reformation has been distorted and passed down in the Korean Church. This is due to the emphasis placed on a half-baked concept of the justification doctrine that simply confessing Christ with one's lips to be one's Lord will bring about salvation. So far, the Korean Church has been forensic in its treatment of justification and focused on it being only one-time in nature, failing to teach Calvin's emphasis on the inherent relationship between justification and sanctification, which are not separated; sanctification is the life of the holy that gradually progresses throughout the believer's entire life and that justification is proved by good works and obedience.

Due to this influence, the Korean church has naturally emphasised the doctrine of 'justification; only and have relatively neglected the good deeds needed for sanctification. Thus salvation has fallen down to be a 'cheap grace' (Bonhoeffer & Fuller, 1959:35)¹¹⁹ lacking works of faith. In this way, the doctrine of justification by faith has been distorted and spread as 'salvation without works' or 'salvation by cheap grace' in the Korean Church. In doing so, the doctrine of justification by faith naturally has not brought substantial change to the righteousness in the life of a believer and has instead become a distorted doctrine limited to formal and declarative righteousness achieved through a hollow confession.

However, this dichotomous approach to separating 'belief' from 'works' is an incorrect understanding of the justification doctrine. This is due to a misconception of the justification by faith doctrine as being saved if one is justified formally before God, without accurately understanding the context of the Reformation during the 16th century. As a result of this, many ethical issues within the Korean Presbyterian Church exist today, and the level of morality of the

Church has fallen due to the reformers' misunderstanding and incorrect interpretation of Calvin's 'justification' doctrine.

Luther and Calvin emphasised that human salvation is possible by 'grace through faith'. However, as the medieval Roman Catholic Church emphasised 'salvation through good works', many misunderstandings about 'good works' arose. In other words, salvation was recognised as being granted through the combination of 'God's grace' and 'human good works.' Thus, the combination of 'God's grace' and 'human merits and works', that is, 'works soteriology' took root, and this eventually led to even the sale of 'indulgence'.

The soteriology advocated by the Roman Catholics in the Middle Ages was that human good works was the premise and means for salvation before God. In other words, human effort and merit were emphasised as conditions for salvation. Thus, the phrase '*Facere Quod in se est*' (do what lies within you) used widely at the time (McGrath, 1993:76), made Christians pay attention to moral good works or achievements and implanted a cooperative view of salvation between God and man. As noted by Calvin (1960a:670-673) acts such as sacrament of confession, relic worship, pilgrimage, fasting and penance were considered meritorious acts required for salvation which ultimately culminated in the sale of indulgences. This view of salvation combined with the sacramental means of the church at the time exerted powerful power over believers and contributed to further solidifying the authority of the priest.

Reformers criticised the Roman Catholic Church's view of salvation for stealing the glory of Christ and limiting God's grace to human merit, asserting that only Christ could remove punishment and guilt. Thus, they emphasised God's nature as a God of grace and mercy rather than the God of judgement and punishment. Therefore, this theology centred on justification by faith of the Reformation has been positioned as 'the core argument of the Reformation, on which the rise and fall of the church depends'.

Luther emphasised faith in order to correct the errors of the medieval Catholic Church that placed human deeds and merits as a pre-requisite for salvation but did not intend to fail to notice nor neglect good works. After realizing the limitations of Luther's Reformation theology, the Reformed Church immediately tried to correct these shortcomings. Calvin thus emphasised sanctification along with justification (see section 5.5) and Wesley in the 18th century even emphasised the theology of complete sanctification.

However, as the Korean tradition of Calvin's doctrine of justification teaches that one is justified by faith and ultimately saved by faith alone, the Korean Presbyterian Church has incorrectly

taught as if good works or the holy life of Christians has no relation to salvation. It has been thus perceived by many Korean Christians that salvation is achieved through justification only, but sanctification is not directly related to salvation.

However, as per Calvin (1960a:798), justification and sanctification obtained through the believer's union with Christ are inseparable and simultaneous. Therefore, those who are justified must accompany the fruit of sanctification. The truth of justification is proved through the fruit of sanctification. If justification is genuine, sanctification follows necessarily, without delay.

Those who exclude good works from justification by faith and practice 'easy believe-ism' seek to emphasise only justification without the necessity of sanctification. However, faith only in words or by listening cannot be true faith.

Nevertheless, the doctrine of justification by faith has continued to be passed down in its distorted form within the tradition of the Korean Church. As a result, in Korean churches, salvation by cheap grace, and faith only in words is prevalent, and naturally the ethics of church-goers is low and good deeds are neglected. In addition, the distortion of the justification by faith doctrine results in a negative attitude towards the commandments.

6.3.2 Misunderstanding of God's law

The Korean church's distorted understanding of justification by faith led believers to neglect God's laws and underestimate the necessity of good works, causing believers to fall into self-indulgence. In this way, this conception of the doctrine of justification has knowingly or unknowingly instilled the impression that 'because you have already been justified by faith, it is good to do good works, but even without it, this does not affect one's salvation' into Korean Christians.

This conception bears close resemblance to the assertion made by Libertines made during the Reformation. They insisted on Antinomianism, that the law was not necessary for salvation. According to their theology, since direct communion with God through the Holy Spirit is paramount, the Bible and its commandments are superfluous. Therefore, God's salvation does not require human works. As it is only through God's grace that one is saved, those who have already received salvation need not be concerned about falling out of grace and salvation even if one falls into sin. Thus there is no need to strive for sanctification, or the pursuit of being ethical or following God's law (Calvin *et al.*, 1982:7-10).

However, it is evident that Calvin rather emphasised the third usage of the law. Beeke (Beeke & Myers, 2009:11) states that the third usage of the law played an important role in the formation of the Reformation theology of piety and that there is a relationship between the third usage of the law and ‘covenant theology.’ Gunther Haas (McKim, 2004:97) asserts that for Calvin, this is the “ultimate moral norm” as it reveals God’s eternal will.

According to Calvin (1960a:348-366), the law has three functions. The first is the function of revealing one’s sins. The second is an overall social and political function as the law has the function of curbing evil in the world. The third is to present the righteous life of Christians who have been regenerated through their faith in Christ. According to Calvin, believers who have been justified must follow the fruits of sanctification in their lives. Therefore, it is the role of the law to inform believers of their duties and their desire for holiness and obedience.

For Calvin, this third use is most important. Thus, Calvin emphasised that the law mainly encourages believers to do good works. Hence, through Christ, teaching of the law remains unbreakable: it is through “teaching, admonishing, reproving, and correcting,” (2Tim 3:16) that we are formed and prepared for every good work.

The third and principal use, which pertains more closely to the proper purpose of the law, finds its place among believers in whose hearts the Spirit of God already lives and reigns. For even though they have the law written and engraved upon their hearts by the finger of God (Jer.31:33; Heb. 10:16), that is, have been so moved and quickened through the directing of the Spirit that they long to obey God, they still profit by the law in two ways. Here is the best instrument for them to learn more thoroughly each day the nature of the Lord’s will to which they aspire, and to confirm them in the understanding of it. It is if some servant, already prepared with all earnestness of heart to commend himself to his master, must search out and observe his master’s ways more carefully in order to conform and accommodate himself to them (Calvin, 1960a:360).

As believers who have the assurance of salvation have been born in Christ, those who are born again continue to live according to godly lives according to the law handed down by Christ. In this way Calvin stresses the third usage of the law and points out the piety and ethics that must be revealed in the lives of believers. To reiterate, Christians who have been assured must live in thanks of God’s grace, and voluntarily obey His law and actively live a pious life for the glory of God. A pious life for the glory of God is not a coercive obligation but comes from realising how to repay God’s grace. Therefore, when one is assured of salvation, the believer yearns for growth

in Christ and emphasise sanctification according to the means of grace.

The whole life of Christians ought to be a sort of practice of godliness, for we have been called to sanctification (1 Thess. 4:7; cf. Eph. 1;4; 1 Thess. 4:3). Here it is the function of the law, by warning men of their duty, to arouse them to a zeal for holiness and innocence (Calvin, 1960a:835).

In this way, for Calvin, the law is a standard of gratitude for those believers who are justified, and a voluntary obedience that follows assurance. Through this third use, the law continues to have a positive function.

Calvin (1960a:804) emphasises that the law exists in the grace and faithfulness that God has bestowed unto believers through Christ. Of course, the law may not be a comfort to Christians. However, it is by no means negative. When one is sure they have received the righteousness of Christ, a new relationship between the law and Christians is established. Calvin (1960a:805) asserts that Christ fulfilled the law and His promises. In his final edition of his Institutes, Calvin discussed the law and the Ten Commandments under the title, 'Hope of Salvation in Christ (Calvin, 1960a:348). From this, it is evident that Calvin saw the law from the point of view of Christ.

Hesselink (1992: 97) correctly understands that the key to Calvin's understanding of the law is 'Christ'. Thus, he states that approaching Calvin's conception of the law without Christological relevance will miss the core of Calvin's understanding.

David Jones (Hall & Lillback, 2008:311) similarly views Calvin's position on law as a 'Christ-centred understanding'. In addition, Jones emphasises that the law is one of morals, universal norms of love, doctrines of piety and justice that reflect the nature of God and His purpose for humans whom He created in His image (Hall & Lillback, 2008:301-302).

Christ obeyed all laws and received God's punishment to absorb and dispose of all the consequences of the law. Therefore, believers with the assurance of salvation have been released from the law's harshness and threat. The law no longer threatens nor condemns those with assurance. Therefore, believers who have been united with Christ through Christ should wear the mark of gratitude.

'The Heidelberg Catechism' (Ursinus & Olevian, 2003:69) which was written to teach the

doctrine of Calvinism and most widely used in during the Reformation in the 16th century, describes the life of a believer from the perspective of a life of gratitude from the first question and answer.

The first question asks, “What is your only comfort in life and death?” The response is as follows.

A. That I am not my own, but belong— body and soul, in life and in death— to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven; in fact, all things must work together for my salvation (Ursinus & Olevian, 2003:69).

In other words, the way to express gratitude to Christ is to live a life of obedience to His law. That is, through piety and good works. In this way, the Catechism of the Reformed Church influenced by Calvinism presents the law as a natural expression of gratitude for believers with the assurance of salvation, from its very first discussion. This showcases that the law has been understood in terms of a life of gratitude, and on this basis has developed Calvin’s theology into a life of voluntarily obeying the word of God.

As can be seen from the above, Calvin saw the law as not a means of salvation but as a rule of righteousness for the godly lives of those who have been saved. Thus, Calvin titles Book II, Chapter 7 of his Institutes, as “Principally it admonishes believers and urges them on it well doing” (Calvin, 1960a:360)

As we have seen, for Calvin, the law is an expression of gratitude for God’s grace for believers who have been assured of salvation. And while Calvin emphasised the law, he never showed a legalistic tendency because he always interpreted the law in a Christ-centred way.

Now, the Korean Church needs to keep in mind that Calvin and the Reformed Church accepted and emphasised the law as an important standard for the individual as well as the social ethical life of believers. The reality of the harsh societal criticism against the Korean Church and its believers for failing to serve as the “salt and light” of the world has been established above. Believers have failed to live up to the Christian name and the ethics of pastors have too fallen to a poor level.

Henceforth, the Korean Church which follows Calvin’s theology must no longer regard God’s

law as something irrelevant to follow or not follow, but instead, promote and practice the voluntary obedience of the law and living a pious life for God's glory in gratitude of His grace.

The next section will examine how 'God's Sovereignty', which is a trait within Calvin's theology has been erroneously functioned in the Korean Church.

6.3.3 Weakened human responsibility through emphasis on God's sovereignty

Calvinism lays emphasis on 'God's sovereignty'. In particular, the Korean Presbyterian Church emphasises 'God's sovereignty' more than anywhere else (Hwang, 2014:3). As such, God's sovereignty and the free will of humans have often been logically opposed or in confrontation with one another. The Korean Church which has followed Calvinism has tried to reduce the importance of human free will out of a belief that the more free will is emphasised, the significance of God's sovereignty will be reduced (Kim, 2015:162-163).

This one-sided emphasis on 'God's sovereignty' has had the tendency of weakening the voluntary and active good works of the Church and its believers. In addition, due to the inclination towards God's absolute sovereignty, human responsibility for their own individual destinies and wider social change has been abandoned as believers have had the attitude of leaving everything to God's sovereignty. This attitude results in a fatalistic and deterministic outlook which has the effect of leading to a distorted logic that weakens humans' ethical responsibilities in society and history.

Thus, as the Korean Church has fallen into following a distorted interpretation of Calvin's theology, in the face of social irregularities and injustice, has accepted this to be God's providential reality instead of demonstrating its public responsibilities and role in society.

This reality protected the unrighteous power of the military dictatorship in Korea during the 1970-80s and while the public engaged in the people's democratisation movement, the majority of Korean churches stood by silently with folded arms (Kim, 2015:166). In addition, when the Korean government provided of preferential treatment to large corporation and neglect of human rights to workers in efforts to achieve rapid economic growth, the Korean Church sided with the government, and spread systematic theology, expressing a position of protecting vested interests (Kim, 2015:166-167). This reveals the Korean Church to be a group that has abused Calvin's theology and supported an unjust system, defending vested interests while biased towards a national theological ideology.

However, the fundamental intent of Calvinism's theology in emphasising 'God's sovereignty' is to emphasise the 'coming of God's sovereignty and reign over the world (Beeke, 2008:39).' In that respect, Michael Horton accurately grasps Calvin's theology. Horton emphasises that

Reformation's piety must go beyond individual piety to include all of creation. In addition, Horton insists that God's sovereignty does not distinguish between God's creations and must be exercised in all areas of humanity.

So the horizon of Reformed piety is not merely the individual heart or a personal relationship. Of course, it is that- but much more. Christ's saving work includes the whole created order- not only souls but bodies, and nor only human beings but natural world (Rom. 8:18-25)...The sovereignty of God over all areas of life resists our tendency to compartmentalize our life into private and public, individual and corporate, sacred and secular (Horton, 2011:131).

Here the realm of God's sovereignty and rule is not simply a religious realm over the 'inner piety' or 'spiritual peace' of a believer who has received salvation, but also means that God's indiscriminate reign incorporates the realm of politics and society, and indeed, all matters of the world. This is the realisation of God's reign and sovereignty, not confined to the religious realm of individual salvation or the church community, but also includes the entire creation including the history and culture of human society. Therefore, the realm of God's reign is over all areas of life including marriage (family), nation (politics), society (human life) and labour/work (economy). This is an area upon which many scholars who study Calvin agree.¹²⁰

R. A. Muller (1991:15-16) argues that in the methodology of researching Calvinism's theology, it is necessary to emphasise the simultaneous work of Calvinism in defending the traditional truths of Christianity, as well as spreading the spirit of reform in the world and society. So far, the Korean Church's tradition of Calvinism has thought (Kim, 2015:152-153) that social commentary or the realisation of social justice are only appropriate for theologians and certain denominations who specialise in social activism. However, this reflects an incorrect understanding of Calvin's theology. Demarcating Calvin's theology into general divisions of 'liberal' or 'conservative' in later generations is to distort Calvin. The firm believe in the priority of certain doctrines by the self-proclaimed traditional Calvinists is actually damaging the holistic nature of Calvin's theology. Traditional Korean Calvinists have neglected social participation or ethical practices as a system of life, remaining fascinated with predestination, covenant theology or personal soteriology as the characteristics of Calvin's theology.

P. Vollmer (1909:184-187) pays attention to the 'interdependence and relationship of mankind' among Calvin's important achievements from the perspective of modern sociology. Vollmer argues that the characteristics of Calvin's anthropology are that humanity is composed of social elements suitable for community building rather than individualistic beings. As Vollmer points out, Calvin's theology includes Christians' active participation in not only the inner, spiritual and

religious realms of the individual but also the active engagement in social activities, politics, society and culture (Calvin, 1960a:271-274).

Calvin was a ‘reformer of the church’ but his reformation was limited to issues within the church. His ideal of church reform extended to social reform, as a natural result of church reform. In terms of social reform, Calvin’s contributions was greater than that of Luther’s. Calvin did not divide society according to dichotomies of holiness or secularity and believed that God’s sovereignty rules over everything in the home, church and society. Thus William Monter (1964:118) states that all roads lead to Calvin in the history of Geneva, bearing testament to Calvin’s reformation of society as a whole. It can be seen that Calvin emphasised the social responsibility of both the Church and believers. John Bratt (1971:31) also emphasises that Calvin valued the Christian life in terms of the cultivation of morality and ethics. True righteousness and godliness were the goals that Calvin pursued.

Dutch Calvinist, Abraham Kuyper (1999:90-92) argued that escape from the world was never a characteristic of Calvinism, and that Calvinism is not a theology that denies social responsibilities and obligations while living in the church indifferent to the world, but rather, it is to realise that there is a calling to lead all of humanity to a higher ideal even in the midst of corruption. For Calvin, the life led by believers in this world is significant. It is to willingly give thanks to God who allows His believers to taste the kingdom of God in our daily lives through His abundant provision of divine mercy and grace.

In the next section, the characteristics of Calvin’s Reformation theology will be examined and I will propose the godly life of Christians that Calvin emphasised in application to the Korean Church.

6.4 Calvin’s Reformation theology and the application of its characteristics

This part seeks to examine the characteristics of ‘piety’ and ‘assurance’ which Calvin emphasised in his reformed theology and proposes its adoption by the Korean Church.

Firstly, the primary characteristic of Calvin’s Reformation theology can be said to be his doctrine of piety which pursues the glory of God. As examined above, Calvin’s piety can be said to be the centre and cornerstone of his Reformation theology, and the purpose of this piety was to seek the glory of God. In his book, “Living for God’s Glory”, Beeke (2008:174) also declares that the supreme goal of Calvin’s piety is “Soli Deo Gloria”.

Secondly, Calvin’s piety became more prominent through his doctrine of Justification and

sanctification. Of the main themes of Calvin's Reformation theology is justification and sanctification, and Calvin explains these doctrines well with the doctrine of 'union with Christ'. Calvin's 'union with Christ' and 'justification' and 'sanctification' are the sum of all piety, and especially Calvin's doctrine of 'good works' is an important theme that brings the fruits of 'sanctification'.

Thirdly, this part will propose how the characteristics of Calvin's Reformation theology can be applied to the Korean Church by looking at examples of how Calvin's 'piety' and 'assurance' was expanded and contributed to the reform of Geneva.

6.4.1 God's glory and piety

The starting point of the Reformation in the 16th century began with the sale of indulgences by the Roman Catholic Church. However, upon closer examination, the Reformation was to remove the injustice and tyranny of the Roman Catholic Church at the time, rightfully restore the truth of the Bible, and to uphold God's justice. At that time, Roman Catholicism incorrectly taught that salvation, the result of God's exclusive grace, could be obtained through human merits, and was full of wrong customs such as relic worship and saint worship. Through these evil traditions based on false doctrines, Roman Catholicism deluded and deceived the world. Accordingly, Reformers sought to abolish the erroneous theologies and remove the evil practices of Roman Catholicism to return to the truth of the Bible. The greatest legacy of the Reformation was its restoration of the supreme authority of the Bible, the establishment of the right doctrine according to the Bible, reforming the corrupt reality of the church, and presenting an alternate Christian life of believers. This Reformation movement naturally contributed to greatly transforming the corrupt society of the Middle Ages through correcting the faith of believers (McGrath, 1993:27-37).

Calvin, as a second-generation Reformer following Luther and Bucer, criticised the Roman Catholic religious system as being ungodly at the end of the Middle Ages, and worked to restore Christianity to true godliness as based on the Bible. Calvin published the first edition of *Institutes* in 1536 and was recognised as a theologian representative of the Reformation.

In his preamble to *Institutes*, Calvin (1960a:Prefatory 9) states the intent behind his work to be to describe the basic principles so that believers can live a life of true godliness. In addition, in his "A message to the reader" which was added to the Latin edition in 1559, Calvin goes so far as to say that his whole ministry was to reform the church by preserving the doctrine of true piety.

God has filled my mind with zeal to spread his kingdom and to further the public

good. I am also duly clear in my own conscience, and have God and the angels to witness, that since I undertook the office of teacher in the church, I have had no other purpose than to benefit the church by maintaining the pure doctrine of godliness (Calvin, 1960a:To the Reader 4).

In this way, in critique of the ungodliness of the Roman Catholic Church at the time, Calvin tried to restore the meaning of true godliness of the Christian faith and apply this to the public society, beyond the individual believer.

There have been many scholars who have engaged in study of Calvin's piety. However, in many cases, Calvin's piety has been focused on at the personal or inner level. Representative of this is Joseph Richard (1974:174-192) whom in his 'The Spirituality of John Calvin', after comparing 'modern piety' (devotion moderna) with Calvin's concept of piety, interpreted that although Calvin was influenced by 'modern piety', that Calvin rejected the external consciousness of 'devotion' that was actively developed during the late Middle Ages and instead emphasised the inner motivation of 'pietas'.

Battles (1996:292) states that Calvin emphasised inward change for hypocrites who outwardly disguise themselves as pious. Beeke (McKim, 2004b:125) evaluated Calvin to hold the heart as more important to Calvin, interpreting Calvin's piety as fundamentally biblical and emphasising the heart rather than the head despite Calvin stating "the head and heart must work together" (McKim, 2004:125).

Of course, as pointed out above, it is of no doubt that self-proclaimed religious reformer Calvin criticised the hypocritical piety and outwardly appearance of the religious system of Roman Catholicism at the time, and also considered the internal characteristics of piety. However, it should not be dismissed that the true godliness pursued by Calvin aimed for the external practice of godliness realised in the community, along with the internal change of the individual.

Leith (1989:19) emphasises that for Calvin, theology was a practical study which purports to glorify God, save people's souls and transform human life and society. Horton (2014c:17) also respected Calvin whose doctrine was always oriented towards practice and a scholar who pursued God's glory and sovereignty¹²¹ and that doctrine was consistent and his life and worship.

Calvin's thought that clearly distinguished him from other reformers was that his theology emphasised the 'glory of God'. The goal of Calvin's piety was the 'glory of God' (Calvin, 1960a:690). The ultimate reason why God saved us is to reveal God's righteousness to the world. Therefore, true believers should make it their goal in life to reveal God's glory.

How can we glorify God? As Calvin argued, God has already revealed the way in which He is glorified through His believers. That is piety, and piety is obedience to His word.

God has prescribed for us a way in which he will be glorified by us; namely, piety, which consists in the obedience of his Word. He that exceeds these bound does not go about to honor God, but rather to dishonor him (Leith, 1989:42).

Obedience to God's word is to seek forgiveness of our sins in Christ, knowing Christ through His word, serving Christ with love, doing good works in gratitude of Christ's goodness, practicing self-denial and even loving one's enemy. Calvin (1960a:787,791) claims that God is pleased with our good works and bring glory to him.

From this, the integrity in Calvin's piety can be discovered. Calvin's piety is not only a self-transcendental piety for those who absolutely fear and love God, but also a 'life of piety' where through humility, patience, and serving one's neighbour, aims to integrate the love towards God with the love which also extends to one's neighbour (Calvin, 1960a:695-701). In addition, Calvin says that rather than being an abstract concept, piety should begin with inner change which is concretely revealed in practice. However, Calvin (1960a:692) points out that true piety must be continuously borne out in society through community practice and complete obedience to the word of God.

In her book 'John Calvin: Writings on pastoral piety', McKee accurately grasps the characteristic of Calvin's piety.

It is a piety in which prayer and worship are central, but prayer normally in the plural("we") form and worship normally in the context of the community ("public").
..... Calvin's piety the most clearly in its "this worldly" dynamic; it encompasses every aspect of every day's life for every person and the whole community, and it is fundamentally ethical (McKee, 2001:5).

As McKee points out, Calvin's piety does not exist only within the church separated from society

or as merely a mystical spirituality residing only in one's inner realm. Rather, Calvin's piety is a life of true faith in reverence of God, and the godliness to emphasise a believer's social responsibility in society and history in addition to service directed to the church community. Thus, the focus on 'Ethical Responsibility to Society' in Calvin's piety is revealed.

6.4.2 Sum of all piety: union with Christ, justification, and sanctification

While accepting Luther's doctrine of justification by faith, Calvin aimed to realise the Reformation in the overall lives of Christians. One of the accusations against the Korean Church today is that the Korean Church's theory of justification encouraged the believers' ethical self-indulgence and indolence (Kim, 2017:15). This is the same as the greatest condemnation and criticism that was made against the Reformers by the Roman Catholics during the 16th century Reformation.¹²² Roman Catholicism critiqued the Reformation as being Antinomist, while Anabaptists condemned the Reformation as being reforms which failed to meet expectations (McGrath, 1993:10-11). Calvin kept the balance between the Roman Catholic Church and Anabaptists while establishing the Reformed Church. His discussion of sanctification prior to justification is indeed as this blocks critiques from the Roman Catholics who condemned him for antinomianism (Hall & Lillback, 2008b:321). Thus, the area that Calvin devoted his heart and soul to in dealing with soteriology was the doctrine of justification and sanctification. This was intended to prevent the danger of the doctrines of justification and sanctification becoming distorted, misused, and misrepresented. The reason why Calvin placed so much importance on the doctrine of justification was because he(1960a:725-726) was convinced that only this doctrine was the basis for making true piety possible and the source of the driving force for promoting sanctification.

This is distinctly revealed in his Institutes. Calvin discusses 'unity with Christ' and 'sanctification' before justification (Calvin, 1960a:592-787). Upon close examination, Book III, Chapter 1 of Institutes first discusses regeneration, sanctification and repentance prior to finally considering justification later in Book III, Chapter 11. The structure in which justification follows sanctification (Calvin used the term of repentance as sanctification) is a unique structure that cannot be found in other dogmatics¹²³.

What is important is that the reason why matters of regeneration (sanctification) was discussed before justification is because of Calvin's emphasis that the free justification believers receive through the mercy of God alone does not need a lack of good works (Calvin, 1960a:725-726).

In Book III of Institutes, Calvin emphasised 'union with Christ' in order to solve all

misunderstandings about justification by faith alone and developed a soteriology that makes justification and sanctification possible based not on human merits but through God's mercy and the actions of Christ. And the two benefits given through the 'union with Christ' are 'justification' and 'sanctification'. However, justification and sanctification are two sides of grace which cannot be separated. While simultaneously a single grace that is two-folded (Calvin, 1960a:725-726).

In addition, Calvin (1960a:798) emphasises that if justification received through union with Christ is genuine, sanctification must follow. This is because justification and sanctification are forever bonded into an inseparable union with Christ in the believer. Vorster (2019:77-82) also point out that Calvin uses the formulation "united but confused" to explain the relation between justification and sanctification. In other words, Calvin's view was that there is a logical but not chronological difference between justification and sanctification. Therefore, the faith that unites us to Christ does not produce justification without sanctification, as faith does not exist without works.

In Calvin's doctrine of justification, there is no justification without sanctification. Rather, it emphasises again that the doctrine of justification is a doctrine that necessarily accompanies the fruit of sanctification. As examined in section 5.5.1, 'sanctification' that Calvin refers to is another aspect of piety, like fraternal twins who share the same DNA. Therefore, the piety that Calvin speaks of is a life and attitude toward God and neighbours that naturally comes from those who realise God's paternal love and experience the grace of Christ, and a life of sanctification and good works is displayed in all areas of life.

He names this godly life of a believer as the 'Christian life'. Thus, Calvin explains the believer's life of sanctification up through to chapters 3-5 of Book III of his Institutes. And in chapters 6-10, this doctrine of sanctification is further developed in a practical and pastoral sense. These chapters are classics in devotional literature and are frequently published as separate pamphlets. Indeed the title itself is 'The Golden Booklet of the true Christian Life'(Calvin & Van Andel, 1952). For Calvin, the Christian life is not a doctrine of just words, but a doctrine of life.

The Christian life is not a matter of the tongue but of the inmost heart We have given the first place to the doctrine in which our religion is contained, since our salvation begins with it. But it must enter our heart and pass into our daily living, and so transform us into itself that it may not be unfruitful for us (Calvin, 1960a:687-688).

Therefore, if believers who have received 'justification' and have 'assurance' do not pursue godliness in their lives or do not show signs of sanctification, it is necessary to ascertain whether their assurance is a false conviction, a 'subjective feeling' derived from self-belief, or a false implicit faith. This is the basis upon which believers who have the 'assurance of salvation' should examine themselves if they do not pursue a life of 'sanctification' and 'good works' or if they are lazy.

Although there have been many controversies among scholars about the relationship between good works and justification,¹²⁴ Calvin (1960a:785) clearly states in his Institutes that justification is only obtained by through faith, but good works show that the spirit of adoption is given, and that sanctification and good works thus necessarily accompany faith. Calvin also emphasises that those who are justified by true faith prove their righteousness through obedience and good works not by a bare and imaginary mask of faith (Calvin, 1960a:816)

Summarizing the above, we can conclude that justification and sanctification that comes from union with Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit bear fruit in good works and a life of godliness. It is the truth that the goal of justification and sanctification received through union with Christ as Calvin insists, is the practice of godliness in the life of the believer. Here, the realm of the believer's piety includes all areas of life.

Thus Billings (2011:13) emphasises a believer's social responsibility in saying that the act of ignoring God's call for justice despite having achieved union with Christ and the status of adoption through the gospel, is to tear Christ apart, and reject the grace of sanctification, which is the second limb of the union, while holding on to the grace of justification.

The suasion of Calvin theologian Billings is that he urges serious reflection on how to apply the precise suitability of Calvin's theology to this era and to the Korean Church.

For through the Spirit believers receive not only justification but also sanctification, which animates and enlivens our love of neighbour. Hence, justice cannot be seen as an option "extra" for super-Christians. Yet on the other hand, the gospel can never be reduced to our own acts of justice. For Jesus Christ, and our union with him, is the good news: in him we receive both forgiveness and new life by the Spirit. Both gifts are received in union with Christ himself can be torn into piece (Billings, 2011:10).

In this way, the scope of the believer's sanctification that Calvin pursues includes social life beyond one's family and church. Calvin was sure that it was human nature to live in the community amongst others. Therefore, the separation of a human from the social solidarity of humankind was a sort of curse. These thoughts often appear in his Institutes.

Since man is by nature a social animal, he tends through instinct to foster and preserve society. Consequently, we observe that there exit in all men's minds universal impressions of a certain civic fair dealing and order (Calvin, 1960a:272).

And the scope of Calvin's sanctification is not limited to the individual or to the church. He emphasises that the piety of believers who have experienced the grace of regeneration (sanctification) must be exercised in their lives for faith, piety for God, through charity for neighbours, justice and godliness.

He (God) recovers them through the grace of regeneration. Among these are faith, love of God, charity toward neighbour, zeal for holiness and for righteousness. All these, since Christ restores them in us, are considered adventitious, and beyond nature (Calvin, 1960a:270).

That they be applied to the common good of the church. And therefore, the lawful use of all benefits consists in a liberal and kindly sharing of them with others. No sure rule and no more valid exhortation to keep it could be devised than when we are taught that all the gifts we possess have been bestowed by God and entrusted to us on condition that they be distributed for our neighbours benefit (cf. I Peter 4:10) (Calvin, 1960a:695).

So too whatever a godly man can do he ought to be able to do for his brothers, providing for himself in no way other than to have his mind intent upon the common upbuilding of church. Let this, therefore, be our rule for generosity and beneficence: We are stewards of everything God has conferred on us by which we are able to help our neighbour, and are required to render account of our stewardship (Calvin, 1960a:695).

Calvin saw that believers' personal salvation through justification and sanctification is not to live and stay within the church but to extend to society and the world, living with a greater sense of responsibility towards society than non-believers. Therefore, in order to actively participate in the

world of believers, Calvin took a critical and positive stance on the world, unlike the medieval Roman Church and the Anabaptists. Calvin carried out reforms throughout all of society in Geneva based on his sense of responsibility for society and his critically positive perspective, including the family, church, politics, economy, public welfare, and education. This will be covered in greater detail in the next section.

6.4.3 Calvin's Reformation in Geneva

As examined above, the Korean Church's unilateral emphasis on 'justification by faith' in its understanding of soteriology has led to a rampage of 'cheap grace' and has been an important cause of resulting in the dichotomous life of justification without sanctification in believers. This dichotomous understanding of salvation further deepens the dualistic division between law and grace, faith and works, and the church and the world. However, Calvin did not accept the medieval Roman Catholic's dualism of holiness and secularity, nor did he agree with the Anabaptists' attitude of separation from the world. For Calvin, doctrine, worship and life were one. Doctrine has always aimed for practice, and practice has always taken root in true theology, piety.

A good example of this is indeed Calvin's reform activities in Geneva. Philip Benedict (Hirzel *et al.*, 2009:1) says that one of the most remarkable aspects of Calvin's life is his influence on 16th century Geneva. In addition, he evaluates that renowned Reformation historians recognise Calvin to be a great apostle of the 16th century 'Reformation of Refugees' (Hirzel *et al.*, 2009:1).

At that time, Geneva was in the form of a state-church, and the residents of the city, and believers of the Geneva church were almost the same. As such, Calvin could not and did not want to separate the city from the situation. His reform activities were thus not confined to the church, but related to the overall life of Geneva.

At the time of Calvin, as pointed out by Benedict (Hirzel *et al.*, 2009:7), Geneva was a city full of violence and corruption, and intrigue and depravity. In addition, in the early 16th century, the churches in Geneva, similar to other churches across Europe were corrupt with people not attending Sunday services instead gambling at home, stirring up trouble in the churches, drunkards, shoplifters, people quarrelling and fighting, adultery, and even brothels operated by Roman Catholic priests were thriving businesses.

In his preface to his commentary of the Psalms, Calvin (1996a: The Author's Preface, xiv) points out that while there were many in Geneva suffering from poverty and hunger, there were others

blinded by greed and ambition for dishonest gain.

Calvin's emphasis on a godly life was a response to the immoral and unethical society in Geneva. Geneva was a city so full of diverse issues to the point that Fred Graham (1971:157-173) expresses that Geneva during the time of Calvin had all the problems of that time.

Calvin aimed to restore the social order through his reform activities and tried to create a community overflowing with love and care for one another (McGrath, 1994:128). Thus, Calvin emphasised that the Christian life should not extend only to the individual life but also to the social realm.¹²⁵

For Calvin, the narrow sense of the concept of piety is related to the individual attitudes of believers such as reference, obedience, worship of God and religion, but the wide sense of the doctrine is related to love for humankind and neighbours and justice for society. This is as kindness and honesty must be practiced to demonstrate one's reverence of God, which this piety must be thus reflected in one's attitude and actions towards humankind and neighbours (Calvin, 1960a:695-697).

However, what is often seen in the Korean Church today is that Christians tend to neglect social order or ethical obligations to be observed in the community due to their overwhelming attention to individual faith and personal interests. As a result, they ignore the role of Christians in society and focus only on personal spiritual training or inner training, or on individual success or blessings. However, Calvin emphasises that Christians with justification should show their piety integrated into their lives. This is the life of a believer who seeks sanctification.

Horton (2014c:228) understands the piety of Reformers in terms of a kind of Christian vocation. Therefore, it is emphasised that Calvin recognised the priesthood of all believers as much as Luther did. Every believer is a minister, and even a doctor, baker, or housewife can become a person who serves the work of God's Kingdom by revealing the glory of God through their daily labour of their individual lives.

There is a large place for good works in the Reformer's piety, but is now under the topic of vacation rather than justification. We bring our good works not to God for reimbursement, but to our neighbours for their good (Horton, 2014c:228).

In addition, Horton (2014c:229) defines biblical piety as defined by Calvin as an outward life in

which we draw our faith to God, and our love to our neighbours. This outward life refers to Christians' lives in the world in general. This is to emphasise piety not only in the church and religion, but also in everyday life. In this way, Calvin dreamed of a change to bring about a land of Christ's spirit in the world (Monter, 1967:235). Thus Joseph Richard (1974:125) calls Calvin's piety to be "a spirituality of the service of God in the world."

Benedict believes that Calvin used three main means to change the manner and morals of Geneva (Hirzel *et al.*, 2009:5-8). The first was preaching, the second consistory and the third was the law.

According to Benedict's estimations, Calvin is believed to have preached almost 4,000 sermons in Geneva over a period of approximately 25 years (Hirzel *et al.*, 2009:5). Through preaching, he enlightened and corrected the citizens of Geneva, and he adjusted the wrong doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. Preaching is already emphasised in the Reformed Church so will not be iterated further.

Secondly, as Benedict argued, one of the institutions that Calvin created to reform Geneva was the Geneva Consistory.¹²⁶ The Consistory was founded in 1541 when Calvin returned to Geneva from Strasbourg. Calvin organised and realised the Consistory in Geneva to establish church discipline and carefully supervise the godliness of believers. The cases which the Consistory dealt with the most included blasphemy, family conflicts, and unsavoury incidents between neighbours that were easily committed in everyday life. The Consistory did not end with ensuring the true confession of faith and worship of believers, but was deeply interested in training their lives to ensure believers' full completion by living a transformed life (Lee, 1997:272).

As McNeill (1954:189-190) points out, the Consistory had the role of supervising, educating and governing the citizens of Geneva to live faithfully and observe the moral order. The Consistory met regularly every week and served not only as a court, but also played an educational and counselling function (Selderhuis, 2009:354-358). Kingdon recognises the Consistory to have played a significant role in teaching the correct knowledge to the citizens, and forming godly social relationships in Geneva (Selderhuis, 2009:471). Scott Manetsch also believes that Calvin and his fellow ministers played the role of a moral watchdog for the city and played a part in morally transforming Geneva.

Although Calvin and his pastoral colleagues did not possess formal civil authority, they did exercise substantial moral authority within Geneva due to their intellectual stature and prominent social position, as well as to the crucial role that the pulpit played in mass communication and indoctrination. During Calvin's lifetime, and in

the half century that followed, Geneva's ministers regularly assumed the role of public prophets and moral watchdogs, warning the magistrates from the pulpit and in city council chambers about a variety of dangers, including religious heterodoxy, breaches of justice, and social immorality (Manetsch, 2013:27).

In addition, Calvin developed specific activities to help the poor as an activity for social change in Geneva (McKim, 2004b:163-167). For Calvin, the diakonia was a way to put his Reformation theology into practice. Calvin encouraged Christian relief and charity, and emphasised that the church should actively practice diakonia in the public sphere (McKim, 2004b:163-164). In his theology, the diakonia was an outward expression of faith based on piety. Billings (2011:111) states that since many refugees fled to Geneva at the time of Calvin, he paid much attention to refugees in need. Thus, the church leadership and discipline was reorganised and a special fund was used so that deacons could utilise the welfare system according to the needs of the people such as providing food to the hungry, and medical benefits to the sick.

After returning to Geneva in 1541, Calvin provisioned the office of deacon in the "Ecclesiastical Ordinances", through which the task of caring for the poor and sick became a common concern of church and state (McKim, 2004b:165). In addition, Calvin practiced a social welfare system that took care of the poor in Geneva society through the Spital: Hospital General.¹²⁷ Although Calvin was not the founder of the workhouses, he did solidify the work of the workhouses by providing biblical sources and theological basis to those responsible for the work.¹²⁸ Moreover, Calvin went further to actively support the activities of Bourse Francaise (Fund for Poor French Foreigners) which raised funds to help French refugees (McKim, 2004b:166-167). In this way, Geneva became a city where in justified believers cared for the needy and homeless with love. Calvin took it for granted that the church's deacons and believers should take care of the poor and the sick, and for him the only starting point for reform was the Bible, not secular state legislation. By correctly understanding and interpreting the Bible, Calvin helped believers live a godly and upright life in front of God, which consequently changed society.

As a theologian, Calvin did not hold his theology only as a theory. He was a Reformer who tried to realise his theology in the pastoral field of Geneva. His theological goals bore fruit in his later years. In a word, for Calvin, theological theory and practice were not separated from each other. His theology and piety continuously harmonised and blossomed through his reform activities.

Scottish Reform John Knox who witnessed the transformed Geneva praised Geneva to be "The most perfect school of Christ that ever was in the earth since the days of the Apostle." (McNeill, 1954:178)

The English bishop John Bale also visited Geneva, after which he wrote,

Geneva seemeth to me to be the wonderful miracle of the whole world: so many from all countries come thither, as it were into a sanctuary, not to gather riches but to live in poverty ... Is it not wonderful that Spaniards, Italians, Scots, Englishman, Frenchmen, Germans, disagreeing in manners, speech and apparel, sheep and wolves, bulls, and bears, being coupled with the only yoke of Christ, should live so lovingly and friendly, and that monks, laymen and nuns, disagreeing both in life and sect, should dwell together, like a spiritual and Christian congregation (McNeill, 1954:178-179).

Due to Calvin's reform activities, Geneva became a completely changed city in 30 years. The population doubled, the economy grew stronger, and above all, the character of the city was renewed and, as a result, Geneva came to be respected by other cities.

In this way, the transformation of Geneva clearly shows how amazing results can be produced when the correct theology of a Reformer, Calvin, and the situation in Geneva meet.

This clearly teaches what the Korean Presbyterian Church which adheres to Calvinism should teach and practice in reality, rather than trying to change the Korean society from which it is receiving much criticism.

6.5 Conclusion: the way forward for the Korean Church

The Reformation which occurred in the 16th century is the greatest event in 2000 years of Christian history. This Reformation was a movement to restore the pure gospel and the salvation of God's grace while accusing the corruption of medieval Roman Catholic doctrine and ethics. Starting with Martin Luther (1483-1546) who first open fire with his 95 theses, along with Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531), Martin Bucer (1491-1551), Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575), John Calvin (1509-1564) all pointed out the doctrinal and ethical errors of Roman Catholicism and emphasised the gospel of justification by faith.

Among the reformers, Calvin in particular established the Reformation theology by emphasising sanctification against the criticism of the Roman Catholic Church who contended that through justification by faith, good works are destroyed (Calvin, 1960a:797). In addition, Calvin criticised the error of the ascetic and formal piety system made by the Roman Catholic Church. In Calvin's

view, the Roman Catholic religious system at the time seriously distorted Christians' understanding of a godly life.

Calvin (1960b:1260) especially criticises the oaths and lives of Roman Catholic monks at the time as "vain and futile" and to be "impiety". Calvin (1960b:1261) reasons this impiety is due to their belief they have obtained exceptional righteousness after doing foolish things, and commit to entirely outwardly observable work through actions like monastic celibacy, and ascetic devotion.

However, Calvin (1960a:347) argues that true piety must begin with the internal and voluntary change to realise God is the Father who loves and keeps His believers, and will gather His believers to the eternal kingdom. Above all, Calvin (1960a:689) emphasised that piety is to live and act according to God's will in society (Rom. 12:1-2).

In addition, Calvin (1960a:415) emphasises that true piety must be manifested as a communal practice and continuously trained according to the teachings of the law represented by the Bible. Of course, because Christ met all the requirements of the law, the law no longer condemns believers. However, the law now teaches believers the principles of a godly and righteous life. In particular, the role of the law serves as an universal standard to train believers to live a righteous Christian life. Following the law is essentially an inner affair, but it is also an outward display of faith. That is the duty of godliness (Elsie, 2011:201).

Now the perfection of that holiness comes under the two headings already mentioned: "That we should love the Lord God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength" (Deut. 6:5 P.; cf. Matt.22:37,39). First, indeed, our soul should be entirely filled with the love of God. From this will directly flow the love of neighbour. This is what the apostle shows when he writes that "the aim of the law is love from a pure conscience and a faith unfeigned" (1Tim. 1:5P.). You see how conscience and sincere faith are put at the head. In other words, here is true piety, from which love is derived (Calvin, 1960a:415).

In the chaotic situation of the 21st century Korean church, the characteristics of true godliness that Calvin consistently emphasised and the understanding of the law as a consistent standard for the concrete practice of true godliness provide us with lessons that are still valid today.

As examined above, the issue underlying the Korean Church today is that wrong ideas such as misconception of the theology of justification by faith, prejudice against sanctification and good

works and ignorance of the law has been carried through in the Korean Church. This has caused believers to live separate lives between faith and action, and belief and ethics. Along with this, church growth and materialism fuelled by secularisation, the influence of the dualism that separates holiness and secularity, and the attitude of considering faith only as a tool to achieve personal blessings and ignoring one's social responsibilities are overall prevalent in the Korean Church.

However, Calvin (1960a:835) expresses that as Christians who have been called to live a life of sanctification, the whole life of a believer should be a practice of piety.

In this regard, the Korean Church must undertake the following corrections:

- 1) Sanctification is not the result of justification, but God's grace that comes simultaneously through union with Christ, and the justified believer must bear the fruit of sanctification.
- 2) Also, good works are "essential" in the life of a saved Christian as the fruit of faith.
- 3) The third use of Calvin's understanding of the law must be taught in order to practically encourage believers to do good.
- 4) All of this is the sum of Calvin's piety, and A believer's piety goes beyond personal piety and includes community social responsibilities.

In fact, Calvin's piety can be said to be the basis for maintaining his faith, life, and his entire academic world. Calvin's piety was furthermore not only useful for reforming the city of Geneva. It provides a religious standard that can show the right values of Christians in the Korean Church and society today. As such, the pursuit of true godliness is not a matter of personal choice that each church or individual believer can choose according to their convenience. In the lives of believers, true piety is a lifelong duty to be specifically and consistently affirmed and trained according to God-ordained norms. The Korean Church must accurately understand Calvin's teachings and properly teach them to its members.

Calvin's understanding of true piety and efforts to practice it are the content that the Korean Presbyterian Church must practice in order to restore truly healthy ethics and restore trust from society. In that sense, true godliness as taught by Calvin should still be emphasised as an important theological theme in the Korean church today. The current Korean Church will have to listen

again to this cry of 'piety' that Calvin himself showed through his life. Only then will the Korean Church be able to restore trust from society and exalt the glory of God through 'piety', a true religious existence.

NOTES

¹¹¹ After the first arrival of missionaries in Korea in 1885, the Korean Church had grown to 250,000 people by the March 1 Independence Movement in 1919. This grew to 1.2 million in 1960, a growth of just under 5 times over 40 years. On the other hand, in 1985, the 100th anniversary of missionaries' arrival in Korea, a miraculous growth of 11 million people (approximately 22% of the total population) was achieved. This is a nearly 10-fold increase in just 25 years, and an increase of more than 1 million each year except for 1978. After the centenary anniversary of the mission, the Korean Church, which had continued to grow phenomenally until the late 1980s, began to show a slow-down in growth (3%) from 1993.

¹¹² Since the early days of the Korean Church, the mainstream thought was the Calvinist tradition following the faith of the American Presbyterian missionaries. Although of course, other theologies including Methodism, were introduced in the early days of missionary work, among them, the Presbyterian Church following Calvinism has held a firm leading position so far. A report published on the Far East in 1919 already reported the situation in Korea as such. "The typical missionary of the first quarter century after the opening of the country was a man of the Puritan type. In theology and biblical criticism, he was strongly conservative, and he held as a vital truth the premillennial view of the second coming of Christ.... The higher criticism and liberal theology were deemed dangerous heresies." This statement shows that the Korean Church maintained a firm belief in the Bible, and that this was influenced by Puritanism, or Calvinism. See Brown, A. J. 1919. *The Mastery of the Far East: The Story of Korea's Transformation and Japan's Rise to Supremacy in the Orient*. New York: Bell., 540. Seong-Won Park also argues that the Korean Presbyterian Church did not directly inherit the Reformed heritage from the 16th-century Reformed churches but did inherit the Calvinist tradition from Reformed missionaries in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Scotland. See Park, S. 2007. *The Social and Economic Impact of John Calvin on the Korean Church and Society* in *John Calvin Rediscovered: The Impact of his Social and Economic Thought*. Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press.

¹¹³ This survey is the sixth follow-up study in 2020 since the first survey was started in 2008 which has the purpose "of measuring the trust of the Korean people in the Korean church. Cf. Christian Ethics Movement of Korea. 2020. 2020 Church Social Reliability Survey Result Announcement. <https://cemk.org/resource/15704/> Date of access: 19 Sep 2022.

¹¹⁴ Christian Ethics Movement of Korea. 2020. 2017 Korean Church Social Reliability Poll Result Databook. <https://cemk.org/resource/2699/> Date of access: 19 Sep 2022.

¹¹⁵ Translated from graph provided in CEMK's 2020 report, page 32.

¹¹⁶ Translated from graph provided in CEMK's 2020 report, page 30.

¹¹⁷ As a result of CEMK's 2020 research, the issue of hereditary succession in the Myung Sung Presbyterian Church emerged as the second biggest issue in Korean churches. Cf. Christian Ethics Movement of Korea. 2020. 2020 Church Social Reliability Survey Result Announcement. <https://cemk.org/resource/15704/> Date of access: 19 Sep 2022.

¹¹⁸ Gallup Korea. 2021. Religion of Korea 1984-2021. (1) Religion Status. <https://www.gallup.co.kr/gallupdb/reportContent.asp?seqNo=1208>: Date of access; 25 Oct. 2022

¹¹⁹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his book "The Cost of Discipleship" critiques and terms the wrong form of Christian faith as "costly grace" and "cheap grace. Bonhoeffer, D. & Fuller, R.H. 1959. The Cost of Discipleship. London: SCM Press.

¹²⁰ In "The Cambridge companion to John Calvin" edited by Donald K. McKim, a representative work of Calvin's studies, Calvin's Ethics by Guenther H. Haas, Calvin and social-Ethical issues by Jeannie E. Olson, Calvin and Political Issues by William R. Stevenson is included. See Edit by McKim, D.K. 2004. The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. "The Calvin Handbook" edited by Herman J. Selderhuis shows that Calvin emphasises God's sovereignty over all areas of life, including marriage (family), state (politics), society (human life), and labour (economy), all of which are the realms of God's reign. See Selderhuis, H.J. 2009. The Calvin handbook. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans.

¹²¹ Refer to the excellent publication by Michael Horton: Horton, M. 2014. Calvin on the Christian life: glorifying and enjoying God Forever. Wheaton: Crossway.

¹²² In his Institutes, Calvin argues what the Roman Church at that time slandered the doctrine of justification by faith. "This, in one word, is enough to refute the shamelessness of certain impious persons who slanderously charge us with abolishing good works, and with seducing men from the pursuit of them, when we say that men are not justified by works and do not merit salvation by them; and again, charge us with making the path to righteousness too easy when we teach that justification lies in free remission of sins; and by the enticement, with luring into sin men who are already too much inclined to it of their own accord." Calvin, J. 1960a. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. 797.

¹²³ Richard Gaffin also points out that Calvin's motive for dealing with sanctification before justification has provoked discussion among scholars. Gaffin recommends the following book for

a more detailed discussion.: Wubbenhorst and the literature cited there in “*Calvin’s Doctrine of Justification*” in ed B. L. McCormark. ed., 2006. *Justification in Perspective: Historical Developments and Contemporary Challenges*. Grand Rapids: Baker.

¹²⁴ Refer to chapter 5 for the relationship between sanctification and assurance.

¹²⁵ André, Biéler in his book, ‘Calvin’s economic and social thought’ discusses this in greater detail. Biéle. A. 2006. *Calvin's Economic and Social Thought*. Geneva: World Alliance of Reformed Churches. See also Ronald, Wallace’s “Calvin, Geneva and the Reformation: a study of Calvin as social reformer, churchman, pastor and theologian”. Wallace, Ronald S. 1990. *Calvin, Geneva, and the reformation: a study of Calvin as social reformer, churchman, pastor, and theologian*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.

¹²⁶ The Consistory of Geneva which was founded in 1541 was the governing court of Geneva and consisted of 12 laymen and 12 ministers. The 12 lay members were elected: 2 from the 25 member council, 4 from the 60 member council, and 6 from the 200 member council. The 12 ministers were ministers from the city of Geneva. In addition to the 24 members, one of the magistrates chaired the consistory, with a clerk and a summons officer. See Robert M. Kingdon’s article for further details on the Consistory of Geneva. Kingdon, R. 1997. *A New View of Calvin in the Light of the Registers of the Geneva Consistory*. Kirkville, MI: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, Inc.; Kingdon, R. A. 1994. “The Geneva Consistory in the time of Calvin”, *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620*, eds. Andrew Pettegree et al. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹²⁷ Spital (Hospital General) was the predecessor of the modern hospital and was a facility where the sick (including pilgrims) were nursed and cared for until just before they died. Furthermore, the elderly, widows, orphans, those in crisis, and wayfarers were cared for here.

¹²⁸ For greater research on the Geneva workhouses, refer to the following works by Kingdon. Robert M. Kingdon. 1982. Calvinism and Social Welfare. *Calvin Theological Journal*, Vol.17, No. 2 (Nov. 1982): 212-230; Robert M. Kingdon. 1971. Social Welfare in Calvin’s Geneva. *American Historical Review*, Vol. 76, No 1(Feb.1971): 50-69; Robert M. Kingdon. 1985. *The Deacons of the Reformed Church in Calvin’s Geneva: Church and Society in Reformation Europe*, ed. Robert Kingdon. London: Variorum Reprints.

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research project was to address the crisis in the Korean Church that has arisen from the misunderstanding of the theological crux of the Reformation, the doctrine of justification by faith alone. The thesis aimed to propose recommendations to overcome this crisis by studying Calvin's sound doctrine of assurance and piety and correctly applying the foundational principles of Reformed theology, namely justification and sanctification.

First and foremost, I have made efforts to examine Calvin's discourse on piety from various perspectives and establish a comprehensive definition in chapter 2. Throughout the research, it has become evident that defining Calvin's piety in a simple and concise manner is a challenging task. Calvin's preference for the term "piety" and the comprehensive nature of his piety make it a concept that encompasses various aspects and qualities. It has been revealed that there is a difficulty in translating the concept of 'pietas' used by Calvin into modern defined language and concepts. Therefore, it indicates the necessity to use Calvin's own words to capture the true meaning of 'pietas'. The complex discourse of Calvin's piety necessitates a careful examination of his works to uncover the true intentions of his theology.

It is worth noting that Calvin's concept of piety cannot be divorced from his personal and historical context. His theology is deeply rooted in the background and circumstances of his time, addressing the issues of ungodliness prevalent in his society. Therefore, a true understanding of Calvin's piety requires a consideration of this contextual element. It is through this contextual lens that the practical and dynamic qualities of Calvin's piety can be discovered. Furthermore, it was also revealed that the concept of piety in the Reformed tradition often focused solely on human attitudes towards God and religious-oriented worship. Calvin expands its scope to include love for neighbours and engagement as a social responsibility.

Another goal of this research was to further clarify the theological significance of Calvin's piety and assurance and provide a systematic understanding of their characteristics for practical application. In relation to this, the hypothesis of this study was that Calvin's piety and assurance can be found to be closely connected to the prominent themes of Reformed theology, namely justification and sanctification, as evidenced in his commentaries and other works. To achieve this, I examined Calvin's expression and usage of the concepts of piety and assurance in a biblical

and exegetical manner, particularly through his notable commentaries on the Psalms and his first commentary on the book of Romans, which he greatly cherished. This was carried out in conjunction with the second research question and progressed through chapters 3 and 4.

Through this, it was confirmed that Calvin uses the terms assurance and piety in his commentaries to convey the meanings of justification and sanctification. It was also emphasised that those who possess assurance will inevitably pursue a life of piety. Furthermore, interconnectedness of assurance and piety with justification and sanctification within the theological framework was highlighted.

In chapter 5, through analysis Calvin's magnum opus, *Institutes*, it was further emphasised how his sound doctrine of assurance and piety is interconnected with his other notable theological concepts such as knowledge, union with Christ, justification, and sanctification. Through this examination, it was demonstrated that assurance and piety correspond to justification and sanctification, and that believers who possess assurance necessarily pursue a life of piety.

In the final chapter 6, an analysis was conducted into how the misappropriation of Calvin's doctrine of justification by faith in the Korean Church has led to various distortions and issues. In light of these issues, suggestions were proposed as to how to apply the foundational principles of Calvin's theology to overcome these problems in the Korean Church.

Overall, this research project aimed to examine Calvin's theology of assurance and piety and its application within the context of the Korean Church. Through a comprehensive study of Calvin's works, including his commentaries, *Institutes*, and other writings, the goal was to gain a deeper understanding of the theological concepts of assurance and piety and their significance in the context of the Korean Church. The research also explored the relationship between assurance and piety with other key concepts such as justification, sanctification, and knowledge. Furthermore, the project analysed how the misuse of Calvin's theology in the Korean Church has led to various challenges and proposed ways to apply the principles of Calvin's theology to overcome these issues. By delving into the theological foundations and practical implications of Calvin's assurance and piety, the research aimed to contribute to a more faithful and balanced understanding of these concepts within the Korean Church.

7.2 A discussion of the findings regarding the research questions

The research design was founded on four primary research questions. I will briefly mention the findings derived from this research with regards to each of the research questions.

7.2.1 What does Calvin mean when referring to piety?

Although the term ‘piety’ may seem unfamiliar and less commonly used in contemporary language, during the period of the Reformation, it was a widely used and familiar term within the Christian world. Among the Reformers, Calvin in particular had a preference for using the term ‘piety’. This is evidenced by clear examples provided in chapter 2, which demonstrate Calvin's frequent use of the term and his definition of piety. Through the exploration of Calvin's theology and the life he pursued, we found that to gain insights into the concept of piety as defined by Calvin.

Calvin's understanding of piety is a complex concept that cannot be easily defined in a concise manner. However, through a close examination of his theology, it becomes clear that Calvin preferred the term ‘piety’ over other terms, and his notion of piety is both comprehensive and practically applicable. While it may be challenging to provide a simple definition of Calvin's piety, its nature can be understood through various characteristics and considerations.

It is important to approach Calvin's concept of piety not only systematically but also ministerially, ethically, and practically. His theology cannot be separated from his personal and historical context, as it is closely intertwined with the circumstances of his time and reflects his response to what he perceived as ‘ungodliness’ in his context. Therefore, understanding Calvin's piety requires taking into account his personal and historical context to grasp its true nature. In light of Calvin's own sufferings and life experiences, his piety exhibits dynamic and practical qualities.

Calvin's theological method, often seen as dialectical and based on the ‘Duplex Cognito Dei’ (the twofold knowledge of God and self), is relevant to his discussion of piety. Within this dialectical framework, Calvin emphasises the concept of piety to highlight its practical application. The knowledge of God, which includes recognizing Him as both creator and redeemer, is crucial in Calvin's understanding of piety. This knowledge goes beyond intellectual understanding and involves heartfelt belief in God as a loving Father, which is expressed through faith and obedience to His words. This true knowledge of God and self serves as the foundation of Calvin's piety within his dialectical framework, and it ultimately leads to reverence for God and love for neighbours, which are the evidence of genuine piety.

While the concept of piety in the Reformed Church often focused on human attitudes towards

God, Calvin expands its scope. He asserts that piety is not limited to reverence for God and worship-oriented practices but also encompasses the love for neighbours. Calvin argues that the absence of love for others indicates a lack of true piety. However, it is essential to note that the basis for social responsibility in the Christian life is rooted in the assurance of faith itself. Love for neighbours and social action flow naturally from genuine faith, serving as a test of true piety.

In summary, Calvin's concept of piety is difficult to define succinctly due to its complexity and practical nature. However, through research, we have reached the following conclusions regarding Calvin's piety: It encompasses a heartfelt love for God, reverence, obedience, and a holistic understanding of God's knowledge and the knowledge of self. Genuine piety extends beyond religious practices to include love for neighbours and active social engagement. It is through the dynamic interplay of faith, knowledge, reverence, and love that Calvin's notion of piety finds its fullest expression.

7.2.2 What is the relationship of piety to assurance in Calvin's theology according to his commentaries?

7.2.2.1 The relationship between piety and assurance in Calvin's commentary on the Psalms

In answer to this question, it can be concluded that the relationship between assurance and piety as seen in Calvin's commentary on Psalms is intricately intertwined.

Unlike the doctrinal approach of Institutes, Calvin's commentary on Psalms provided practical insights into the concepts of piety and assurance. Through analysis of Calvin's commentary on Psalms, Calvin shows how piety and assurance are intertwined in the lives of believers. Piety, in this context, refers to a deep reverence and devotion towards God, while assurance pertains to the confident belief in one's salvation and God's faithfulness.

Calvin emphasised that true piety is rooted in assurance. Those who have a genuine assurance of their salvation will naturally pursue a life of piety and devotion to God. This assurance is not merely a subjective feeling or a result of personal belief but is based on the objective truth of God's promises and His saving work through Christ.

In the Psalms, Calvin finds examples of individuals, like David, who demonstrate both piety and assurance. Their trust in God's faithfulness and their unwavering devotion to Him in the midst of trials and challenges serve as a testament to the connection between piety and assurance. Through their experiences, Calvin highlights the importance of cultivating a piety that is rooted in a

genuine assurance of salvation.

Therefore, in Calvin's commentary on Psalms, we found that piety and assurance are closely intertwined. Assurance provides the foundation for a life of genuine piety and devotion to God, while piety is the natural expression of a heart assured of God's love and faithfulness.

More specifically, Calvin's commentary on Psalms highlighted that the importance of prayer and praise as expressions of piety. Prayer allows believers to remain faithful in all circumstances, acknowledging God's mercy, while praise serves as a means to express joy and gratitude towards God. Through reliance on God and praise, believers develop trust and faith, even amidst their weaknesses and the challenges they face, experiencing the sweetness of the Lord.

Furthermore, those with assurance demonstrate their reverence for God by willingly bearing the cross. Calvin emphasised that this includes not only personal suffering and affliction but also the burdens of others. Self-denial, cross-bearing, and contemplation of the future life are essential elements of a Christ-like life, closely tied to the themes of 'union with Christ' and sanctification.

In summary, Calvin's commentary on Psalms revealed the relationship between assurance and piety. Assurance of salvation and living a pious life are intimately connected to justification, sanctification, and other theological concepts. Prayer, praise, and willingness to bear the cross demonstrate one's faith and reverence for God. These teachings provide a more detailed understanding of the relationship between assurance and piety within Calvin's theological framework.

7.2.2.2 The relationship between piety and assurance in Calvin's commentary on the epistle to the Romans

Calvin's commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, studied specifically in relation to piety and assurance, has greatly aided in understanding his theological concepts of salvation. As it is well-known, Calvin completed his commentary on Romans in 1540, before any of his other commentaries. This decision was driven by his desire to disseminate the truth and accurately teach the Gospel during a tumultuous period. Calvin believed that understanding Romans was essential for a comprehensive understanding of the entire Bible and that it held the key to unlocking the treasures of Scripture.

As a second-generation Reformation figure, Calvin was aware of the criticisms faced by Luther's theology of justification from the Roman Catholics, who argued that it lacked the notion of

sanctified life. In response to this, Luther emphasised "justification by faith" as a reformatory doctrine. However, the Roman Catholic Church criticised the perceived absence of sanctification. Calvin, in his commentary on Romans, discusses that justification attained through faith inevitably leads to sanctification. He argues that when individuals are reconciled with Christ, they receive the dual grace of justification and sanctification, making a life of sanctification inseparable from justification. This influence is evident in the structure and content of his Institutes, where Calvin discusses sanctification prior to justification.

According to Calvin, sanctification is synonymous with repentance and regeneration. Through daily repentance, believers can lead holy and renewed lives—a concept to which Calvin attaches great importance. However, this piety is a natural outcome for those who have been justified and entered into righteousness through God. Calvin's commentary on Romans narratively explains justification as "reconciliation with God" and "peace with God," emphasizing the concept of a relationship rather than a purely forensic understanding. In his Institutes, Calvin presents assurance within the context of reconciliation with God, emphasizing the peace that stems from full trust in God's promises and the assurance of His paternal love.

This reconciled relationship with God signifies one's state of justification and salvation. Furthermore, the faith that reconciles us with God leads to a life of piety. Genuine faith that brings salvation inherently contains the spirit of sanctification. Therefore, Calvin's commentary on Romans underscores that justification not only makes us righteous in a forensic sense but also instils a desire for internal and essential transformation, leading to a pursuit of repentance and a pious life. Calvin also emphasises that the reconciled relationship with God (justification) signifies union with Christ.

Through faith, those who are united with Christ are engrafted into Him, receiving spiritual nourishment and becoming more like Him. Thus, Christ serves as both the foundation of salvation and the basis of sanctification. Calvin stresses the need for believers to rely on the grace of the Spirit to live a life of piety. Unlike justification, the sanctification of believers is a lifelong process of being restored to the "image of God" through dependence on the Spirit. However, those who have assurance strive for repentance and piety daily based on their union with Christ and the indwelling of the Spirit.

As Calvin has emphasised in his Institutes, his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans also affirms that justification and sanctification cannot be separated, and those who receive justification also lead holy and devout lives. This understanding of the inseparable relationship between justification and sanctification, explored through the lens of assurance and piety in

Calvin's commentary on Romans, serves as a conclusive statement where Calvin firmly declares the connection between justification and sanctification. Another noteworthy aspect of Calvin's theology is his focus on suffering and its deep connection to assurance and piety. Calvin, who experienced adversity as a refugee surrounded by enemies, emphasises that Christ attained glory through suffering. However, this does not imply that suffering is a prerequisite for salvation. Rather, God's intention for His chosen people (the children of God) is to shape believers' character to resemble Christ through suffering. Therefore, believers facing trials should find assurance in knowing that they have been chosen by God. It is through this assurance that believers find the strength to overcome suffering. Moreover, suffering is a transformative process that produces pious individuals, and by enduring such trials, believers can attain God's glory. Thus, Calvin views suffering as both evidence of being God's children and assurance of salvation.

Calvin also places strong emphasis on prayer and loving our neighbours, illustrating the practical and dynamic nature of his theology. In the latter part of his commentary on Romans, Calvin highlights prayer and loving one's neighbours as models of piety. However, Calvin asserts that these practices naturally flow from those who have assurance and are in a reconciled relationship with God. Prayer is inseparably linked to being children of God. Undoubtedly, for those who have entered into a reconciled relationship with God and have experienced His paternal love, genuinely loving one's neighbour becomes a natural attitude. Therefore, Calvin points out that the special concepts representing piety—prayer and loving one's neighbour—are only possible with the assurance of being children of God.

According to Calvin, justification and sanctification are the double grace received through union with Christ. For genuine believers, receiving justification without also experiencing sanctification is impossible. Those who are justified are compelled to live lives of sanctification. Those who have assurance of being accepted by God (reconciliation with God) continually pursue righteous lives (piety). Therefore, it has been revealed that this is the essence of Calvin's discussion in his commentary on Romans.

By following Calvin's teachings, the significance of dynamic and practical faith becomes evident. To have assurance of our justification, we can examine our own lives, which should demonstrate a pursuit of piety, including endurance through suffering, sincere prayer, and loving our neighbours. These aspects serve as evidence of our assurance, as this holiness arises from a true reconciliation with God.

7.2.3 What is the relationship of piety and assurance according to Calvin's Institutes?

Calvin's Institutes is undoubtedly one of the greatest works in Reformed theology. With respect to this monumental piece, I examined Calvin's sound doctrines of piety and assurance in relation to other core themes of Calvin's theology, such as knowledge, faith, union with Christ, justification, and sanctification. Through this exploration, I was able to delve into the intricacies of Calvin's soteriology and gain a deeper understanding of the systematic and logical reasoning behind his doctrines of salvation. Institutes provide us with a profound understanding of Calvin's theological framework and offer valuable insights into the interconnectedness of these doctrines.

Through a comprehensive study of this question, several significant findings and outcomes emerge, shedding light on the theological landscape and offering practical guidance for the church.

First and foremost, it is crucial to recognise that Calvin's theology is not an abstract, detached system of beliefs. Instead, it arises from a concrete historical context, shaped by the challenges and criticisms posed by the Roman Catholic Church. Calvin's engagement with these issues underscores the practical and pastoral nature of his theology, aimed at addressing the pressing concerns of believers.

Building upon this understanding, one key discovery from chapter 5 is the central role of piety in Calvin's theology. Piety is not a peripheral aspect but lies at the heart of his theological framework. Calvin regards piety as the ultimate goal and manifestation of true faith. He emphasises that true piety is rooted in a genuine knowledge of God and a personal encounter with Christ, facilitated by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, Calvin's concept of assurance emerges as inseparable from piety. Assurance is not merely a subjective feeling or psychological certainty; rather, it is intimately linked to the believer's understanding of their justified state before God. Calvin asserts that assurance is a confident trust in the promises of God and a firm conviction of one's standing as a justified believer. This assurance is grounded in the objective reality of God's grace and the believer's union with Christ through faith.

Furthermore, Calvin's theology highlights the importance of good works in the life of a believer. While he vehemently rejects the idea that good works contribute to one's justification, he affirms their significance as the fruit and evidence of true faith. Calvin argues that good works are the natural outworking of justification and sanctification, flowing from the believer's union with Christ. They serve as visible signs of God's grace at work in the believer's life and demonstrate the authenticity of their faith.

Through this exploration, it becomes evident that Calvin's theology offers a holistic perspective on the relationship between piety and assurance. Piety, understood as a life of sanctification and good works, is both the goal and the fruit of justification. Assurance, in turn, is the confident assurance of one's justified state before God, arising from a genuine and active piety. This integration of piety and assurance underscores the practical implications of Calvin's theology for the Christian life.

In conclusion, the study of chapter 5 in Calvin's Institutes reveals a rich and nuanced understanding of the relationship between piety and assurance. Calvin's theology is not a mere intellectual exercise but a practical and pastoral theology that addresses the challenges of his time. The emphasis on piety as the goal and fruit of justification, coupled with the significance of assurance grounded in genuine faith, offers profound guidance for the contemporary church. Moreover, Calvin's recognition of the role of good works underscores the importance of a sanctified and fruitful Christian life. Thus, this exploration of piety and assurance in Calvin's theology provides invaluable insights and practical application for the theological discourse and the life of the Korean Church today.

7.2.4 What is Calvin's theology of justification and sanctification, and how does it relate to assurance and piety?

As already revealed in the previous sections within this conclusionary chapter, it is evident that Calvin's piety and assurance are closely related to justification and sanctification. Calvin's assurance and piety can be seen as an expression of a practical and holistic model that encompasses the doctrines of justification and sanctification, along with the believer's attitude and the essence of faith in their life, as well as their ethical conduct.

Calvin's theology of justification and sanctification is intricately connected to his understanding of assurance and piety. These concepts form a cohesive framework that shapes his view of the Christian faith.

First and foremost, Calvin emphasises the doctrine of justification as the core of Christian belief. According to him, justification is the act of God's grace by which a sinner is declared righteous. It is not achieved through human effort or merit but solely through faith in Christ. This justification is a legal or forensic declaration, where God pardons the believer's sins and imputes Christ's righteousness to them. It is a foundational aspect of salvation, as it brings about reconciliation with God and the forgiveness of sins.

However, Calvin does not merely focus on justification alone but considers the process of sanctification to be of greater importance, placing it at the forefront of his Christian doctrine. According to Calvin, sanctification is the ongoing transformation of the believer's life through the work of the Holy Spirit. It is a progressive and lifelong journey of becoming more like Christ and growing in holiness. Through sanctification, the thoughts, desires, and actions of the believer gradually align with the will of God. Calvin believes that justification and sanctification are inseparable and occur simultaneously through union with Christ. In other words, those who have been justified will naturally experience sanctification in their lives.

In Calvin's theology, assurance of salvation is closely linked to justification and sanctification. True assurance is not based on one's own merits or feelings but rests on the objective promises of God's Word and the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit. Assurance is rooted in the believer's union with Christ, where they find security and confidence in their relationship with Him. It is through faith and the inward witness of the Spirit that believers can have the assurance that they are justified and saved.

Piety, or a life of godliness, is the outward expression of assurance and sanctification. It encompasses both the right relationship with God and the manifestation of that relationship through good works. Piety is not a mere adherence to religious rituals or external practices but a genuine devotion to God that permeates all aspects of life. It involves knowing God, obeying His Word, and living in accordance with His will. Good works, which flow from sanctification, are the visible evidence of true piety and faith.

In summary, Calvin's theology of justification and sanctification provides the foundation for assurance and piety. Justification by faith alone assures believers of their salvation, while sanctification, through the work of the Holy Spirit, leads to a life of piety and good works. These doctrines are intricately connected and reflect the cohesive and systematic nature of Calvin's theological framework. They highlight the transformative power of God's grace in the life of a believer, leading to assurance of salvation and a life devoted to God's glory.

Through the aforementioned discussion, we have come to understand that in Calvin's theology, justification and sanctification are intertwined with assurance and piety, and piety is expressed as a practical and integrated model of both justification and sanctification. These teachings can provide valuable insights and solutions to the challenges faced by the Korean church, such as the misuse of justification leading to the absence of sanctification and moral laxity. Calvin's theology offers a corrective and presents practical alternatives rooted in the true Gospel, offering hope for the church in addressing these issues.

7.2.5 How is this relevant to the context of the Korean church and how can it be applied within the Korean church?

The Reformation, which took place in the 16th century, marked a significant event in Christian history. It aimed to restore the pure gospel and the salvation of God's grace while exposing the corruption within medieval Roman Catholic doctrine and ethics.

Among the reformers, Calvin particularly emphasised sanctification as a response to the criticism from the Roman Catholic Church, which claimed that good works were destroyed through justification by faith alone. Calvin also criticised the flawed ascetic and formal piety system promoted by the Roman Catholic Church, arguing that true piety must begin with an internal and voluntary change and a realisation of God as the loving Father who gathers His believers to the eternal kingdom. Calvin emphasised that piety is not limited to individual devotion but should also be lived out and practiced in society.

Unfortunately, the current situation of the Korean Church resembles that of the Reformation era. Similar to how Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone faced criticism for potentially leading to moral laxity, the Korean Church has also emphasised justification by faith but has struggled to properly understand and apply Calvin's Reformed theology, leading to a disconnection between belief and ethics. As a result, the Korean Church has lost social credibility and has been criticised for a lack of good works and sanctification.

To address these issues, the Korean Church needs to rediscover the importance of true piety and embrace Calvin's teachings on justification, sanctification, and the role of the law. The Korean Church must reject a distorted focus on faith supremacy and church growth, and instead emphasise the integration of faith and life. By emphasizing the transformative power of the gospel in personal holiness, ethical living, and engagement with societal needs, the Korean Church can regain the trust of society and demonstrate the relevance and practicality of Calvin's theology in the present context.

The Korean Church must correct its misconceptions and prejudices, recognizing that sanctification is not separate from justification but is a result of God's grace experienced through union with Christ. Good works are essential in the life of a saved Christian as the fruit of faith, and the practical application of the third use of the law should be taught to encourage believers to do good. Calvin's understanding of true piety, which extends beyond personal devotion and includes social responsibilities, should guide the Korean Church in its pursuit of godliness.

Calvin's teachings on piety provide a religious standard that can demonstrate the right values of Christians in the Korean Church and society.

The pursuit of true godliness is not a matter of personal preference but a lifelong journey that believers must consistently practice according to God's word. The Korean Church must accurately understand and teach Calvin's teachings, recognizing them as the foundation for restoring ethical integrity and regaining trust from society. Emphasizing true godliness as taught by Calvin will not only contribute to the restoration of the Korean Church but also bring glory to God through a genuine religious existence.

In conclusion, the Korean Church must embrace Calvin's teachings on assurance, piety in relation with justification, and sanctification as a theological framework for renewal. By rediscovering and applying these principles faithfully, the Korean Church can address the challenges it faces, restore ethical integrity, and regain its credibility in society.

7.3 Limitations of the research and suggestions for future research

This research was conducted with the intention of providing alternative solutions to overcome the moral laxity and distortion of the justification doctrine in the Korean Church through Calvin's theology of assurance and piety.

Therefore, I mainly examined his prominent commentaries on the Psalms and Romans, as well as the final edition of his Institutes, which are directly related to assurance and piety. While there are still other commentaries, sermons, treatises and letters by Calvin that could provide deeper insights into the meaning of assurance and piety, the Psalms commentary and Roman's commentary are considered his most devoted works, where we can glimpse his theological intentions, reflections, and his passion for the Gospel and love for the people of his time. However, I cannot be certain that there are no greater treasures to be found in his other commentaries. If we were to examine his papers and letters through the lens of assurance and piety, we may be able to provide further support and enrich the current research.

Furthermore, although this study focused on Calvin's final edition of Institutes as the central source for exploring the themes of assurance and piety, it would be meaningful to examine how the concepts of assurance and piety evolved and developed in Calvin's theology from the first to the fifth edition of his Institutes. This comparative study would shed light on how Calvin's understanding of assurance and piety expanded and matured over time.

Calvin is the most widely discussed and highly regarded theologian in the Korean Church. However, it is ironic that his theology is often misused and misunderstood in the context of Korean church. This research was undertaken with the hope that Calvin's piety and assurance would be correctly understood and applied in the Korean Church, leading to the restoration of trust from Korean society and the revitalization of faith among believers. May we anticipate fruitful outcomes from this endeavour.

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