

**A LUO CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLE OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT IN SANCTIFICATION ACCORDING TO JOHN
CALVIN**

by

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ABSTRACT

This research project interprets Calvin's views on the work of the Spirit in sanctification. It then evaluates Calvin's views from a Luo perspective. The study of Calvin focuses on the 1559 edition of the *Institutes*, while the evaluative study of his views is taken from the perspective of the Luo of the Africa Inland Church (A.I.C.) of Kenya. The Africa Inland Church was founded under the influence of Calvin's legacy, particularly concerning matters regarding Christian sanctification. Therefore an evaluative study of Calvin's views from a Luo perspective is relevant.

The study of Calvin focuses on Calvin's views on "the Christian life" and specifically "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude." It is from these views that the evaluative study of his views is undertaken from a Luo perspective. The chapters in the study are developed in the following manner:

Chapter One forms the introduction to the study itself. It defines the "problem statement" of the research project and demonstrates what is being investigated in the study. It outlines the "purpose statement" of the research project and makes clear the contribution being made. The "purpose statement" outlines the perspectives of Calvin's views that are explored in the study. The statement further points to the fact that a thorough study of the Luo also develops in the process of the research project. This chapter of the study further states the limits of the study of Calvin and that of the evaluation of his views. It states that the study only focuses on the perspectives of Calvin's views already outlined and the evaluative study of his views from the perspective of the Luo members of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya.

Chapter Two centres on a study of how Calvin's influence found its way into the Christian practices and beliefs of the Luo. The chapter outlines a number of works published on the study of Calvin through which Calvin's influence is seen; a brief outline of Calvin's life demonstrating the nature of influences upon his own life through which he acquired skills that subsequently became useful to him in his contribution towards the development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit; the cultural background of the Luo people; as well as the nature and characteristics of the Christian beliefs and practices which form the background of the Luo members of the Africa Inland Church. Such Christian beliefs form the basis on which Calvin's influence on the Church and the Luo people is evaluated. Furthermore, this chapter of the study forms the basis upon which the succeeding chapters in the study are developed. It is necessary to understand the manner in which Calvin's influence found its way into the Christian beliefs and practices of the Luo before interpreting Calvin's views and evaluating such views from a Luo perspective.

Chapter Three focuses on the study of Calvin's views. It explores Calvin's understanding of the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of "the Christian life" and specifically of "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude." Concerning "the Christian life," the study demonstrates that Calvin understood the Spirit as the power that effects sanctification in the Christian life, firstly, by bringing forth faith in an individual, and secondly, by working through the aspects of faith, namely repentance, Christian life (a life of righteousness) and prayer.

The aspect of justification, however, which Calvin also discusses under "the Christian life," though an activity through which renewal into the Image of God takes place by the work of the Spirit, is not a process through which sanctification takes place. The Spirit is only involved in the work of justification in the sense that justification is imputed by God who exists in Three Persons (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit) and the Spirit therefore forms part of the Being and function of the Godhead.

Furthermore, concerning Calvin's understanding of "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude," the study demonstrates that Calvin understood the Spirit to sanctify believers through the elements of the Word, Baptism, the Lord's Supper and the Church. Calvin understood the elements as means through which the grace of God is attained and gratitude is demonstrated to God for His work in creation and salvation. Firstly, God's gracious "acts" are extended to the people through the elements and, secondly, individuals, as they observe the elements, honour God, hence expressing gratitude to him, since the elements have been instituted by him for this purpose.

Chapter Four deals with the evaluation of Calvin's views from the perspective of the Luo of the Africa Inland Church. It reconsiders Calvin's views discussed in chapter three and compares those views to those of the Luo. Consequently, a Luo response to Calvin's views develops. The chapter demonstrates that the Luo of the Africa Inland Church interpret the work of the Spirit in "the Christian life" and "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude" in a manner more or less similar to that of Calvin. Furthermore, the chapter demonstrates vividly that, in spite of coming from a cultural background where belief in the ancestral spirits is firmly rooted, the Luo make a distinction between the "Holy Spirit" and the "ancestral spirits;" hence they submit to the work of the Holy Spirit in their Christian beliefs and practices in spite of the fact that the concept "Holy Spirit" is translated in the Luo Bible, the *Muma Maler*, as "Roho Maler" which, in plain "Dholuo" (Luo language), just means "Clean Spirit." The term "Clean Spirit" does not bear any reference to God the Father and God the Son, compared to Calvin's interpretation of the identity of the term "Holy Spirit."

Chapter Five provides the Conclusion. It is in this chapter that the views of Calvin and the Luo of the Africa Inland Church are reassessed. The chapter outlines the fact that Calvin's views have indeed had a remarkable influence on the Luo of the Africa Inland Church as evidenced in the manner in which they respond to Calvin's views. The Luo understand the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of "the Christian life" and "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude" in more or less the same way as Calvin did. This implies the enormous influence of Calvin's views on the people. Furthermore, the chapter also points out that, though the Luo Christians understand who "Roho Maler" (Clean Spirit) is and understand his related work in the sanctification of a believer, when the term "Clean Spirit" is used in a context where the audience consists of non-believers, the non-believers in particular are not able to make a clear distinction between what the "Holy Spirit" and "ancestral spirits" are, since people from a Luo cultural background believe that not all spirits are bad. Some would be seen as good depending on how they relate to the living – whether they return to haunt the living or not. The "good spirits" may therefore be understood as "Clean Spirits" by unbelievers. The chapter therefore concludes by offering two necessary principles for interpreting the Holy Spirit in a Luo Christian cultural dimension. Those principles are, firstly, that of focusing on the study of the Scripture and secondly, understanding the dimension of "Community" in a cultural background where Luo traditional cultural values are the dominant values.

Finally, the chapter points out that, though Calvin's views are useful when interpreting Luo views, the Luo need to focus, more than anything else, on the study of Scripture, in this case, the *Muma Maler* – as Calvin also based his interpretation on Scripture.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie navorsingsprojek behels 'n ondersoek na Calvyn se sienings oor die werk van die Gees in heiligmaking waarna dit vanuit 'n Loa perspektief geëvalueer word. Die studie oor Calvyn fokus op die 1559 uitgawe van die *Institute*, terwyl die evaluasie van sy sienings gedoen word vanuit die perspektief van die Luo van die *Africa Inland Church* (A.I.C.) van Kenia. Die stigting van die *Africa Inland Church* is beïnvloed deur die nalatenskap van Calvyn, veral deur aangeleenthede wat verband hou met heiligmaking. Gevolglik is 'n ondersoek en evaluasie, gedoen vanuit 'n Luo perspektief, van Calvyn se sienings oor hierdie onderwerp hoogs relevant.

Die studie met betrekking tot Calvyn fokus op sy verstaan van "die Christelike lewe" en "die Christelike lewe as 'n lewe van Genade en Dankbaarheid" en dit word dan beoordeel vanuit 'n Luo perspektief. Die hoofstukke in die studie ontwikkel en volg mekaar as volg op:

Hoofstuk Een vorm die inleiding tot die studie. Hier word die probleemstelling van die navorsingsprojek gedefinieer asook die voorwerp van die studie. Verder bevat die hoofstuk 'n omskrywing van die doelwit van die navorsingsprojek asook van die bydrae wat die studie maak. Die omskrywing van die doelwit van die studie gee ook in breë trekke die perspektiewe op Calvyn se sienings wat ondersoek sal word weer en wys verder daarop dat 'n deeglike studie van die Luo self ook ontwikkel in die loop van die navorsingsprojek. Ten slotte toon hoofstuk een die grense aan van hierdie studie deurdat dit duidelik gestel word dat hier slegs gefokus word op die genoemde perspektiewe op Calvyn se sienings en slegs vanuit die perspektief van die Luo lede van die *Africa Inland Church* van Kenia.

Hoofstuk Twee sentreer rondom die vraag hoe Calvyn se invloed inslag gevind het in die Christelike praktyke en oortuigings van die Luo. 'n Oorsig word gegee van 'n aantal werke wat gepubliseer in studies oor Calvyn waarin sy invloed gesien kan word; 'n kort oorsig van Calvyn se lewe word gegee ten einde die aard van invloede op hom aan te toon wat aan hom die vaardighede verleen het om mettertyd sy leer oor die Heilige Gees te ontwikkel; daar word verwys na Calvyn se bydrae tot die ontwikkeling van die leer van die Heilige Gees; 'n oorsig word gegee van die kulturele agtergrond van die Luo asook van die aard en eienskappe van die Christelike oortuigings en praktyke wat die agtergrond vorm van die Luo lede van die *Africa Inland Church*. Hierdie Christelike oortuigings vorm die basis waarop Calvyn se invloed op die kerk en die Luo geëvalueer word. Hierdie hoofstuk dien as basis waarop die daaropvolgende hoofstukke van die studie ontwikkel, aangesien dit noodsaaklik is om 'n begrip te vorm van die wyse waarop Calvyn se invloed die Christelike oortuigings en praktyke van die Luo binnegedring het alvorens Calvyn se sienings self geïnterpreteer en vanuit 'n Lou perspektief geëvalueer word.

Hoofstuk Drie fokus op Calvyn se sienings, spesifiek waar dit gaan oor die werk van die Heilige Gees in die heiligung van "die Christelike lewe" en van "die Christelike lewe as 'n lewe van Genade en Dankbaarheid." Wat "die Christelike lewe" aanbetrif word daarop gewys dat Calvyn die Gees verstaan het as die krag wat heiligmaking in die Christelike lewe tot gevolg het. Dit geskied eerstens deur die bewerking van die geloof in die individu en tweedens deur middel van spesifieke aspekte van die geloof, naamlik berou, die Christelike lewe ('n lewe van geregtigheid) en gebed.

Die aspek van regverdigmaking, hoewel dit 'n gebeurtenis is waardeur hernuwing na die Beeld van God deur die toedoen van die Gees plaasvind en ook deel vorm van Calvyn se bespreking van "die Christelike lewe," is egter nie 'n proses waardeur heiligmaking plaasvind nie. Die Gees is slegs betrokke by regverdigmaking vir soverre Hy een van die Drie Persone (God die Vader, God die Seun en God die Heilige Gees) binne die Drie-eenheid is en as sulks deel uitmaak van die Wese en werk van die Godheid in die toerekening van die regverdiging.

Verder, met verwysing na Calvyn se verstaan van “die Christelike lewe as ’n lewe van Genade en Dankbaarheid,” toon hierdie studie dat die Gees volgens Calvyn gelowiges heilig deur die elemente van die Woord, Doop, Nagmaal en die Kerk. Calvyn het hierdie elemente verstaan as genademiddele en as middede waardeur dankbaarheid aan God betoon word vir Sy skeppings- en verlossingswerk. In die eerste plek word God se “genadedade” deur hierdie elemente oorgedra na mense en, tweedens, vereer individue God deur deel te hê aan hierdie elemente. Hulle betoon ook so hul dankbaarheid aan God aangesien Hy hierdie elemente ingestel het vir hierdie doel.

In **Hoofstuk Vier** word Calvyn se sienings vanuit die perspektief van die Luo van die *Africa Inland Church* geëvalueer. Calvyn se sienings soos bespreek in hoofstuk drie word dan vergelyk dit met dié van die Luo en ’n Luo respons word ontwikkel op Calvyn se sienings. Hierdie hoofstuk toon dat die Luo van die *African Inland Church* die werk van die Gees in “die Christelike lewe” en “die Christelike lewe as ’n lewe van Genade en Dankbaarheid” interpreer op ’n min of meer soortgelyke manier as Calvyn. Verder word duidelik gewys hoedat die Luo, ten spyte van die feit dat hulle kom vanuit ’n kulturele agtergrond waarin die geloof in voorvaderlike geeste diep gewortel is, wel onderskei tussen die “Heilige Gees” en die “voorvaderlike geeste.” Gevolglik onderwerp hulle hulself aan die werk van die Heilige Gees in hul Christelike geloofsoortuigings en praktyke, selfs al word die konsep “Heilige Gees” in die Luo Bybel, die *Muma Maler*, vertaal as “Roho Maler” wat in “Dholuo” (die Luo spreektaal) bloot “Rein Gees” beteken. Anders as in Calvyn se interpretasie van die identiteit van die “Heilige Gees,” bevat die term “Rein Gees” egter geen verwysing na God die Vader en God die Seun nie.

In **Hoofstuk Vyf** volg die Gevolgtrekking van die studie. Die sienings van beide Calvyn en die Luo van die *Africa Inland Church* word in heroorweging geneem. Daar word in breë trekke gewys op die feit dat die sienings van Calvyn ’n opmerklike invloed op die Luo van die *Africa Inland Church* gehad. Die Luo verstaan die werk van die Gees in die heiligung van “die Christelike lewe” en “die Christelike lewe as ’n lewe van Genade en Dankbaarheid” op min of meer dieselfde wyse as Calvyn wat die geweldige invloed van Calvyn se sienings op hulle impliseer. Verder wys hierdie hoofstuk daarop dat, hoewel Luo Christene verstaan wie die “Roho Maler” (Rein Gees) is en wat sy heiligmakende werking met betrekking tot die gelowige behels, die term “Rein Gees” wanneer dit gebruik word in ’n konteks van ’n niegelowige gehoor, laasgenoemde nie die vermoë het om duidelik te onderskei tussen die “Heilige Gees” en “voorvaderlike geeste” nie. Die rede hiervoor is te vind in die feit dat vanuit die Luo se kulturele agtergrond nie alle geeste as boos beskou word nie. Afhangend van hul verhouding met die lewendes – of hulle terugkeer om die lewendes te teister of nie – word sommige geeste as goed beskou. “Goeie geeste” mag dus as “Rein Geeste” beskou word deur niegelowiges. In hierdie hoofstuk word daarom twee beginsels vir die interpretasie van die Heilige Gees in ’n Luo kulturele milieu aan die hand gedoen: eerstens ’n sterk fokus op die bestudering van die Skrif en tweedens, begrip vir die dimensie van “Gemeenskap” in ’n kulturele milieu waar tradisionele Luo kulturele waardes domineer.

Ten slotte wys die hoofstuk daarop dat, hoewel Calvyn se sienings nuttig aangewend kan word by die interpretasie van Luo sienings, die Lou bo alles moet fokus op die bestudering van die Skrif – in die geval van die Luo, die *Muma Maler* – aangesien ook Calvyn immers sy interpretasie op die Skrif baseer het.

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And now I must turn in gratitude to our Almighty Father, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, being the source of everything in my life, and more so during the course of this work. The project itself was almost brought to a standstill by the sting of death which hovered over my life when I was ill during the journey towards its completion at the University of Stellenbosch. Were it not for your almighty hand, "Nyasaye," I would not have lived to complete it. Glory be to you, ALMIGHTY GOD, ever existing in Three Persons – GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON and GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT! I could worship and serve you in no other way than by undertaking this project that seeks to teach your people how you work in them through the Person of the HOLY SPIRIT to ensure that we are sanctified from moment to moment for the honour and glory of your Name.

AMEN

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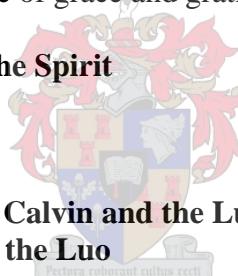
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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>A.B.O</i>	<i>Africa Based Orientation</i>
<i>A.I.C.</i>	<i>Africa Inland Church</i>
<i>A.I.M.</i>	<i>African Inland Mission</i>
<i>ATR.</i>	<i>African Traditional Religion</i>
<i>B.C.C</i>	<i>Branch Church Council</i>
<i>C.C.P.</i>	<i>Calvin's Commentary to the book of Psalms</i>
<i>C.C.JN</i>	<i>Calvin's Commentary to the book of John</i>
<i>C.C.ROM.</i>	<i>Calvin's Commentary to the book of Romans</i>
<i>C.C.1 COR.</i>	<i>Calvin's Commentary to the book of 1 Corinthians</i>
<i>C.C.GAL</i>	<i>Calvin's Commentary to the book of Galatians</i>
<i>C.C. EPH</i>	<i>Calvin's Commentary to the book of Ephesians</i>
<i>C.C. 1 PET</i>	<i>Calvin's Commentary to the book of 1 Peter</i>
<i>C.C.C.</i>	<i>Central Church Council</i>
<i>D.C</i>	<i>Deutero- Canonical Books</i>
<i>D.D.C.</i>	<i>District Church Council</i>
<i>INST.</i>	<i>Institutes</i>
<i>L.C.C</i>	<i>Local Church Council</i>
<i>R.C.C.</i>	<i>Regional Church Council</i>

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Problem Statement

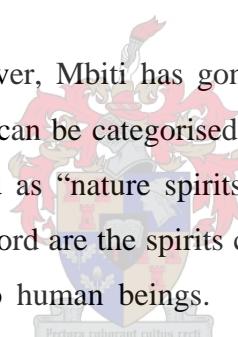
This research project investigates how John Calvin interprets the role of the Holy Spirit in sanctification. Calvin's interpretation is then evaluated from a Luo perspective. It is based on the 1559 edition of the *Institutes*, while the evaluative study of his views is from the perspective of the Luo members of the Africa Inland Church (A.I.C) of Kenya. The Africa Inland Church was founded under the influence of Calvin's legacy particularly on matters regarding Christian sanctification. Therefore, there is relevance in the study of the Luo beliefs of the Africa Inland Church in the light of those of Calvin.

The choice of Calvin for this study is made because Calvin is an authoritative scholar on matters regarding Christian sanctification. Furthermore, the Luo, who form part of the membership of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya, are bound as members of the church by the Church's doctrinal requirements. Each individual member of the Church is under obligation to observe such requirements. The doctrinal requirements of the Africa Inland Church define the theological basis upon which the church is founded. Such doctrinal requirements are outlined in a section on the "statement of faith." The section on the "statement of faith" is found in the opening pages of the Church's constitution. The A.I.C. Constitution is the official Church document in which the laws and regulations governing the Church are found. From the outlined requirements, there exist stipulation which concern Christian sanctification, and particularly, with regards to the work of the Holy Spirit in an individual. The Luo are likewise expected to observe such stipulations.

The problem, however, is that the Luo come from a cultural background where belief in the "Spirit World" is firmly rooted; yet the people are as well expected to interpret and live up to the requirements of the Church regarding the work of the Holy Spirit. It would indeed be interesting to see how the people respond to such requirements from a background where belief in the "Spirit World" was already firmly rooted. In the first place, how do the people

make a distinction between the spirit's existence in their understanding of the "Spirit World" and the Holy Spirit?

Furthermore, the interpretation of the "Spirit World," as understood by the African people in general including the Luo, has been a controversial subject especially among African scholars. It has not yet been clearly established how the beings are believed to exist in the "Spirit World." The renown African scholar and theologian, John Mbiti (1969:78), affirms the same when he observed that, "Myriads of spirits are reported from every African people, but they defy description almost as much as they defy the scientist's test tubes in laboratory." He further noted, "Written sources are equally confusing." That is, works already published on the subject do not clearly bring out a clear definition of the spiritual beings. For this reason, the description and categorisation of spiritual beings has remained a subject to be resolved, not only among African Christian theologians but also among all Christian theologians in the global context.



In spite of such discrepancy, however, Mbiti has gone a step further to define a working ground upon which spiritual beings can be categorised and described. He says that spiritual beings can be generally categorised as "nature spirits" and "human spirits." The "nature spirits" in the "strict" sense of the word are the spirits created by God, while "human spirits" are spirits, which once belonged to human beings. Furthermore, he proceeds to make a distinction between the two categories. Concerning the "nature spirits" he asserts that there exists "sky spirits" and "earthly spirits." Concerning the "human spirits" he says that there exists spirits of those who died very long ago, at least five generations before. Such spirits he refers to as "ghosts"! They exist in the "Zamani"¹ period of time.

The second category of spirits is spirits of people who died recently, within a time period of not more than five generations. He refers to such spirits as the "living-dead." Such spirits exist in the time period of "Sasa."² Whereas the spirits of those who died long ago are no longer remembered by name by those who knew them, on the other hand, the spirits of those who died recently are remembered by name since some of those who knew them still are among the living.³ The spirits in this category are believed to play an important role among

¹ The meaning of the term is explained in the study.

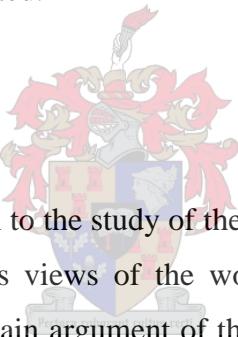
² The meaning of the term is explained in the study.

³ See p. 75.

the living. Though the persons to whom the spirits belonged are physically dead, their spirits are believed to exist and to constitute practical aspects of the living as the living engage them in their every day activities. In Mbiti's understanding, the "living-dead" constitute the spirits of ancestors, brothers and sisters although he notes that it would be better to classify all such spirits together as the "living-dead," to avoid confusion.

In this study the category of spirits assumed is that of the "living dead" in the distinction advanced by Mbiti, and in particular the "ancestral spirits." Mbiti's description of spiritual beings is not different from the Luo belief. The Luo believe in the existence of the spirits of the "living-dead" and also in the role played by the ancestral spirits in their everyday life activities. In this study, therefore, the Luo belief in the "ancestral spirits" forms the background upon which Calvin's views are evaluated from the perspective of the Luo of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya. This is to establish how the Luo Christians respond to Calvin's teaching on the work of the Spirit in sanctification from a cultural background where belief in ancestral spirits is firmly rooted.

1.2 Statement of Purpose



This research project is a contribution to the study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit according to John Calvin. It develops Calvin's views of the work of the Spirit in sanctification of individual believers, to include his main argument of the work of the Spirit in "the Christian life" and of "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude;" and then proceeds to respond to his views from a Luo perspective. In order to evaluate and respond to Calvin's views, therefore, a thorough study of the Luo is also developed in this research project

1.3 Delimitation

The theme of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit according to Calvin is very broad and covers many perspectives. Furthermore, many works have been published on this topic and take varied perspectives of the doctrine according to Calvin. This study is therefore conducted with a limited focus on a study of his views of the Spirit in sanctification on "the Christian life" and with "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude."

On the other hand, the Luo as a people have diverse beliefs and religious practices. It is therefore not possible to deal in a study of this kind with the Luo as a people and with all their religious and cultural practices. The study is therefore restricted to the perspective of the Luo members of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya, and with a limited focus on their understanding of sanctification and the role of the Holy Spirit in such sanctification. Furthermore, from the cultural background of the Luo people, belief in “ancestral spirits” is the one aspect of Luo religious and cultural practices that is assessed, from which the Luo respond to Calvin’s teaching.

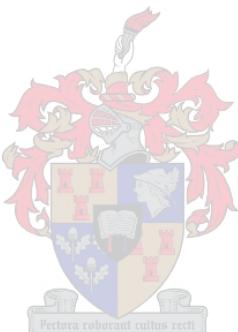
1.4 Methodology and Sources of Study

This study is approached firstly by establishing how Calvin’s influence found its way into the Christian beliefs and practices of the Luo of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya. The section begins by outlining authoritative literature published on Calvin, through which Calvin’s influence has gone further a field, including the Christian beliefs and practices of the Luo. Upon establishing such a foundation, the study then focuses on the interpretation of Calvin’s views to determine how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in sanctification. The study then evaluates Calvin’s views from a Luo perspective to determine how the Luo respond to Calvin’s views from a cultural background where belief in ancestral spirits is firmly rooted. The study then concludes by comparing the beliefs on the Holy Spirit in sanctification of John Calvin and of the Luo Christians of the Africa Inland Church.

The study of Calvin is developed through a critical study of primary and secondary literature. Beginning with the primary literature, we will focus on the works that Calvin himself wrote. Such works include: the four editions of the *Institutes* (1536, 1539, 1550 & 1559), commentaries, sermons and the letters that Calvin wrote. Of the primary works outlined, this research project is developed primarily through the 1559 edition of the *Institutes* as the main focus of study. Secondary literature on the other hand includes the works published on Calvin. Those used in the study include the works by: Simon van der Linde (1943), Werner Krusche (1957), Ronald Wallace (1959), Brian Gerrish (1993), Philip Butin (1995) Ford Lewis Battle (1996), just to mention a few.

Further, the studies on the sections that concern the Luo are developed through secondary literature on the Luo people and on the Africa Inland Church of Kenya. There are a number of works published on the Luo but the one used mostly for the purpose of interpreting the Luo

people's interpretation of the "Spirit World" is by Ocholla Ayayo (1976). When interpreting the views of the African people in general, the works of John Mbiti (1969 & 1975) have been mostly used. Furthermore, the study of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya is developed through a study of the Church's constitution, the Constitution of the Africa Inland Mission and the Constitution of Pennsylvania Bible Institute in the United States of America. The Institute existed in the 1880s. More so, the Luo Bible - *Muma Maler* has largely been used in the interpretation of the Luo views on sanctification particularly in chapter four. There are also a number of works published which concern John Calvin, the Africa Inland Church and the Luo that have been used in this study as listed in the section on Works Consulted.



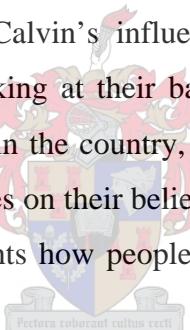
CHAPTER 2

JOHN CALVIN AND HIS INFLUENCE ON THE LUO

2.1 Introduction

This chapter demonstrates how the influence of Calvin on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit found its way into the Christian beliefs and practices of the Luo of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya. The chapter begins with an introductory study on the person of John Calvin and subsequently outlines the most authoritative works written on Calvin concerning the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. It further presents some biographical facts about the person of John Calvin, demonstrating briefly the influences upon Calvin's own life through which he acquired skills to later in life make valuable contribution towards the study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

The chapter subsequently discusses Calvin's influence on the Luo of the Africa Inland Church. It introduces the Luo by looking at their background, their influence in Kenya in comparison to the other tribes settled in the country, and their cultural beliefs. The study of the cultural beliefs of the people focuses on their belief in the "Spirit World," in particular the belief in ancestral spirits, and highlights how people have responded to the Christian Faith from such a cultural background.



The chapter then focuses on the study of the Luo of the Africa Inland Church itself. It demonstrates the nature and the characteristic beliefs of the Church to which the people belong and through which the people's beliefs have been influenced. The study here covers the structure of the leadership system of the Church and the system through which biblical values are taught to the people.

It further traces the history of the beginning of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya and demonstrates in particular how the Church embraced Calvin's teachings which the Luo have since adopted by virtue of them being part of the Church. The study defines the Church's teachings on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and shows how Calvin has influenced the Church and this doctrine.

This chapter forms the basis for the development of the successive chapters. It is necessary to understand the background of the Luo Christians and how they came into contact with Calvin's teachings before engaging in a study of Calvin's views of the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of a believer and evaluating them from a Luo perspective.

2.2 John Calvin

2.2.1 Introducing Calvin

John Calvin is a well-known theologian and scholar of the sixteenth century Reformation. The name "John Calvin" is an English version of the Latin name Ioannis Calvinus. The French version of the name is Jean Cauvin.⁴ Despite the fact that all three forms of his name are used interchangeably, the English version, John Calvin, is often used by English-speaking scholars, especially where studies on Calvin are conducted in the English language. The various forms of Calvin's name is of particular interest to most African people, and more so to the Luo, where naming and names are very important because of their cultural background.

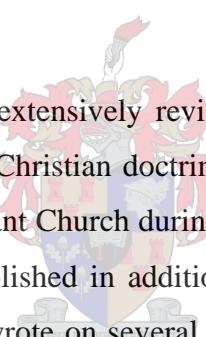
From a Roman Catholic background, Calvin emerged as a profound scholar and theologian during the sixteenth century. He pioneered and led the Protestant Church in the development of its doctrinal beliefs from the beliefs in the Roman Catholic Church and into the doctrines that the Church now largely holds. His passion for reformation began with a passion for the poor. McKee (2001:1) has rightly remarked that the *Institutes*, which mark the beginning of Calvin's contribution to the reformation,⁵ began as "Calvin's response to the needs of the

⁴ It must be noted that the French form was the original form of Calvin's name. His father was of French nationality and had the French form of the name – Cauvin, which confirms the fact that his original name was in French. The changes and subsequent use of different forms of his name by Calvin himself and in later studies on Calvin's scholarship may have been the result of Calvin's engagements in ecclesiological matters and especially his literary contributions. Though he was of a French nationality, his main theological treatise – the *Institutes* – was first written in Latin and this was probably the reason why the Latin form of his name became popularised. Later, when the *Institutes* were translated into French and subsequently into English, his name was used in these two languages. Studies on Calvin have been undertaken in a number of differing languages like Latin, French, English, German and many others and different scholars use different forms of his name.

⁵ The sixteenth century reformation began with the contribution of Martin Luther. Alister McGrath (1988:88) rightly pointed out an encounter through which Luther's contribution to the reformation is argued to begin. He asserts: "the first such controversy centred on the sale of indulgences. Archbishop Albert of Mainz had given permission for the sale of indulgences in his territories. Johann Tetzel, who was responsible for the sale of these indulgences in the Wittenberg region, irritated Luther considerably, and moved him to write to Archbishop Albert, protesting against the practice and offering 95 Latin theses which he proposed to dispute at the University of Wittenberg. Luther's colleague, Philipp Melanchthon, subsequently reported that these 95 theses were also 'posted' (that is nailed for public display) on the door of the castle church at Wittenberg on 31st October 1517. This date has subsequently been observed by some as marking the beginning of the

persecuted French Protestants who had virtually no pastors to teach or defend them.” A study of the *Institutes* demonstrates that Calvin sought to make his point clear to the Roman Catholic Church on the place of the poor before God; and more so, on the need to respond to God as taught in the Scripture.

The influence of Calvin began with his disagreement with the Roman Catholic Church in his home country of France, but went far beyond France. Many people in Europe and further afield heard about Calvin during the time and were attracted to his teaching and longed to see him personally. His arrival in Geneva, Switzerland, and his warm reception accorded to him in the town is a clear indication of how popular Calvin was even during the early years of his life. Interestingly, it was in the same city of Geneva where he later made immense contributions to the Protestant Christian Churches and these contributions have since shaped several aspects of the Protestant Church doctrine. Alister McGrath (1990:79) has rightly observed that to “speak of Calvin is to speak of Geneva. Calvin would shape, and be shaped, by Geneva.”



It is actually in Geneva that Calvin extensively revised the *Institutes*, the work which has revolutionised the face of Protestant Christian doctrine. Calvin laid a proper and systematic theological foundation for the Protestant Church during this period. He also wrote many other theological treatises, which were published in addition to his work of the *Institutes*.⁶ Such works include the commentaries he wrote on several books of the Bible and the sermons he preached. One outstanding feature of all these works that has remained central in the history of Calvin’s scholarship is the remarkable contribution he made towards the development of the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit. In fact, for this reason, a number of scholars have described him as “the theologian of the Holy Spirit.”

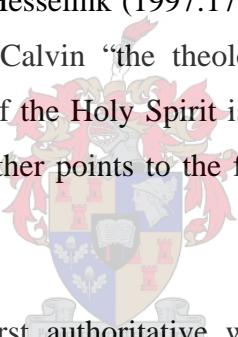
2.2.2. Calvin as “the Theologian of the Holy Spirit”

reformation.”[Revised edition]. In the work that McGrath (1990) published earlier on Roots *that refresh: A celebration of reformation spiritually*, also reflect on the rich heritage through which reformation began.

⁶ Calvin’s first work, however, was a Commentary on Seneca’s *De Clementia*. Wallace (1998:5) alluded to this when he rightly reported, “Seneca’s book is a plea for a merciful rule by those who have power. The first work proves that Calvin had a good deal of natural sympathy with the sensible and sober outlook of Seneca; that he now was ambitious to be recognized by the learned men of his day as a contemporary of notable stature and original judgement”. The commentary was followed by the publication of the 1536 edition of the *Institutes*.

Calvin is depicted as “the theologian of the Holy Spirit” in the history of the interpretation of the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit. From among all the theologians of the sixteenth century and up to the present day, it is only John Calvin who has been richly and popularly associated with this title. As Hesselink (1997:177) has observed in recent years, no scholar has ever denied the fact that Calvin is deserving of this title. Studies on Calvin and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit point to the fact that the theme of the Spirit was central in his life and work. He contributed more to the study and development of the doctrine than any other theologian before him.

Benjamin Warfield, who became the first theologian to describe Calvin as “the theologian of the Holy Spirit,” observed that ‘in the same sense in which it may be said that the doctrine of the sin and grace dates from Augustine, the doctrine of satisfaction from Anselm, the doctrine of justification from Luther, ... it must as well be said that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is a “gift” from Calvin to the Church.’⁷ Hesselink (1997:177) also later alluded to this fact when he observed that Warfield dubbed Calvin “the theologian of the Holy Spirit,” and that Warfield had said that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is a “gift from Calvin to the Church.” Works later published on Calvin further points to the fact that the theme of the Spirit truly was crucial in Calvin’s life.



To begin with, one of the very first authoritative works in Calvin’s scholarship to be published during the twentieth century, on Calvin’s thoughts on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, was the work published by Simon van der Linde (1943). Van der Linde gave an excellent summary of Calvin’s understanding of the work of the Spirit. He begins by pointing to the Trinity as the basis for John Calvin’s teaching of the Holy Spirit: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. A proper understanding of the Spirit must, therefore, embrace the fact that the Spirit does not exist on his own but One who is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son. The study of Van der Linde then focuses on the study of the general work of the Holy Spirit,⁸ the special work of the Holy Spirit,⁹ and a study

⁷ Benjamin Warfield was professor of Systematic theology (or ‘Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology’ as the chair was then more sonorously and vigorously called) at the Princeton Theological Seminary (Presbyterian Board: 1909). In his article, “Calvin the Theologian,” Warfield attributed the title of the “theologian of the Spirit” to Calvin. This is available on-line

at: <http://www.markers.com./ink/bbwcalvin 1.htm>

⁸ See p. 34.

⁹ See p. 84.

of Calvin's views compared to those of Karl Barth.¹⁰ He gives an excellent summary on the work of the Spirit in general revelation and special revelation.

On the general work of the Spirit, Van der Linde states that, according to Calvin, the work of the Spirit is seen in creation. It is through the work of the Spirit in creation that God's providence is seen and experienced. He further focuses on the fact that it is through the same work of the Spirit that the experience of the general grace of God is realised. More so, in the same section, Van der Linde demonstrates that, according to Calvin, the revelation of God is experienced through the power of the Holy Spirit. Though Calvin acknowledged the fact that the revelation of God is experienced in creation, he affirmed that the Word only served to seal the revelation that already existed in creation. Calvin is, therefore, not asserting that there are two kinds of revelation when he teaches about revelation in creation and the revelation through the Word. The revelation in creation is sealed through the Word.

With regard to the specific work of the Spirit, Van der Linde begins by asserting that the presence of the Spirit is seen in the Word incarnate. The Spirit gives forth Christ and, at the same time, is the Spirit of Christ. Van der Linde then moves on to demonstrate how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in the Church with regard to election (predestination), being born again, faith, love, prayer, the preaching and the sacraments of baptism and the Last Supper. In this particular section, he also discusses Calvin's understanding of the work of the Spirit and eschatology.

Van der Linde then compares Calvin's views with Karl Barth's understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. In this latter section, however, Van der Linde's objective is to use Calvin's study to reflect on Barth's understanding of the subject, so he only attends to Barth's study in brief or in passing.

Slightly over a decade later, Werner Krusche (1957)¹¹ published a study on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, a work that centred on Calvin's view of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. In this work, Krusche approached the study of Calvin from a Trinitarian perspective¹² and

¹⁰ See p. 206.

¹¹ Philip Butin (Butin 1995:19). has pointed out that Werner Krusche's work was "an influential and a highly regarded study."

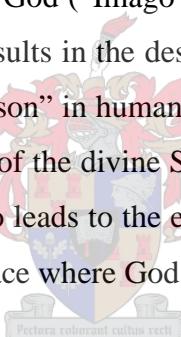
¹² This is the theme of his discussion in chapter one.

emphasised more of Calvin's views on the work of the Spirit in salvation.¹³ His views on salvation arise through the work of the Spirit in the life of the Church.

Regarding the Trinitarian perspective, Krusche researched the Trinitarian foundation in Calvin's thinking. He argues that, according to Calvin's understanding, the work of the Spirit is not anything that comes forth apart from the work of God the Father and God the Son. The Three function together. The Spirit only performs part of the work of the Three Persons. He sees the Spirit as the effective power in the divine actions.

Krusche then moves on to define the areas in which the Spirit works, according to Calvin. He teaches that the Spirit works in "the cosmos," in "the preservation of the human society" and in "the Church."

Regarding the work of the Spirit in the cosmos, he outlines that the Spirit is the power which brings forth the reality of the image of God ("Imago Dei") in the cosmos (creation). The loss of the Spirit in the world, therefore, results in the destruction of "the spiritual image" of God in creation and in "the blindness of reason" in humanity. The blindness of reason entails "the ignorance of God" and the "ignorance of the divine Spirit" itself. Furthermore, he asserts that the loss of the Spirit in the cosmos also leads to the enslavement of the will in humanity. The will cannot exert itself into the right place where God intends it to be.



On the work of the Spirit in the preservation of the human society, he researched the notion that the Spirit is the power through which the general grace of God is experienced. The Spirit enables all creation to benefit from God's goodness. Krusche also states that the Spirit is the power through which science and art are realised. The wisdom seen in the fields of science and art is a reflection of the work of the Spirit in the human society. Krusche furthermore sees the Spirit, according to Calvin, as the source of charisma in the public office. It is the Spirit that enables individuals to serve in public office with dedication. More so, he states that Calvin saw the Spirit as the source of virtue in the human society. Whenever virtues are seen in people, it has its source in the Spirit.

Krusche then discusses the work of the Spirit in the Church. He extensively explores the fact that the Spirit is the means by which the "grace" (salvation) of God is attained in the life of the Church. He further states the fact that the Spirit's work is not experienced apart from the

¹³ His entire discussion in the work focuses on the theme of the work of the Spirit in relation to salvation.

work of Christ. The Spirit's work arises from the work of the Person of Jesus Christ. Krusche's discussion on the Church also covers the working of the Spirit on the "Community of grace" and demonstrates how the Spirit itself works in building up the community of the faithful through the Word.

Although Krusche deals extensively with the subject of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit according to Calvin and emphasises Calvin's views on salvation, the study does not centre on the work of the Spirit in sanctification, even though sanctification was as crucial to Calvin as the work of the Spirit in salvation. As we shall see later, the present study will seek to bridge the gap by demonstrating how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in sanctification. The studies of Van der Linde and Krusche have inspired many other scholars to study Calvin. Consequently, more works were published.

In a lengthy essay by H. Quistorp, found in a collection of essays on the Holy Spirit, entitled *De Spiritu Sancto: Calvin's Lehre vom Heiligen Geist*,¹⁴ the theme of the Spirit according to Calvin is extensively covered from various perspectives on Calvin's views. The work is also cited in the study of Hesselink (1997:177).

The essay speaks of Calvin as "the theologian of the Holy Spirit" and demonstrates that the theme of the Spirit, to the development of which Calvin made a contribution, was a key contribution of the Reformation. The work also affirms the fact that the roots of the doctrine can be traced back to Augustine who drew a close link between Word and Spirit.

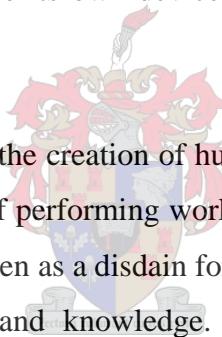
The essay addresses four main issues concerning Calvin's thought on the Holy Spirit. These four issues are: the "Holy Spirit as the Third Person of the Trinity," the "Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the Father or the Creator," the "Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the Son or the Saviour" and the "Holy Spirit as the creator of the new life of the children of God in the congregation of Jesus Christ."

On the subject of the "Holy Spirit as the Third Person of the Trinity," the essay states that Calvin's views on the Holy Spirit are embedded in his understanding of the Trinity, which is also a characteristic of his *Institutions of the Christian Faith*. It stresses that, according to Calvin, the divinity of the Holy Spirit as the Third Person focuses on the confession of the *Filioque*, which asserts that the Holy Spirit emanates from both the Father and the Son.

¹⁴ The essay is published in German and the book in Dutch.

Therefore the Holy Spirit is more than a divine power, but rather God the divine Person. Scriptural texts cited by him include John 4:24 which demonstrate that God is by nature Spirit but, at the same time, that the Father and the Son are the One and only true God.

On the subject of the “Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the Father or Creator,” the essay states that, according to Calvin, the Father as Spirit participated in the creation of the world, according to Genesis 1; and that, according to John 1, the creation took place through the Son as the eternal Word, demonstrating the close relationship between the Spirit, the Word and the Father. Such emphasis on the creative activity of the Holy Spirit implies that Calvin appreciated the cosmic dimension of the Holy Spirit; a subject that he noted had been neglected by theologians for centuries. For Calvin, the Holy Spirit does not only participate in the creation of the world, but also in the preservation of the world from chaos; thus the “Spiritus Creator” also becomes the “Spiritus Conservator.” The Holy Spirit not only establishes the creation out of nothing, but also preserves the creation. This view makes the deist view of creation, which states that “God created and then left creation to its own devices” impossible, since the Holy Spirit is still continually at work in creation.



One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is the creation of humankind in the image of God. Despite the Fall, humankind is still capable of performing works of art, culture and science, therefore a disdain for either art or science is seen as a disdain for the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the source of both faith and knowledge. Inequalities amongst humankind are explained by the different gifts of the Holy Spirit, which in a certain sense explains the privileges of the aristocracy, and is a qualification for democratic principles.

Further, on the theme of the “Holy Spirit as Spirit of the Son/Saviour,” the essay states Calvin’s view that the work of God as Creator and Provider through the Holy Spirit is part of God’s soteriological goal to protect fallen humanity by His salvific and merciful intervention in the life of humankind that came under the curse of sin. Although humanity deserves to be punished and even destroyed, the mercy of God is manifested in the salvation of humankind in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. The intimate and close relationship between the Son and the Spirit therefore enabled the incarnation for divine salvation as a re-creation. The Son became flesh through the working of the Holy Spirit and this enabled the incarnation for salvation.

The essay depicts true faith according to Calvin as the knowledge revealed by God in his Word; as well as the trust enabled by the Holy Spirit through the forgiveness of sin; and the gift of righteousness due to the mercy of God and the death and resurrection of Christ. Faith, therefore, is rooted in the Word of God (written and preached); and this is established by the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the creator of the Word, as well as the creator of faith by means of the Word. The relationship between the Word and the Holy Spirit must be explained further; against Roman doctrines, Calvin advocated that neither the Word of God nor the sacraments brought effective power in themselves, because the Word and the sacraments are effective only by the Holy Spirit. The effect of the Word, according to Calvin, is established by the “internal witness of the Holy Spirit” through whom the salvation of Jesus Christ is mediated and communicated to humankind. Therefore the Word is the basis of the certainty of our faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, whilst the Holy Spirit is the reason for this certainty to be established.

On the “Holy Spirit as creator of the new life of the children of God in the congregation of Jesus Christ,” the essay outlines the subjects of sanctification and the Church as the congregations of saints according to Calvin’s teaching. It stresses that sanctification for Calvin is the result of the salvation by Jesus Christ and the work of his Holy Spirit. There can, therefore, be no “good deeds” because they have no worth in themselves; because real “good deeds” are the result of the work of Christ and not of man. The essay, however, states that there is a difficult relationship between Calvin’s doctrine of the Holy Spirit (Pneumatology) and his doctrine of predestination, which both try to protect the freedom of God and his mercy.

Though the essay addresses Calvin’s view of the Holy Spirit, it, too, is brief. It does not deal with the entire subject in depth, as this study aims to do.

Furthermore, in a later work published by Hesselink (1997), Hesselink sought to define Calvin’s view of the Holy Spirit more precisely. This work, especially the section on “Calvin, The Theologian of the Holy Spirit,”¹⁵ centres on the study of the Spirit according to John Calvin. The work itself, however, is more of an overview, or rather a summary of the thought of Calvin on the subject of the Holy Spirit. The particular section on “Calvin, The Theologian of the Holy Spirit” is about the identity of “The Person of the Holy Spirit,” “the Spirit and the Word,” and “the Spirit and the Christian life.” The focus of the discussion here clearly shows

¹⁵ See p. 178.

the place of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Calvin and the extent to which his views have had an impact.

Slightly over a decade ago studies at the Sixth Colloquium of the Calvin Society were conducted on the theme “Calvin and the Holy Spirit,” which produced a great many articles, collected and edited,¹⁶ that show the extent of the influence of Calvin’s thinking. The papers presented point to the fact that the influence of Calvin as an authoritative scholar on the study of the doctrine was still on the increase.

Alongside all the works mentioned, many more have been published. Though they do not focus directly on the study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit according to Calvin, this theme is featured in them.

One of the most authoritative works in this category is the work published by Ronald Wallace (1959) on *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Christian life*. Wallace’s writing addresses six major subjects in Calvin: the “Sanctification of the Church in Christ,”¹⁷ “Dying and Rising with Christ,”¹⁸ “Restoration of the True Order,”¹⁹ “Nurture and Discipline within the Church,”²⁰ “The Exercise of Faith”²¹ and “The Effects and Fruit of Faith.”²²

On the subject of “the Sanctification of the Church in Christ,” Wallace sought to demonstrate, that according to Calvin, the priestly and kingly work of Christ is crucial in understanding the place of sanctification in the church. It is through these roles of Christ that the Church can be sanctified in Christ. Without this priestly and kingly offering of Christ, sanctification cannot take place. The Church in turn, in the process of sanctification, must demonstrate thankfulness to God for his work effected in the life of the Church.

¹⁶ The articles were edited by Peter De Klerk.

¹⁷ See p. 3.

¹⁸ See p. 51.

¹⁹ See p.103.

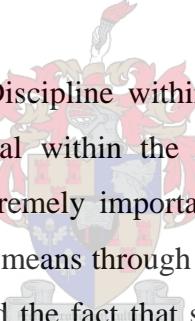
²⁰ See p.195.

²¹ See p. 251.

²² See p. 299.

On the subject of “Dying and Rising with Christ,”²³ Wallace highlighted the fact that according to Calvin, the “inward change” that takes place within an individual must be followed by a number of elements upon this change in the life of the individual. Such elements include self-denial, bearing of one’s cross, meditation on the future or heavenly life, alongside a clear understanding of the need of participation in the resurrection and the glory of Christ, as well as repentance and dying and rising with Christ.

On the subject of “the Restoration of the true Order,”²⁴ Wallace dealt with the matter of restoration of humanity into the image of God – into the “Imago Dei.” He stated that the true order of man’s life is seen in his being restored into the image of God. Without the restoration into the image of God, the true order of man cannot be realised nor seen. Wallace further indicated that this true order is reflected in the law of God. The law of God is the true order, which Scripture points out to us. Wallace’s discussion in the particular section covers the aspects of the “order and nature of the Christian life,” the manner of “mutual communication and subjection within the order of nature” and what “Christian moderation” should be.



In the section on the “Nurture and Discipline within the Church,” Wallace discussed the subject of the place of the individual within the church with regard to the matter of sanctification. He stated that it is extremely important for an individual to be part of the church, for the Church is an important means through which sanctification is enhanced in the individual. His discussion also covered the fact that sanctification in the church takes place through the Word and sacraments. Calvin saw the discipline of a “Christian Man” as something that is guided by the Word. Adherence and loyalty to the visible Church is extremely important.

Concerning the “Exercise of Faith,” Wallace has demonstrated that, according to Calvin, the demonstration of faith is not without its difficulties and challenges. He observed that Calvin believed that a believer should understand that Christ had already undergone the same kind of challenges on our behalf. That should, therefore, give the believer confidence in facing such challenges whenever they arise. Wallace also noted that, according to Calvin, the attitude of

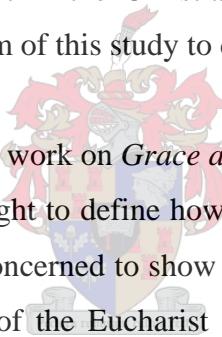
²³ G. J Retief (1984), in his doctoral dissertation also researched on the subject of “Mortification” and “Vivification” according to Calvin. The study demonstrates how Calvin understood the matter of “Dying and Rising with Christ” in humanity.

²⁴ R.Prins (1972) also published an article on *The image of God in Adam and restoration of man in Jesus Christ: A study in Calvin*. The work also covers the subject and would be useful in studying Calvin’s views on the subject.

faith even in such difficult circumstances ought to be that of submission to God and self-denial. Furthermore, prayer must always characterise the life of an individual, since prayer itself is the principal exercise of faith.

Concerning the “Effects and Fruits of Faith,” Wallace outlined and discussed the subjects of “Assurance, boldness, and stability,” “Progress towards perfection” and “Perseverance to the end” as the effect or the fruits of faith. All these aspects demonstrate that faith does exist within an individual.

Though Wallace’s discussion covers the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, particularly in the sections on “Our self-offering only being possible by the power of the Holy Spirit,”²⁵ “Self-denial as the work of the Holy Spirit”²⁶ and “the Holy Spirit and the Law”²⁷ the theme of the Holy Spirit is not well developed or extensively discussed in his work; yet all these aspects of the Christian life which Wallace discussed concern the work of the Spirit in the Christian life. The theme of the work of the Spirit in the Christian life, therefore, remains to be more extensively developed and it is the aim of this study to do so.



Brian Gerrish (1993) also published a work on *Grace and Gratitude: The eucharistic theology of John Calvin*. In this work, he sought to define how Calvin understood the Lord’s Supper. He argued that he was “even more concerned to show that the theme of Grace and Gratitude, presented in the words and actions of the Eucharist [shaped Calvin’s] entire theology and [made] it from the beginning to the end a Eucharistic theology.”²⁸

Gerrish discussed the subjects of “The Holy Banquet and the Sum of Piety,”²⁹ “The Fountain of Good and the Shame of Adam,”³⁰ “The New Heir and the Sacramental Word,”³¹ “Children of Grace,”³² “The Eucharistic Offering,”³³ and on “The Mystical Presence.”³⁴

²⁵ See p. 40.

²⁶ See p. 66.

²⁷ See p. 120.

²⁸ See p. vii.

²⁹ See p. 1.

³⁰ See p. 21.

³¹ See p. 50.

³² See p. 87.

³³ See p. 124.

³⁴ See p. 157.

In the sections on “the New Heir and the Sacramental Word,” “Children of Grace,” “The Eucharistic offering” and “the Mystical Presence,” Gerrish offered thoughts on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit according to John Calvin. His discussion immediately shows the work of the Spirit through the “sacramental word,” in the life of the children of grace, in the Eucharist itself and particularly in the elements of the sacraments. When he talks about the “Mystical presence of Christ,” it is the work or the thought of the Spirit which first comes to the fore.

In a more recent work, published by Philip Butin (1995) on *Revelation, redemption and response: Calvin’s understanding of the divine- human relationship*, the theme of the Spirit also features significantly. In this, Butin extensively discusses the relationship between the “Divine” and “Human.” When Butin talks of the “Divine – Human relationship,” it is the Holy Spirit whom he sees as the point of contact between the Divine and Humanity, according to Calvin’s thinking.

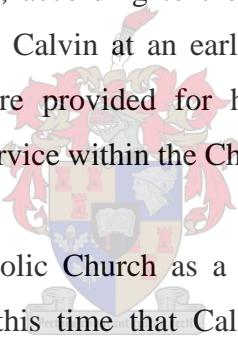
In a very recent doctoral dissertation by James B. Krohn (2002) on *Knowing the Triune God: Trinity and Certitude in the theology of John Calvin*, undertaken at the University of Stellenbosch in the Department of Systematic Theology, the theme of the Holy Spirit according to John Calvin, features significantly throughout the discussion. Particularly in chapter three under the headings “the Holy Spirit and Order,” “the Holy Spirit and the Word” and the “Holy Spirit and the Christian life” under the sub-title of “Calvin’s Trinitarianism” the discussion is all about the Spirit according to John Calvin.

The above-mentioned works vividly demonstrate that Calvin’s influence has been on the increase over the past decades. This is particularly through studies regarding his understanding of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Calvin’s contribution to the development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit did not take shape in a vacuum, but was greatly influenced by Calvin’s own context. Influences upon his life before he undertook to contribute towards the development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit shaped his character so that he would grow and acquire skills to contribute to the study of the doctrine. In order to understand these influences, we shall briefly look at an account of his life.

Calvin was born on the 10th of July, 1509, at Noyon in Picardy, France. He grew up in a stable family environment with parents who stayed together. Calvin grew up in a Christian home and society.

Calvin came into contact with Christian Religion at a very early age in his life because of growing up in this society. Benjamin Warfield (1931:3), the renowned Calvin scholar, attests to the same fact in pointing out that Calvin's "boyhood was spent under the shadow of the 'long, straight-baked' cathedral which dominated his native town." The Cathedral was actually that of the Catholic Church. It was located in the village where his family lived. The fact that the Cathedral itself was next to their house was a convenience to the Cauvin family, since it provided an excellent opportunity for the family to get involved in the life and work of the Roman Catholic Church of that time. Calvin's father, Cauvin, held a clerical office within the Roman Catholic Church and at the same time worked at the nearby Cathedral. Calvin's father also received aid from the Church, which he used for the support of his family, according to the custom of the time. Warfield (1931:3) further noted that, according to the custom of the time, "a benefice in the cathedral was assigned to the young Calvin at an early age, and to it was afterwards added a neighboring curacy; thus funds were provided for his support." Calvin himself, therefore, benefited directly from his father's service within the Church.



The Cathedral and the Roman Catholic Church as a whole had a powerful influence on the Cauvin household. It was during this time that Calvin became acquainted with life in the Christian Religion, which he embraced as he grew up. Subsequent events in his life confirm that such was the case and Calvin himself attested to this when he stated:

When I was as yet a very little boy, my father had destined me for the study of theology. But afterwards, when he considered that the legal profession commonly raised those who followed it to wealth, this prospect induced him suddenly to change his purpose. Thus it came to pass, that I was withdrawn from the study of philosophy, and was put to the study of Law. To this pursuit I endeavoured faithfully to apply myself, in obedience to the will of my father; but God, by the secret guidance of his providence, at length gave different direction to my course. And first, since I was too obstinately devoted to the superstitions of Popery to be easily extricated from so profound an abyss of mire, God by a sudden conversion subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame, which was more hardened in such matters than might have been expected from one at my early period of life. Having thus received some taste and knowledge of true godliness, I was immediately inflamed with so intense a desire to make progress therein, that although I did not altogether leave off other studies, I yet pursued them with less ardour.³⁵

³⁵ See C.C.P., p. xi. Another study, conducted by Ronald Wallace (1988:5), alluded to the same, noting that Calvin asserted that he gave himself fully to obey the will of his father and provided reasons why he changed to

According to Calvin, his father withdrew him from the study of Philosophy so that he could study Law, but though it is not quite clear whether Calvin actively continued studying theology in his free time, it is clear that he did understand his priestly calling during his early years and was willing to give himself to the study of theology. Wallace (1988:2) has remarked that Calvin was “remarkably religious” in his youth. He noted that, at an early age, “Calvin was sensitive enough to experience something of the deep yearning for God that lay beyond superstition, as men and women put out their hands to touch the hem of Christ’s garment.” Through such influences, Calvin was introduced to Christian Religion at a very early age in life. But were these the actual influences that later propelled him contribute towards the study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit?

Although we cannot underestimate the fact that Christian values Calvin embraced during these early years of his life constituted foundational values upon which his later Christian values were built,³⁶ further influences that came into his life played a much greater role in shaping his character, so that he would later on successfully contribute towards the development of doctrine. These influences were mainly those that had an impact on his life during his years of study in the learning institutions and after, when he became one of the key figures of the sixteenth century Reformation, particularly during his years of living in the city of Geneva, in Switzerland.

To begin with, the university education that Calvin acquired equipped him with scholarly skills that he would later apply in the study of the Christian Religion. We know that Calvin first attended the University of Paris, where he became well trained in Latin grammar. McGrath (1988:96) dates the period of his life at the university to be round about 1523. Every serious scholar of Calvin would know that the very first great works of Calvin, the *Institutes* was first published in Latin. While we cannot underestimate the fact that Calvin later developed his knowledge of Latin grammar further by his own efforts (private study), after graduating from the

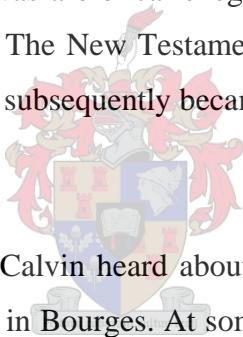
pursue the career the father later purposed for him. Further, in a later study conducted by Alister McGrath (1990: 32), it was noted that Calvin himself wrote that his father had previously intended him to study theology. More so, T.H.L Parker (1975: 15), in his study on the section of the “Law, Literature and the Gospel,” observed: “In 1525 or 1526 Jean’s life suffered a sudden change. G’erard had intended him from childhood for theology, that is, for the theological course at the University leading to the priesthood.” All these references point to the fact that Christian Religion was not foreign to Calvin during the early years of his life; hence affirming the fact that he indeed encountered Christian Religion at a very early age in life. Furthermore, Parker (1995) also published work on *Calvin: An introduction to his thought*. The work introduces Calvin and the trend of his theological thinking upon encountering the Christian faith at an early age.

³⁶ We know that Calvin contributed largely towards the development of the doctrines of the Protestant Church. He could, however, not have contributed meaningfully if he had not understood the teaching within the Roman Catholic Church. It was during these early years that he began to embrace the teachings of the Church against most of which he later reacted when he stood under the wings of the Protestant Church.

University of Paris, it was at this University that the basic and fundamental principles of Latin grammar were planted in his life.

Furthermore, from this university, Calvin joined the College de Montaigu, where he pursued further studies in the Arts. The education he received from the College played a further role in shaping him to be a profound scholar, especially in the field of the Arts. His later contribution to the Christian Religion concerns the study of the Arts. Scholarly skills such as the “art of reading” and “interpretation of ideas” that he acquired then subsequently became very useful in his study of the Christian Religion. Proper engagement in the study of religion required these skills.

There were still more educational influences on his life: From College de Montaigu, Calvin moved to Orleans to study civil law. McGrath (1988:96) points out that, while at Orleans, he also studied Greek. While studies in law were useful in shaping Calvin as a great scholar, thinker and eloquent speaker, study in Greek became useful in his interpretation of the New Testament books of the Bible. As we know, Calvin was a biblical exegete and sought to study and interpret the Scripture to the letter and in depth. The New Testament itself was originally written in Greek. His study of this language at Orleans subsequently became useful to him; enriching his exegetical work in the New Testament.



Furthermore, also while at Orleans, Calvin heard about the great and influential Italian lawyer, Andrew Alciati, who was then based in Bourges. At some point, attracted by the fame of Alciati, he moved to Bourges, where he met and came to be greatly influenced by Alciati. McGrath (1988:96) has observed that “most Calvin scholars consider that Calvin’s great clarity of expression is due to the influence of Alciati. Calvin’s encounter with French legal humanism is generally thought to have been of fundamental importance in shaping his understanding of the way in which classical text (such as the Bible and Roman legal texts) could be applied to modern situations.” Though here McGrath refers particularly to the “French legal humanism” by which Calvin was influenced through Alciati, the term humanism³⁷ itself refers to a philosophy or way

³⁷ Alister McGrath (1990:52) with reference to the origin of the term states that the “term ‘humanism’ was coined by the German educationalist F.J. Niethammer in 1808 to refer to a form of education that placed emphasis upon the Greek and Latin classics. Neithammer was alarmed at the growing stress upon the natural sciences and technology in German secondary education, and believed that the potentially dehumanizing consequences of this emphasis could be reduced only through immersion in the study of the humanities. In the twentieth century, the term ‘humanism’ has come to mean a philosophy or outlook on life that affirms the dignity of humanity without any reference to God.” In a later work-revised version, McGrath (1999:41) also dealt with the term in detail, demonstrating what it is. He noted that, because humanism entailed the study of the Greek and Latin Classics, some scholars have defined it as “Classical Scholarship and Philology.” Others still, he says, see it as “The New Philosophy of the Renaissance,” that is the movement that embodied the new philosophy of the Renaissance, which arose as a reaction to humanism. McGrath himself, however, supports Kristeller’s view of humanism, which saw the movement as a cultural and

of thinking that dominated the period immediately after the Renaissance. In fact, the philosophy is closely associated to the Renaissance itself and is even seen by some scholars as a product of the Renaissance.

Though it is true that the humanist thinkers of Calvin's time, including this "French Legal humanism," influenced Calvin, it must be pointed out that Calvin's thinking differed from those of the humanists of his time in the sense that he became centrally concerned with the "knowing" of God. Krohn pointed this out when he noted that:

Chronologically and culturally Calvin does indeed stand in continuity with Renaissance Humanism, but it would be a grave error to overlook the stark manner in which he stands discontinuously against it. The course of his own life gives evidence to a change of direction from his humanistic priorities to championing the Reformation cause. Calvin's Biblical-exegetical intention though greatly aided by his humanistic background and training, also set him on collision course with most of humanism's intellectual aspirants (2002:34).

Furthermore, reacting to Bouwsma's position that Calvin was precariously poised between belief and doubt in the sixteenth century, Krohn (2002:34) rightly noted that "even if Calvin's view of knowing was in accordance with most of the Renaissance criteria for knowing, it was equally true that the latter could not adequately meet the Criteria for Biblical knowing, and it was with Biblical Knowing that Calvin was centrally concerned." Through the influence of the humanistic thinkers of his time, however, Calvin acquired the skills of interpretation and eloquence that later became useful to him in his contribution towards the development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Of all the influences upon Calvin's life, however, it was actually those that impacted on him during the sixteenth century reformation movement that subsequently propelled him to contribute towards the development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. We can trace his involvement with and contribution towards the reformation from his home country France.

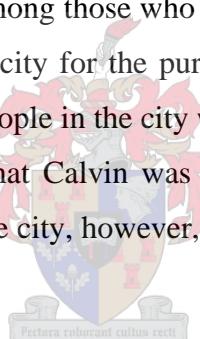
After graduating from College de Montaigu, and Orleans, Calvin returned to Noyon. His father then was ill and died shortly after. His mother had died earlier, when Calvin was still young.

educational movement, primarily concerned with promotion of eloquence in its various forms. I quote his words: "Its interest in morals, philosophy and politics is of secondary importance. To be a humanist is to be concerned with eloquence first and foremost, and with other matters incidentally. Humanism was essentially a cultural programme, which appealed to classical antiquity as a model of eloquence." For further study on French Humanism, also see the work published earlier by Q Breen (1931) on *John Calvin: A study in French humanism*.

With the death of his father, he became freed from responsibilities in the parent's home and therefore opted to return to Paris to pursue further studies. As McGrath (1988:96) puts it, it was actually then that he became increasingly "sympathetic to reforming ideas then gaining an excited hearing in the city." It is from this time that we see Calvin attracted to the reformation movement, of which he subsequently became part as among the key reformers.

Since reforming ideas were not welcomed by the Roman Catholic Church; the Church to which Calvin had belonged from his childhood, Calvin, in disagreeing with the Church, took refuge in Strasbourg in fear of his life. Unfortunately, the usual route to Strasbourg was blocked due to war that had broken out between Francis 1 of France and Emperor Charles V. Calvin resolved then to find an alternative route, passing through the city of Geneva.

While in Geneva, the course of Calvin's journey changed. People heard of his presence in the city and many were longing to see him. Among those who eventually met him was a man called Farel who convinced him to stay on in the city for the purpose of reforming it. According to Farel, Geneva then needed reformation, as people in the city were not living according to the teaching of the Scriptures. In spite of the fact that Calvin was reluctant to accept the request, he finally stayed on. His first visit and stay in the city, however, was shorter than the second as he left after a while and returned later.

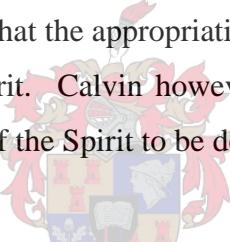


It was actually during his life and stay in Geneva that his character became greatly shaped to the extent that he became imbued with incredible scholarly abilities and pastoral gifts that subsequently enhanced his successful contribution towards the development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. This happened through actively becoming engaged with ecclesiastical matters in the city.

Calvin himself desired to see the city of Geneva reformed and did all he could to reform it. He engaged in teaching people God's Word with the aim of leading them to understand the correct doctrinal teachings and to give themselves to living according to such teachings. Calvin understood God as the central power through which a Christian life is lived practically. Furthermore, according to him, it was God by the power of the Holy Spirit that enabled people to live in accordance to the teaching of God's Word.

During his life in Geneva, he began to extensively revise his *Institutes*, which had become an instrument of his teachings and had been begun as a response to the needs of the persecuted French Protestants who had virtually no pastors to teach or defend them. As mentioned earlier, Calvin also wrote many more works, including commentaries on many books of the Bible and on the sermons he preached. His desire to see the city of Geneva reformed is also seen in the fact that he founded the Geneva Academy purposely for the education of pastors.

Through the Academy, both the trained pastors and individuals influenced through the teaching ministry of the pastors would come to understand the correct doctrinal teaching and seek to live according to such teachings. Calvin himself understood Scripture very well. During his time in Geneva, he grew in knowledge and skill as a biblical exegete, hence becoming a profound scholar well versed in the Scriptures. Through the acquired skills, Calvin became a pastor committed to the teaching of God's Word to the people. This he did to lure the people to appropriate such teachings in their lives. He believed that the appropriation of such teachings in the individual was aided by the power of the Holy Spirit. Calvin however taught that the individual had to live responsibly in order for the efficacy of the Spirit to be deeply experienced in each.



It is through such influences and engagements that he became an accomplished theologian contributing more towards the development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit³⁸ than any other doctrines of the Protestant Christian Church. The study of the Holy Spirit has since had a far-reaching influence,³⁹ finding a way into the Christian practices and beliefs of the Luo people of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya.

³⁸ Since the objective of the study of this section is not to look into the life and background of Calvin in detail, but only to look briefly into the influences upon his early life through which he later contributed towards the study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, we shall not add more information here. A number of works that deal with the subject has already been published. Any scholar interested in the life and background of Calvin should therefore access such work. Examples include work by W. J. Bouwsma (1988) on *John Calvin: A sixteenth century portrait*.

³⁹ The work edited by W. Stoward Reid (1982) contains articles which extensively demonstrate how Calvin's influence went further afield in the Western World (to countries including the Netherlands [p. 93], Germany [p. 121], Hungary [p. 141], England [p. 173], Scotland [p. 215], America [p. 240], Canada [p. 307] Australia [p. 323], South Africa [p. 343], and on different aspects of his theological treatise. Though the work does not focus on the influence of his contributions in the study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit or demonstrate how his legacy found its way into the Christian beliefs and practices of the Luo, it does point to the fact that Calvin's influence went beyond his home country of France and Geneva, in Switzerland, where he made further significant contributions to the development of Christian doctrine.

2.3 The Luo

2.3.1 Introducing the Luo

The Luo of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya belong to the Luo tribe or ethnic group living in Kenya. They form a significant part of the membership of the African Inland Church in the country. What, however, does the term “Luo,” the name by which these people are referred to, mean? Or what is the definition of the term “Luo”? This is well defined in the work of Achola Ayayo (1976). Ayayo is himself from the Luo ethnic group and is a scholar with vast knowledge of the people and their way of life. His work comments on the definition of the term Luo:

If we say “Luo,” we often refer to the Southern Luo people (particularly the Luo of Kenya), or refer to the Luo language, or to the people we generally call “Nilotes.” But the word “luwo,” “lupo,” or “luw” means to speak, to follow, or to come after. We can say “iluwo lep mane?” This may be translated as “What language or tongue do you follow (speak)?” With the answer “Aluwo lew luo,” “I speak Luo tongue.” The term “lupo” also means fishing, “luwo rech,” “to follow fish,” or “luwo dhako” (“riso”) a party at a Luo marriage ceremony, which takes place after a woman has returned to her kin’s home, with the *riso* ceremony following. From the linguistic evidence, it appears to me that the word “Joluo” comes from “Jolupo,” which means “fishermen” or “luw dhok!” “come after cattle!” If a traveller comes to a village at any time of the day and turns his eyes towards the lake or river, he will certainly be curious, and ask who those people are; the answer to that question will definitely be “Jolupo,” “Jalowo,” or “Jonewol;” since the traveller will see many such groups, he will call them “Joluo,” as they are referred to by those who are at home. This is, in fact, the term that the “Nilotes” tend to imply. In this case, the word “Luo” should be a general term referring to people who previously lived along the Nile Valley (Ayayo 1976:14).⁴⁰

⁴⁰ It is also important to note that in his introduction to the study of the Luo in the same section, Ayayo (1976:13) states, “the name by which the Luo of Kenya and the Luo of Wau are known, is perhaps the oldest name of the people that we often refer to as the ‘Nilotic’ people. It is the name of the languages spoken by groups in the Sudan, Ethiopia, Congo, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. The Luo-speaking people find their dialects from the language that the Southern Luo use as their national name which unites not only the southern groups, but also their ancient kin in the north. Some of the names such as “Shilluk,” “Acholi,” “Alur” or “Nilotic” itself, were coined either by early travellers or by their non-Luo neighbours and thus remain permanently attached to some of the Luo national groups. In many cases, they do not use these names; for example, the Paulo of Uganda do not call themselves “chope,” a name given to them by their neighbouring Bunyoro with whom they have had good relations for many years. From another angle, the Luo settlements were named after the leaders of the groups who first led the pioneers [shown in the historical texts by Ogot] These groups are later known by names of the founder of the territory that they now occupy.” Ayayo’s thoughts here demonstrate an excellent historical background of the development of the term “Luo.”

Besides the work of Ayayo, Lucia Omondi (1975)’s doctoral dissertation is also useful in understanding the Luo language in general. Prof. Omondi is a Luo and is well versed with the Luo language (“Dholuo”). She is presently a professor of Linguistics and African languages at the University of Nairobi, Kenya. The dissertation however does not concern the interpretation of the term “Nyasaye” in “Dholuo.”

Furthermore, towards the conclusion of his study where the subject of the “Political Organization” of the Luo people is discussed, Ayayo has given a further explanation of the term but from a political or ideological perspective. His entire study focuses on the “traditional ideology and ethics” of the people. In order to have a broader understanding of term Luo, it is necessary to understand how Ayayo further defines the term Luo in a normative sense with regard to the study of the political ideology of the southern Luo. He asserts that:

The term Jo-luo may be defined as: a nation whose people do not necessarily share the same ethnic or clan origin, but who share a common “Nilotic” culture and speak the same language, and follow their customs and traditions ... Yet it is now difficult to distinguish them from the “pure” Luo. The word “pure” Luo is also difficult to trace since from the beginning of their downward migration, they have always kept exogamous marriage principles, and therefore almost each village had a Bantu or a “Nilo-Hamitic” wife, a Bantu grandmother or “ Nilo-Hamitic” grandmother, and therefore a mixture of blood. This is shown in the present physical characteristics of the population of the Southern Luo, which varies considerably from the Nilotic –Luo in the Sudan (Ayayo 1976:199).

Though, in the latter definition, Ayayo has rightly defined the term “Luo” to denote a people who are essentially from a diverse cultural background, it must be noted that most of the Luo of Kenya are distinguishable from the other ethnic groups in Kenya.⁴¹

There are about forty different tribes or ethnic groups in Kenya.⁴² As a tribe, the Luo is one of the biggest. It is a large tribe with great influence in the country. In the population report of the Kenyan census of 1989, the Luo emerged as the third largest tribe in the country after the Kikuyu and the Luhya tribes,⁴³ with statistics showing that the percentage difference between

⁴¹ The Luo people are normally soft-spoken, of darker complexion and taller.

⁴² There are many other minority ethnic groups in the country who cannot be categorised as of Kenyan descent (see footnote 9).

⁴³ According to the population report of the Kenyan census of 1989 published by the Central Bureau of Statistics (1994), the ethnic groups traditionally classified as Kenyan include the Embu - 1.20%, the Kamba - 11.45%, the Kikuyu - 20.78%, the Mbere - 0.47%, the Meru - 5.07%, the Tharaka - 0.46%, the Kisii - 6.15%, the Kuria - 0.52%, the Luhya - 14.38%, the Bajun - 0.26, the Bonianye - 0.05, the Mijikenda - 4.70%, the Pokomo - 0.27%, the Taita - 0.95%, the Taveta - 0.07%, the Swahili-Shirazi - 0.06, the Basuba - 0.50%, the Luo - 12.38, the Dorobo - 0.11%, the Elmolo - 0.02%, the Kalenjin - 11.46%, the Masai - 1.76%, the Njemps - 0.07%, the Samburu - 0.50%, the Teso - 0.83%, the Turkana - 1.32%, the Boran - 0.37%, the Grabra - 0.17%, the Bulji - 0.03%, the Dasnachi-Shangil - 0.00%, the Orma - 0.21%, the Rendile - 0.12%, the Sakuye - 0.05%, the Ajuran - 0.13%, the Degodia - 0.47%, the Gosha - 0.01%, the Gurreh - 0.37%, the Hawiyah - 0.13%, the Ogaden - 0.65%. Others minor ones are the so-called Somali 0.21%, the Kenyan Asian - 0.25%, the Kenyan European - 0.01%, the Kenyan Arabs - 0.16%, the Other Kenyan - 0.13%, the Tanzanians - 0.09%, the Ugandans - 0.13% the Other Africans - 0.07%, the Indians - 0.14%, the Pakistanis - 0.01%, the Other Asians - 0.02%, the British - 0.07%, the Other Europeans - 0.07%, the Other Arabs - 0.04%, the Rest-Nec - 0.03%, the Tribe Unknown - 0.08% of a 100%.

In figures, the Luo population was 2,653,932, Luhya 3,083,273 and the Kikuyu 4,455,865 out of the total population 21,443,636. This census report is available at the Kenyan government statistical centre, Herufi House,

the Luo, Luhya and the Kikuyu is not very big compared to that between the rest of the many other ethnic groups settled in the country. The percentage of the total population of the other tribes in the country is below fifty percent, whereas the percentage of the Luo and the other larger tribes is over fifty percent. The Luo themselves formed 12.38% of the country's total population, only slightly less than the Luhya and the Kikuyu.

The Luo of Kenya has had a long history of settlement in the region and this is one of the major reasons why the population of the Luo people of Kenya has grown so much over the years. The people arrived and settled in the country during the 18th and 19th centuries⁴⁴ and since then have established themselves in the region.

Nairobi. The census, however, was not the latest conducted in Kenya. The very latest one was that conducted during the year 1999. This report, however, does not show the population of the various ethnic groups of people living in Kenya since it was conducted according to the number of people irrespective of their ethnic backgrounds living every District represented in Kenya. It is for this reason that the census population report of 1989 is used instead. According to the staff handling the statistics at the government center, the 1989 census report gives an accurate reflection of the percentages of each ethnic group in the country and is therefore useful in demonstrating the population of the ethnic groups people living in Kenya including the Luo. The population census in Kenya is normally conducted after every decade.

⁴⁴ According to a research study conducted in 1982 by the Ministry of planning and National Development and Institute of African studies university of Nairobi, the “original home of Jo-Luo was in the Southern Sudan in the region today occupied by the Shilluk. From this area, beginning about the fourteenth century, the Luo began their long migration southwards driven by both hunger and war. During the early wave of migration, some settled in Acholiland and Pathola in Uganda, while the rest moved on to settle on the shores of Lake Victoria where they arrived about the sixteenth century. From their lake shore settlements, the Luo began spreading along the shores to Kisumu, and the Kano plains, arriving in these areas in about 18th and 19th centuries. From these regions, some continued through Karachuonyo to other parts of South Nyanza. These pioneers in South Nyanza were later joined by others who crossed the lake by boats from such places as Alego. The Luo settlement of South Nyanza continued into the 19th and 20th centuries.” The study further outlines the fact that the view tends to support the idea that the common place of origin of the Luo is Southern Sudan and is based on both oral tradition and linguistic geography. However, the study also shows that “recent evidence from historical linguistics (Hein in 1977) points to the fact that the Nilotic languages have been in the lake basin from as early as 1000 B.C. The Nilotic presence during this time spread from eastern Uganda across the lake basin to northern Tanzania. A minority of scholars led by C. Wrigley (1981) therefore argues that the original home of Luo-speaking people was somewhere in central Uganda. It was from this area that they migrated northwards into Sudan and eastwards into Kenya. The reason for the migration was political upheavals that occurred in the Bantu Kingdom in the area; especially in the kingdom of Bunyore. This account places the Luo-speaking people earlier than the generally accepted view. According to this study, if this view is accepted, then some of the Nilotic speakers of South Nyanza would be descendants of this early population, which has virtually disappeared with the exception of the Ogiek.”

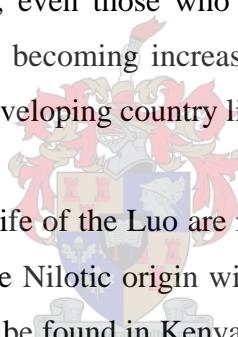
Whatever position one may hold, the truth is that the Luo have lived in the region long enough to guarantee the growth of the population in the region as shown in the population statistics (these statistics comprise the most recent and reliable study conducted on the Luo of Kenya). The significance of the study is seen by the fact that it constitutes the popular view of the Luo migration that holds that the original home of the Luo was in Southern Sudan. This view is largely upheld in the study of the history of the migration of people. For a detailed study of the history of the Luo people, see especially the work by B.A Ogot (1967) on the *History of the Southern Luo*, and the work by Ayayo (1976) on *Traditional Ideology and Ethics Among the Southern Luo*, already cited in the study. There is work, which was also published by S. Santa (1968) on the Luo. The work however is only useful in studying about the people before moving downwards from Southern Sudan into the countries of Uganda Kenya and Tanzania.

[This information on the Luo being referred to in this section is available from a document in the Government statistics centre - treasury building in Nairobi-Kenya).

Besides the long history of the settlement of the Luo people in the region, the social structure and the way of life of the people have also contributed to the immense growth of the population. The Luo, over the centuries of their settlement in Kenya, have enjoyed the benefits of living in a stable environment due to the structure of their family life. The Luo settled in homes, as fishermen and farmers, with the result that it has been possible for family members to spend most of their time together in an organised family system.

More so, the Luo people of Kenya are known to cherish and practice polygamy.⁴⁵ The majority of males from the Luo community marry more than one wife, hence there is little or no restriction to the number of children one is expected to have. In traditional Luo society, polygamy was regarded as a prestigious practice and was seen as a symbol of wealth.

Individuals who engaged in polygamy were therefore accorded higher status in the community and were regarded as wealthy people. For this reason, many from the Luo Community still practice polygamy, even those who have embraced the Christian faith.⁴⁶ This is in spite of the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult to have a large family because of the weak economy in a developing country like Kenya.



The social structure and the way of life of the Luo are radically different from those tribes or groups of people who share the same Nilotc origin with the Luo. One group of people who falls in this category is the Maasai tribe found in Kenya. The Maasai people are found mostly in the areas of Kajiado, Narok and Transmara. Some are also scattered in the Baringo, Samburu and Marsabit regions in Kenya. The Maasai people are largely pastoral and spend most of their time wandering with cattle in search of pasture and grazing land. A section of the Maasai, however, who live in the highland areas, do some farming. Kenyan census statistics have shown that the population of the Maasai, was only 1.76%, and that of the Njemps, a section of the Maasai, was 0.07%. The social structure and the lifestyle of the people are probable factors in keeping the population so low,⁴⁷ compared to that of the Luo.

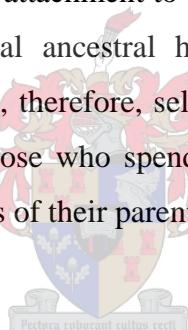
⁴⁵ The term polygamy here refers to marriage with more than one wife.

⁴⁶ Those here referred to as “Christians” are those who have confessed their faith in Jesus Christ.

⁴⁷ Since most of the Maasai people wander from one area to another in search of pasture for animals, the people do not spend much time together as families. The Maasai people also have loose family ties since the men would normally wander around, living with other women among them and hence lacking the focus and care expected for the individual’s family. These are probable factors that may have kept the population of the Maasai people in Kenya low.

The Luo population of 12.38% is largely concentrated in the south-western part of Kenya. As Aloo Osotsi Marjola (1994:39) has noted in his discussion of the people, the major settlements of the Luo are at “the extreme south-western corner of Kenya, in the areas bordering the shores of Lake Victoria.”⁴⁸ This is the area where the Luo settled originally. Though the Luo are concentrated in this area, a number of Luo have moved and settled in other parts of the country, either as individuals or families. Members of the Luo community usually only move and settle in other parts of the country for economic reasons. This would result in Luo settlements in large towns and cities in Kenya.

Quite a large number of towns and cities in Kenya have attracted members of the Luo community for reasons related to employment. These towns and cities include Kisii, Migori, Eldoret, Nakuru, Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu.⁴⁹ The city of Kisumu , however, is located in the Nyanza province,⁵⁰ which is the home province of the Luo people; many of those who live in Kisumu for the purpose of employment are from the Luo Community. Members of the Luo Community usually have a strong attachment to close family members and seldom move away permanently from their original ancestral homes or the original homes of their respective immediate family. The Luo, therefore, seldom settle in other parts of the country permanently. Furthermore, most of those who spend many years away, normally return to their original home or the Communities of their parents at retirement.



⁴⁸ Lake Victoria is the lake into which a number of rivers which criss-cross the areas where the Luo live empty their waters. The people are settled along the rivers and on the lake's shores and largely depend on these rivers and the lake for fishing. The main rivers are the Nyando and the Sondu Miriu. Lake Victoria forms the source of the Blue Nile, a tributary of the River Nile, which empties its waters into the Mediterranean Sea through Egypt.

Although flash floods, especially along the river Nyando during the long rainy seasons (between April and July) sweep away the homes of the people and cause much damage to the people and their properties, people often return to the same areas after the water has subsided to engage in their fishing activity. The government, however, is currently working on reviving a “rice pilot scheme” which has benefited from the river Nyando, though it had collapsed due to poor governance to supplement the fishing activity and to enhance economic growth among the Luo. Furthermore, on the river Sondu Mirui, where the people also carry out the activity of fishing, the government of Kenya has recently considered putting up an hydro electric power station near Sondu Market where many Luo have also settled, hoping to generate improved immense economic income for the Luo through employment.

Lake Victoria borders on three East African countries – Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. On the Kenyan side, it is mainly the Luo people who have settled on the shores and are actively engaged in the fishing activity.

⁴⁹ There are only three cities in Kenya. These are:Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu. The rest mentioned are towns.

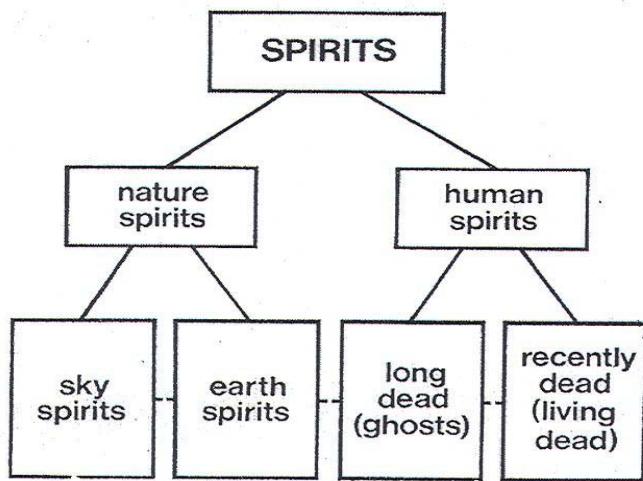
⁵⁰ Nyanza province is one of the provinces in Kenya. Kenya has a system of government whereby the country is divided into provinces, districts, locations and sub locations. Provinces are the larger regions in which the districts and the mentioned lower regions fall. There are presently eight provinces and many more districts .The leaders of the provinces are “Provincial Commissioners,” who deal with the higher offices of the president directly.

Whether they are temporarily or permanently settled, one aspect of the Luo that stands out is their adherence to their cultural values. The Luo as a tribe are strongly imbued with cultural values and they actively live out these values. One aspect of these values regards the manner in which the people relate to the “Spirit World.” As is often seen among African peoples, the “Spirit World” is not something of academic value only, but indeed something believed to exist as a reality. The people see the spirits as real and believe they influence the religious and social practices of the living. Although the Luo, like the rest of Africa, believe in the “Spirit World,” the categorisation and definitions of these spirits that are believed to exist remains a matter to be resolved.

The renowned African scholar and theologian John Mbiti (1969:78)⁵¹ noted that “Myriads of spirits are reported from every African people, but they defy description almost as much as they defy the scientist’s test tubes in laboratory.” He also indicated “written sources are equally confusing.” A work by Mbiti (1975) published half a decade later, extensively discussed the subject of the “Spirit World” while still holding on to the view that it could not be adequately described. The matter of the description and categorisation of the “Spirit World” in the African mind is therefore yet a matter to be resolved, particularly by African scholars.

In spite of this view, however, Mbiti has gone a step further in defining a working basis upon which spiritual beings can be categorised and described. Having discussed the subject in both of the earlier works, Mbiti (1975:65) used the following diagram in this particular work to illustrate his thoughts on how the categories of spiritual beings should be defined. The diagram he has used is shown below.

⁵¹ John Mbiti is of Kenyan nationality and a person who is particularly acquainted with the world view containing spiritual beings, not only among African people in general, but also particularly among African people living in Kenya, a country where the Luo have settled and are living according to their cultural values.



In this diagram, Mbiti endeavoured to show that spiritual beings can be classed as nature spirits and human spirits. The nature spirits in the strict⁵² sense of the word are the spirits created by God, while human spirits are spirits that once belonged to human beings. He makes a further distinction within each of these two categories: “nature spirits” consist of sky and earthly spirits, while “human spirits” are subdivided and classed as spirits of those who died long ago and those who died recently. The spirits that died long ago refer to people who died at least five generations or longer ago and they are called ‘ghosts’! They exist in the “Zamani”⁵³ period of time. The spirits of people who died recently represent those who died not more than five generations ago. He refers to such spirits as the living-dead who exist in the time period of “Sasa.”⁵⁴ While the spirits of those who died long ago are no longer

⁵² The phrase, “strict sense of the word,” is used here to distinguish temporarily the human and the created spirits, since Mbiti suggests that the spirits of those who died long ago in later stages congregate and join with the created spirits so that the category of the created spirits in the final analysis would also comprise the spirits of human beings.

⁵³ The term, “Zamani,” is a Swahili word that means “long ago.” In Luo, the term is translated as “Chon gilala,” bringing out the same meaning as implied in the “Zamani” term.

⁵⁴ The term, “Sasa,” is also a Swahili word, which means the “present period” of time. In Luo, the word is translated as “Sani” which again brings out the same meaning as the “Sasa” term. According to Mbiti and via personal interview with him, he chooses to apply the use of Swahili terms because the Swahili language is more of an “international” language compared to the indigenous African languages, including Kiikamba, the mother language of John Mbiti. According to him, the Swahili terms would, therefore, enhance a broader understanding of the concepts, especially in an African context. Otherwise, according to Mbiti, there is no other reason for his choice of such terms.

remembered, since those who knew them are all dead, the spirits of those recently dead are remembered since some of those who knew them are still alive.⁵⁵

In a much later study by Richard Gehman (1989),⁵⁶ the African view of the spirits has also featured significantly. One aspect of Gehman's study is his acceptance of the category of the living dead in the distinction made by John Mbiti. Gehman discusses the role of the living dead among the living. In this section, we would like to look in detail at the role of the living dead among the living as outlined in his work. This would be useful in assessing the role of the ancestral spirits among the Luo, since Gehman's study comes from the Kenyan context where the Luo people live and from where he largely researched the cultural practices of the African people. His study, however, focuses mainly on the Akamba⁵⁷ people of Kenya, though their views are shared by most of the African peoples living in Kenya, including the Luo.

⁵⁵ Mbiti has extensively discussed the subject of spiritual beings, firstly in his work entitled *African Religions and Philosophy* (particularly on pp. 75-83), and in his later work entitled *Introduction to African Religion* (pp. 65-76).

⁵⁶ Richard Gehman originated from the United States of America. He has served in Kenya as a Christian missionary with "the Africa Inland Mission and the Africa Inland Church" from 1965 to 2002 when he retired and returned to the States. He has had lots of experience with the African people living in Kenya and particularly with those of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya. During his term of service in Kenya, he mainly served in the church's affiliated schools of Scott Theological College, Machakos, where he served as Principal for eight years; and Moffat Bible College, Kijabe, Kenya. His first published work was *Doing African Christian Theology: An Evangelical Perspective*, which appeared in 1987. The work on *African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective* was published in 1989 and has recently been revised (2005). *Who are the Living-Dead? A Theology of Death, Life after Death and the Living Dead* was published in 1999.

During his period of service in Kenya, Gehman also held the position of Co-ordinator of the "Theological Advisory Group" and Director of the *Institute of Church Renewal* based at Scott Theological College. "TAG" was begun in mid-1986 as a sub-committee of the A.I.C National Bible Schools Committee. It was later transferred to Scott Theological College for research. During his tenure in the office he helped co-ordinate the research work at the centre, which later saw the publication of study books for the churches. Included among the publications of TAG for which Gehman served as the manuscript drafter are:

The Roots of Christianity in Africa: Prayer in the History of the Christian Church in Africa.

"Where Two or Three Are Gathered..." *Prayer in the Christian church in Africa* [With a student work book]

"Come let us Bow Down..." *Worship in the Christian church in Africa* [With a student workbook]

Worship Guide for Pastors and Elders: How to Improve the Worship in the Africa Inland Church.

A Biblical Approach to Marriage and Family.

The Holy Spirit and the Church in Africa Today. The book extensively discusses the subject of the Holy Spirit from a biblical and an African perspective.

Those Controversial Gifts: Healing, Prophecy, Tongues, Baptism with the Holy Spirit Have You Received it?

Spirit Power for all Believers

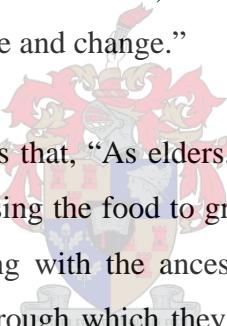
Baptism with the Holy Spirit Have you received it?

⁵⁷ The Akamba people are a tribe settled in the eastern part of Kenya. These people are also among the larger tribes in the country. According to the Kenyan census statistics cited above, the Akamba population is 11.45% and only slightly less than that of the Luo, which is 12.38%.

Gehman lists and discusses seven roles of the “living dead” in his work (Gehman 1989:140).⁵⁸

The first role of the living-dead which Gehman mentions is: “As senior elders of the clan, the ancestors function as the guardians of the family traditions and life.” The living-dead ensure that the traditions of the family are correctly observed by the living. On the other hand, the living know that the living-dead expect them to observe all the requirements of the family traditions in order to enhance a harmonious life with the living-dead.

The second role is: “When the living fail to follow the customs of the fathers, it becomes the duty of the ancestors to correct their errors.” Gehman observes that “virtually every crisis that develops, whether it is drought or pestilence, sickness or death, may be attributed to the displeasure of the ancestors.” Through such crises, the living-dead make known their will and demand that the wrong be corrected. In this way, the people are brought back to the traditions of the ancestors. In addition, Gehman states that, since “Zamani” (the past) is the focus of concern, there is reluctance to innovate and change.”



The third role on Gehman’s list states that, “As elders, the ancestors serve as the owners of the land, fertilizing the earth and causing the food to grow. The land becomes ‘sacred’ in the sense that it binds together the living with the ancestors.” The living therefore sees the ancestors as the source of fertility through which they receive the gains from the land. The land itself is thus sacred.

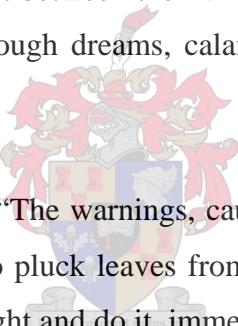
The fourth role, according to Gehman, is that “the living-dead receive requests from the living.” He says that the living may implore, beg, request or ask their ancestors for assistance. Fertility, he says, is of the greatest concern to the living-dead, since, without continual reproduction of children, they will lack descendants who can continue to remember them and supply the necessary sustenance. Thus people often request their ancestors for help in bearing and protecting children. Since the ancestral spirits may be the cause of trouble among the living, because of some offences, requests and offerings are often made to the living-dead. The medicine man frequently identifies a particular ancestor who has been offended and who needs to be propitiated in order to restore peace and prosperity.

⁵⁸ All seven roles of the living dead are covered in the section from page 140 of the work.

The fifth role that is stated is that the ancestral spirits also serve as intermediaries between human and God. He proposes that, “Being close in time to the living, the living-dead can best understand man’s needs. Being close to God, they have full access to the channels of communicating with God directly.” Gehman, however, asserts that many people approach the ancestral spirits without any knowledge that they are merely intermediaries between God and Man.

The sixth role Gehman discusses is that the living-dead can be a source of comfort to the living who are always conscious of their presence. He says, “There is no greater inner sense of relief for a traditional African than when they are assured that their ancestors are continually with them.”

The seventh role that Gehman (1989:142) lists is that “the living-dead communicate with the living by revelations.” He sees the act of communication as an important activity through which a realistic link becomes evident between the living-dead and the living. He asserts that such communication takes place through dreams, calamity, ecstasy and trance, possession, prophets and divination.



About dreams, Gehman states that: “The warnings, cautions and hints derived from dreams are taken seriously. If admonished to pluck leaves from a bush for use in herbal medicines, they will arise in the middle of the night and do it, immediately after seeing a dream. If a dead father appears in a dream, the living will seek the advice of a diviner and offer a sacrifice. If men desire to retain a good dream in their memory, some may spit on the floor, but if they desire a bad dream to vanish, they may sneeze and chew some medicine.”⁵⁹

On calamity, Gehman observes that “whenever some crisis occurs, be it personal illness, tribal disaster or death, the diviner is consulted to ascertain whether some ancestor is seeking to make known his displeasure. Accidents which are too trivial to be considered disasters are looked upon as warnings from the spirit world” He sees calamities as expressions which indicate a message from the ancestors on the living.⁶⁰

Further, on ecstasy and trance, Gehman notes that “certain people are subject to periods of emotional disturbance, excitement or unusual changes in their normal personality.” Such

⁵⁹ See p. 142.

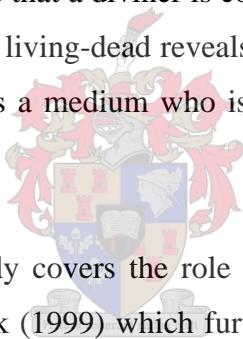
⁶⁰ See p. 142.

experiences are seen as the means by which communication between the ancestors and living takes place.⁶¹

With regard to spirit possession, Gehman says the living-dead are thought to enter individuals and use them as mediums of communication with the living. Every village is full of vivid accounts of people possessed by the spirits. When in this state of possession, they receive special revelation from the spirit world.”⁶²

Furthermore, with regard to communication through prophets, he (1989:143) asserts that there is a difference between communication by means of a prophet and that by means of possession: “whereas the latter addresses a larger group with wider implications, ‘the impressive feature of the prophet’ is that he uses no argument and appeals to no authority but that of the spirit which inspires him.”⁶³

More so, on divination, Gehman says that a diviner is consulted in order to determine the true source and meaning when any of living-dead reveals himself through dreams or calamity. The diviner or medicine man is thus a medium who is able to communicate with ancestral spirits.



Besides this study, which extensively covers the role of the living-dead among the living, Gehman also published another work (1999) which further discusses the ancestral spirits. In this Gehman’s focus is more on the destiny of the ancestral spirits beyond the physical death of the people to whom the spirits belonged.

In comparing these two works by Gehman with that of Mbiti, two important issues which must be noted for the purpose of this research project are revealed. Firstly, for Mbiti, the “living-dead” comprise not only the spirits of ancestors, but also of children, women, brothers and sisters, while Gehman uses the terms ancestral spirits and the living-dead interchangeably and so it is difficult to ascertain whether he has the same spirits in mind as Mbiti or not. It is clear from Gehman’s description of the role of the living-dead among the living that, while his discussion falls under the subject of the living-dead, he often refers to ancestors, or ancestral spirits. Secondly, while Mbiti’s main intention is to define the categories of spiritual

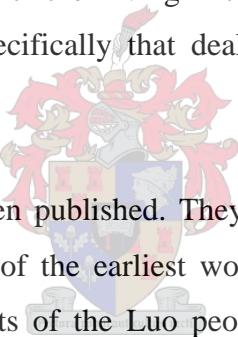
⁶¹ See p. 142.

⁶² See p. 143.

⁶³ See p. 144.

beings more precisely as they exist for African people, Gehman's objective is to assess African belief in the spirit world from a biblical perspective. His primary intention is therefore to demonstrate that the various beliefs and practices pertaining to spirits in Africa are not biblical. Except for these different objectives, it must be noted that Gehman's work, and particularly the study of the spirit world according to the African people, is largely based on the findings of John Mbiti. Most of the terms that he uses are terms adopted from Mbiti's study. Mbiti's work still stands out as the most authoritative study on the African belief in the Spirit World, in spite of the fact that, in defining the spirit world, he still noted that it must be remembered that spirits are spirits regardless of the manner in which they may be defined or classified.⁶⁴

Due to the authoritative nature of Mbiti's views on the spirit world and the manner in which he has defined the categories of spiritual beings, this research project will follow his classification. Mbiti's perception of the Living-dead are very similar to that of the Luo people in that they are believed to interact with the Living in their daily activities. But are there any works that have been published specifically that deal with the study of the spirit world according to the Luo people?



A number of works have indeed been published. They are useful in interpreting the Luo's perception of the spirit world. One of the earliest works is by Carole E. Dupre (1968).⁶⁵ Dupre discussed a number of aspects of the Luo people, which range from the historical background of the people to the economical, political and social life of the people. Although this study has merits, it does not discuss all these aspects in detail. Dupre only highlighted the key issues related to the historical background of the people, their economical, political and social life. In discussing of the social aspects of the Luo, and particularly when dealing with the subject of religion, she highlights some key concepts concerning Luo belief in the spirit world. Though Dupre's discussion on the subject is useful, it does not cover the Luo's view of the spirit world extensively, and we would therefore like to begin by focusing on the study by Ayayo, which was referred to previously, and which presents an extensive discussion on the spirit world according to the Luo. Dupre's thoughts will, however, feature in the discussion as well. Ayayo's study (1976:174) used figures to demonstrate and illustrate the Luo's view of the spirit world. The figure that follows illustrates Ayayo's analysis of the Luo view of the spiritual world.

⁶⁴ See p. 65.

⁶⁵ The work is already cited elsewhere in the study.

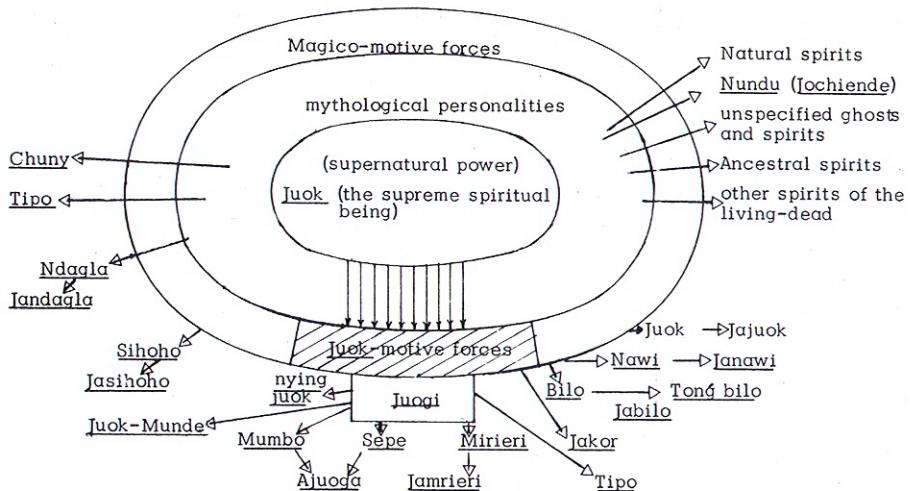


FIGURE 6. JUOK: THE SUPREME NATURAL POWER AND JUOK MOTIVE FORCES

In the figure, Ayayo demonstrates that there are six basic categories of spiritual beings according to the Luo. These are: “Juok” “Supreme Being,”⁶⁶ “Nundu” (“Jochiende” [Ghosts]),⁶⁷ “Unspecified ghosts and spirits,”⁶⁸ “Ancestral spirits”⁶⁹ and the category of “Other Spirits of the “living-dead.”⁷⁰

If this is how Ayayo sees the categories of spiritual beings perceived to exist by the Luo people, how, then, does he describe each of these categories? He does this in the following ways:

The “Juok” or “Supreme Being,” is also known as “Nyasaye.”⁷¹ Nyasaye is believed to be just but one being. So whenever the Luo refer to “Nyasaye,” the people are referring to this one being, the “Supreme being.” Though the “Supreme Being” is also called “Nyasaye,”

⁶⁶ See the inner circle. The Supreme Being is seen to exist within the realm of supernatural power.

⁶⁷ See the second inner circle.

⁶⁸ See second inner circle.

⁶⁹ See second inner circle.

⁷⁰ See second inner circle

⁷¹ Okot P'Bitek (1970:75) has argued, however, that the Luo speak of “Nyasaye Nyakalaga,” meaning “Nyasaye who is found in many places.” He further argued that the meaning of the term has been interpreted by missionaries to mean the omnipresence of this deity. According to him, the term Nyasaye does have a plural form! It therefore seems that the Luo and the Luhya peoples conceived of a category of deities singly known as “Nyasaye,” and collectively “Nyiseche.” A year later p’Bitek (1971) also published work on *Religion of the central Luo*. The work focuses on the study of the Luo in areas of the country of Uganda.

Ayayo has also noted that the etymology of the word “Nyasaye” is not clearly understood. He states that:

Wagner’s early reports from Nyanza say that “both Bantu groups (Nyole, Kisa, Tiriki and Idalako) and the Luo use the terms “Nasaye” and the “Nyasaye” respectively to mean “God.” The term is however never used in this sense among the Northern and central Luo, while among the Southern Luo they currently use, for example, the expressions: “Nyasaye oresi,” or “Were oresi,”(may God bless you). In Hauge’s interpretation of etymology, “sayo” means “to beseech, beg or implore.” And consequently “Nyasaye” stands for an entity which people beseech, beg, or implore as a great provider of gifts. On the other hand, Onyango-Ogutu and Roscoe⁷² examine the term “Nyasaye” from two roots. The prefix “Nya” which is attached to many Luo words has a long linguistic history. It denotes diminutive symbols: “the small of”, “the young of”, and “the daughter of”, “from,” which in fact do not indicate attributes of God. Whisson therefore suggests that *Nysaye* is a word borrowed from Bantu. But Onyango-Ogutu further suggests that *Nyasaye* may be linguistically akin to the Maasai word “Atasaiya” which means “to kneel down to pray or [do] homage”. And the word “Asai” in Luo language means “I pray you” or “I beg you”, but the Nandi and Kipsigis, “Nilo-Hamite” groups, whose languages are akin to Maasai and the Luo have also something similar, e.g. the Nandi word for “God” and also for sun is “Asis” or “Asista” for the “sun”. We do not know whether “Nyasaye Oresi” or “Were Oresi” or “Oresi” of the Luo have any direct linguistic relation although they appear to be referring to begging for God’s guidance. But it is important to note that the term “Nyasaye” appears both in traditional and Christian usage as the current term for providence, i.e. divine guidance and sustenance, and also as the creator, maker of life and other things (Ayayo 1976:166).

Though the etymology of the word “Nyasaye” has not been fully understood among scholars, the Luo know that the term “Nyasaye” stands for the Supreme Being and whenever people mention the name “Nyasaye,” they know to whom they are referring. Ayayo (1976:168) notes that “Nyasaye” is conceived of as the dominant, universal power that knows everything, sees everything and hears everything. It moves slowly in a human’s body. Indeed, it can sometimes be too close to touch, but sometimes too far to be reached. It is unknowable and invisible”⁷³ Furthermore, Ayayo has also noted that the term “Nyasaye:”

Has in the Luo religious context, strong bisexual connotations, in spite of the current usage which often refers to creator in the idiom of parenthood as “father” (“Wuoro”) with a pronoun “He”, which does not exist in Luo traditional Language. In the context of creation, “Nyasaye” is “Jachwech,” i.e. “moulder’ or

⁷² Onyango Ogutu and A.A. Roscoe published a work (1974) entitled, *Keep My Words: Oral Literature*, which touches on the linguistic perspective of the study of the Luo language.

⁷³ Dupre (1968:53) notes of *Nyasaye* that it is a concept among the Luo that refers to “a personal God (*Nyasaye*), creator and life force. He is in large objects: the sun, moon, and elephants. He is responsible for goodness on earth, and he encourages men to follow tradition. *Nyasaye* cannot be placated directly, but individuals can pray to him.” Though the Luo view of *Nyasaye* is well portrayed by Dupre, her use of the term “life force” in reference to *Nyasaye* needs to be applied with caution so that the term is not simply taken to refer to a “supernatural power.” *Nyasaye* is believed to be a being and not merely a force. Ayayo’s study also affirms that indeed “*Nyasaye*” according to the Luo is a being.

“maker,” in idiom of pottery or basketry, which are female activities among the Luo. But “Nyasaye” also appears as “Jakwath,” i.e. as a herder or guardian, in the idiom of cattle herding, which is male activity among the Luo. With reference to its grace, mercy and kindness, “Nyasaye” is known as “Were” (“Wele” among the Abaluhyia). With reference to its quality of an omnipresent guardian “Nyasaye” is known as “Nyakalaga.” With regard, to its quality of being a universal parent “Nyasaye” is commonly referred to as the Father (“Wuoro”), exercising paternal authority and care over everything. This supernatural paternalism intimately relates to a social situation in which ownership, leadership and inheritance have been predominantly linked with male roles and with patrilineal descent” (Ayayo 1976:167).

On the supernatural power;⁷⁴ the power seen in the inner circle where the Supreme exists, Ayayo argues that the Luo conceive of the existence of divinities and that these divinities also seen to have some supernatural power. He asserts that the Luo conceive of divinities, either as being created spiritual beings or as being part of the “Juok.” Divinities would then be closer to the “supreme being” than other spiritual beings. He further points out that the relationship between the *Juok* and the divinities leads to the belief among the Luo that:

Every organism (including man) has its three properties: 1) “Del,” because the Luo say “dend adhano,” (human body); 2) “Chuny-soul,” 3) “Tipo” (shadow), which can move away from man. We say “ineno tipona,” which means, “You have seen my shadow.” These elements of the spiritual entity of man are also collectively called “juogi” (pl) and “Juok” (sing.). The southern Luo particularly, (the Luo of Kenya and Tanzania) use the terms “Mumbo,” “sepe,” “juogi,” “Tipo,” also “Jochiende,” to refer to the spirits which belong to the lineage, clan, or the tribe members who died back in the past. Various aspects of human life are controlled by them. They may bring blessings or may alternatively be malevolent (Ayayo 1976:173).

The spiritual being, “Juok,” Ayayo (1976:177) says, “is normally a totality of spirits, souls, shadows, and ghosts. “Juok” manifests itself either through a living organism, i.e. a totem, or through a vision, natural phenomena, or dreams. The ancestor’s spiritual “Juok” may dwell in a large rock, i.e. Lwanda Magere, the Luo war-hero Nyakach⁷⁵ who turned into a rock after being killed in the battle field during the Luo-Maasai war.”

Natural spirits, he says, are the spirits that inhabit natural things such as trees, mountains, water and so on. He cites a belief among the Luo about the Migongo tree in support of this.

⁷⁴ Ayayo (1976:170) further states, “there are three basic premises related to the concept of Juok. -1. All living creatures possess spirits, souls and shadows beside their physical forms. 2. Man and animals possess spirits, soul and shadow besides their physical forms. 3. The spiritual attributes of man and of animals continue to exist after the decomposition of their physical shapes.”

⁷⁵ The person of “Lwanda Magere” was also referred to as “Nyakach.”

The tree from which “Migongo”⁷⁶ (means centre Keel) is made, and water on which it would sail, he says, is believed to have their “Juogi.”⁷⁷

“Nundu” (“Jochiende” [Ghosts])⁷⁸ are the spirits which once belonged to human beings and are believed to return as ghosts to haunt the living.

⁷⁶ “Migongo” is a product from the tree.

⁷⁷ See p. 174.

⁷⁸ Ayayo (1976:178) has also attempted to define the sources of “Jochiende” as according to the Luo. Such sources included the following: Suicide (“Deruok”). It is feared, that a person who committed suicide may become a ghost. The body of *Ng’amondere*, (suicide man) had to be punished by whoever comes to his funeral. The body was slashed by a twig from the *Pawo tree*. This was done to remind his *Tipo* (spirit) that it was his own fault, and not someone else’s. If the suicide took place on a tree, the tree was cut down and burned. In the case of suicides, Ayayo has noted that, although the Luo accept a number of grievances that might cause a person to commit suicide, they strongly disapprove of suicide.

Death at sea (“Ng’amothe e Pi”). “When this occurred it was considered that one’s *Juok* had preferred to live in the water. When a person dies, his soul or spirit goes to the underworld after a few days or weeks; the underworld can be: 1) at the centre of the earth, 2) at the bottom of the sea, 3) in a far distant steppe, 4) or down below the mountains. The spirits are assumed to come from the underworld through totems or other means for their temporary stay on earth. It was therefore proper to bury the body of a person who died in water quite close to the water itself. The soul of the person who died in the water is considered to have chosen to live in the world under the water, and it would be offending to his “Juok” to bring his body back to the earth. It is necessary that a body of a person who dies in the water, “Japi,” be buried by the lake or river side.” If this is not done as expected, the “jachien” (ghost) of the dead would return to haunt the living.

Ayayo (1976:179) has further cited cases where a man being killed and his kinsmen not exacting vengeance or compensation for his death. If this was not done, the ghost of the dead would return to haunt the living.

The ghost of a man dying while he was still unmarried due to a lack of cattle was expected to return to haunt the living. Normally in the Luo community, parents would always give cattle as the bride’s price for a son’s marriage. In the cases where this was not done, the ghost of the dead was expected to return to haunt the living.

In cases where a man was blamed for some action and committed suicide, the spirit of the dead was feared to return to haunt the living.

In cases where a girl was forced into a marriage and committed suicide, it was definitely expected that the ghost of the dead would return to haunt the living.

In cases where a son died while being resentful that his father favoured his brother, the ghost of the dead was feared to return.

Furthermore, in cases where a married woman died after having been accused of witchcraft and beaten, it was expected that the ghost of the dead would return to haunt the living.

When a man died in a state of shame for something he had done, or in resentment for some affront, the ghost of the dead was expected to return.

When a woman died after an unsettled quarrel with her husband or with one of her co-wives, the ghost of the dead would return to destabilise the living.

When a ghost was forgotten by its kin, it was expected that such a ghost would at some time resurface to haunt the living.

These beliefs did not only exist in the past among the Luo, but are beliefs which are still largely held and acted upon by many today.

Ayayo (1976:179) has also further noted that “in the past, “Jachien” was one of the powerful ways for the regulation of conduct among family and kin. “Jochiende” is still believed to be one of the major causes of sickness and misfortunes and it is still believed that any significant wrong done to a person may be punished by him after death. The “juok” of the victim may return to ensure that the killer is brought to justice or avenge itself by terrorising or causing other misfortunes.”

The “Nundu” were believed to travel by night and in bands, because as they go on their way they often talk, but it was possible to deceive them by maintaining silence in the night. Another way of deceiving “Nundu” was to make a mark with ashes or grain flour at the cross-road pointing in the wrong direction. “Nundu” were believed to be “shadows” from the underworld who invaded the upper world. “Jachien” have no mass body to be touched although they may appear in human shape (Ayayo 1976:178).

Ayayo recounts a story of a girl who died just before her “Meko,”⁷⁹ which vividly describes what “Jachien” are according to the Luo.

According to the Luo tradition and custom, it is right for a girl or a boy to marry after the puberty stage (after eighteen years of age). And it is the duty of the parents or guardians to see to it that it comes about. Should a girl or a boy die after that age, before his marriage, his/her ghost is expected to be troublesome, and would return to demand the reason why he or she was not permitted to marry while it was his right... an interesting story took place in Central Nyanza⁸⁰ where in 1940, a girl just died before her “Meko” Ceremony. Many “Juoge” were called to calm her “Tipo” but all were in vain. At last a “jadil” was called. He arrived during the absence of the parents, but found a girl working in the cattle Kraal. The ghost of the dead girl welcomed “Jadil” and prepared him food. When the parents of the girl returned they found their guest had eaten. The guest thanked the parents and the girl whom he thought was at the back of the house. The father of the girl paused for a moment, and told the “Jadil,” “Mano nende e En,” that is, “That was the girl you came for” which means it was the ghost of the girl you had come to calm! The “Jadil,” having heard that, took up his things and went away as fast as he could (Ayayo 1976:180).

Concerning the “unspecified ghosts and spirits” Ayayo states that these are spirits which once belonged to human beings but are neither haunting the living nor causing harm and therefore fall into their own category.

Ayayo has further noted that “Another illness caused by accident if, repeated in a village, would be considered as the work of “Jachien,” when such illness was noticed in the homestead’s elder, “Jaduong dala” may get a diviner, “Ajuoga,” to discover the cause. And if he says that the sickness is due to a particular “Jachien” on account of some grievances, they hasten to compensate “jachien” for the wrong they have done to him, they will sacrifice a fowl for a sick child and a goat for a woman, and a sheep for a sick man... several sacrifices may be done to those dangerous “jochiende,” but if Jachien was not appeased by sacrifices and continued to cause trouble they may summon “Jadil.” Often “Jadil” performs sacrifices by an oxe and warns the “Jachien” that if he continues, the grave will be dug up and its sanctuary (the body where “jachien” still dwells) shall be burned and the ashes thrown in the lake or papyrus on the river bank. The Luo themselves do not actually dig the grave to unearth a dead body; instead, they call a distant “Mugalu” that is *Jadil* of another tribe to do that for them.” Furthermore, even as Ayayo narrates all these he reminds his readers of a story told that “a jadil” once came to dig a grave of a very troublesome “Jachine”. The “Jachien” was waiting until the grave was large enough and then the skeleton of “Jachien” got hold of the “Jadil’s” hand and quickly jumped on the “Jadil’s” back. The “Jadil” ran way and died on his way home.”

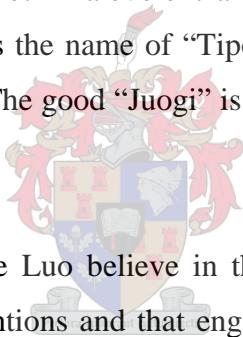
⁷⁹ Refers to the occasion of marriage.

⁸⁰ Central Nyanza is part of Nyanza Province. The Nyanza Province in Kenya is the province mostly inhabited and dominated by the Luo people.

Furthermore, the ancestral spirits, according to Ayayo (1976:174), are the spirits which once belonged to the elderly people in a family lineage. The living try to live in harmony with them. He states that “the dead parents or guardians have ancestral “Juogi,” and are referred to as “Juok-kawaro” if from the grandfather’s side, or “Juok-Dayo” if from the grandmother’s. If a child assumes the name of his grandfather or grandmother, the Luo say he has the spirit of grandmother⁸¹ or he has “Nying-Juok,” the name of “Juok” [or the name of his parental spirits].”

The other category Ayayo mentions is that of the “other spirits of the living-dead.” These are the spirits of other people who die, who are not elders in their family lineage. The spirits that once belonged to these people are believed to return, particularly to haunt the living when the owners were offended in one way or another during their life time.

Concerning the living, Ayayo (1976:174) notes “every individual has his own “juogi” (spirits) and it is not possible that both malevolent and positive “Juogi” exist in the same individual. The evil “Juogi” assumes the name of “Tipo” or “Jachien” if a man is dead, but “Chung-Marach” if he is still alive. The good “Juogi” is “Chung-Maber,” which means “good spirit.”



Ayayo’s study demonstrates that the Luo believe in the existence of spiritual beings. The kinds of spiritual beings that he mentions and that engage with the Living are the “Nundu” (“Jochiende”), the Ancestral spirits and “other spirits of the living dead”. Although the Luo believe in the existence of “natural spirits” and “unspecified ghosts and spirits,” they believe that they are not closely involved with the affairs of the living. In the work by Dupre, cited above (1968: 54), the author mentions “free spirits.” She states that:

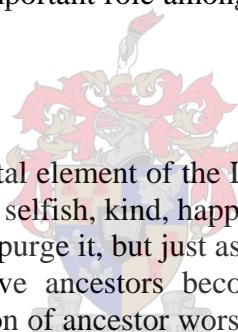
“The free spirits (“juok”), possess people, and they come from euphorbia trees (known as “bondo”), the water snake (“mumbo”), and from the rivers. Each type of spirit possession has its own practitioners who claim to recognize that particular type of spirit possession in the people they treat. If a person does not recover completely after the spirit has been brought under control, then he is said to have another spirit which the practitioners cannot control. All spirit possession would be by “juogi” until the practitioners identified the specific spirit involved. Some “juogi” cause small-pox; others possess a man and make him jump around, some give a man the power to prophesy when he is cured and he in turn has the power to cure others so afflicted” (Dupre 1968: 53).

⁸¹ Though Ayayo has not begun by referring to the “spirit of grandfather” before referring to the “grandmother,” it is logical that he ought to have begun with the former before mentioning the latter according to his argument in the sentence. In this case he does not mention the former but only the latter. The researcher is not aware whether the former has been left out erroneously or not.

There are two fundamental points which stand out in Dupre's discussion. The first is that "free spirits" come from the euphoria tree, the water snake ("mumbo"), and from the rivers. Secondly, that if such spirits possess people, a practitioner may be called to identify the particular kind of spirit; and in the event that the spirit is not calmed by the practitioner, the individual is said to have another spirit. The researcher deduces from these two points that what Dupre calls "free spirits" either refer to the "nature spirits" or to the "unspecified ghost and spirits"⁸² according to Ayayo's classification.

Although Ayayo has not indicated which spirits are believed to be closer to the living, the spiritual beings which are seen to be closer to the living according to his classification, as far as the researcher is concerned, are the "ancestral spirits" and the "other spirits of the living-dead." These are the spirits which are believed to bring either fortune or misfortune to the living. Examples already cited of spirits that return to relate to the living are largely either of the "ancestral spirits" or "other spirits of the living dead." Even so among the Luo, the kind of spirits which were seen to play an important role among the living were the ancestral spirits.⁸³

Dupre has observed that:



The ancestors are the most vital element of the Luo supernatural beliefs. They resemble the living – they are selfish, kind, happy, and sad; if disaster strikes a homestead, the ancestors can purge it, but just as often they are responsible for the disaster. The Luo believe ancestors become troublesome if they are ignored. An important function of ancestor worship is the power it provides to the elders. Only elders are able to invoke the aid of the ancestors. This in effect sanctions the authority of the elders over lineages. The ancestors are also a focus of unity for lineages since the group is united by a common ancestor.... (Dupre, 1968:53)

An interesting episode which took place in Kenya nearly two decades ago demonstrates how the place and role of the ancestral spirits are valued among the Luo of Kenya. This was a saga which concerned the burial of a prominent Luo criminal lawyer, Silvanus M. Otieno, who suddenly died of a heart-attack in his Nairobi home where he was staying. Otieno, who was of a Luo tribe from the South Western part of Kenya, which was the original home of the Luo, had married a Gikuyu lady from the Central Province. As Gehman has observed, upon his death,

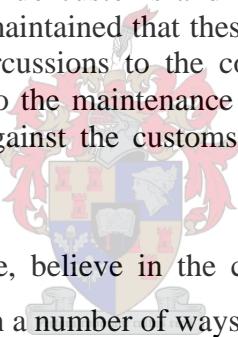
⁸² These are in a category of spiritual beings that are not seen to be closely involved with the affairs of the living and somewhat far removed from the living.

⁸³ Ayayo (1976:170) has noted that the Luo even offered prayers through the spirits of their forefathers and ancestors. *Nyasaye* was seen as the creator, the source of life and the source of everything, while ancestors played an important role in receiving prayers on behalf of the people and presenting them to "*Nyasaye*".

When his wife had announced plans over the radio to bury her late husband at his farm near Nairobi, his clan objected. His clan claimed that Mr. Otieno should not be buried by his wife near Nairobi but by his clan according to the customary law at his ancestral home. The protracted legal struggle lasted five months while the body of the deceased lay unburied in the city mortuary. The story became top news in Kenya with thousands crowding the law courts daily and the newspaper giving the story extensive front-page coverage. The story became the chief topic of conversation for thousands. The daily narrative brought suspense and surprises such as when Mrs. Otieno announced that she had been born again. And in the end, the Nairobi All Saints' Cathedral refused to hold S.M. Otieno's funeral service at the Cathedral as the Clan had desired. For five months, there were suspense and surprises. At first Mrs. Otieno was granted permission by the judge to bury her late husband but the burial was stopped by a counter injunction from the deceased's brother. A full trial ensued with the judge awarding burial rights to the clan. Thereafter, Mrs. Otieno took the matter to the court of Appeals which handed down its decision five months later, giving the body to the clan for customary burial" (Gehman 1989:15).

Furthermore, in a study conducted much later, Kanyore contended that:

Otieno's kinsmen could not allow the body to be buried in Nairobi as the wishes did not comply with Luo customs and religious beliefs and that such could not be honored. They maintained that these customs could not be lightly flouted without serious repercussions to the community. The ancestors, the "living dead", have taken into the maintenance of these customs. They could haunt the living for going against the customs of the community (Kanyore: 2000:52).



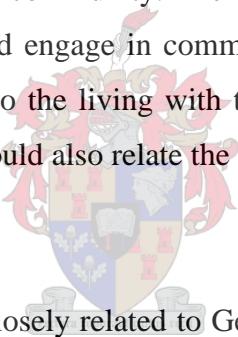
The Luo people of Kenya, therefore, believe in the continuing existence of the ancestral spirits and engage with these spirits in a number of ways. The ancestors ("Jokakwaro") are the custodians of the family traditions. They are believed to be pleased when the family traditions are observed, and offended when members from their family lineage do not live according to the family traditions. The Luo are well versed in the "chike" (traditional laws) and when the "chike" are not followed to the letter, any crisis which may hit the members of the family are attributed to the failure of those family members to follow the "chike" which resulted in the displeasure of the ancestors.

Ancestors play an important role in the naming of children. Children would always be named after deceased ancestors and according to the ancestors' wishes. When a child is born and cries without stopping, the names of the ancestors were invoked. A number of the names of ancestors from the family lineage would be called out. The name called when the child stops crying is the name given to the child. More than the naming itself, the Luo people also believe that the ancestor after whom the child is named, inhabits the child and the spirit of the ancestor lives within the child. For this reason, children named after ancestors are also

respected. This is also why the male child named after the ancestor, would be referred to as “Mzee”⁸⁴ or “Babu,”⁸⁵ if the ancestor were male, and as “Dana”(my grandmother) or “minwa” (my mother) if the ancestor were female, depending on the ancestor’s relationship to the living.

The ancestors were also seen as useful means through whom prayers were presented to God. The names of the ancestors would be invoked especially in times of crisis. The names of the ancestors would be invoked vividly as if the prayers themselves were directed to the ancestors. In traditional Luo prayers, it is sometimes difficult to tell whether the prayers are directed only to the ancestors or whether they are directed to the ancestors only as a means through which the prayers are presented to God.

For the Luo people, the ancestors communicate with the living through dreams and visions, prophets and diviners. When an elderly person in the family died, it was expected that the spirit of ancestor would return to the community. The ancestor is still seen to be part of the living. Quite often, individuals would engage in communication with the ancestors through dreams and share the message sent to the living with the rest of the living members of the community. Prophets and diviners would also relate the demands of the ancestors to the living and vice versa.



The role played by the ancestors is closely related to Gehman’s description of the role of the living-dead. As mentioned earlier, Gehman, however, does not distinguish the different kinds of spirits among the living-dead, but only discusses the role of the “living-dead” in general; although, among the Luo, such roles as mentioned specifically concern ancestral spirits.

In spite of the fact that the belief in ancestral spirits is firmly rooted among the Luo people of Kenya, a number of Luo have responded to the Christian faith and have sought to live a Christian life within their cultural context. Though a case like the burial dispute of the late S. M. Otieno largely characterises the beliefs of the Luo people of Kenya, a number of Luo Christians have demonstrated that Christian values are held above the traditional values, especially regarding the veneration of ancestral spirits. A classic example of this is the burial practice for the body of the late Bishop John Henry Okullu of the Anglican Church of

⁸⁴ Term used to refer to an elderly person. It is used particularly to portray respect to the person being referred to.

⁸⁵ Used to refer to in most cases a grand father. In the same way, it is used particularly to portray respect to the person being referred to.

Kenya.⁸⁶ Okullu became ill and was hospitalised at Nairobi hospital, one of the top hospitals in Kenya. He died shortly afterwards, on the 13th March 1999, in the Hospital's intensive care unit, from complications arising from low blood pressure. Upon his death, leaders of the Maseno South diocese where he served up to his retirement in 1994 resolved to bury his body in the churchyard instead of at his homestead in the Luo land, in honour of the faithful service to the dioceses and to God. According to Luo customary laws and beliefs, the people would not usually bury an elderly person who has built a home away from his homestead in the Luo homeland, as we have seen in the case of the burial dispute concerning the late Silvanus Otieno. The leaders of the diocese however did that purposely to honour him for his faithful service to God and his faith in God which stood above mere Luo cultural beliefs. During his years of service to God, he never compromised his faith by exercising cultural beliefs that were contrary to scriptural teachings.⁸⁷

Furthermore, Peter Otieno Raburu,⁸⁸ a senior government official from the Luo tribe who is also from an Anglican Christian background, though he has lately joined a charismatic Church by the name of "Chrisco,"⁸⁹ is a staunch Christian believer who, while on his regular official government duties, is always preaching the Christian faith and calling upon people

⁸⁶ Okullu was a very vocal Anglican Bishop in Kenya. He confronted the government of the former President Daniel Toritich Arap Moi on a number of issues. He particularly laboured to point out to the former president of Kenya the need for his government to be relevant to the people's needs, since poverty was ravaging the country. Moi was one of the longest serving Presidents in Kenya. He took over immediately after the death of Kenya's founding president, Jomo Kenyatta, in 1978 and ruled until the multi-party era in 1992 and then had a further two terms of office that ended in 2002. Moi was succeeded by President Mwai Kibaki who is currently still in office.

Okullu was born on the 1st of September 1929. He grew up to later study at Bishop Tucker Theological College in Uganda from where he received his ministerial training. He became a Deacon in the church in 1958, a Priest in 1960. He also became the first Black African Provost at the All Saints Cathedral in Nairobi. He served in that capacity during the period between 1970-74. He became the consecrated second Bishop of Maseno South Diocese on 24th February 1974. The Diocese itself was created in 1974. He retired as the Bishop of Maseno South Diocese in 1994 and was succeeded by Bishop Francis Abiero who is the present Bishop of the Diocese. During Okullu's time, the Diocese of Maseno gave birth to two more dioceses; that is Maseno west, established 1984, and South Nyanza, in 1994.

Okullu also contested to become the Arch Bishop of Anglican Church of Kenya in 1980 but lost to the now late Manases Kuria.

During his lifetime, Okullo published a number of books: *Church and Marriage in East Africa*, *Church and politics in East Africa*, and then *Church and State in Nation building and human development*.

As already indicated, he died on the 13th March 1999, in Nairobi Hospital's intensive care unit at 11.20 p.m. on Saturday at the age of 70 years.

⁸⁷ Information on the late Okullu is available in the Archives of the Anglican Church in Kenya at the church's headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.

⁸⁸ Raburu was born nearly sixty years ago. He is currently serving as a governor (Provincial Commissioner) in the government of Kenya. He is a committed Christian and one respected all over the country and beyond Kenya in other parts of the world where he has had an opportunity to minister to the people.

⁸⁹ "Chrisco" stands for "Christ Co-workers fellowship."

that he encounters to put their faith in Jesus Christ. He has been declared a Church minister by the Church's top leadership and regularly preaches in the Church's services of worship and in meetings of Christians from denomination throughout the country and beyond whenever invited. Raburu also does not adhere to the cultural values that contradict his understanding of the Christian faith. One instance that remarkably demonstrates this in his life is that, when his father died some years ago, he ensured that the Luo customary laws intended for the appeasement of ancestral spirits- the spirit of his late father in this case and belief that contradicted his understanding of the scriptural teachings were not observed at the funeral or after. Such a strong position against the Luo customary laws and in particular beliefs in ancestral spirits is a mark that Christianity is indeed penetrating the lives of members of the Luo Community.⁹⁰

Furthermore, many people from the Luo Community of Kenya who have been attracted to the Africa Inland Church in the country try to live out and demonstrate Christian values in the Church and Community. A classic example here is that of Rev. John Anyul Odaa. Odaa is a staunch Christian and member of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya. He served as an assistant bishop of the Church in an exemplary manner from 13th March 1980 to 15th October 1996, when he voluntarily retired from official church duties in spite of the fact that the majority of the members of the Africa Inland Church still regarded him highly and as the best candidate to succeed the retiring Bishop of the church, the late Ezekiel Birech. During Odaa's tenure in office, he not only steered the growth and development of Churches in the Luo land, but also taught the Luo in the Churches, by example, that Christian values were above Luo customary values and beliefs. Large numbers of people from the Luo Community who uphold Christian values therefore constitute the membership of the Africa Inland Church. It would be in the congregations and activities of this Africa Inland Church that many members of the Luo Community would come under the influence of John Calvin's views, and where their understanding of the Spirit and the "Spirit World" would come into contact with Calvin's teaching on the Holy Spirit. The spirits of the "Spirit World" therefore have an impact on the lives of traditional Luo people, and although they do not use the term sanctification for this, these spirits are indeed important with regard to how they contact their lives in their consideration of good and bad, right and wrong, proper and improper, holy and unholy; in short, their values, virtues and practices.

⁹⁰ Work edited by D. B Barett (1973) on *Kenyan churches handbook: The development of Kenyan Christianity, 1498-1974*, also vividly demonstrate that the Christian faith is largely penetrating many areas in the regions and among different ethnic groups found in the country.

In the following section, we therefore consider the Luo of the Africa Inland Church to demonstrate how Calvin's legacy in particular found its way into the Christian practices of the people, hence coming into contact with their belief in the "Spirit World."

2.3.2 The Luo of the Africa Inland Church

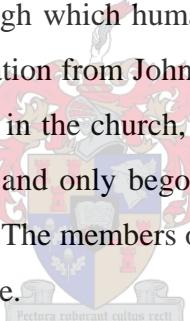
The Luo form part of the membership of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya. The people attend the congregations of the Church near them on a regular basis. They are registered members in such congregations.

There are presently over four thousand congregations of the Church in Kenya. The Church, however, is still rapidly growing and there are many more congregations being established on a yearly basis. Furthermore, the existing congregations are widely spread throughout the country among the different ethnic groups represented in the Kenya. In the region where the Luo settled, there are about four hundred congregations with a majority of the Luo in each congregation. There are approximately two hundred thousand Luo members of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya. While majorities are found in the four hundred congregations in the Luo region, many more are found in the urban congregations of the Church all over the country. What about the membership itself? How does one becomes a member of the Africa Inland Church?

A person becomes a member of the Church by virtue of being approved by the Church in accordance to the Church's requirements as stipulated in the Church's Constitution. The Constitution is the Church's official document, which contains definitions, reasons for the church's existence and regulations on how the Church is run and managed. Furthermore, the document has definitions of the different parallel councils and offices in the Church. Though the Constitution is the Church's main document, there is in addition a smaller booklet known as the "By Laws." The "By Laws," in particular, contain regulations on church discipline. This booklet gives a detailed description on the procedures to be observed where irregularities occur and where the Church is subsequently forced to deal with these irregularities. The Constitution and the By Laws, therefore, go hand in hand. While the Constitution is basic for the government of the Church, the By Laws are equally necessary.

The Constitution itself is an old document. Its first draft was adopted in 1954 and later revised in 1962. The revised version⁹¹ has, therefore, been in use for the last forty years. The Constitution plays an important part as far as the recruitment of members is concerned. It is through the stipulations in the Constitution that the Church seeks to identify the legitimate members of the Church. The Constitution serves as the eye of the Church through which the true members of the Church are seen and counted.

The Church particularly requires that those who would like to be members must put their faith in Christ Jesus. Individuals must confess that Jesus Christ is their Lord and Saviour in order to become members of the Church. They must acknowledge that the whole human race fell into sin and that reconciliation to God is only possible through Christ Jesus. The Church bases her teaching on the fall of humanity recorded in Genesis 2-3 which teaches how the first Man disobeyed God and, therefore, became separated from Him. The sin, which humanity committed and which requires reconciliation with God, is the sin of disobedience against the creator. Christ is the only means through which humanity is reconciled to God. The Church bases her teaching on the need of salvation from John 3:16 amongst others. This popular text in Scripture, which is recited by many in the church, including children, states: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” The members of the Church are, therefore, recruited to understand and appropriate this message.

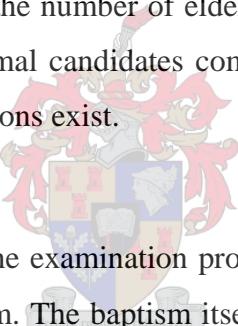


Upon confession and acceptance of Jesus Christ as one’s Lord and Saviour, the individual is introduced to catechism classes. The catechism class is commonly called “Baptismal Class” by the members. They call it, “Baptismal Class,” because it is a class through which an individual is prepared for the baptism. The kind of Baptism being discussed here is Water Baptism.⁹² Only those mature persons, who understand what salvation is and are able to declare their faith in Christ, are baptised.

⁹¹ The Church is currently engaged in reviewing this version and this process is already at an advanced stage. Once it is completed, the Church hopes to adopt and implement it.

⁹² The Baptism is conferred upon mature individuals. The Church refers to the Baptism as Water Baptism. The Africa Inland Church does not practice Infant baptism. Instead, the Church dedicates children to God through prayer during the regular Sunday worship service. During such times when children are being dedicated through prayer, the officiating minister calls the parents and prays for them and dedicates them to God along with the children. The parents would then stand before the congregation (normally both parents are required to be there), and the minister would hold each child individually and pray for each. After praying for each individual, the concluding prayer is normally done for all. Parents, who want their children to be dedicated, normally bring the names of the children to the church in advance and prior to the actual day of dedication. The dedication of

The Holy Bible is the main text used for the teaching in the catechism class. The aim of the class is the growth and the development of the Christian life in the church member. The class is intended for helping young believers to mature and grow in Christ. The participants are taught to understand and appropriate the biblical truths into their lives. The catechism period normally spans a period of six months or more after which the participating members graduate and are Baptised. The duration of the catechism depends on the decision and organisation of the respective Church councils under whose authority every local church/congregation falls. At the end of the period, the prospective member takes an oral examination. The purpose of the exam is to assess whether the individual has learnt the basic truths of Scripture, and particularly the truths pertaining to the Christian life and how the Christian life should be lived. The exam is normally presided over by at least one trained minister (Pastor), and a number of the elders available at the time of the exam. There is normally no set number of elders required to attend and oversee the exam, but the number of those who attend is determined by the number of elders available for the occasion from the local congregation where the Baptismal candidates come from and of the immediate higher councils under which such congregations exist.

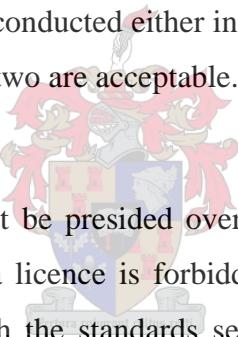


Upon the successful completion of the examination process, the candidates are subsequently prepared for the sacrament of baptism. The baptism itself is a very important and significant occasion in the lives of those being baptised and in the life of the Church in general. With regards to the individuals being baptised, baptism is seen as an activity which symbolises the dying and rising of an individual with Christ. The individual is seen as having died to sin and made alive again in Christ. Baptism is viewed as significant because it serves as a public proclamation of the inward change in the individual. By accepting water baptism, the individual affirms the change that has taken place in the individual's inner life. This change, like faith in Christ, is a matter of the heart and cannot be discerned from outside. It is, therefore, evident through an outward sign like the sacrament of Water Baptism that some unique change has taken place in the life of an individual. It is viewed as an occasion where the individual demonstrates and declares publicly that the individual has decided to follow Christ, and more so, to die to sin and rise with Christ. With regards to the life of the Church,

children itself has nothing to do with the salvation of the child. Since the church teaches and emphasises that salvation is only found through faith in Christ, even children who have been dedicated are expected to respond to Christ in faith in order to receive salvation. Upon dedication, cards are issued for each dedicated child to show that the dedication of the child has taken place.

baptism is an occasion where the individuals become legitimate members of the Church. The Africa Inland Church does not count those who are not Baptised as part of its legitimate members despite the fact that there are hundreds of unbaptised people who attend the church. Baptism is, therefore, seen as an occasion through which members are incorporated into the life of the Church.

The particular form of Baptism adopted by the Church is that of immersion. It is not merely a baptism done by sprinkling water on a person's head, but one where an individual is wholly dipped into the water and then removed. According to the Church, that is the right form of baptism and the kind upheld and taught in Scripture. The Church has adopted this kind of baptism because it believes that this is what is taught in the Bible. The New Testament teaches water baptism by immersion and not merely by sprinkling of water. John the Baptist baptised in this way and even baptised Jesus Christ himself in this way. The Church, therefore, sees immersion as scripturally rooted and this is why baptism by immersion is practiced. Baptism itself is normally conducted either in running water (in a river or a stream) or in a prepared pool. Either of these two are acceptable.



The ceremony of baptism itself must be presided over by either a licensed or an ordained minister.⁹³ Any minister without a licence is forbidden to preside over the sacrament of baptism. This is in accordance with the standards set by the Church as stipulated in the Church's Constitution.

During the ceremony, each candidate is required to recite a verse from Scripture, commonly known as a memory verse.⁹⁴ This may be any verse that the candidate prefers. The candidate must have prepared his memory verse in advance to recite during the occasion. As the candidates queue and stand in a line, waiting to be immersed into the water, the presiding

⁹³ According to the requirements of the A.I.C, the Ministers/Pastors are either “licensed” or “ordained.” Once a minister/pastor is licensed or ordained, he is qualified to perform or officiate certain duties in the Church which unlicensed or un-ordained ministers cannot do. A licensed pastor can officiate baptism and the Lord’s Supper, but not a marriage. Only an ordained minister can officiate marriage. On the other hand, an unlicensed minister/pastor cannot officiate any of the three, but can only perform church duties that are stipulated in the Church Constitution. Ordination is a higher level qualification than Licensing and only those who are ordained qualify for the title, “Reverend.” Licensing and Ordination are normally accorded on the individual performances of the candidates and it is bestowed on persons as is deemed appropriate by the leaders or elders of the respective Local Church Council (L.C.C.), Branch Church Council (B.C.C.), District Church Council (D.C.C.) and Regional Church Council (R.C.C.).

⁹⁴ This is significant since it reaffirms that the candidate’s life is founded on God’s Word.

minister enters into the water first and allows each candidate to come into the water one at a time. Upon the successful recitation of the memory verse, the candidates form a queue for the next part of the ceremony. As each enters the water, the presiding minister holds the candidate's hands and asks the question⁹⁵ which basically goes as follows: "Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Saviour"? Normally one-hundred percent of the candidates would respond positively by answering, "Yes!" The question comes just before the immersion. If the response is positive, the presiding minister subsequently replies in the following manner: "Because you have confessed Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour of your life, I baptise you in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." The individual is then immediately immersed into the water by the presiding minister. Upon immersion, the baptism is completed.

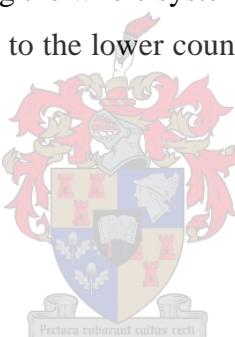
The Baptised individual is now officially regarded as a legitimate member of the Church. Henceforth, the individual becomes part of the life of the Church and is under an obligation to live in accordance with the requirements of the church and membership. One of the major requirements includes participation in the Holy Communion. Anyone who is baptised is a legitimate member and must join the others in celebrating the Lord's Supper. Those who are not yet baptised, however, are not allowed to participate in the Lord's Supper. The elements used in the celebration of the Lord's Supper are normally wheat bread to symbolise the body of Christ and any soft drink to symbolise the blood of Christ.

Nothing mystical happens to the elements during the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The elements are simply taken in remembrance of the death and crucifixion of Christ, and because Christ himself ordered his disciples to observe the Lord's Supper in this way in remembrance of him. The bread, therefore, does not change into the body of Christ and the drink does not change into the real blood of Christ. The bread and drink are simply symbols. During the ceremony, however, the people believe that the Holy Spirit is with them. It is a time for soul-searching where all the participants confess the sin in their lives so as not to grieve the Holy Spirit. The people know that any form of sin is not acceptable, especially in the presence of the Holy Spirit during the celebration of the Lord's Supper. For this reason, those who do not feel ready for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, because they are aware of unconfessed sin in their lives, refrain from joining others in celebrating the Lord's Supper.

⁹⁵ The question is normally meant to affirm whether the individual truly confesses his faith in Jesus Christ.

In the event, however, where any member is found guilty of not conducting himself or herself in a manner deemed worthy⁹⁶ and in accordance with the requirements of the Church, these members are disciplined. Discipline is enforced with the intention of enabling the individual to realise his or her sins in order to confess and repent and be restored into the fellowship of the Church. When discipline is enforced, the disciplined individual is not allowed to join with others in the celebration of the Lord's Supper until the disciplining measures are lifted. The Church's By-Laws and the Constitution contain the details on how each matter should be examined and how discipline should be enforced when it is deemed necessary.

Furthermore, the Church has a well-organised system of leadership that ensures that the requirements of the Church are well observed. The system of leadership is a "top-down" system of leadership, according to the researcher. This kind of leadership is structured in such a manner that the power directing the whole system of the Church comes from the higher councils and this power is distributed to the lower councils of the Church. (See the diagram⁹⁷ below).

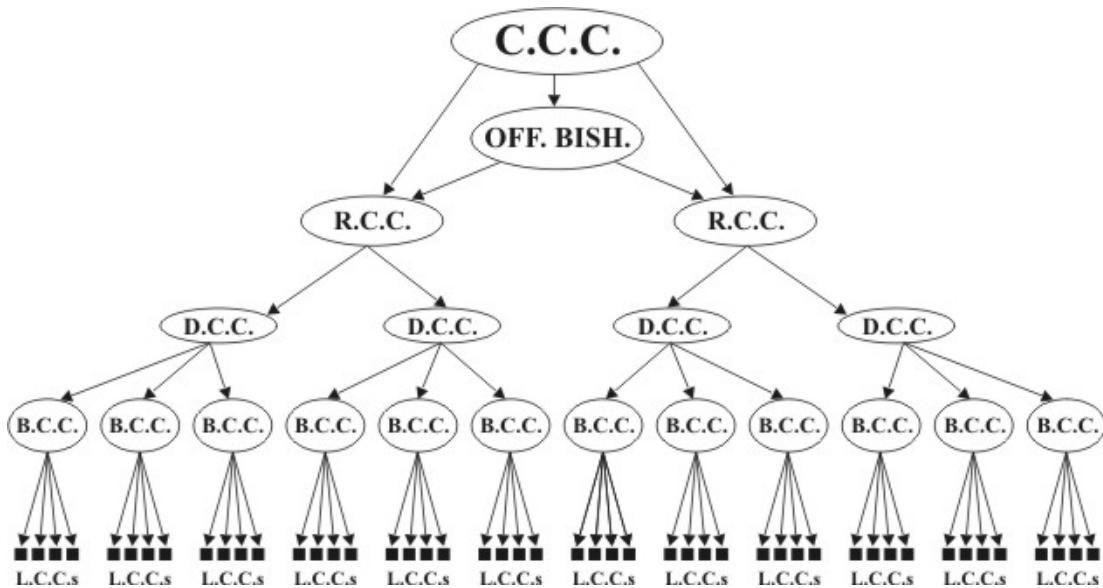


⁹⁶ In the Africa Inland Church, one would be subjected to church discipline for not doing everything that is expected of all the members as stipulated in the Constitution of the Church. Discipline is enforced when an individual goes back to engage in traditional African practices deemed unacceptable by the Church and which contradicts the Scriptural teachings in light of their church's understanding of Scripture, or when a minister or individual simply disobeys and ignores the laws and regulations of the Church. Secondly, an individual would be subjected to discipline if he does not uphold the moral standard expected of him by the Church. The Africa Inland Church does not allow her members to get involved in the drinking of wine, smoking, adultery, fornication and other related vices. If one is found guilty of one of these, then he/she would surely be subjected to church discipline.

⁹⁷ The diagram is the original work of the researcher.

STRUCTURE & SYSTEM OF LEADERSHIP IN THE A.I.C

TOP-DOWN SYSTEM



As demonstrated in the diagram, at present there are five parallel councils within the leadership structure of the Africa Inland Church. In addition to such parallel councils, there is the Office of the Bishop. The Office of the Bishop is the highest, serving as the central administrative office of the Church. It consists of the bishop as well as other departmental officers in the Church. Therefore, it serves as the administrative centre for the entire Church.

The highest council of the Church is known as the Central Church Council.⁹⁸ The Central Church Council is made up of the bishop himself, a number of administrative personnel in the Office of the Bishop, as well as a number of officials from the Regional Church Councils.

The Regional Church Councils are the first level of Councils under the authority of the Central Church Council as well as the authority of the bishop. The Regional Church Councils are directly linked to the Central Church Council, since certain members of the Regional Church Council are also members of the Central Church Council. They can, therefore, implement any resolution passed by the Central Church Council which directly concerns the

⁹⁸ In this study, the use of the term, “Council,” refers to the meeting of people for the purpose of deliberation. These meetings can make authoritative decisions which affect different areas of the Church.

Regional Church Councils. The Regional Church Councils are, however, directly under the authority of the bishop as far as the administrative matters of the Church are concerned. The Office of the Bishop directly oversees the affairs of the Regional Church Councils and ensures that the Councils do everything required by the Central Church Council and stipulated in the Church's Constitution.

On the other hand, the Regional Church Councils are also responsible for the oversight of the District Church Councils that are subordinate to them. All the District Church Councils are accountable to their respective Regional Church Council. The District Church Councils are again responsible for their respective Branch Church Councils. Furthermore, the Branch Church Councils are responsible for the affairs of the Local Church Councils. The officials of every Local Church Council are in charge of their own respective congregations.

Though the power structure of the Church is from top to bottom, leaders are first elected at the local congregational level before they ascend to higher positions. The Church has a congregational form of government where leaders are elected to key positions by members of the Church, as stipulated in the Constitution. There are normally five official members elected to the official positions in every church congregation. The positions are those of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Vice-Secretary and the Treasurer. In addition, there are normally four other members co-opted into the Church Council. Co-option itself is normally done by those officially elected. Therefore, one would expect about nine members in total for every Local Church Council.

The officially elected Chairman, Secretary and the Treasurer of each local congregation automatically become members of the higher councils. They become members of each of the councils from the District Church Council through to the Central Church Council. Furthermore, the higher councils have authority to co-opt other members from the lower councils at their own discretion. The number of members in the higher councils varies, from one council to another, depending on the number of lower councils under each of them. Some higher councils have more councils under them than others and each lower council must be represented in the respective higher council.

All the leaders of the Church, including the trained ministers, are required to be people worthy of Church leadership in accordance with the teachings of Scripture. The text normally used when electing leaders is that of 1 Timothy 3:8-13 (see the Constitution). This text is used to screen the applicants and to test if they are qualified for leadership in the Church. Only those who measure up to the demands of Scripture are considered for leadership positions.

The officials in the various councils are expected to manage and care for their respective councils according to the requirements of the Church as stipulated in the constitution. In every local congregation, however, the constitution of the Church states that a trained minister must be the chairperson of the Local Church Council. There are some cases where, for one reason or another, such as a lack of trained ministers, the position of Chair Person is taken up by a lay person.

All those elected or co-opted into leadership positions have the responsibility of guiding the spiritual development of the Church. The trained ministers are especially responsible for the care of the spiritual life of the Church. The minister's work is to teach the congregation God's Word and to care for the congregation in all respects. He also serves as the overall leader of the Church. Though the ministers serve within their respective local congregations, they are employed by the respective District Church Councils under which their individual congregations exist. The ministers are not elected into their positions by the local congregations as other officials are. The ministers ascend to the higher councils through elections.

All the employed ministers must be trained at one of the Bible Institutions affiliated with the Church. Gehman (2004:132)⁹⁹ has observed "by the year 2000, there were twenty-one Bible training institutions affiliated to the Africa Inland Church in Kenya with more than one thousand students." The training period in these schools is normally four years for a Diploma or a Bachelor Degree. There are, however, a number of younger schools which have sprung up in the country which are offering a two year training program. The training in these schools is normally offered at a certificate level. Those who do the four year training program normally receive a Diploma in Theology. Scott Theological College, the chartered private university sponsored by the Church, offers a Bachelor of Theology degree. Those

⁹⁹ Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology Vol 23.2, 2004.

students, who do the two-year certificate, normally study to become evangelists; while those doing the four-year Diploma or Degree programmes train for full time ministry. Upon graduation these evangelists work alongside the ministers in the respective congregations. They work under the supervision of the ministers who are in charge of their congregations. There are currently over one hundred and fifty evangelists who have received their certificates from these institutions in the church and many more who are busy with their training. The establishment of training institutions is one of the major achievements of the Church since its inception.

The Africa Inland Church has a long history in Kenya. It began in 1895 through the work of the Africa Inland Mission in Kenya. When the Mission arrived in Kenya, it established its first congregation in the eastern part of the country in a place called Nzau (Nzawi). This was done under the leadership of Peter Cameron Scott who led the first team of missionaries. Scott came from the United States of America, though he was not born in America. In Gehman's work already cited above, Gehman has pointed out that:

Scott was born near Glasgow, Scotland, on March 7, 1867. When he was twelve years old, Peter and his family immigrated to Philadelphia in the United States of America. During his teenage years he experienced an inner struggle. On the one hand, his musical talent attracted him to the concert stage where he was invited to sing professionally. On the other hand, his parents refused him permission because of Christian convictions. Through this spiritual struggle over the question of a musical career, Peter Cameron Scott eventually made a complete dedication of himself to God.¹⁰⁰

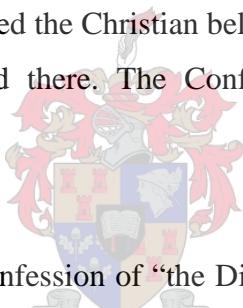
A notable incident in Scott's own life occurred, which later inspired him to become a missionary to British East Africa, when he visited the tomb of David Livingstone in Westminster Abbey in England. This happened upon his return to England from the Congo, a region of Africa where he had served before. As further noted by Gehman, "In November 1890, he had sailed to Congo where he and his brother John, served under the International Missionary Alliance for two years. During that time he buried John and he himself became deathly sick from malaria, necessitating his return. He was 'carried out of the country...unconscious.',¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 118.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 119.

Anderson (1994:19) highlights three organisations which were based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in the United States of America (the Africa Inland Mission, the Pennsylvania Bible Institute, and the American Industrial Mission), that had the same objective, to evangelise the world for Christ. However, the manner in which these organisations operated was different. While the “Africa Inland Mission” and the “Central American Industrial Mission”¹⁰² focused on evangelisation in cross-cultural missions, the primary objective of the Pennsylvania Bible Institute was to train those who would engage in cross-cultural evangelism. These individuals had to understand Scripture well in order to apply Scripture to any situation.

The Institute, therefore, served as a centre of training for all the different affiliated denominations who felt called to ministry. The Institute had an enormous influence on the Africa Inland Mission as well as on the American Industrial Mission. The Institute influenced the life and Christian beliefs of the Africa Inland Mission through its doctrinal Confessions. The Confessions of the Institute shaped the Christian beliefs and practices of the Africa Inland Mission personnel who had trained there. The Confessions of the Institute¹⁰³ are now discussed:



The Institute was founded on the confession of “the Divinity, substitutionary atonement and pre-millennial coming of Christ.” This particular view emphasised the teaching that Christ shared the Divine nature with God and that he died on behalf of sinners. Christ himself was not sinful nor had he committed sin to warrant his death on the cross. He instead took our sins upon himself so that he would die on our behalf. Furthermore, the confession emphasises the fact that Christ’s return would occur before the thousand year reign of Christ on earth.

Secondly, the Institute was founded on the confession which held to the view of the “personal indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.” This confession says that the Holy Spirit is actively involved and works within the individual believer. The Holy Spirit was, therefore, not a power outside the believer, but a Person who reigned from within.

¹⁰²The Central American Industrial Mission was purposely established to oversee and facilitate the evangelisation of the Central American region. The whole field had more than 3,000,000 people almost without a single Protestant evangelist in the area (Hearing and Doing vol.1, no1).

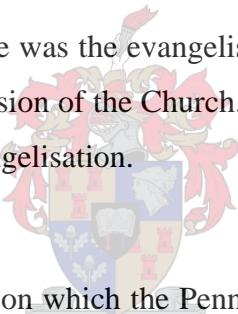
¹⁰³Hearing and Doing vol.1, no.1.

Thirdly, the Institute was founded on the belief that upheld the “verbal inspiration of Scripture.” This view emphasised that Scripture came forth through the power, direction and guidance of the Spirit.

Fourthly, the Institute was founded on the confession which emphasised the teaching of “salvation by faith alone.” Salvation was not seen as the result of human activity, but comes through faith in Christ alone. Those who demonstrated faith in Christ alone were assured of salvation.

Fifthly, the Institute was founded on the belief of the “eternal consciousness of the lost.” This meant that the lost would be conscious of their status forever.

Sixthly, the main goal of the Institute was the evangelisation of the world. Evangelisation of the world was seen as the special mission of the Church. The Institute thus trained individuals to equip them for the ministry of evangelisation.



In this discussion of the Confessions on which the Pennsylvania Bible Institute was founded, one fundamental Christian doctrine that features throughout is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. It confesses the “Divinity of Christ,” which implies the nature and the relationship between God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God does not exist in one or two Persons but in three: God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Whenever the term “Divinity” is used, it always implies a relationship where the Person of the Holy Spirit is involved. It is through the experience of the work of salvation accomplished by Christ who in himself was both human and God that the person of the Holy Spirit is known and his work becomes experienced in the Christian life. In the Confession the Spirit is seen as the power of God dwelling in the believers. The Spirit’s indwelling of believers enables them to live a Christian life. Without the power of the Holy Spirit, the practical Christian life cannot be attained.

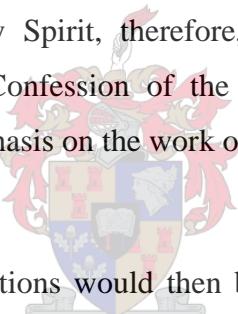
The work of the Spirit is also connected to the confession of “salvation through faith in Christ alone and not by works.” The role of the Spirit is implied here in the sense that the Institute understood faith to be the product of the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit, faith

would never be realised. The phrase, “salvation by faith alone,” implies that salvation is an activity brought about by the power of the Spirit.

The importance of the Spirit is further evident in the fact that the Confession declares that the Scripture has been directly inspired by the Spirit. Inspiration is the work of the Holy Spirit and Scripture itself has come into existence through the power of the Holy Spirit.

More so, evangelisation is the work of the Spirit and is, therefore, closely connected to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Since salvation is attained through faith in Christ and not through works, and since faith itself is the work of the Spirit, evangelisation is impossible without the power of the Spirit. It is the Spirit who enables those who encounter the gospel to respond to it. Without the power of the Holy Spirit, evangelisation is a fruitless endeavour.

The Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit, therefore, features in the Confession of the Pennsylvania Bible Institute. The Confession of the Institute was greatly influenced by Calvinistic views, evident in the emphasis on the work of the Spirit in bringing forth faith.



The question posed by these correlations would then be: How was the Confession of the Institute influenced by Calvin’s own views? To answer this question one has to look at the background of the Pennsylvania Bible Institute to find out which Christian Churches existed in the area during the time the Institute was founded.

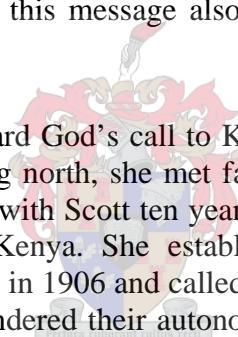
To begin with, the Churches that existed in the area were mainly Baptist and Presbyterian. The influence of these two Churches was very strong in the Philadelphia area where the Institute was established. The origin of these two Churches can be traced back to the Reformation, which took place in Europe in the sixteenth century. The Confessions of the Church fathers of the Reformation, especially those of John Calvin, spread and influenced the Christian beliefs in Churches throughout Europe and beyond. This influence also spread to America with the migration of people from Europe to America. Most of the founders of the Baptist and Presbyterian Churches in the Philadelphia area came from Europe. As we have also already noted in the study, the parents of Peter Cameron Scott himself (who later became the founding leader of the Africa Inland Mission) arrived in the States from

Scotland.¹⁰⁴ Peter and his parents also attended the Presbyterian congregation in the Philadelphia area where they had settled and from where Peter also actively got involved with Church ministry and particularly with the choir. The Christian beliefs and practices of the Baptist and the Presbyterian churches were largely characterised by Calvin's own views.

Most of the leaders in the area were involved in the Pennsylvania Bible Institute, the American Industrial Mission, the Africa Inland Mission and the American Sending Council and they passed their theological views onto these organisations. The Christian beliefs and practices of the Pennsylvania Bible Institute and that of the Africa Inland Mission were greatly influenced by the Reformation as represented in the Baptist and Presbyterian theology. The personnel of the Africa Inland Mission, who reached out to Africa, and in particular to Kenya, passed on the Confessions of the Reformation to the people they encountered.

Through the Africa Inland Mission, this message also reached the Luo. Anderson explains how it happened:

An American, Miss Boldt, heard God's call to Kenya while working among the Zulus in South Africa. Moving north, she met farmers, Mr. and Mrs. McLellan Wilson (who had first arrived with Scott ten years previously). They pointed her to the Luo of the western Kenya. She established the Independent Niloti



Mission close to Lake Victoria in 1906 and called her friends Mr. and Mrs. Innis, to join her. They gladly surrendered their autonomy to become part of the AIM and the nucleus of a team for the Luo (Anderson 1994:143).

This particular station was established at a place called Ogada.¹⁰⁵ Later, however, the team moved from Ogada to begin a new station at Nyakach in 1913.¹⁰⁶ From Nyakach the Mission's work spread throughout the homeland of the Luo people. The doctrinal teachings which the Mission advanced greatly influenced the Luo people. The challenge that faced them was how to integrate these teachings into their own cultural system of values. While spreading the gospel, the Mission personnel did not leave their own values and way of life

¹⁰⁴ History of Christianity in the United States of America is extensively discussed by M. Noll (1992) on his work on *A history of Christianity in the United States and Canada*. His study covers a study of the Baptist and the Presbyterian churches as well. Any reader interested in the further study of the churches would find the work very useful.

¹⁰⁵ The word, "Ogada," is a Luo word denoting a place where water does not move. The name of the place is closely related to the fact that this particularly area had a poor drainage system.

¹⁰⁶ From a personal interview with Simbiri, it became clear that the team opted to move to the new place, Nyakach, as the team intended to spread the gospel there since Christianity had now been introduced to the Ogada area.

behind, but brought it with them. Like the other African peoples in Kenya who also encountered the gospel through the work of the Africa Inland Mission, the Luo also had to seek to integrate the teachings and values into their own cultural situation with the Christian teachings whose origin can be traced back through the Pennsylvania Bible Institute to the Baptist and Presbyterian congregations to John Calvin himself.

A clear indication that the Christian beliefs of the Africa Inland Mission were greatly influenced by the Pennsylvania Bible Institute, which was in turn was influenced by the teachings of the Baptist and the Presbyterian Churches, is the Confession of the Africa Inland Mission, and particularly those articles about the Holy Spirit. The Confession¹⁰⁷ of the Africa

¹⁰⁷ This Confession is found in the section on the statement of faith of the Mission. Here are the full stipulations of the Confession of Faith of the Mission.

1. The unity and Trinity of God, eternally existing in three co-equal Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
2. God the Creator and Preserver of all things, who created man, male and female, in His own image, and gave them dominion over the earthly creation.
3. The deity and humanity of God, the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ who, being very God, also became man, being begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, was crucified, dead and buried, was raised bodily from the dead, and ascended to the right hand of the Father; whose two natures continue eternally and inseparably joined together in one Person.
4. The deity and personality of God the Holy Spirit, and the necessity of His work to make the death of Christ effective to the individual sinner, leading him to repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and in His ministry, dwelling permanently within and working through the believer for godly life and service.
5. The divine, verbal inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as originally given, and their absolute and final authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
6. The universal sinfulness and guilt of human nature since the fall, rendering man subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
7. The sacrificial death of our Representative and Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, by the shedding of whose blood atonement was made for sins of the whole world and whereby alone men are redeemed from the guilt, penalty and power of sin.
8. The necessity of the new birth as the work of God and the Holy Spirit to be obtained only by receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, that men are saved by grace through faith, not by works.
9. The security of the believer, based entirely on the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereby, as a born again child of God, he has assurance of salvation and has right to all the privileges as sons.
10. The responsibility of the believer is to maintain good works, and to obey the revealed will of God in life and service, through which eternal rewards shall be received.
11. The True Church, whose head is the Lord Jesus Christ, and whose members are all regenerate persons united to Christ and to another by the Holy Spirit.
12. The observance of the ordinance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ.
13. The Supreme mission of the church as being to glorify God and to preach the gospel to every creature.
14. The personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ
15. The resurrection of the body

Inland Mission is found in the opening pages of the Constitution of the Mission. This Confession was adopted much later than that of the Institute. Items 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9 of the Confession in particular, are related to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, more or less in the same manner as that of the Institute.

The Mission did not work as an independent body in Kenya, but was accountable to the sending body back in America which ensured that the Mission's work was in line with its Confession. The sending body was known as the American Sending Council¹⁰⁸ which worked

16. The eternal blessedness of the saved, and the eternal punishment of the lost.

¹⁰⁸ Here below is a copy of the letter, which Peter Cameron Scott wrote back home in the United States of America updating the American sending council on the teams mission in Kenya [printed from "Hearing and doing" magazine].

Mombasa, Nov. 8, 1895

Brethren beloved in the Lord: it is with thankful hearts that I take up my pen to write to you from this point of my journey to let you know something of the Lord's dealing with us; but I can tell you very little of our Father's mercies; His blessings are more than can be numbered and I feel inclined to cry out with the Psalmist, "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men."

I landed at this point with Brother Krieger on the 27th of October, having left the rest of our party at Zanzibar, while we came on here to make arrangements for the reception of the others. You know that it is quite a serious matter landing in this country with a large party because there are no hotels in which to house them. The Lord gave us favor in the eyes of our brethren and sisters of the Church Missionary Society who are stationed here. Rev. W. E. Taylor is in charge of the work among the Mohammedans on the Island of Mombasa, assisted by his wife and five ladies, while Rev. H.K. Burns is in charge of the work at Freetown, which is an old settlement of the freed slaves. They not only opened their hearts to us, but they placed two houses at our disposal, one of them a very pretty house belonging to Bishop Tucker, in which our three ladies were housed on their arrival the 29th, and another house which accommodated three of our boys while Brother Krieger and myself are stopping on the Island, where it is much handier for us to look after all matters of business and the repacking of our loads into packages of 65 pounds.

We have made arrangements with the firm of Smith, Mackienzie & Co. to take charge of our transport into the Interior, and I have found out that mission work in the Interior must be carried on at an enormous expense, especially for the first few years. For instance: Should we go into Ukambani country, and settle down in Nzoia district, it will cost six dollars and a half to transport a single load of 65 pounds into that place from the cost, not counting the original cost, ocean freight, or income tax. Suppose I buy a sack of salt in Liverpool, valued at seventy five cents, before it reaches me in the interior, it has swelled up to enormous price of eight dollars, and this simple illustration will give you an idea of what it means to carry on work here.

It is going to cost fully two hundred and seventy-five pounds sterling (\$1375) to take our goods and us into the interior. On the 12th [not clear] Inst. we hope to leave the coast for the interior, i.e. the gentlemen of our party, leaving the ladies still at the coast, and after selecting a site and getting things fairly underway, if God spares my life, I shall then return to the coast for the ladies and take them up. It was our intention first of all to take the ladies right up with us, but the Consul General forbade our so doing, as the country has been very much disturbed of late by the uprising of a rebel named Ubarak, an Arab chief, and they think it might be dangerous. Of course we must be obedient to the powers that be, and while I myself think that there is no immediate danger, yet it behooves young men to take the wiser and more mature counsel of those who have had a larger experience in these matters. In many respects, I am thankful that the ladies are to remain behind at the coast, and one reason is that they will get a good beginning in the Swahili language, which is a very valuable dialect on the east coast, and then again it is quite healthy at Mombasa and it will save them many inconveniences and hardships of pioneer days. I am happy to be able to say that the Lord has not only given us favor in the eyes of the missionaries here, but also in the eyes of the authorities, and last night my sister and myself had the honor of dining with the Administrator of Mombasa, and his wife and the consul General of Zanzibar and the British East Africa, who was here on business.

closely with the Pennsylvania Bible Institute and shared Christian Confessions which had similar emphases and beliefs.

As the work of the Mission grew in Kenya, there arose the need to nationalise the work of the mission by handing over the leadership of a large portion of the work to the Kenyan nationals. As a result, the Africa Inland Church was founded. Anderson says:

In a commendable drive for a mature, self-governing church, AIM formed the Africa Inland Church in the early forties as a separate body, although its doctrine and organization drew heavily from AIM patterns. The mission retained responsibility for the Bible Schools, Literature, Radio, and Medical Departments, and negotiated with the colonial government on behalf of both bodies. AIM saw two sister organizations working as partners, each respecting the other's autonomy (Anderson 1994:192).

However, as the nationals identified more with the work and actively got involved, tension emerged between the missionaries and the Kenyan nationals on the matter of leadership. Anderson has further noted:

Due to a contentious relationship that subsequently grew between the A.I.M and Africa Inland Church over the matter of Leadership,¹⁰⁹ in June 1970 an agreement was reached between the A.I.M and A.I.C that favored the A.I.C for the overall responsibility of leadership. Consequently on October 16th 1971, the A.I.C took over the leadership of the entire Mission's work with obligation to direct all the church – related work and to be responsible for missionaries, properties, and

I have found the missionaries of C.M.S deeply spiritual people. You know that they belong to the Church of England. On Sabbath they have services in Swahili and English, and last Sabbath P.M [unclear] the Lord granted me the privilege of preaching to the English congregation from John xvii. 16-18. On Tuesday Brother Krieger spoke to the natives at the Market meeting through an interpreter, and the Lord wonderfully held that Mohammedan audience while our brother was speaking. To-day I had the privilege of speaking to the same audience through an interpreter, but the congregation was very noisy. The dear missionaries have need to be held up in prayer, for the field is a difficult one; most of the natives are followers of the Prophet Mohammed, and should one of them confess faith in Christ, it means persecution and possible death. It is indeed sad to see this whole Island with its 30,000 inhabitants given over to follow a false prophet. Oh the wretchedness and misery! Your hearts would ache for the people. It is very amusing to watch the expressions on the faces during preaching in the market place; some are filled with wonder and amazement, others filled with contempt, while others filled with contention are ready to embrace any opportunity to break up the meeting by argument. The ministers who are excited and distressed by the outcry of a child in the church would get over that in six months residence here, and be able to preach though all the children were bawling at the same time. There is much of interest that I could tell you about this place and its people but I am very much pushed for time; infact I am kept busy from morning to night, so many little details to look after in connection with our journey into the interior, and you know nothing must be forgotten, as we will be cut off in a little while from all suppliers.

May the Lord graciously guide, bless and keep you, and cause all grace to abound towards you. May wisdom be granted you in all your deliberations, and may you be used mightily for the spreading of the "joyful tidings."

Yours in Gospel bonds,

P. CAMERON SCOTT.

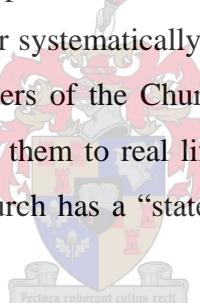
¹⁰⁹ The Kenyan nationals wanted to take leadership of the entire organisation in the country while the A.I.M.'s missionaries found it difficult to relinquish their leadership position. They did, however, do so some time later.

money. Meanwhile, the A.I.M took the position of a department in the A.I.C. (Anderson 1994:194).

From this time on, the Africa Inland Church of Kenya began functioning as an denomination autonomous from the Africa Inland Mission¹¹⁰, although they took with them the rich heritage of the Christian beliefs and practices adopted from the Mission. It has since then become the Church which has attracted a large number of people from the Luo community in Kenya and the place where the Luo are practicing their Christian faith and beliefs – a Christian faith deeply influenced by Baptist and Presbyterian views going back to Calvin himself. How would this influence impact on their traditional views of spirits, the spiritual life and ethics?

2.3.3 Africa Inland Church and the Spirit

In the words of John Mbiti,¹¹¹ the Africa Inland Church's teaching on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is based on a compilation of Scriptural verses. With this comment, Mbiti means to say that the Church has not yet arranged or systematically organised the teaching on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Instead, the members of the Church simply read some verses about the Spirit, interpret them and try to apply them to real life issues. While the researcher agrees with Mbiti, it is also true that the Church has a "statement of faith,"¹¹² which in some way



¹¹⁰ There are further a number of works that also extensively discusses the work of the Africa Inland Mission and through which the impact of the work of the Mission can be assessed. Such works amongst others include: K. Richardson (1968)'s on *Garden of miracles: A history of the Africa Inland Mission*, J. A Gration (1974)'s dissertation on *The relationship of Africa Inland Mission and its national churches between 1895-1971* also give a vivid description of the life and work of the African Inland Mission which may be of interest to many scholars, B.N Musembi (1997)'s masters thesis undertaken at the university of Stellenbosch on *The Impact of the Western missionary enterprise on the development of the African church: As involving Akamba people of Kenya*. Furthermore, work published by M. Shaw (1996) on *Kingdom of God in Africa* also extensively discusses the work of the Africa Inland Mission and would be useful for the purpose of further study on the subject.

¹¹¹ Personal interview on 24th June in Capetown, South Africa. John Mbiti, as a Kenyan, was originally a member of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya though he is currently serving with the Anglican Church and based in Geneva, Switzerland. Mbiti hails from among the Akamba people of Kenya and among the people where the Africa Inland Church began through the work of the Africa Inland Mission. The station Nzawi (Nzau) already mentioned in the study, where the first congregation of the Africa Inland Mission was formed in Kenya, is located in the area where the Akamba people live and where Mbiti comes from. Furthermore, the Africa Inland Church has attracted more people from the Akamba ethnic group than from any other ethnic group found in the country. In Mbiti's work of 1971, *New Testament Eschatology in an African Background*, he has extensively dealt with the Akamba people and their relation to the Africa Inland Mission and the Africa Inland Church, especially with regards to their traditional values and their Christian values. He also later in 1994 published an article on "The Holy Spirit in African Independent Churches." The article demonstrates that Mbiti has also researched on the subject of the Holy Spirit as well. As a member born in the Africa Inland Church, Mbiti is well versed in the Christian beliefs and practices of the Church.

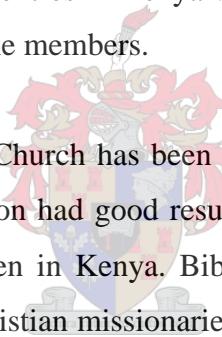
¹¹² See particularly items 1,3,4,5, 8 &11 of the full version of the statement here below which directly concerns the subject of the Holy Spirit.

defines or explains how the Holy Spirit is or ought to be interpreted and understood by the Church. The “statement of faith” is a stipulation outlined in the opening pages of the Church’s Constitution. According to the “statement of faith,” and in light of the Church’s view on the Scriptural teachings about the Holy Spirit, the Church sees the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, as the power at work in creation and in the molding and the shaping of all the dimensions of the Christian life. The Holy Spirit is very important in the Church. Church members often refer to or talk about the Spirit in the organised church gatherings or in private. The Spirit greatly features in meetings such as Sunday worship sessions, Sunday School classes, Bible study sessions, camps for men, women & the youth, outreach ministries, family devotions and in lectures, seminars & conference presentations of Biblical and Theological Institutions of the church. With the aid of the principles outlined in the “statement of faith,” the church members read and study about the Holy Spirit from Scripture. The stipulation of the “statement of faith” concerning the doctrine of the Holy Spirit gives direction on how the Holy Spirit should be interpreted and understood from Scripture.

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1. The Unity and Trinity of God, eternally existing in three co-equal persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
 2. God the creator and the preserver of all things, who created man, male and female, in His own image and gave them dominion over the earthly creation.
 3. The deity and humanity of God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who being very God, also became man, being begotten of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, dead and buried, was raised bodily from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father; whose two natures continue eternally and inseparably joined together in one person.
 4. The deity and personality of God the Holy Spirit and the necessity of His work to make the death of Christ effective to the individual sinner, granting him repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and in His ministry dwelling permanently within and working through the believer for godly life and service.
 5. The divine, verbal and plenary inspiration and infallibility of the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as originally given and their absolute and final authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
 6. The universal sinfulness and guilt of human nature since the fall, rendering man subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
 7. The sacrificial death of our Representative and Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, by the shedding of whose blood atonement was made for the sins of the whole world and whereby alone men are redeemed from the guilt, penalty and power of sin and death.
 8. The necessity of the new birth as the work of God the Holy Spirit that men are saved by grace through faith, not by works.
 9. The eternal security of the believer, based entirely on the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereby, as a born again child of God, he has assurance of salvation and has the right to all privileges of the sons of God.
 10. The maintenance of good works and obedience to the revealed will of God in life and service, through which eternal rewards shall be received.
 11. The True Church, whose Head is the Lord Jesus Christ and whose members are all regenerate persons united to Christ and to one another by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
 12. The observance of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ.
 13. The Supreme mission of the Church as being to glorify God and preach the Gospel to every creature.
 14. The personal, visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ:
 - a. The Rapture (the catching up of the Church)-1Thessalonians 4:16-17
 - b. The Tribulation - Rev. 3:10; Matt.24:29
 - c. The Millennial Reign of Christ - Rev. 20:6
 15. The literal resurrection of the body. The physical resurrection of all people.
 16. The eternal blessedness of the saved and the eternal punishment of the lost.

Bibles are available for the members of the Church in most of the languages of the different ethnic groups represented in the Church. Most of the church members are therefore privileged to be able to study Scripture and read about the Spirit in their own language.

Furthermore, many copies of the Bible are available in the two national languages of Kenya, which the majority of Kenyans are able to speak, namely, English and Swahili. This has made it possible for many people in the Church to have access to the teachings of Scripture. This is especially important, since many people, particularly the educated, would prefer to read and study in either English or Swahili, because these two languages are used for teaching in the Kenyan schools. The versions of the Bible, which are abundantly available and used by many people in the Church are: the “New International Version” in English and “Biblia” in Kiswahili. Furthermore, English and Swahili are widely spoken and used as the medium of communication in churches located in the urban areas. The Africa Inland Church has congregations in many of the urban centres in Kenya where the English and Swahili versions of the Bible are extremely useful to the members.



The easy access to the Bible in the Church has been brought about by the success of Bible translation in Kenya. Bible translation had good results in Kenya, since the Bible has been translated into most languages spoken in Kenya. Bible translation in Kenya can be traced back to the arrival of the western Christian missionaries in the country. Mojola (1994:iii),¹¹³ an African scholar who wrote about Bible translation in Kenya, has in the recent years observed that it can be argued that Bible translation started in Kenya as early as 1844. This date marked the arrival and the subsequent translation work into Kimwita Swahili undertaken by Dr. Kraft. Mojola, however, notes that organised Bible society work was picked up much later in 1869. This, he says, was done under the auspices of the British and Foreign Bible Society in London.

Mojola has further noted that with the translation of the Bible into “Dholuo”(the Luo language), the final inter-confessional Bible with the Deutero-canonical books appeared in

¹¹³ This is a little booklet on Bible translation in Kenya. Mojola however later in 1999 published work *God Speaks in Our Own languages*, which also focus on Bible translation. This work focuses on Bible translation in East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda) and with his discussion in the earlier work constituted in it. Mojola himself is a Kenyan and of a Luo tribe. He is presently working as a translation consultant with the United Bible Societies. He is in charge of African region and based in Tanzania.

1977¹¹⁴ and was published by the Bible Society of Kenya.¹¹⁵ This translation has, therefore, been in use in the country for nearly three decades. The success of translation into Dholuo has been noted in spite of the fact that there is more than one dialect among the Luo. Mojola has rightly observed that:

Two dialects or varieties of Luo are generally recognized namely the South Nyanza variety and Nyanza variety, roughly speaking. These two varieties however posses a very high level of mutual intelligibility, a fact which has greatly facilitated the development and promotion of common literature in this language. It is nonetheless clear that South Nyanza variety has usually been favored or has more publications, and is accepted to be the more dominant of the two varieties. This can be explained simply by noting that the latter variety has more speakers and has produced more writers in the language. Moreover translations of the Bible in “Dholuo” are usually in this variety having been produced by translators who were fluent speakers or native speakers of this variety (Mojola 1994: 40).

The copy of the first produced Luo Bible was that of *Muma Maler*.¹¹⁶ Some years later, another version called, *Muma Manyien Kod Zaburi* (*New Testament and the Book of Psalms*)¹¹⁷ was translated. The *Muma Maler* version uses mainly the use of original or old Luo words which can only be understood well by those who know Dholuo (Luo) language very well. *Muma Manyien Kod Zaburi*, on the other hand, is translated with the modern use of the *Dholuo*. Again, its translation is largely based on the English version of the “New International Version.” Of the two versions, however, *Muma Maler* is still today the preferred version of many Luo Christians. Furthermore, the latter version does not constitute all the sixty-six books in the Bible used by the Protestant churches. More so, there are many more copies of *Muma Maler* available in bookstores in Kenya than seen in the case of *Muma Manyien Kod Zaburi*.

¹¹⁴ It is worth noting that the very first “Dholuo” Interconfessional Translation Bible with D.C Books appeared in 1957. The latter version referred to in our discussion therefore only became published two decades latter. The term “Interconfessional” is used to refer to the translation accepted by all the Christian Churches. That’s is by both the Roman Catholics and the Protestant believers.

¹¹⁵ See p. 41

¹¹⁶ In “Dholuo,” the word, “Muma” means “a vow.” Normally when one made a vow in a manner not acceptable to the people, he or she would be referred to as “Ogoyo Muma.” This is unacceptable practice and whenever someone did this, it is believed that misfortune will follow, either upon the person who made the vow or the person it was aimed at. On the other hand, the word, “Maler,” simply means, “clean” in Luo. Therefore, *Muma Maler* would mean, “clean vow.” The Bible is thus regarded as a book, which contains “clean vows.” The vows themselves are understood to come from Nyasaye, namely, God.

¹¹⁷ “*Muma Manyien Kod Zaburi*” is a version which only constitutes the New Testament Scriptures and the Old Testament Book of Psalms. The rest of the books of the Old Testament are not included in the version. As in the case of *Muma Maler*, the word, “Muma,” here again refers to vows. “*Muma Manyien Kod Zaburi*,” therefore, simply refers to the vows in the New Testament books as well as those found in the Book of Psalms. The vows again here are seen to come from Nyasaye, namely, God.

These versions of the Luo Bible are studied by the members along with the stipulations found in the Constitution of the Church. Copies of the Constitution, however, are only available in the Swahili and English, both languages being available in one booklet. In every congregation of the Church, at least one minister, assigned to the congregation, is expected to be able to read, understand, interpret and translate the teachings of the stipulations of the Constitutions to the rest of the leaders and members. It is also expected that a number of the elders should be acquainted with the teachings in the Constitution in order to guide the Church according to the demands of the Constitution. It is the responsibility of the leaders to study the Constitution and to teach the Church what its demands. With the aid of Scripture and that of the Constitution, the Holy Spirit's presence is revealed throughout the Church and in society.

The Holy Spirit himself is known and spoken of in church in several languages; in English, Swahili and other ethnic languages represented. Among the Swahili, the Holy Spirit is known as "Roho Mtakatifu;" among the Akamba as "Veva Mutheu;" among the Kalenjins as "Tarmiriet Tilil;" and among the Luo as "Roho Maler,"¹¹⁸ to mention a few. The manner in which the people speak of the Spirit and think of it in the Church is largely determined by the peoples' understanding of Scripture as guided by the stipulations of the "statement of faith"¹¹⁹ of the Church. There are indeed a number of stipulations in the "statement of faith" which are directly linked to the study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. These are:

Item 1 of the "statement of faith," states that the Church believes in "The Unity and Trinity of God, eternally existing in three co-equal persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." In this stipulation the identity of the Holy Spirit is clearly spelt out. The Spirit co-exists with the Father and the Son. The Church, therefore, confesses that the Spirit can be known, since his identity is revealed in Scripture. In a work published by the "Theological Advisory Group" of the Africa Inland Church (Tag 2000:19), TAG observed that the three Persons of the Trinity are essentially one in being and nature. In the economy of salvation, however, there is a distinction between the three in terms of their work in salvation. God the Father sends God the Son, while the work of the Son becomes efficacious through the power of God in the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, the concept of "Trinity" brings with it the meaning of

¹¹⁸ Though the Holy Spirit is referred to in Luo as "Rono Maler," the word "Roho" is not originally a Luo word. The interpretation of the Holy Spirit is dealt with in greater detail in chapter Four.

¹¹⁹ See full view of items of statement of faith already outlined.

“oneness.” The Trinity brings to the Church the values of unity and mutual relationship,¹²⁰ as manifested in the Triune God. In this relationship, however, it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that, that which is ordered by the Father and effected by the Son, is applied in the individual.

Furthermore, in statement 4, the Person and work of the Spirit is more clearly explained. The Church states that, “the deity and personality of God the Holy Spirit and the necessity of His work is to make the death of Christ effective to the individual sinner, granting him repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and in His ministry dwelling permanently within and working through the believer for godly life and service.” In this particular statement, not only the identity of the Spirit is clarified, but the role of the Spirit in the life of an individual is also defined. The Spirit is portrayed as the power through which repentance is realised. Since the Church members are always aware of the need of repentance in their lives, the Spirit as the power through which this repentance takes place, is ever rekindled in them.

Item 5, which relates to the inspiration and authority of Scripture, refers to the role of the Holy Spirit in the inspiration of Scripture and how he guides believers in the reading of the Bible. It states that the Church believes in: “The divine, verbal and plenary inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as originally given and their absolute and final authority in all matters of faith and conduct.” Since church members are aware that Scripture is itself the product of the work of the Spirit, they are constantly aware of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Item 8 further states that the church believes in “The necessity of the new birth as the work of God the Holy Spirit that men are saved by grace through faith, not by works.” Salvation itself is understood as the work of the Holy Spirit. As the church members think about their salvation, they are constantly reminded of the work of the Holy Spirit.

From Item 11 it is clear that the church members are aware that they are bound to Christ and to each other through the power of the Spirit. It reads as follows: “The True Church, whose Head is the Lord Jesus Christ and whose members are all regenerate persons united to Christ and to one another by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.” The bond between the believers is

¹²⁰ This is demonstrated in Item 1 of the “statement of faith.”

created through the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers are, therefore, constantly reminded of the work of the Holy Spirit when they think about this bond that exists between them.

The statement of faith does not only show that the Africa Inland Church is aware of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, but that the church understands that the Spirit plays an important role in the life of individual Christians and in the church.

Having seen how the influences of Calvin came into contact with the Luo Christian beliefs and practices, as we conclude the study of this chapter it would be important to recap some of the key issues raised in the study by way of summary. This is the objective of the study in the following section.

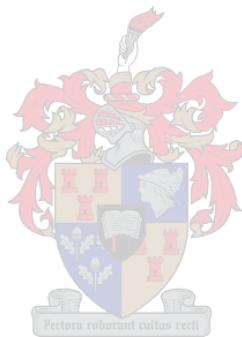
2.4 Summary: On Calvin's Influence upon the Luo

This chapter demonstrates that Calvin's influence on the study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit had a world-wide impact and continues to have influence today. It particularly shows that Calvin had an immense influence on the Christian beliefs and practices of Luo people through the work of the Africa Inland Mission in Kenya. The Mission itself became influenced by his views through the teachings and the doctrinal confessions of the Pennsylvania Bible Institute in the United States of America. The Institute itself was located in the Philadelphia area which was largely dominated by the Presbyterian and the Baptist Churches. It was through the Christian teachings and beliefs of these Churches that the Confession of the Institute came into being.

Since the Africa Inland Mission was greatly influenced by the teachings of the Institute, they adopted most of their teachings, and subsequently passed it on to the Africa Inland Church in Kenya. Since then, the Luo have been influenced by these teachings by virtue of them being part of the Church.

Calvin's legacy of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is demonstrated by the fact that the doctrinal confessions of the Pennsylvania Bible Institute, the Africa Inland Mission and the Africa Inland Church share common features, and particularly so with regard to doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The Luo of the Africa Inland Church have been greatly influenced by the teachings and beliefs of Calvin through the Africa Inland Mission.

Before, we look into detail on the nature and extent of impact of Calvin's actual views upon the Luo, it is necessary first to establish how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit, and in particular in the sanctification of individual believers since it is upon such views of Calvin's, that an assessment of the impact or the nature of his influence upon the Luo would later be based. In the following section, therefore, we focus on interpreting Calvin's views of the work of the Spirit in sanctification.



CHAPTER 3

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SANCTIFICATION ACCORDING TO CALVIN

3.1 Introduction

This chapter constitutes the main body of work in this research project. It centres on Calvin's views of the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of individual believers. The study focuses on Calvin's views of "the Christian life,"¹²¹ and specifically of "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude."¹²² It seeks to explore and determine how Calvin understood the Spirit bringing forth sanctification in "the Christian life," and more so in his understanding of the Christian life as a life of "Grace" and "Gratitude."

¹²¹ The study of the doctrine of "the Christian life" according to Calvin is already extensively explored in the work published by Ronald Wallace (1959) on *Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life*. The work was highlighted in Chapter two of this study, where it is outlined as one of those works published on Calvin through which Calvin's influences are seen to have gone further afield. The study, however, majors on the Christian life according to Calvin in general and does not therefore focus on how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of a believer. The value of this section therefore lies in the fact that it focuses on the study of the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of a believer according to Calvin as a subject which has not yet been explored in existing works.

¹²² A study of the doctrine of "the Christian life as a life of grace and gratitude" according to Calvin was introduced and highlighted in the work of Brian Gerrish (1993) on *Grace and Gratitude: The Eucharistic theology of John Calvin*. The work was highlighted in chapter two of this research project as another of those works through which Calvin's influence is seen. It is actually Gerrish who first applied the use of the phrase, "Grace" and "Gratitude," in the study of Calvin, as far as the researcher is concerned. The phrase is indeed rightly placed as it denotes a theme that features significantly in Calvin's theology. We shall explore the theme in greater detail later on in the chapter. Though Gerrish made a significant contribution, his study does not focus on the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of individual believers in the life of "Grace" and "Gratitude" according to Calvin. Instead, it focuses on how Calvin understood the Lord's Supper. It is the theme of the Lord's Supper that he relates closely to that of the life of "Grace" and "Gratitude." I quote Gerrish's own words: "I certainly wish to make my contribution to the vexed question how he understood the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. But I am even more concerned to show that the theme of *grace and gratitude*, presented in the words and actions of the Eucharist, shapes his entire theology and makes it from the beginning to the end a Eucharistic theology" (1993:vii). In sum, therefore, according to the title of the book, *Grace and Gratitude: The Eucharistic theology of John Calvin*, the message Gerrish seeks to convey is that, according to Calvin, God has demonstrated acts of grace to humanity by creating humanity and, subsequently, by effecting redemption for the purpose of reconciling humanity to himself after the fall. In turn, therefore, humanity must notice such acts, embrace them and participate in the Eucharist, which is in itself a means through which the Grace of God is attained. Through the participation believers also demonstrate gratitude to God for his work of creation and salvation.

Since even such an authoritative work as that of Gerrish does not focus on the study of the sanctifying work of the Spirit in the life of "Grace" and "Gratitude" according to Calvin, the study in this section shall bridge the gap by demonstrating how Calvin understood the Spirit to sanctify individual believers in his understanding of the Christian life as a life of "Grace" and "Gratitude."

This chapter primarily deals with a study of Calvin's views from his work in the 1559 edition of the *Institutes*. There are four editions in total of the *Institutes* written by Calvin. The editions are those of 1536, 1539, 1550 and 1559. Each edition varies somewhat in content and argument. As Calvin revised the successive editions again and again, beginning with that of 1536, he addressed differing contexts, thus adding information that he thought would be most suitable and relevant for each.¹²³ Of the four editions, the 1559 is the latest and the most comprehensive. It provides Calvin's latest thoughts on the theological treatise that he discusses in all four editions of the *Institutes*. Furthermore, it is in the 1559 edition of the *Institutes* that his views on the Spirit are most clearly seen, compared to the earlier editions.

¹²³ The first edition of the *Institutes*, which appeared in 1536, largely contains Calvin's address in the context of France. As Walker (1918:473) has demonstrated, it was the incident of the persecution of the French Protestants that compelled him to begin writing the work. Walker narrates "Francis I was coqueting for the aid of German Protestants against Charles V, and so, to explain French persecutions, he issued a public letter in February 1535, charging French Protestantism with anarchistic aims such as no government could bear. Calvin felt that he must defend his slandered fellow believers. He therefore hurriedly completed the work begun in Angoulême, and published it in March 1536 as his *Institutes of Christian Religion*, prefacing it with a letter to the French King." The successive editions of 1539 and 1550 constitute additional information concerning his reactions and experience while in Geneva, to which he later moved from France. The last edition of 1559 also constitutes Calvin's thoughts and experience while in Geneva. It is important to note that the edition was completed while Calvin was already ailing from illness and was nearing the end of his life as he died shortly after, in 1564. Calvin, however, put the best of his thoughts in this edition; hence it is the edition that presents his latest thoughts on theology and is the most comprehensive edition of the four. The copy of the *Institutes* applied for use in this research project is the English translation by Henry Beveridge. The translation is from the Latin edition of 1559. The version is presented in a very simple and clear manner and, hence, can be read and understood easily by any serious Calvin scholar.

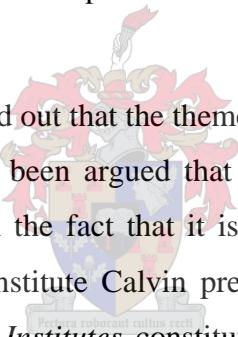
The fact that the 1559 edition of the *Institutes* contains Calvin's latest thoughts and is also the most comprehensive and influential of the four is also supported by the number of works that have been published on studies of Calvin. Such works include:

The work of Francois Wendel (1963) on *The Origin and Development of His Religious Thought*. Wendel has given a good and excellent outline on the writing and development of each of the editions, beginning with that of 1536 and continuing to the 1539, 1550 and 1559 editions; hence, he demonstrated that the 1559 edition indeed stands above the earlier ones. Wendel also noted that Calvin's ill health was one of the factors that encouraged him to put his best into the work. In his words: "Calvin was already suffering severely, and in fear of his approaching end he had determined to produce a new and definitive version of his book. With the aid of his brother Antoine and some friends he set to work, and, in spite of atrocious pain, he delved into the previous editions, adding a little here and a new development there, suppressing passages which seemed to him ill-expressed and unclear" (1963:118). For further details on the development of the *Institutes*, see pages 111 to 149 of Wendel's work, and the work by R C Gamble (1992) on *Influences upon Calvin and discussion of the 1559 edition*. Also see particularly p. 118 of the recent work by Richard A. Muller (2000) on *The Unaccommodated Calvin*, and work published earlier by Ford Lewis Battles & J. Walchenbach (1980) on *Analysis of the Institutes of the Christian Religion of John Calvin* would be useful in studying about the works of Calvin in general including the *Institutes*.

In summary, therefore, it must be pointed out that, though the 1559 edition of the *Institutes* stands out above the earlier editions, Calvin's work on the *Institutes* in general is outstanding and is the most authoritative work ever produced on the study of the Christian Religion and a work which Calvin himself valued highly. One of the most influential Calvin scholars of the last few decades, V. E. d'Assonville (1968:2), in his work, *John Knox and the Institutes of Calvin*, alluded to this when he noted that, "The whole Calvinism is in the *Institutes* – a work of capital importance, the work most valued by Calvin, who spent all his life revising and reshaping as well as enriching it. All his other works – commentaries, controversies, smaller dogmatic and moral treatises – are related to it like advanced redoubts meant to defend the heart of the place against the enemy." Furthermore, John Leith (1977:122), a renowned scholar of Calvin as well, also affirmed this idea when he noted that, "Calvin's *Institutes of Christian Religion* (First edition of 1536-1559 edition) is the most influential statement of the Reformed Theology in particular and of Protestant Theology in general."

The essential place and role of the Spirit as presented in the *Institutes* has been noted very early in the scholarship on Calvin. Benjamin Warfield,¹²⁴ as early as 1906, in an article entitled, “John Calvin the Theologian,” observed that in Calvin’s *Institutes*, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was central in Calvin’s thought. He noted that:

The *Institutes* is, accordingly, just a treatise on the work of God the Holy Spirit in making God savingly known to sinful man, and bringing sinful man into Holy Communion with God. Therefore it opens with the great doctrine of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti* – another of the fruitful doctrines which the Church owes to Calvin – in which he teaches that the only vital and vitalizing knowledge of God which the sinner can attain, is communicated to him through the inner working of the Spirit of God in his heart, without which there is spread in vain before his eyes the revelation of God’s glory in the heavens, and the revelation of His grace in the perspicuous pages of the Word. And therefore, it centers on the great doctrine of Regeneration – the term is broad enough in Calvin to cover the whole process of the subjective recovery of man to God – in which he teaches that the only power which can ever awake in a sinful heart the motions of a living faith, is the power of this same Spirit of God moving with a truly creative operation on the deadened soul. (Warfield 1906:4)¹²⁵



Furthermore, even as Warfield pointed out that the theme of the Spirit is central in the work of the *Institutes*, he also noted: “it has been argued that the main fault of the *Institutes* as a treatise in theological science lies in the fact that it is too subjective in character. That its effect, at all events, has been to constitute Calvin pre-eminently as ‘the theologian of the Spirit.’”¹²⁶ That is to say, that the *Institutes* constitute Calvin’s views on doctrine to the extent that the work by itself presents Calvin as “the theologian of the Holy Spirit.”

The magnitude of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Calvin’s work in the *Institutes* therefore speaks for itself. The theme features significantly in all the books that constitute the work. The *Institutes* constitute four books in total, namely Book One, Book Two, Book Three and Book Four.¹²⁷ It is impossible to study any of the books without coming across the theme of

¹²⁴The article is available online at http://www.markers.com/ink/bbwcalvin_1.htm (this article has already been cited elsewhere in the study).

¹²⁵ The quotation is from the article written by Benjamin Warfield. The article appeared in a booklet published by the Presbyterian Board of Education in 1909.

¹²⁶ Ibid p.3

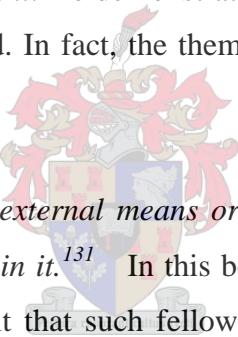
¹²⁷ Although the Books of the *Institutes* are described as Book First, Book Second, Book Third and Book Fourth in Calvin’s work, we shall, for the purposes of this research project, use the description of Book One, Book Two, Book Three and Book Four for the respective books of the *Institutes*. This is due to the fact that the latter form of description is more in keeping with the usage in current studies on Calvin in the English language.

the Spirit. This theme runs through each and every book and occurs almost in every chapter of Calvin's discussion in the work.

In Book One, Calvin discusses the *Knowledge of God the Creator*.¹²⁸ From his discussion of the subject in the book, Calvin demonstrates that the Spirit is one with God. As God creates, the Spirit also participates in God's work of creation.¹²⁹

In Book Two, Calvin discusses *the Knowledge of God the Redeemer, in Christ, as first manifested to the fathers under the Law, and thereafter to us under the Gospel*. In this book Calvin portrays the *Redeemer* as coming from God the Creator who is also One with the Spirit. He also sees the Spirit as coming from the Person of the Redeemer (Jesus Christ) himself.¹³⁰

In Book Three, Calvin discusses *the mode of obtaining the grace of Christ; the benefits it confers, and the effects resulting from it*. He demonstrates that the Spirit is the power through which the grace of Christ is obtained. In fact, the theme of the Spirit itself features large in this book.



In Book Four, Calvin discusses *the external means or helps by which God allures us into fellowship with Christ, and keeps us in it*.¹³¹ In this book he vividly demonstrates that it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that such fellowship is enhanced and individuals are kept.

As shown, all four books of the *Institutes* therefore concern the workings of the Holy Spirit. In this research project the study of the Spirit in relation to the sanctification of individual believers, however, begins from Book Three of the *Institutes*. This is due to the fact that it is in Book Three that Calvin discusses *the mode of obtaining the grace of Christ*. It is in this book that Calvin begins to express his views on the Christian life and the views that concern

¹²⁸ Calvin's views on *the knowledge of God* were extensively discussed in the work edited by G.E. Duffield (1966) on *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's theology*. The work is useful in interpreting how Calvin understood God.

¹²⁹ Since the concern here is not to deal with the work of God and the Spirit in creation, we shall not explore the subject further in this section. The subject will be covered in greater detail later in the study, though, again, it is not the object of this research project.

¹³⁰ See Section (3.2) for further details on the relationship which exists within the Trinity.

¹³¹ The manner in which the subject of each of the books (Book One, Two, Three and Four) is ordered is exactly the manner in which the subjects are described in the *Institutes* and the manner in which Calvin himself described the subject of each Book.

the work of the Spirit in the individual believer. The study of the book demonstrates that the Spirit Himself is the efficacy or power through which the *grace of Christ* is obtained by individuals.

The term, “Grace,” which is the *key* word used by Calvin in the description of the subject he addresses in Book Three, denotes an “act” of God received by humanity and the “act” which humanity did not or does not merit. Calvin here is actually referring to the “saving” work of God, and the work accomplished in Christ, through which humanity is being reconciled to God. The discussion in the book, therefore, focuses on how such “acts” of grace begin to take root in an individual and how the life of the individual subsequently takes shape from the reality of experiencing such “life” and “acts” of grace. It is from Book Three, therefore, that the whole story of how the grace of Christ is attained begins.

Furthermore, Calvin’s views on how the “grace” of Christ is attained does not end with his discussion in Book Three but continues through to Book Four.¹³² In Book Four, Calvin demonstrates more vividly the practical aspects of the views discussed in Book Three. The aspects are those that ought to be observed by every individual who has experienced the “acts” of grace discussed in Book Three. Though the study of this research project begins from Book Three, it must be noted that Calvin’s views on the Spirit, and particularly the *mode of obtaining the grace of Christ*, run through Book Three to Book Four. The study in this research project, however, cannot begin from Book Four because Book Four is the continuation of Book Three. Its theme begins in Book Three. Since the two books are therefore closely related to each other in the manner mentioned, justice cannot be done to the study of any of the books without considering a study of the other, and in the order in which Calvin developed and arranged the books.

Furthermore, as the study of each of the two books is explored in close relation to that of the other, it must be pointed out that the themes of Book One and Book Two also concern the perspective of this research project, though to a limited extent, compared to those of books Three and Four.

¹³² Hesselink (1997:182) rightly pointed out that “in many ways the theme of book III and book IV of the *Institutes* is the work of the Holy Spirit: in book III in relation to faith or regeneration, in book IV in relation to the church and the sacraments.” The work of the Holy Spirit that he refers to here, concerns the “acts” of grace, hence affirming that the themes of the two books relate closely to each other.

To begin with, the study of Book One constitutes a discussion on the “knowledge of God” and that of “Humanity.” In the introductory section of the book, Calvin states that:

Our wisdom in so far as it ought to be deemed true and solid wisdom, consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But as these are connected together by many ties, it is not easy to determine which of the two precedes, and gives birth to the other. For, in the first place, no man can survey himself without forthwith turning his thoughts towards the God in whom he lives and moves; because it is perfectly obvious, that the endowments which we possess cannot possibly be from ourselves; nay, that our very being is nothing other than subsistence in God alone (*Inst. 1:1:1*).

The topic of the “knowledge of God” and the “knowledge of ourselves” cited above is not something unrelated to the study of Book Three. Indeed the subjects concern the study of the book. This is in view of the fact that the introductory sections of Book Three, particularly when Calvin discusses how “faith” comes to be, relates to the subjects of discussion in Book One.

As we shall see later in the study, “faith” for Calvin is an activity towards Christ. The activity of faith, according to Calvin’s interpretation, therefore, directly concerns the “knowledge of God” as Christ does not exist on his own but exists as One with God. Furthermore, the process through which faith is realised also concerns the matter of the “knowledge of ourselves” as it calls for knowledge of the “fallen state” of humanity on the side of the individual in whom faith comes to be. The individual must have the knowledge of his or her sinful state when such a person demonstrates faith in Christ.

It is therefore in such a manner that the theme of Book One relates particularly to that of Book Three. In spite of such a relationship, study in this research project must still begin from Book Three; since, firstly, the theme of Book One does not directly concern the subject of the Christian life; and, secondly, because it is actually in Book Three that Calvin begins to present his views on the *mode in which the grace of Christ is obtained*.

Furthermore, the study of Book Two also relates to that of Book Three and Book Four. This is in the sense that the subject of the *knowledge of God the Redeemer in Christ*, which is discussed in the book, constitutes the foundation upon which the acts of grace discussed in Books Three and Four are built. Without the person and work of Christ, the “acts” of grace discussed in Books Three and Four cannot exist, since Christ is the source from which all such “acts” spring. In spite of such a foundation as established in Book Two, however, the

study in the research project must still pick up from Book Three, since it is actually in this book that Calvin's views on the life of grace in an individual begin to be voiced.

As we, therefore, begin the actual study of Calvin's views of the Spirit in this chapter; it is necessary first to seek to determine how Calvin understood the identity of the "Holy Spirit." This is particularly necessary due to the fact that the "Holy Spirit" is the theme which forms the backbone of this research project. It is the work of the Holy Spirit itself which is being explored. How, then, did Calvin understand and define the "Holy Spirit"? Did Calvin have any precise knowledge of "who" or "what" the Spirit is?

3.2 The Spirit of the Triune God

As the title of the study of this section suggests, the "Holy Spirit" according to Calvin is the "Spirit of the Triune God." He believed that God is Three-in-One with the Spirit being the Third Person of the Trinity.¹³³

¹³³ A number of works already published on Calvin have also alluded to the fact that Calvin understood the Holy Spirit as the "Spirit of the Triune God." These works include:

The work by Vander Linde (1943) introduced in the study of Chapter two of this research project. Vander Linde affirms that the foundation or the basis upon which the Spirit, according to Calvin, is known is that of the "Trinity." That is, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are One. From the relationship that exists between the Three, the idea of the Spirit as the "Spirit of the Triune God" therefore clearly comes out into view as the Spirit does not exist on its own but with and of the Father and the Son. Furthermore, in Vander Linde's summary of the work of the Spirit in creation, it goes without saying that the Spirit is involved in the work of creation with God the Father and God the Son.

In the work of Werner Krusche (1957), also already cited in this study in chapter two, Krusche began his discussion by demonstrating that the Spirit is the "effective power in divine actions," hence closely relating the Spirit and the actions of the divine God. Just the fact that the Spirit is the "effective power" in divine actions demonstrate that the Spirit is the "Spirit of the divine God." More so, in the section where Krusche discusses the subject of the 'Holy Spirit and the Church,' he touches on the fact of "Filioque" and the Incarnation, hence, affirming that the Spirit, according to Calvin, comes from the Father and also from the Son. In Krusche's study, it is therefore evidenced that the "Spirit is indeed the Spirit of the Triune God."

There is more in the work of Philip Butin (1995). Butin's discussion throughout the work demonstrates more vividly the relationship of the Spirit to God the Father and God the Son. The theme of the "Trinity" by itself dominates Butin's discussion. In summary, Butin endeavours to show that, according to Calvin, the Holy Spirit is the point of contact between the Divine and Humanity. It therefore vividly comes out in his work that the Spirit is the "Spirit of the Triune God." See particularly page 76, where he discusses Human response, *The Trinity as the dynamic of God's Relationship with Humanity*. In the discussion he points to a close relationship between the Three, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, but more so, demonstrates that the Holy Spirit is the means and point of contact between the Divine and human; hence again portraying the Spirit as the "Spirit of the Triune God."

In the work of John Hesselink (1997:178), there is reference to the same idea when Hesselink defines the Spirit as one within the body of the Trinity. In the section discussing the subject of "who is the Holy Spirit?" Hesselink states that, according to Calvin, "the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, equal in the deity

Though Calvin taught that the Holy Spirit is the “Spirit of the Triune God,” he dealt carefully with the unity and distinction within the Trinity. The term, “Trinity,” refers to our understanding of God being the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the One true God. The term precisely denotes unity within the Triune God.

The doctrine of Trinity itself is a huge subject that requires a study of its own. Since the object of our study in this section is not to deal with the Trinity as such, but only to interpret Calvin’s understanding of the Holy Spirit, so as to interpret how the Spirit Himself brings forth sanctification in individual believers, we shall only touch on the subject of Trinity.

From what point then do we understand Calvin’s thoughts on the place of the Spirit within the Trinity according to the *Institutes*? His thoughts first come into view when Calvin states: “But there is another special mark by which [God] designates himself, for the purpose of giving a more intimate knowledge of his nature. While he proclaims his unity, he distinctly sets it before us in three persons.” (*Inst. 1:13:2*). When God, therefore, chose to demonstrate the intimate knowledge of his divine nature, he did it in such a way that the Three Persons within the body of Trinity are revealed. Calvin believed that the idea of the existence of the Three Persons of the Trinity must be upheld if a proper knowledge of God is to be ascertained. In Calvin’s own words: “These (Three Persons) we must hold, unless the bare and empty name of Deity merely is a flutter in our brain without any genuine knowledge” (*Inst.1: 13:2*). Calvin defines what he means by “Person.” He states that by *Person*, he means that “in the Divine essence, –a subsistence which, while related to the other two, is distinguished from them by incommunicable properties” (*Inst.1: 13:6*).

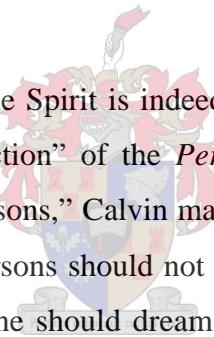
with the Father and the Son.” The idea of the “Spirit as the Spirit of the Triune God” therefore also comes out in Hesselink’s work.

Further, in a recent work undertaken for doctoral studies by James B. Krohn (2000), discussion on the place of the Spirit within the body of the Trinity dominate the work, demonstrating that the Spirit is the Spirit of the Triune God.”

In spite of the fact that all the above- mentioned works demonstrate that the “Spirit is the Spirit of the Triune God,” no work actually deals with the subject of the Spirit himself to show “who” the Spirit is and demonstrate his relationship to God the Father and God the Son from Calvin’s work of the Institutes. The study of this section therefore seeks to demonstrate precisely “who” the Spirit is from Calvin’s work of the *Institutes* before interpreting how Calvin understood the Spirit to bring forth sanctification in individual believers.

Calvin used the term, “subsistence,” to demonstrate that though the Three Persons are of the same essence, and are connected with the essence by an indissoluble tie, being incapable of separation, the Three Persons have special marks through which each is distinguished. He goes on to say that when God is mentioned simply and indefinitely, the name belongs not less to the Son and the Spirit than to the Father. But whenever the Father is compared with the Son, the peculiar property of each distinguishes the one from the other (*Inst. 1.13.6*). In Calvin’s teaching on such a distinction, the identity of each of the constituted bodies within the Trinity comes into view hence that of the *Person* of the Holy Spirit is also seen.

Furthermore, his idea of the Spirit as a *Person* is also reaffirmed by the fact that, on every occasion in the *Institutes* where he does not refer to the Spirit by the term “Holy Spirit” or just “Spirit,” he instead applies the use of the third personal pronoun formula, “He,” to refer to the “Holy Spirit.” The formula in the English translation was applied to humans in the time of Calvin and is used in this manner in our own time, so that the Holy Spirit would be referred to and understood as a *Person*.



More so, he also demonstrates that the Spirit is indeed a “Person” by carefully dealing with the issue of “unity” and the “distinction” of the *Persons* existing within the body of the Trinity. On the “unity” of the “Persons,” Calvin maintains that the Three are One and that the applied terminology of person/persons should not be used to refer to each as existing on its own. Calvin asserts: “Lest any one should dream of a three-fold God, or think that the simple essence is divided by the three Persons, we must here seek a brief and easy definition which may effectually guard us from error” (*Inst. 1:13:2*). Calvin here is quick to warn against taking the definition of the terms too far, as was the case with those who were merely seeking the philosophical definition of terms in his time.

In an attempt to argue his case against those who thought of the term as merely of human invention, Calvin uses the Scripture to defend his position. He pointed out, for example, “when the apostle calls the Son of God ‘the express image of his person,’ he undoubtedly does assign to the Father some subsistence in which he differs from the Son” (*Inst. 1: 13:2*). For Calvin, therefore, the Scripture was the basis for his argument for the use of the term “Persons” within the Trinity while the unity between the persons also still exists.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Hendrikus Berkhof (1946:113) alluded to the same idea when he noted “Calvin derides those who speak of the Trinity in analogy of ‘Three men.’” Berkhof therefore concurred with the fact that Calvin did not apply the use of the term Persons to refer to three separate Gods within One.

He clarified his argument on such unity by pointing out that it is simple and undivided. The Father, though distinguished by his own peculiar properties, has expressed himself wholly in the Son. He has rendered his person (hypostasis) in him. On the other hand, the Son has become the brightness of his glory. In the same manner, the Spirit is both God though he is of a separate subsistence (*Inst. 1:13:2*).

As Calvin taught about the unity of the Three Persons, he also demonstrated that there is a unique distinction that exists between the Three Persons. His views on the distinction between the Three Persons are more clearly seen in his discussion on sections seventeen and eighteen of Chapter thirteen of Book One of the *Institutes*. It is important to note that when he was teaching about the “distinction” that exists between the Three Persons, Calvin did not merely use his own thoughts but relied on the Scripture. In fact, he spoke of Scripture itself as showing the direction concerning how such a distinction exists when he notes: “On the other hand, the Scriptures demonstrate that there is some distinction between the Father and the Word, the Word and the Spirit” (*Inst. 1:13:17*). For Calvin, Scripture was the foundation upon which his interpretation of the Trinity was based. Even while he taught and emphasised that the distinction between the Three Persons exists, he did not allow the fact of the unity between the Persons to escape his mind. This is evidenced by the fact that he comes back to the subject of the Unity while he teaches on the distinction between the persons when he exhorts his audience: “Let us beware of imagining such a Trinity of Persons as will distract our thoughts, instead of bringing them instantly back to unity” (*Inst. 1:13:17*). For Calvin, therefore, the distinction that exists between the persons should not be perceived to mar the unity between the persons.

Further, on the distinction itself, Calvin pointed out that “the words, Father, Son and the Holy Spirit certainly indicate a real distinction, not allowing us to suppose that they are merely epithets by which God is variously designated from his works. Still they indicate distinction only, not division”¹³⁵ (*Inst. 1:13:17*). For Calvin, the different words used to describe the constituents within the body of Trinity were therefore the mark that Scripture itself authenticates the existence of the Three Persons within the Trinity. Calvin also supported his argument by pointing out that the matter of distinction between the Three Persons comes out clearly in the words of Christ himself. He noted that:

¹³⁵ Calvin’s use of the term “distinction” and not “division” in the section also points to the fact that the matter of unity within the Trinity was indeed crucial to him.

Christ distinguishes the Father from himself, when he says that there is another who bears witness of him (John v. 32; vii. 16). To the same effect is it elsewhere said, that the Father made all things by the Word. This could not be, if he were not in some respect distinct from him. Besides, it was not the Father that descended to the earth, but he who came forth from the Father; nor was it the Father that died and rose again, but he whom the Father had sent (*Inst. 1:13:17*).

Furthermore, the place of Christ as the visible mark of distinction of persons existing within the Trinity is also noted when Calvin pointed out that “Christ intimates the distinction between the Holy Spirit and the Father, when he says that the Spirit proceedeth from the Father, and between the Holy Spirit and himself, when he speaks of him as another, as he does when he declares that he will send another Comforter” (*Inst. 1:13:17*). Besides Christ being the mark of such distinction, therefore, his words also make it plain that the distinction exists. More so, Calvin also sees a distinction in the order in which the Three Persons of the Trinity function. He observed that:

To the Father is attributed the beginning of action, the fountain and source of all things; to the Son, wisdom, counsel, and arrangement in action, while the energy and efficacy of action is assigned to the Spirit. Moreover, though the eternity of the Father is also the eternity of the Son and Spirit, since God never could be without his own wisdom and energy; and though in eternity there can be no room for first or last, still the distinction of order is not unmeaning or superfluous, the Father being considered the first, next the Son from him, and then the Spirit from both (*Inst. 1:13:18*).

Immediately upon establishing such marks of distinction, since Calvin did not allow the idea of the unity of the Three Persons to escape his mind, he reminds his audience once again of the unity when he states that “this distinction is so far from interfering with the most perfect unity of God, that the Son may thereby be proved to be one God with the Father, in as much as he constitutes one Spirit with him, and that the Spirit is not different from the Father and the Son, in as much as he is the Spirit of the Father and the Son” (*Inst. 1:13:19*). Every reader must therefore know that the distinction between the Three Persons of the Trinity does not mean division within the body of the Trinity.

But more so, in Calvin’s interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity, his primary concern was not to engage in philosophical debates merely, but much more with practical Christian living,¹³⁶ so that, for him, the practical aspect of understanding God was a priority.

¹³⁶ John Hesselink (1997:178) rightly alluded to the same idea when he noted, “Calvin’s real concern here, as elsewhere, is not theological abstraction but practical Christian living.”

Furthermore, Calvin was also cautious about straying from the traditions of his time. He understood the traditions of the time very well and sought to interpret doctrine in line with these traditions. This is evidenced by the fact that he noted, while responding to Tertullian's definition of the term, "Trinity," that he would not have a problem with Tertullian's definition as long as it was well understood in its rightful place. Tertullian had observed that "there [was] in God a certain arrangement or economy, which [made] no change on the unity of the essence" (*Inst.1.13.6*). Calvin's understanding of the unity and distinction seen within the body of the Trinity was, therefore, not something that was out of context with the tradition of his time.

Calvin's understanding of the unity and the distinction that exist within the body of the Trinity points to his understanding of the Spirit as a person. According to Calvin, the Spirit was not merely a force but a person who constituted an important position within the Godhead. However, as far as the Spirit's function within the Godhead is concerned, with energy and efficacy of action attributed to the Spirit, Calvin saw the Spirit's function as a power and force that creates and sustains. Such is expressed when he noted of the Spirit, "... his being diffused over all space, sustaining, invigorating, and quickening all things, both in heaven and on earth. The mere fact of him not being circumscribed by any limits raises him above the rank of creatures, while his transfusing vigour into all things, breathing into them being, life, and motion, is plainly divine (*Inst.1.13.14*). He further made his argument on the same section even stronger by pointing out that the Scripture affirms that the Spirit is the power who brings forth regeneration by an intrinsic energy through which the future immortality is guaranteed. It is through such a function of the Spirit as power and force that Calvin believed the Spirit brought forth sanctification. How then did he understand the role of the Spirit in bringing forth sanctification in the individual believers? Before we answer that question, it is necessary to look briefly at how Calvin relates the themes of the Spirit and sanctification in his arguments from the *Institutes*. That is therefore the focus of the study in the following section.

3.3 The Spirit and Sanctification

This section of the study demonstrates that the themes of the "Holy Spirit" and that of "Sanctification" are closely related in Calvin's discussions in the *Institutes*. Moreover, the

two themes are prominent throughout the *Institutes*.¹³⁷ Though Calvin also addresses the subject of the Spirit by itself, and also how the Spirit relates to other aspects of Christian Religion, in his study of sanctification, the Spirit is prominent as the Spirit is the Power through which sanctification is realized. Sanctification itself, according to Calvin, is a process that concerned the renewal of believers into the Image of God. Calvin taught that believers experience an inward change as they are transformed into the image of God.

The “Spirit of the Triune God” (see. section 3.2), according to Calvin, is the Power through which such transformation takes place. The work of God the Father, as ordered through the Son, is effected in sanctification through the person of the Holy Spirit.¹³⁸ The place of the Three Persons in Calvin’s thoughts on sanctification is also seen when he pointed out that “the Spirit is called the Spirit of Christ, not only inasmuch as the eternal Word of God is with the Father united with the Spirit, but also in respect of his office of Mediator; because, had he not been endued with the energy of the Spirit, he had come to us in vain” (*Inst. 3:1:2*). The Spirit, therefore, functions in sanctification with God the Father and God the Son. More so, when Calvin noted that the Spirit “quickens and cherishes us, not merely by the general energy which is seen in the human race, as well as other animals, but because he is the seed and root of heavenly life in us” (*Inst.3.1.2*), he also alluded to the idea that the Spirit is not just an ordinary power but a power of heavenly origin.¹³⁹ Being of heavenly origin, he therefore also becomes the root of heavenly life in us in the sense that it is through his power that the heavenly life is established in us. Without the power of the Spirit, sanctification cannot take place in us; hence, the heavenly life cannot be planted or grown in us either.

¹³⁷ Though the theme of the Holy Spirit and sanctification largely constitutes Calvin’s discussion in the *Institutes*, it must be pointed out that the themes are also seen in the other works written by Calvin. In his commentaries, for example, and particularly in the books on the New Testament in which Scripture exhorts on practical Christian living, particularly with regard to the work of the Holy Spirit, the themes feature largely. For example, in his commentary on the book of John (C.C.17), the theme is seen to feature in his comments on Christ’s prayer when Christ prayed to the Father to “sanctify” his disciples. The “Sanctification” he commented on, according to him, is not an activity that comes forth without the efficacy of the Holy Spirit.

¹³⁸ The theme closely relates to Butin’s (1995:80) discussion on ‘The Spirit: “The Way We Receive the Grace of Christ”.’ In the relevant section, Butin noted that ‘Calvin regards the most profound and adequate explanation of this requisite union of believers with Christ to consist in the recognition that “the secret efficacy of the Spirit, by which we come to enjoy Christ and all his benefits”.’ Though Butin’s primary concern was to show that we receive those benefits which the Father bestowed on his Son through the power of the Spirit, who is the bond of union between believers and Christ, his discussion also pointed to the fact that the Spirit, while being the efficacy and power in the individual believers, also closely related to God the Father, and God the Son, hence, being “the Spirit of the Triune God.”

¹³⁹ Being one with God the Father and God the Son.

As we shall see later in detail in the study of this chapter, Calvin believed that the process of sanctification began from the first point of contact¹⁴⁰ of the Spirit with the individual. From that first point of contact, the process of renewal into the image of God continues throughout the lifetime of an individual. As the process continues, it affects all aspects of the Christian life. There is no part of the Christian life that is not concerned in sanctification.

Furthermore, Calvin believed that the significance of the process of sanctification lies in the fact that those chosen by God are continually “separated” from the world through this process. Calvin brought out this idea more vividly when he noted that it is worthy to “remember that Christ came provided with the Holy Spirit after a peculiar manner –namely, that he might separate us from the world, and unite us in eternal hope of an inheritance” (*Inst. 3. 1.2*). The “separation” which Calvin refers to here is a lifetime process of separation. Once begun, it does not end, until the point of physical death.

For Calvin, the theme of sanctification of individuals was indeed crucial. He himself taught and emphasized the work of the Spirit in the individual believer.¹⁴¹ It is from this emphasis on the work of the Spirit in the individual believer that all his teachings on sanctification arose and were developed. He believed that the efficacy of the Holy Spirit worked from within the individual believer. This is not to say, however, that he only taught about the work of the Spirit in the individual believer, for he also taught about the work of the Spirit in creation and in Church. Since the latter dimensions do not constitute the focus of our study, we will demonstrate briefly how he understood the work of the Spirit in creation and in the Church.

With regard to the work of the Spirit in creation, Calvin believed that the Spirit worked with God the Father in creation. God the Father did not create the heavens and the earth by himself or only with God the Son, but also with God the Holy Spirit. Besides the Spirit participating in the work of creation, Calvin believed that the Spirit is the Power of God involved in the

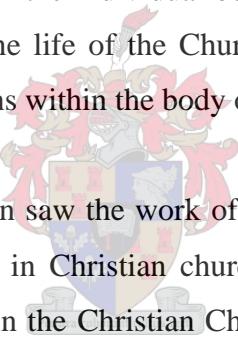
¹⁴⁰ In the tradition from which the researcher comes, that is, according to the doctrinal teaching of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya and as already demonstrated in the study of chapter Two, such a point of contact is referred to as the “Baptism of the Holy Spirit.”

¹⁴¹ The trend to emphasise the work of the Spirit in the individual believer was not something that began with Calvin. It was a characteristic seen among the early church fathers as well. The early church fathers such us Augustine of Hippo, Martin Luther, and Ulrich Zwingli all emphasised the work of the Spirit in the individual believer.

preservation of creation. The Spirit continues to preserve creation for the purpose of maintaining it to the expectation of God.¹⁴²

Calvin also taught about the work of the Spirit in the Church.¹⁴³ He believed that the Spirit is the Power present and working in the life of the Church. Such work of the Spirit, according to Calvin, took place particularly through the Word and Sacraments.¹⁴⁴

Thus Calvin taught the work of the Spirit in three dimensions: in creation, the individual believer, and in the Church.¹⁴⁵ Calvin's teaching on the work of the Spirit in these three dimensions reaffirms how Calvin understood "who" the Holy Spirit is. In his teaching on the work of the Spirit in creation, he believes that the Spirit functions with God the Father and God the Son. In his teaching of the work of the Spirit in the individual believer, he believed that the Spirit of the Father is incarnated in the Son, Jesus Christ. More so, he also believed that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ with Christ himself being the person from whom the Spirit comes to sanctify the life of the individual believer. In the life of the Church, the Spirit comes from Christ to effect the life of the Church. The Spirit functions in the three dimensions and with the Three Persons within the body of Trinity.



The three dimensions in which Calvin saw the work of the Spirit taking place has become a subject that has sparked off debates in Christian churches. This debate has led to various divisions among the Churches. Within the Christian Churches, we have the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Churches. Each of these Churches either teaches or emphasizes the work of the Spirit in one of the dimensions or the other. While the Roman Catholic Church

¹⁴² The theme of the work of the Spirit in creation is extensively dealt with in the work of Vander Linde (1943). An outline of this work and particularly on the focus of his studies is presented in the introductory sections of Chapter two of this research project. A study by Werner Krusche (1957) covered the work of the Spirit in the "preservation of human society." See particularly the section where he deals with the subject of *The gifts of the Spirit for the preservation of the human society*.

¹⁴³ The work of R. Wallace (1959) already cited in the study and also as already explained, dealt with a study on Calvin's views on sanctification through the church. Wallace pointed out that Calvin also taught that participation in the life of the church was crucial for the sanctification of individual believers. See pp. 195 to 243.

¹⁴⁴ Wallace (1982) also focuses on the study of "the Word" and "Sacrament" according to Calvin and the constitutive role of the Spirit in the church through such elements is also discussed.

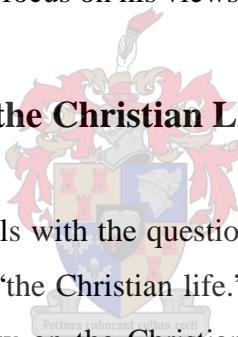
¹⁴⁵ The manner, in which Calvin's views are developed in the *Institutes*, is actually the order in which the themes on the work of the Spirit are developed. Firstly, the work of the Spirit in Creation is largely dealt with in Book One and part of Book Two. Secondly, the work of the Spirit in the individual believer, which relates to Book Two (which concerns the position and work of the Person of Jesus Christ) begins from Book Three. Thirdly, the work of the Spirit in the church, though begins in Book Three, is largely developed in Book Four.

emphasizes the work of the Spirit in the Church, particularly in the sacraments,¹⁴⁶ the Protestant Churches emphasize the work of the Spirit in the individual believer.

Furthermore, within the Protestant Churches, there also are the orthodox Churches and the Charismatic Churches with differing emphases on the teaching of the work of the Holy Spirit. While the orthodox Churches teach and emphasise the work of the Spirit in sanctification, the charismatics emphasise the work of the Spirit in the gifts of the Spirit. John Calvin himself is among the early Church fathers through which the orthodox tradition developed. That is indeed why his teachings and emphasis of the work of the Spirit is on sanctification; even though such characteristics and trends of his teaching, as already pointed out, arise from his teaching on the work of the Spirit in the individual believer.

Since Calvin's views on the Spirit arise from the work of the Spirit in the individual believer, his views of the Spirit in sanctification begin with the work of the Spirit in the Christian life. In the following section we therefore focus on his views of sanctification in the Christian life.

3.4 On Sanctification and “the Christian Life”



This section of the present study deals with the question of how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of “the Christian life.”¹⁴⁷ As indicated in the introductory section of this chapter, Calvin's view on the Christian life begins from Book Three of the

¹⁴⁶ Study published by H. Denzinger (1957) on *The source of Catholic dogma*, would be useful in interpreting the Roman Catholic views including their understanding of the place of the Spirit and the Church.

¹⁴⁷ Besides the work of R. Wallace (1959), which has already been cited in this study in focusing on the study of the doctrine of the Christian life according to Calvin, the other work which partially focused on the study of the doctrine is the paper entitled *Governed and Guided by the Holy Spirit, A key Issue in Calvin's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* presented by John Hesselink at a Colloquium on Calvin studies at Davidson College and Davidson College Presbyterian Church, Davidson, North Carolina, on January 19 and 20, 1990. Neither of the works, however, offers an extensive discussion on the place of the work of the Spirit in the Christian life according to Calvin. As already outlined in the study, the work of Wallace only addresses the subject of the Christian life according to Calvin in general. The paper by Hesselink, though it focuses on the study of the doctrine of the work of the Spirit in the Christian life, only addresses one aspect of this, namely the work of the Spirit in Guiding and Governing the Christian life. The study of this section seeks to go beyond the objective of the mentioned works and to focus on exactly how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of the Christian life.

Institutes where Calvin depicted “the Christian life” as a life that is not static, but one sanctified over time through the power of the Spirit.

It is significant to note that, though Calvin specifically addresses the subject of the Christian life in chapters Six through Ten of Book Three of the *Institutes*, his ideas on the Christian life begin to appear at the beginning of Book Three and run through to Book Four of the *Institutes*. It is therefore from within the two books that his views on the sanctification of the Christian life are also expressed. In order to clearly interpret his views therefore, it is important to explore how Calvin understood each individual subject he discusses from both books that relate to the work of the Spirit in the Christian life.

The first subject that comes into view is that of the relationship between the work of the Spirit and faith. How did he interpret the work of the Spirit in relation to faith in the Christian life? Furthermore, how did he understand the role of the Spirit in bringing forth sanctification in such a relationship? These are the questions to be explored and answered in the following section.

3.4.1 The Spirit and Faith



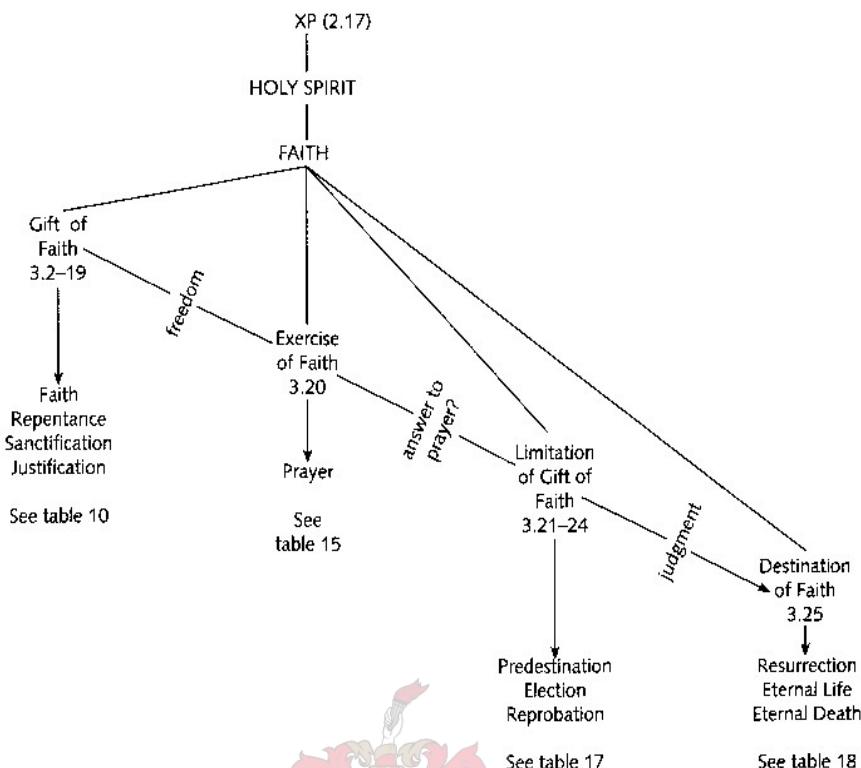
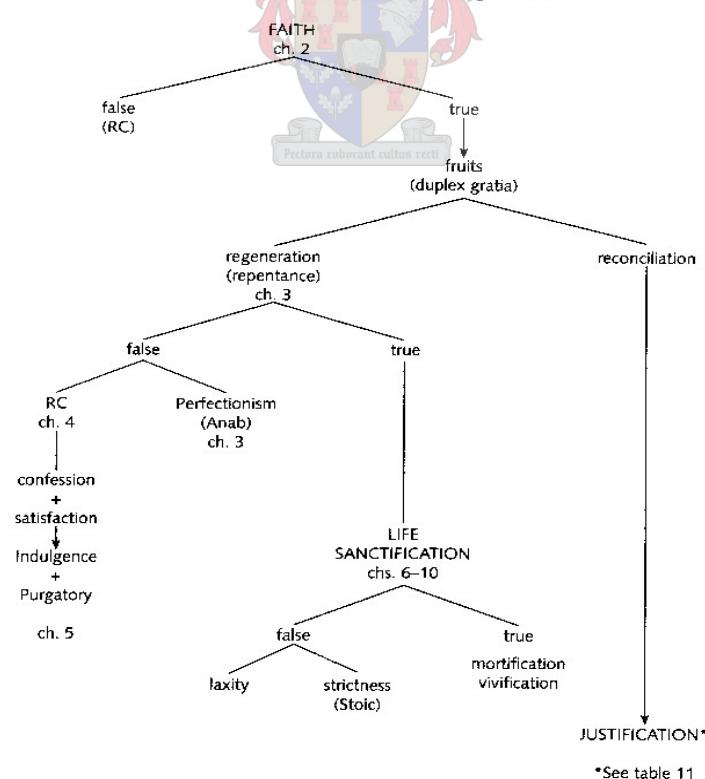
From the beginning of Calvin’s discussion in Book Three,¹⁴⁸ Calvin demonstrates that faith is produced through the work or power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁹ His discussion points to the fact

¹⁴⁸ Calvin’s discussion on the subject of faith features largely from the beginning of Book Three to Chapter Three of the book. He goes back and forth on the matter of faith in his discussion in the section. See, particularly, *Inst.3:3:5*.

¹⁴⁹ A study that demonstrated that the Holy Spirit according to Calvin is indeed the power through which faith comes into the Christian life has already been identified in the work of Ford Lewis Battle (1996:190) on *Interpreting John Calvin*. Battle demonstrated that faith, according to Calvin, could not be realised in an individual without the power of the Holy Spirit. Battle used tables (see Table 9 and 10, below) to illustrate such teachings.

In Table 9, he demonstrates that the Holy Spirit arises from Christ to bring forth faith and all other aspects of faith. In Table 10, Battle begins from the aspect of faith itself and demonstrates more vividly the fruit and work of the Spirit that begins in the Christian life by producing faith.

Though his use of tables has many merits, particularly in the sense that the table vividly illustrates how Calvin understood the work of the Holy Spirit, the study is limited in the sense that it lacks any explanation of how Calvin understood such work of the Spirit to bring forth Faith. Our study in this section will seek to bridge the gap seen in Battle’s study by explaining how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit as the means through which faith came to be in the Christian life. Furthermore, Battle’s study was not centred on Calvin’s views of the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of the Christian life, as is the objective of the present research project.

Table 9. *Institutes*, Book 3: Christ, Holy Spirit, and faith**Table 10.** Gift of faith (*Inst. 3.2-10 generalized*)

that faith cannot be realised in the Christian life without the power of the Spirit. Faith is the first sign of the work of the Spirit in an individual according to Calvin.¹⁵⁰ The manner in which the Christian life begins with and is closely linked to faith is discussed by Calvin in Chapter Three.¹⁵¹

According to Calvin, faith in itself is an activity towards Christ. It is through the power of the Spirit that such faith is demonstrated in Christ. No one would go to God without being drawn to him by the Holy Spirit. In Calvin's own words,

we cannot possibly come to Christ unless drawn by the Spirit, so when we are drawn, we are both in mind and spirit exalted far above our own understanding. For the soul, when illumined by him, receives as it were a new eye, enabling it to contemplate heavenly mysteries, by the splendour of which it was previously dazzled. And thus, indeed, it is only when the human intellect is irradiated by the light of the Holy Spirit that it begins to have a taste of those things, which pertain to the kingdom of God; previously it was too stupid and senseless to have any relish for them (*Inst.3.2.34*).

For Calvin, however, being drawn to God through the power of the Holy Spirit is not a mere ordinary exercise but an exercise through which sanctification is manifest. As the Spirit draws individuals to God through faith in Christ, renewal of the individuals into the Image of God through the same power of the Spirit also takes place. Calvin observed that: “The whole comes to this, that Christ, when he produces faith in us by the agency of his Spirit, at the same time engrafts us into his body, that we may become partakers of all blessings” (*Inst.3: 2:35*). The blessings, which Calvin refers to here, include the experience of the inward renewal into the Image of God that takes place in us by the process through which faith is realized. No one can demonstrate faith in Christ without being transformed through the sanctifying power of the Spirit.

Calvin's teaching on the sanctification of the Christian life is vividly manifest when he explains further how the Spirit works in the Christian life through aspects of faith. In the following section, therefore, we move on to explore in detail how he understood the role of the Spirit in relation to such aspects of faith.

¹⁵⁰ In spite of the fact that faith constituted such an important mark of the work of the Spirit in the Christian life, studies conducted on Calvin have not clearly pointed this out, as far as the researcher is concerned.

¹⁵¹ We shall see how he ties the aspects he discusses in the section to the work of the Spirit

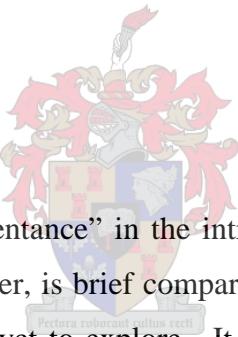
3.4.2 The Spirit and Aspects of Faith

In his discussion on the relationship between the Spirit and aspects of faith, Calvin provides further evidence of how he understood the role of the Spirit in the sanctification of the Christian life. He saw the Christian's life to be renewed into the Image of God through the role of the Spirit in such a life.

The aspects of faith that he discussed are those of repentance, the Christian life (a life of righteousness), justification and prayer. He discussed the aspects in the same order in which the aspects are outlined here.

In our study of this section, we will discuss each of the aspects individually to determine how Calvin understood the process of the Spirit effecting sanctification in relation to each. Since Calvin's discussion in the *Institutes* begins with a study of "repentance," this section must also begin with repentance.

3.4.2.1 Repentance



Calvin discusses the subject of "repentance" in the introductory sections of Book Three.¹⁵² His discussion on the subject, however, is brief compared to discussions of the other aspects of faith in the book, aspects we are yet to explore. It is important to note that this subject comes first in his discussion, since it constitutes the process through which the work of the Spirit actually begins in the Christian life, and therefore through which sanctification of the Christian life also begins.

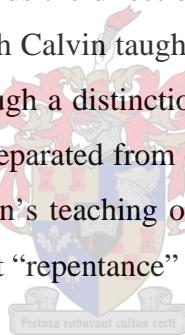
Before we explore in detail how Calvin understood the process of the Spirit effecting sanctification in relation to "repentance," however, it is necessary to understand how he defined the term itself. How exactly did Calvin define the term "repentance"?

By definition, "repentance", according to Calvin, is "a real conversion of our life unto God, proceeding from sincere and serious fear of God, and consisting in the mortification of our flesh and the old man, and the quickening of the Spirit" (*Inst. 3.3.5*). In other words,

¹⁵² Calvin's discussion on the subject of repentance features significantly in *Inst. 3.3.5*. He gives the definition of the subject in the same section. It is significant to note from the beginning that Calvin uses the terms repentance, regeneration, mortification and vivification interchangeably. In our discussion in the study of this section, references made to any of the terms will therefore be meant to refer to the same thing.

“repentance” refers to the activity of genuine conversion to God resulting from the fear of God Himself. The activity itself is realized through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit brings forth mortification hence renewing believers into the Image of God from within. If this is how Calvin defined “repentance,” how did he derive such a definition? Did he just coin the definition or was there a source from which he developed it?

Calvin did not merely coin the definition but developed it from sources in his study. His discussion in the *Institutes* provides evidence that he derived his definition from a study of the Hebrew and Greek words. In Hebrew, the word means “turning again,” while it means “change of mind” in Greek. According to Calvin, therefore, “repentance” is an act of “turning again”¹⁵³ towards God or a “changing” of mind from a direction already taken and where one is, towards that of God. For Calvin, the distinction between “faith” and “repentance” lay in the fact that, while “faith” is an activity of the “turning” or “changing of mind” to be directed towards Christ as enabled through the power of the Holy Spirit, “repentance” is an activity of “turning” or “changing of mind” towards the direction of God, as enabled through the power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵⁴ However, though Calvin taught such a distinction between “faith” and “repentance,” he pointed out that, though a distinction exists between the two in the manner already explained, the two cannot be separated from each other. More so, the two, cannot be confounded but only united. In Calvin’s teaching on such relationship between “faith” and “repentance,” his interpretation of what “repentance” is also becomes clear as evident above.



“Repentance” itself is a process that concerns the entire Christian life. It is a process that begins from the first point of contact between the Spirit and the individual and runs through to the point of physical death.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, it is through the efficacy of the Spirit that it is

¹⁵³ In the study of Calvin’s definition of the term “repentance,” it is important to bear in mind that when Calvin discussed the theme of “repentance,” the thought of the fall of man (according to the scriptural teachings in Gen. 2-3) and the subsequent separation between God and man is very clearly in his mind. In his definition of the term repentance, when he talks about the term, “turning again”, he means “turning again” because the first relationship was marred and broken by the sin of disobedience committed by humanity. Repentance therefore means “turning again” to God after the first relationship was broken.

¹⁵⁴ It would be important to note that the place of the Triune God is also seen in Calvin’s discussion on the distinction between faith and repentance. The place of God the father features vividly as he asserts that repentance is an activity towards God, and faith an activity towards Christ, and with the place of the Spirit seen in both. The Spirit is the power involved in bringing forth faith as well as repentance.

¹⁵⁵ The fact that Calvin saw “repentance” as a life process is reaffirmed by his own words in his discussion on the subject of baptism in Chapter 15 of the *Institutes* (the subject of baptism will be covered in detail later in the study). In his response to what he saw as heretical teachings of the time which supported the view that the occasion of baptism also marked the beginning of the work of the Spirit, Calvin pointed out that “if repentance is recommended during the whole of life, the power of baptism ought to have the same extent.” (*Inst.4.15.4*). In short, therefore, Calvin indicates here that regeneration is a long-term process. Baptism itself is just a one-time activity, which cannot be equated with the process of regeneration.

realized throughout the Christian life. The “turning again” to God, or the change of mind towards the direction of God, does not take place through human might or power, but through the power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵⁶ Without the power of the Spirit, therefore, “repentance” would never be realized. Hence there would be no turning towards God. Most important of all, Calvin did not merely see the Spirit bringing forth repentance in the Christian life, but he saw the work of the Spirit in sanctifying the Christian life, a process through which repentance is realized. Calvin believed that the Christian life is transformed and renewed into the Image of God through and through till the point of physical death. This is precisely the reason why his definition of the term “repentance” entails the matter of “mortification of our flesh” as he himself puts it. The “mortification of our flesh” concerns the inward renewal of believers into the Image of God; hence a life sanctified and lived for the honour and glory of God. This is the kind of life Calvin described when he agreed with Paul that anyone regenerated “no longer lives but that Christ lives and reigns in him” (*Inst. 3:7:1*).

Having seen how Calvin relates the subject of “repentance” to the sanctification of the Christian life, we must move on to see how Calvin further defines the sanctification of the Christian life through “a life of righteousness.” This is to establish how he understood the Spirit to renew believers into the Image of God in the process through which a life of righteousness is lived or demonstrated.

3.4.2.2 The Christian Life (A Life of Righteousness)

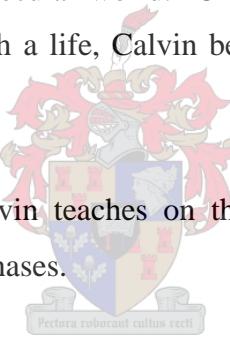
The Christian life or a life of righteousness, according to Calvin, is a life that results from the efficacy of the Spirit. Furthermore, as the Spirit enables believers to demonstrate righteousness in their practical living, they experience inward renewal into the image of God hence being sanctified. How, then, does Calvin develop his argument on the subject of a life of righteousness in relation to the sanctification of the Christian from his work of the *Institutes*? This is the question to be explored and answered in the study of this section.

¹⁵⁶ In Calvin’s Commentary on the Gospel of John, and particularly in the section dealing with the encounter between Jesus and Nicodemus, Calvin’s emphasis on the work of the Spirit in bringing forth change in the individual is seen. Calvin stressed the fact that the Holy Spirit indeed, as Jesus taught, was the power that brought forth new life. For Calvin, the Holy Spirit was the author of the “new life” and he brought forth such new life through the process of repentance. In one of Calvin’s own statements, he puts it that "... For when Christ immediately proceeds to assign the reason why we *must be born again*, without mentioning the water, he shows that the newness of life which he requires is produced by the *Spirit* alone; whence it follows that *water* must not be separated from *the Spirit*" (C.C. Jn 3:5).

To begin with, Calvin dedicates chapters six through ten of Book Three of the *Institutes* to a discussion on the Christian life or a life of righteousness. It must, however, be pointed out that, although Calvin specifically discusses the Christian life in the mentioned chapters of Book Three, his views on the Christian life actually commence from the beginning of Book Three and run through to Book Four. Our concern in the study of this section is his discussion in chapters six through ten of the *Institutes* since it is in these chapters where he demonstrates how such a life ought to be lived.

A life of righteousness, according to Calvin, is a life that mirrors the character of God as practically lived. It is not a life that is merely based on human thoughts or ideologies but a life that entails actions. An individual demonstrating the Christian life is one who seeks to live in accordance with God's expectations as stipulated in the Scriptures. Furthermore, as the Christian life is lived, it affects the whole sphere of life. There is no single part or aspect of a Christian that is exempt from that kind of life. This is irrespective of whether the setting is that of the Christian Church or the secular world. Christian values must be upheld in both settings and at all times. It is in such a life, Calvin believed, that the Spirit would sanctify believers.

From chapters six through ten, Calvin teaches on the life of righteousness. Each of the chapters, however, has differing emphases.



In chapter six, Calvin specifically deals with the subject: "The Life of a Christian Man. Scriptural Arguments Exhorting to It." In this chapter, Calvin's discussion focuses on Scripture. He emphasises that Scripture itself supports the belief that the Christian life must be demonstrably lived and seen. In chapter seven, Calvin's discussion centres on the subject of "A Summary of the Christian Life. Of Self Denial". In this chapter, Calvin vividly demonstrates how the Christian life is to be a life of self-denial. In chapter eight, Calvin discusses the subject, "Of Bearing the Cross – One Branch of Self-Denial." Here Calvin defines what "bearing of the cross" means and demonstrates that the activity of bearing the cross is a branch of self denial. Further, in chapter nine, Calvin's discussion centres on the subject: "Of Meditating on the Future Life." He outlines the characteristics of the present life which is focused on the life to come. In chapter ten, he deals with "How to Use the Present Life, and The Comforts of It." Here Calvin defines how the present life should be used and deals especially with the benefits which it entails. Although Calvin's discussions in all five chapters do not often refer to the Holy Spirit in sanctifying believers, he sees the Christian life

as a life that is lived through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit,¹⁵⁷ hence being renewed into the Image of God.

¹⁵⁷ As already indicated in the body of the study, Calvin seldom mentioned the Holy Spirit or referred to the work of the Holy Spirit in sanctification of believers in the five chapters (Chapters six, seven, eight, nine and ten), but it is the common belief of every Calvin scholar that Calvin's discussion is tied to or built upon the discussions which commence from the beginning of Book Three. Every action that follows, including everything he discusses in Chapters six, seven, eight, nine and ten of Book Three, is built upon the work of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, there are a number of works that Calvin himself wrote, as well as secondary literature published on his studies, that reaffirm that he indeed saw the Spirit to be the Power who works in the Christian life.

One example is from Calvin's comments on Paul's words in the book of Romans, he writes: "The Spirit is the surest mark by which the children of God are distinguished from the children of the world, when by the Spirit of God they are renewed unto purity and holiness. It seems at the same time to have been his purpose, not so much to detect hypocrisy, as to suggest reasons for glorifying against the absurd zealots of the Law, who esteemed the dead letter of the law as of more importance than the inward power of the Spirit, who gives life to the Law. But this passage shows that what Paul has hitherto meant by the Spirit, is not the mind or understanding [which is called the superior part of the soul by the advocates of free will] but a celestial gift; for he shows that those spiritual are ruled by God's Spirit. Nor are they yet said to be according to the Spirit, because they are filled with God's Spirit, [which is now the case with none] but because they have the Spirit dwelling in them, though they find some remnants of the flesh still remaining in them: at the same time it cannot dwell in them without having superiority; for it must be observed that man's state is known by the power that bears rule in him" (*C.C. Rom. 8:9*).

Further, in Calvin's comments on Paul's words in the book of Galatians where he asserts that "the ruin of the church is no light evil, and whatever threatens it must be opposed with the most determined resistance. But how is this to be accomplished? By not permitting the flesh to rule in us, and by yielding ourselves to the direction of the Spirit of God" (*C.C.Gal.5: 16*), he contends with Paul that it is indeed through the Holy Spirit who indwell us that the rule of the flesh can be overcome. Furthermore, the rule of the flesh is only overcome where renewal of believers into the Image of God takes place.

Calvin furthermore asserts: "In the former part of the description [Paul] condemned the whole nature of man as producing nothing but evil and worthless fruits. He now informs us that all virtues, all proper and well-regulated affections proceed from the Spirit, that is, from the grace of God, and the renewed nature we have derived from Christ. As if he said, 'Nothing but what is evil come from man; nothing good comes but from the Holy Spirit'. There have always appeared in renewed men remarkable instances of gentleness, integrity, temperance, and generosity; but it is certain that all were but specious disguises. ... In the sight of God nothing is pure but what proceeds from the fountain of all purity' (*C.C.Gal.5: 22*), Calvin's comments indeed demonstrate that he understood the Holy Spirit to be the source and master of the purity of the Christian life. See also J. Calvin (1950) on *The mystery of Godliness and other selected sermons*.

Now on published works:

In John Hesselink's *Governed and Guided by the Spirit -- A Key Issue in Calvin's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, a paper presented at the Colloquium on Calvin studies at Davidson College and Davidson College Presbyterian Church, Davidson, North Carolina in January 19-20, 1990 (edited by John H Leith) Hesselink rightly pointed out that the Holy Spirit, according to Calvin, was more of an inspirer and enabler in the Christian life. He observed that, according to Calvin, the Holy Spirit performed an important function in the guiding and governing of the Christian life. However, though Hesselink rightly pointed out that the Spirit according to Calvin works in the Christian life, his paper is limited in the sense that it only focused on the one already mentioned aspect of the work of the Spirit in the Christian life. It does not concern Calvin's view of the Spirit in the sanctification of the Christian life. The strength of our study in this section therefore lies in the fact that it goes beyond the scope of Hesselink's study to focus on how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of the Christian life.

In a study conducted slightly later by Ford Lewis Battle (1996:170), it was also rightly pointed out that "Calvin had a clear spectrum of the range of the Spirit's activity in his mind at all times, but did not specifically and expressly set forth this structure in a sustained and explicit section of the *Institutes*. This is very true of many of Calvin's fundamental notions; they are taken for granted, used as working principles, but not elaborated."

Yet another year later, John Hesselink (1997:182) made a further accurate and powerful statement by pointing out: "Nowhere is Calvin more obviously the theologian of the Holy Spirit than his understanding of the Christian life." For Calvin, the Spirit was the vitalising vehicle and power in the Christian life through which sanctification also came forth.

Therefore, the theme of the work of the Spirit in sanctifying believers forms the foundation upon which his arguments are built. Although the arguments in these chapters are of differing emphases, Calvin's theme of the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of believers runs through each of them.

In chapter six on the “Scriptural Arguments Exhorting to the Christian Life,” Calvin observed that the Scripture itself bears witness to the fact that the Christian life should be lived and demonstrated in practice. Therefore, Calvin exhorts that it is important first to seek Scriptural guidance in matters regarding the Christian walk, due to the limitations of our humanity and the fact that humanity is prone to stray from God’s law and expectations. Though Calvin taught about such limitations of humanity, he did not at one time imply that believers are not been renewed into the Image of God as a result of such limitations.

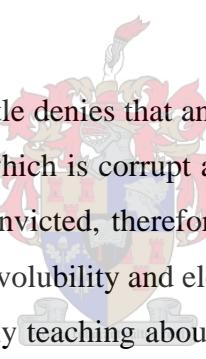
In fact, as we saw in our discussion on the subject of repentance, renewal is a process that goes on throughout the Christian life; so even as Calvin discusses such limitations of humanity, he is not ignorant that the Spirit is at work transforming believers into the likeness of God. Moreover, the use of Scripture is not helpful to the Christian life without the efficacy of the Spirit. Calvin believed Scripture only was useful in the Christian life as the Spirit works through it to guide and transform believers. Believers should therefore not merely seek Scriptural guidance for the sake of it but so that they would be guided in the ways of God, being renewed into the Image of God. Calvin pointed out that, “although the law comprehends within it that new life by which the Image of God is restored in us, yet, as our sluggishness stands greatly in need of both helps and incentives, it will be useful to collect out of Scripture a true account of this reformation, lest any who have a heartfelt desire of repentance should in their zeal go astray” (*Inst. 3.6.1*). The words, “Image of God” and “reformation,” used by Calvin, are evidence that such is the teaching that Calvin sought to advance.

Furthermore, Calvin’s use of the term, “regeneration,” also demonstrates that he indeed understood a life of righteousness as one being sanctified through the power of the Holy Spirit. The term appears at the beginning of his discussion in chapter six of the *Institutes*.¹⁵⁸ This is where he notes that “the object of regeneration is to bring the life of believers into concord and harmony with the righteousness of God, and so confirm the adoption by which

¹⁵⁸ It is significant that Calvin uses the term “regeneration” when he begins his discussion on the subject of the Christian life. “Regeneration,” according to Calvin, entails the work of the Holy Spirit.

they have been received as sons” (*Inst. 3.6.1*). The term points to the fact that Calvin indeed understood the life of righteousness being one that is transformed, hence sanctified, since the term means for Calvin a process through which one is renewed into the Image of God.

Furthermore, in Calvin’s exhortation about the need for upholding or living a holy life, he argued, “we are at the same time admonished, that if we would be regarded as the Lord’s people, we must inhabit the holy city of Jerusalem (*Inst. 3.6.2*). The metaphor he applied, of the “Holy City” of Jerusalem, denotes a city where there is total righteousness and where the inhabitants would be expected to live up to the standards of holiness. The teaching here ties in with the fact that, according to Calvin, the pursuit of a life of holiness begins at the initial point of conversion and continues to the point where a Christian shall inherit the “Holy City” (Kingdom of God) and where a complete state of holiness will be attained. This process through which such a complete state of holiness is attained is called “sanctification.” Believers are sanctified through and through to the point of physical death from where they will inherit the “Holy City.”



Calvin also points out that, “the Apostle denies that any man truly has learned Christ who has not learned to put off ‘the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and put on Christ’ (Eph. iv. 22). They are convicted, therefore, of falsely and unjustly pretending a knowledge of Christ, whatever be the volubility and eloquence with which they can talk of the Gospel” (*Inst. 3.6.4*). Calvin is actually teaching about the new life in Christ and the life that must always be continually transformed through the power of the Holy Spirit. By the phrase, “old man,” Calvin refers to a life which is still largely controlled by the sinful nature. By the phrase, “putting on of Christ,” he refers to a life transformed by the power of the Spirit, the Spirit which comes from Christ himself.

By his argument in chapter six, it comes out clearly that he saw the Scripture as the basis for teaching that such a life ought to be lived, being renewed into the Image of God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

After demonstrating in chapter six the place of the Scripture in the sanctification of the Christian, Calvin moves on to chapter seven: “A Summary of the Christian Life,” particularly with regard to the aspect “of self denial.”¹⁵⁹ In Calvin’s discussion in this particular section,

¹⁵⁹ In the work of Ronald Wallace (1959:66), it has also been pointed out that, according to Calvin, a life of “self denial” is in itself a life realised through the work of the Holy Spirit. He asserts that “the Holy Spirit not only

two main issues preoccupy his thoughts. The first issue is “consecration” to God; and the second, the demonstration of charity.

With regard to the matter of consecration, Calvin exhorts that a Christian life must be fully consecrated¹⁶⁰ to God. It is a life offered to God as a sacrifice, and a life that should be characterised by holiness and not the pleasures of this world. This is the kind of life Calvin referred to when he exhorted in Paul’s words: “Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” (*Inst. 3.7.1*).¹⁶¹ In addition, Calvin states that:

The transformation (which Paul calls *the renewing of the mind*, Rom. xii.2; Eph. iv. 23), though it is the first entrance to life, was unknown to all the philosophers. They give the government of man to reason alone, thinking that she alone is to be listened to; in short, they assign to her the sole direction of conduct. But Christian philosophy bids her give place, and yield complete submission to the Holy Spirit, so that the man himself no longer lives, but Christ lives and reigns in him [Gal. ii.20] (*Inst. 3.7.1*).

The transformation that Calvin discusses here fully concerns the matter of sanctification. This transformation is not limited merely to that of the mind but concerns the entire renewal of a believer. That is why he agrees with Paul that Christian theology demands complete

makes the death of Christ efficacious for our cleansing from guilt of sin but also for the mortification or crucifying of our flesh and self-will. It was by the power of the Holy Spirit that Jesus denied himself, and that power was especially manifest in his death. To participate in the death of Christ by virtue of the Holy Spirit means to participate in the power of the Holy Spirit to subdue and conquer the will of the flesh. In such an effect of the Spirit, the death of Christ is producing its fruit within us.” Wallace here discusses all his concerns about the work of the Spirit in the process of self-denial with the crucifying of the flesh and the self-will.

See also C.C. on 1 Cor. 6:11, on 1 Pet. 1:2, *Inst.3.1.1*

¹⁶⁰ The work of the Spirit in consecration, according to Calvin, is also noted when he observed: “The reign of the Spirit is abolition to the flesh. Those in whom the Spirit reigns not, belong not to Christ; then they are not Christian who serve the flesh; for they who separate Christ from his own Spirit make him like a dead image or a carcase. And we must always bear in mind what the Apostle has intimated, that gratuitous remission of sins can never be separated from the Spirit of regeneration; for this world would be as it were to rend Christ asunder” (C.C. Rom. 8.9).

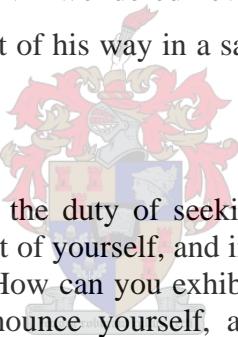
Calvin makes further comment in the same commentary on Romans pertaining to the work of the Spirit in consecration: “But if Christ is in us, etc. What he had before said of the Spirit he says now of Christ, in order that the mode of Christ’s dwelling in us might be intimated; for as the Spirit he consecrates us as temples to himself, so by the same he dwells in us. But what we have before referred to, he now explains more fully—that the children of God are counted spiritual, not on the grounds of a full and complete perfection, but only on account of the newness of life that is begun in them. And he anticipates here an occasion of doubt, which might have otherwise disturbed us; for though the Spirit possesses part of us, we are yet to see another part still under the power of death. He then gives an answer—that the power of the quickening is in the Spirit of Christ, which will be effectual in swallowing up our mortality He then concludes that we must patiently wait until the relics of sin be entirely abolished” (C.C. Rom. 8.10).

¹⁶¹ In this particular section Calvin actually contends, using the words of Paul, not to conform to this world but to be transformed in accordance with God’s will.

submission to the Holy Spirit to the extent that man himself no longer lives but Christ lives in him.

Furthermore, it is through such transformation that a true and honest service to God is rendered. More so, in Calvin's definition of the term "service," he also implies that the work of the Spirit is involved in the activity of the service to God. Whenever such service is rendered to God, therefore, the Spirit becomes the power through which such service is given. Thus Calvin puts it: "By service, I mean not only that which consists in verbal obedience, but that by which the mind, divested of its own carnal feelings, implicitly obeys the call of the Spirit of God" (*Inst.3.7.1*).

The act of "service," according to Calvin, entails the activity of giving or caring for each other by meeting the needs of individuals. For Calvin, this is what charity is. He states that it is extremely difficult and impossible to think of caring for a neighbour if the activity of meeting people's needs is not involved. So Calvin wondered how one would think of seeking the good of the neighbour if one did not go out of his way in a sacrificial manner to meet the needs of the needy:



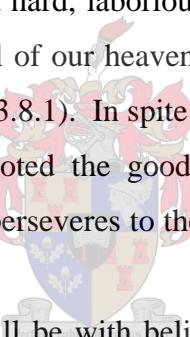
How difficult it is to perform the duty of seeking the good of our neighbour! Unless you leave off all thought of yourself, and in a manner cease to be yourself, you will never accomplish it. How can you exhibit those works of charity which Paul describes unless you renounce yourself, and become wholly devoted to others? 'Charity (says he, 1 Cor. xii. 4) suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, and is not easily provoked' (*Inst.3.7.5*).

For Calvin, "charity" was an important aspect of the Christian life. A life transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit had to be characterised by acts of charity. So Calvin declared: "We shall thus succeed in mortifying ourselves if we fulfil all the duties of charity. Those duties, however, are not fulfilled by the mere discharge of them, though none be omitted, unless it is done from a pure feeling of love" (*Inst.3.7.7*). The "mortification of ourselves," that Calvin refers to here, is not something that can be detached from sanctification. It is all about the renewal of believers into the Image of God, hence resulting in sanctification. Furthermore, the activity of "love" in itself, which Calvin brings out here, also relates to the work of the Holy Spirit. The "pure feeling" of "love" is nothing else but the work of the Holy Spirit. True acts of charity are only seen where "love" exists; and it is only through such "love" that one would deny himself in fulfilling God's will by meeting other people's needs. On the other hand, if

one is merely seeking the pleasures of this world and craving for self-satisfaction, God's aid cannot be expected or realised. So Calvin wondered "how ... anyone [could] have the effrontery to expect that God will aid him in accomplishing desires at variance with his word" (*Inst.3: 7:9*).

After demonstrating why consecration and charity are crucial in the Christian life, Calvin moved on to chapter eight to discuss the subject of "self-denial." One of the means of "self-denial" is "bearing the cross." The matter of "bearing of the cross," as Calvin put it, refers to the sacrificing of everything in one's life for the purpose of living in obedience to God through God's Word.

In this chapter Calvin gives an account of the nature and the extent of the hard life with which a Christian is confronted. He points out that Christians are exhorted to prepare for such a hard life since there is no exception. He wrote: "Those whom the Lord has chosen and honoured with his intercourse must prepare for a hard, laborious, troubled life, a life full of many and various kinds of evils: it being the will of our heavenly Father to exercise his people in this way while putting them to proof" (*Inst.3.8.1*). In spite of such challenging circumstances with which a Christian is faced, Calvin noted the good news that God's supportive hand is experienced through which a believer perseveres to the end. This is what Calvin meant to say when he observed:



God having promised that he will be with believers in tribulation, they feel the truth of the promise; while supported by his hand, they endure patiently. This they could never do by their own strength. Patience, therefore, gives the saints an experimental proof that God in reality furnishes the aid which he has promised whenever there is need. Hence also their faith is confirmed, for it were very ungrateful not to expect that in future the truth of God will be, as they have already found it, firm and constant (*Inst. 3.8.3*).

Calvin therefore noted that there are many advantages produced when Christians bear their cross. The supportive hand of God enables individuals to detect hypocrisy and to be true to the faith. In the process believers are humbled by keeping focused on God, persevering without the feelings of being oppressed or becoming despondent, hence being victorious when observing the demands of the cross. The victory, Calvin says, is then followed by hope, "inasmuch as the Lord, by performing what has been promised, establishes his truth in regard to the future." God enables believers to stand "by his grace so as to perceive that he is true to his promises, and so assured of the certainty of his promises as to be strong in the hope" (*Inst. 3.8.3*). For Calvin, therefore, it is necessary for a believer to persevere through the hard life

for the sake of the cross. But how exactly did Calvin see the “hard life” and “perseverance” being connected to the work of the Spirit and the sanctification of the Christian life?

The enduring of a hard life that Calvin discusses here is not something that can be endured without the aid of the Holy Spirit, in Calvin’s understanding. It is the Holy Spirit that empowers and enables individuals to have patience¹⁶² and endure all the challenges and difficulties encountered in the Christian walk. Without the aid of the Spirit, no single Christian is strong enough to calm the storms of life. Furthermore, the Spirit would not work to enable believers to endure such difficulties without bringing forth renewal in them. As believers endure the hard life, they are also renewed into the Image of God.

From the study of the life of self-denial, Calvin moved on to discuss the subject “Of Meditation on the Future Life” in chapter nine. His views on sanctification are further evidenced in his discussion of this subject.

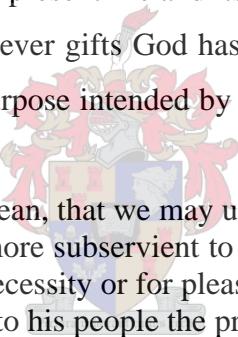
In Calvin’s discussion on this subject, his focus was on the life that is to come, that is, the heavenly future life which believers await while still in this life. While Calvin discussed the future life, he also took into account the nature and manner of the present life, since those who hope for the future life must presently demonstrate in this life a unique life that is different from those who do not have hope; that is, those who are not yet Christians. Those who hope for the future life must seek to endure all the difficulties encountered in this life, for the future life has greater benefits compared to that which is seen in the present life. So Calvin would say: “Whatever be the kind of tribulation with which we are afflicted, we should always consider the end of it to be, that we may be trained to despise the present, and thereby stimulated to aspire to the future life” (*Inst. 3.9.1*). Again in this section as we have also seen in the study of the previous chapter, it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that believers are enabled to endure difficulties as they focus on the future life. And as the Spirit enables believers to endure, believers are also transformed into the Image of God.

According to Calvin, therefore, tribulations should not pull Christians back but instead should inspire believers to prepare more for the future life by living in accordance to God’s expectations in this present life. Furthermore, according to Calvin, God allows such

¹⁶² Calvin comments with Paul as in Galatians (5:22) that all virtues, all proper and well regulated affections, proceed from the Spirit, that is, from the grace of God, and the renewed nature we derive from Christ." (C.C.Gal.5: 22). Patience itself, which forms part of the virtues of which Calvin talks here, is not something that comes apart from the experience of the sanctifying work of the Spirit.

tribulations to come our way for he “knows how strongly we are inclined by nature to a slavish love of this world, in order to prevent us from clinging too strongly to it, he employs the fittest reason for calling us back, and shaking off our lethargy” (*Inst. 3.9.1*). All these teachings on the Christian life are founded on the fact that Calvin saw the Spirit as the power through which the Christian life is lived. In certain cases as in his discussion on this subject, “Of Meditation on the Future Life,” though he does not quite often mention the “Spirit,” the Spirit is the power through which he saw such endurance and focus on the future being realized and the power that in the process brought forth sanctification in the Christian life.

Calvin’s discussion on, “Of Meditating on the Future Life,” furthermore ties in closely to that of chapter ten where he discusses, “How to Use the Present Life, and the Comfort of It.” The two subjects are closely linked in the sense that, if a Christian knew about the greater benefits in the future life, the Christian would use the present life in a meaningful manner. So Calvin, in the last chapter (chapter ten) of his discussion on the Christian Life (or a life of righteousness), wrote about using this present life and its comforts in the light of knowing that our focus is on the future life. Whatever gifts God has bestowed upon us or entrusted to us must be appropriately used for the purpose intended by God himself. For this reason Calvin exhorted:



We must therefore observe a mean, that we may use [the necessary supports of life and those things which seem more subservient to delight than to necessity] with a pure conscience, whether for necessity or for pleasure. This the Lord prescribes by his word, when he tells us that to his people the present life is a kind of pilgrimage by which they hasten to the heavenly kingdom. If we are only to pass through the earth, there can be no doubt that we are to use its blessings only in so far as they assist our progress, rather than retard it (*Inst.3.10.1*).

Calvin supported his argument for the above teaching with Scriptural teaching in noting: “Accordingly, Paul, not without cause, admonishes us to use this world without abusing it, and to buy possessions as if we were selling them” (*Inst.3.10.1*). Calvin further takes note of the lust of the flesh, which is a major factor in luring Christians to abuse the gifts entrusted to them, which are intended to be used for God’s purpose. His call regarding the flesh comes out strongly in his exhortation: “... Let us with no less care guard against the lusts of the flesh, which, if not kept in order, break through all bounds, and are, as I have said, advocated by those who, under pretence of liberty, allow themselves every sort of license” (*Inst. 3.10.3*).¹⁶³ Of course, although Calvin advanced such teaching against the lust of the flesh he still firmly

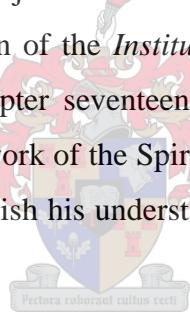
¹⁶³ The article published by J. G Matheson (1949) on “Calvin’s doctrine of the Christian life” also extensively discusses the subject.

held to the view that mortification of believers is a lifetime process. The efficacy of the Spirit still transforms and renews believers into the Image of God. Believers, according to Calvin, those regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit, must live in respect to their calling, without being taken over by the pleasures of this world which do not last. Calvin concluded by writing that “the last thing to be observed is, that the Lord enjoins everyone of us, in all the actions of life, to have respect to our own calling” (*Inst.3. 10.6*).

In conclusion, it must therefore be emphasised that Calvin understood the Christian life as a life being sanctified through the power of the Holy Spirit. If this is how he understood the matter of sanctification in the Christian life, how then did he understand the subject of “Justification” in relation to the sanctification of the Christian life? In the following section, this will be the focus of our discussion.

3.4.2.3 Justification

Calvin’s discussion on the subject of “justification” follows the discussion on the Christian life, which is concluded in chapter ten of the *Institutes*, while that of “justification” begins from chapter eleven and ends in chapter seventeen of the *Institutes*. In order to interpret precisely how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in sanctification and its relationship to “justification,” it is necessary to establish his understanding of the term, “justification.” How did he define the term?



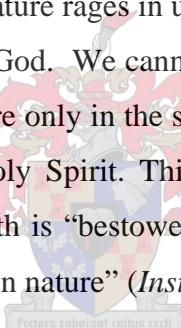
According to Calvin, “justification” refers to the activity of “acceptance with which God receives us into his favour as if we were righteous, so that justification would be said to consist in the forgiveness of sins and imputation of the righteousness of Christ” (*Inst.3.11.2*). It is through the activity of “justification,” therefore, that God counts our sins as forgiven and no longer counting them against us. Moreover, “justification” does not entail any action from us; it is entirely an activity conducted by God himself.¹⁶⁴

From Calvin’s definition, it is immediately clear that Calvin saw the work of the Spirit involved in “justification.” Calvin believed that righteousness is imputed by God alone. Yet,

¹⁶⁴ Calvin, in his Commentary on the book of Romans (3:24), states: “Since there remains nothing for men, as to themselves, but to perish, being smitten by the just judgement of God, they are to be justified freely through his mercy; for Christ comes to the aid of this misery, and communicates himself to the believers, so that they find in him alone all those things in which they are wanting.”

as we saw in our study earlier (see. section 3.2), God exists in “Three Persons (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit).” The Spirit therefore is One with God the Father, and God the Son; hence, the Triune God functions together in imputing “justification.” More so, the Spirit is the power to effect regeneration. Hence the renewal of a believer into the Image of God commences by the work of the Spirit in justification. Such renewal, however, is not a lifetime process activity as in sanctification. It takes place only once and is not repeated since God imputes “justification” on us once and for all on account of faith in Christ. It is therefore in this manner that Calvin believed that the Spirit is involved in the imputation of our righteousness.

Though “justification” is not a process of continual renewal by the work of the Spirit, as we find in “sanctification,” Calvin believed that “justification” was the beginning of the Christian life. He believed that “justification” assures us of our destiny. It guarantees for us the promise of the heavenly life. Due to the sinful nature in us, we cannot live the perfectly righteous life expected by God in this life. If there were no “justification,” our future heavenly destiny would not be certain, since the sinful nature rages in us and would make it impossible to attain the standards of holiness set for us by God. We cannot attain the standards of holiness set by God by our own strength. It is therefore only in the strength of God that such holiness can be attained through the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the teaching that Calvin meant to advance when he observed that strength is “bestowed upon us by the Spirit of Christ alone, and not by the studied efforts of our own nature” (*Inst.3.11.14*).

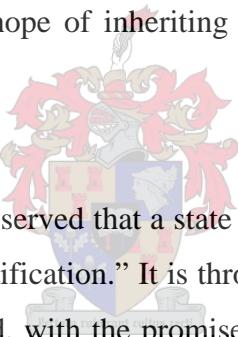


Calvin saw a clear distinction between “justification” and “sanctification.” While “justification” is a one-time activity, “sanctification” is a process. Moreover, in “justification” God counts us as righteous and God does not see any sin in us anymore. Calvin observed, “not even the spiritual works are taken into account when the power of justifying is ascribed to faith” (*Inst.3.11.14*). “Sanctification,” however, is a process, which continues throughout the entire life and through which we are being renewed into the image of God, since the state of holiness is not attainable in this life.

Although Calvin made a distinction between “justification” and “sanctification,” he also maintained that the two are closely related to each other because of the role of the Spirit in each. As “justification” cannot take place without “sanctification” being realised, so the process of “sanctification” cannot take place without “justification” taking place. This can be explained further by demonstrating that, since “justification” is imputed on account of faith,

yet faith is the work of the Holy Spirit, and the product which comes forth from the process of “sanctification.” “Justification” is closely related to “sanctification” in the sense that neither can take place without the other being realised and taking place as well.¹⁶⁵ Activities of “justification” and “sanctification” must, therefore, be realised whenever one or the other takes place, and with the work of the Spirit involved in both. In the activity of “justification,” the Spirit, who is One with God the Father and God the Son, functions as the One in justifying the sinner by grace and through faith alone; while in “sanctification,” the Spirit of the Triune God, who functions as the Third Person of the Trinity, is the power and efficacy through which the process of “sanctification” is realised.

In summary, therefore, it must be noted that, though the Spirit brings forth renewal in both “sanctification” and “justification,” “sanctification” is a process, while “justification” is not a process; it is an activity that takes place once and for all. For Calvin, “justification” was an activity through which righteousness is imputed to us; hence, there is total security for the sons and heirs of God. Our future hope of inheriting the heavenly kingdom is guaranteed through “justification.”



As we have already noted, Calvin observed that a state of total holiness cannot be attained in this life through the process of “sanctification.” It is through “justification” that he believed a total state of holiness was guaranteed, with the promise of inheriting the heavenly kingdom. The promise is guaranteed and sealed through the work of the Spirit who functions with God the Father and God the Son as One.

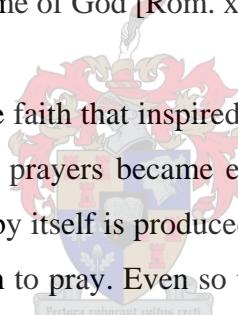
When discussing “justification,” Calvin also discussed “prayer” as an aspect of faith. In the following section, we therefore move on to interpret how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in relation to “prayer.”

¹⁶⁵ Work on “Calvin’s Doctrine of Justification” published by T.H.L. Parker (1952:100) in *The Evangelical Quarterly*, also noted that, according to Calvin, Justification could not be separated from Regeneration. Parker agreed with Calvin that Justification is not different from Regeneration. He also referred to Calvin’s observation that: “whomsoever, therefore, God receives into his favour, he likewise gives the Spirit of adoption, by whose power he renews them in his own image (*Inst.3.11.6*). C.P. Marcel (1955) published an article on “The relation between justification and Sanctification in Calvin’s thought.” The work would be useful for further study on the subject. R. Preus (1960) on the other hand also later published an article on “The justification of a sinner before God as taught in the later Lutheran orthodoxy.” The article is useful particularly in demonstrating how the Lutherans also interpret the subject.

3.4.2.4. Prayer

“Prayer” in Calvin’s teaching from the *Institutes* cannot be delinked from the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of a believer. Calvin saw “Prayer” as an important aspect of faith through which the Spirit works in transforming and renewing a believer into the Image of God. The subject of “Prayer” itself is discussed in chapter twenty of Book Three of the *Institutes*. From his discussions in the chapter, it becomes apparent how Calvin related “Prayer” to the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of a Christian.

“Prayer” for Calvin served as a link between God and His people. Through “Prayer” we communicate with God and God responds to our needs. Anyone who has demonstrated genuine faith in God, therefore, must pray to Him. So Calvin agreed with Paul when he pointed out that: “... the Apostle, to show that a faith unaccompanied with prayer to God cannot be genuine, states this to be the order: As faith springs from the Gospel, so by faith our hearts are framed to call upon the name of God [Rom. x. 14]” (*Inst. 3.20.1*).



For Calvin, however, it was not mere faith that inspired believers to pray; the Holy Spirit was the vital power through which such prayers became efficacious. As we already saw in our study of “the Spirit and faith,” faith by itself is produced through the power of the Holy Spirit so that believers are inspired by faith to pray. Even so the power of the Spirit is also actively involved in the exercise of prayer. Calvin believed that the role of the Spirit in prayer was especially crucial due to the sinful nature of humanity. Because of the sinful nature in us, we fall short of God’s set standards of holiness and therefore our prayers do not invoke God’s response. Moreover, Calvin believed that the Spirit is the power through which believers are renewed into the Image of God in the process of the exercising prayer.

The role played by the Spirit in “Prayer,” as presented in Calvin’s argument, first comes into view when he notes that by the Spirit he “seals the testimony of the Gospel on our hearts, gives us courage to make our requests known unto God, calls forth groanings which cannot be uttered, and enables us to cry, Abba, Father (*Inst. 3.20.1*). With these words, Calvin taught that as the Spirit makes the teaching of the gospel authentic in our hearts, he transforms and renews us into the Image of God.

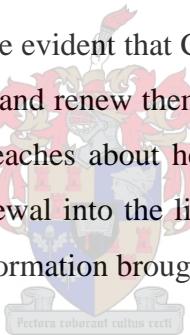
Furthermore, when Calvin notes that the same Spirit is the “source of courage in us” and the power that enables us to pray aright before God, he is reaffirming the same teaching that the

Spirit is indeed the power that works from within a believer bringing forth courage. If the Spirit's efficacy were not experienced in a believer, then we would not be able to pray to God aright. It is the Spirit in a believer who brings forth courage and renews us into the Image of God.

Because of the sinful nature in us, we never get to pray aright before God. The Spirit therefore intercedes on our behalf before God, hence making our prayers efficacious. This is the teaching Calvin sought to advance when he noted:

As the eye of our mind should be intent upon God, so the affection of our heart ought to follow in the same course. But both fall far beneath this, or rather, they faint and fail, and are carried in a contrary direction. To assist this weakness, God gives us the guidance of the Spirit in our prayers to dictate what is right, and regulate our affections. For seeing “we know not what we should pray for as we ought,”...“the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Rom. viii. 26); not that he actually prays or groans but he excites in us sighs, and wishes, and confidence, which our natural powers are not at all able to conceive” (*Inst. 3.20.5*).

From the above teachings, it is therefore evident that Calvin saw the Spirit working within the individual believers to transform them and renew them into the Image of God. The “excites,” “wishes,” and “confidence” Calvin teaches about here all concerns the work of the Spirit through which transformation and renewal into the likeness of Christ takes place. Such are only realized through the inward transformation brought by the Spirit.



The role of the Spirit in the sanctification of a believer in Calvin's teaching is not only evidenced by the work of the Spirit within individual believers but also from Calvin's teaching on human responsibility. Calvin taught and emphasized that, although the Spirit does work within a believer in prayer, a believer should not sit back to let the Spirit do everything without the believer himself taking responsibility in the exercise. Instead, he taught that a believer should also take responsibility in prayer. A believer's responsibility would enhance the experience of the Spirit's efficacy in the exercise. As we already saw in our study on the Christian life, Calvin teaches that a believer should live a righteous life; he or she must yield more and more to the work of the Spirit or the Spirit's efficacy would not be experienced in full. So Calvin appealed for the need of a believer's responsibility when he observed that:

Hence it appears that to pray aright is a special gift. We do not speak thus in indulgence to our sloth, as if we were to leave the office of prayer to the Holy Spirit, and give way to that carelessness to which we are too prone. Thus we

sometimes hear the impious expression, that we are to wait in suspense until he take possession of our minds while otherwise occupied. Our meaning is that, weary of our own heartlessness and sloth, we are to long for the aid of the Spirit (*Inst.* 3.20.5).

Calvin's teaching on the need for believers to exercise responsibility in prayer is further evident in the fact that believers are admonished to come boldly before God with assurance that their prayers are not in vain. This is indeed the teaching that Calvin meant to advance when he noted that, the Holy Spirit: ‘tells us to “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need” (*Heb.* iv. 16); and elsewhere teaches us to “have boldness and access with confidence by faith of Christ”.... . The only prayer acceptable to God is that which springs (if I may so express it) from this presumption of faith, and is founded on the full assurance of hope’ (*Inst.* 3.20.12).¹⁶⁶

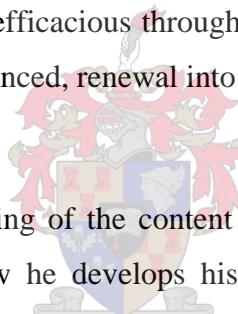
Furthermore, the need for human responsibility in Calvin's teaching is shown by the example of the prayers of those who really do not know God; yet they offer prayers characterised by earnest pleas which recognise the greatness of the God; hence, the need to seek his help earnestly. He cited the example of Plato praying: “O king Jupiter, give what is best whether we wish it or wish it not; but avert from us what is evil even though we ask it” (*Inst.* 3.20.34). In particular, Calvin noted that the prayer recognised the “greatness” of God in that the supplicant is not imposing his will on God but allowing “God” to respond in accordance to his will. Calvin pointed out that even “the heathen shows wisdom in discerning how dangerous it is to ask God what our passion dictates” (*Inst.* 3.20.34). This being so, how much more could those who truly know God be expected to seek God in prayer in an appropriate manner? Since the prayers of those who do not know God point to the “greatness” of our God, such prayers should inspire us who know God to observe prayer seriously.

Further still, Calvin noted that “this heathen ... at the same time ... reminds us of our unhappy condition in not being able to open our lips before God without danger, unless his Spirit instructs us how to pray aright” (*Inst.* 3.20.34). Here Calvin teaches that a believer should be able to pray aright by relying on the Spirit to give and guide on how to pray. Calvin concludes by admonishing believers that: “The higher value, therefore, ought we to set

¹⁶⁶ Calvin's emphasis on human responsibility in prayer is also seen in his further comment on Paul's arguments: ‘For before urging the believers to pray in the Spirit always, with vigilance and assiduity, he enjoins them to take “the shield of faith,” the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God’ (C.C Eph. vi.16-18). Here he demonstrates that human responsibility is necessary in prayer.

on the privilege, when the only begotten Son of God puts words into our lips, and thus relieves our minds of all hesitation” (*Inst.3.20.34*). By the word, “privilege,” Calvin teaches that since we became the children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, we were accorded the authority to pray aright and must use such authority by taking responsibility to pray before God aright.

Calvin’s teaching of man’s responsibility is well demonstrated in his discussion on the Lord’s Prayer. The “Lord’s Prayer” is a prayer which Jesus used to teach his disciples on how to pray. The disciples had to understand the elements of prayer and to use the same approach as demonstrated in the prayer itself as they pray. The disciplines had to take the responsibility of understanding the prayer and prayer correctly as instructed. The prayer, if observed according to Jesus’s instruction, would enable the disciples to pray aright before God and hence their prayers would invoke God’s response. In the same manner in Calvin’s teaching on sanctification, if believers took responsibility to pray aright as instructed in the “Lord’s Prayer,” the prayers would become efficacious through the power of the Spirit. Furthermore, as the efficacy of the Spirit is experienced, renewal into the Image of God takes place.



In order to have a clear understanding of the content of Calvin’s discussion on the Lord’s prayer, we will look briefly at how he develops his discussion on the subject since our objective is not to study the content of the “Lord’s Prayer” in detail but only to demonstrate that through the “Lord’s Prayer” Calvin’s taught human responsibility while praying God.

Calvin discussed the various petitions that occur in the Lord’s Prayer in detail from sections forty-one through section forty-six of chapter twenty of Book Three. He discussed the petitions in two parts, the first and the second.

Before we look at the petitions in each of the parts, however, it is important to note that Calvin introduced his discussion on the Lord’s Prayer by demonstrating our need to call upon the Heavenly Father as we begin to pray. He discusses this in section thirty-six of the chapter. He states that the acceptable manner to call to God is: “Our Father which art heaven.” Such an approach, according to Calvin, demonstrates that our prayers are presented in the name of Christ and hence are directed to God as there is no other Name through which we ought to pray.

The first petition in the Lord's Prayer that Calvin discussed, in section forty-one, is that which states, "Hallowed be thy Name." Here he pointed out that when we approach prayer in such a manner, we express a desire that "... God may receive the honour which is his due: that men may never think or speak of him without the greatest reverence" (*Inst.3.20.41*).

The second petition that Calvin attended to is that which states, "Thy Kingdom come." The petition is discussed in section forty-two of the chapter. The essence of the petition, according to Calvin, is that if believers deny themselves earthly pleasures and devoted themselves to God alone, He through the power of the Holy Spirit would correct all the depraved lusts of the flesh that war against them and also bring all their thoughts into obedience to him (*Inst.3. 20.42*). Calvin further added that:

This prayer, therefore, ought to be withdraw us from the corruptions of the world which separate us from God, and prevent his kingdom from flourishing within us; secondly, it ought to inflame us with an ardent desire for the mortification of the flesh; and lastly, it ought to train us to the endurance of the cross; since this is the way in which God would have his kingdom to be advanced. It ought not to grieve us that the outward man decays, provided the inner man is renewed (*Inst. 3.20.42*).¹⁶⁷

The third petition that Calvin discussed in section forty-three is, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Here Calvin explained that when prayer is observed, it must be done in total and voluntary obedience to God so that God himself takes charge of everything, with the earth being brought under his authority and with all the rebellion against him being extinguished (*Inst.3. 20.43*).

The next part of the prayer that Calvin attended to is that which says, "Give us this day our daily bread." This occurs in section forty-four of the chapter. Here Calvin explained that that when we pray, we should ask God not only to give us food and clothing but everything he knows will assist us to eat our bread in peace. In this way, Calvin asserts that we briefly cast our cares upon him, and commit ourselves to his providence, that he may feed foster and preserve us (*Inst.3: 20:44*).

¹⁶⁷ When Calvin teaches on the fact that the inner man is being renewed here, he is referring to the inward renewal that takes place in us through the Holy Spirit. The petition, "Thy Kingdom come," for Calvin, can also be properly understood in the light of the work of the Holy Spirit in us.

Calvin then moved on to the next petition, the fifth in the entire section on the Lord's Prayer which states, "Forgive us our debts." He discussed the petition in section forty-five of the chapter. By the petition, Calvin taught that we pray or ask God to forgive our sins. "Sins" he refers to as "debts" because we owe the punishment due to them. When God forgives our sins, he also protect us by his power, and support us by the aid of his Spirit, so that we may stand invincible against all temptations (*Inst.3.20.45*).

Calvin then moved on to deal with the sixth petition in the entire section on the Lord's Prayer. Unlike previous sections, Calvin in this section did not begin by outlining the petition itself but went right into the discussion. From the content of his discussion, however, it is clear that the petition he is discussing is the appeal to God, "Not to lead us into temptation."

In beginning the discussion, Calvin alludes to the previous petition, and in particular, to the section where he spoke about the spiritual covenant which God made for the salvation of the church. He outlined that which he described as the "two members" that contain the spiritual covenant. The "two members" he refers to are God's promises which he spelled out as: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts," and "I will pardon all their iniquities." Calvin saw the first member – the promise of, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts" – to concern the particular petition he was talking of in this section. Concerning the petition itself, Calvin asserted "... we here pray that he would furnish us with armour, and defend us by his protection, that we may be able to obtain the victory. By this we are reminded that we not only have need of the gift of the Spirit inwardly to soften our hearts, and turn and direct them to obedience of God, but also of his assistance, to render us invincible by all the wiles and violent assaults of Satan" (*Inst. 3.20. 46*).

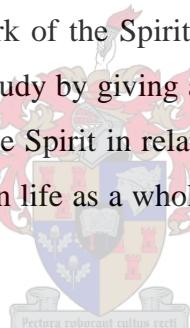
All the crucial matters that Calvin raised in the six petitions discussed in the Lord's Prayer concerned human responsibility in prayer. They therefore point to the fact that the Lord's Prayer is evidence that Calvin taught human responsibility in prayer. Believers must be actively involved in prayer. Believers are not expected just to sit back and to wait for God to do everything by himself through his Spirit without themselves playing any role. The roles which believers are expected to play are outlined in the content of the Lord's Prayer.

Moreover, as believers take the responsibility to pray according to the petitions in the Lord's Prayer, the efficacy of the Spirit renews believers into the Image of God.

Calvin's teaching on human responsibility provides evidence of his belief that the Spirit would sanctify believers. That is, the Spirit transforms and renews believers into the Image of God in the process by which human beings become responsible in living a life pleasing to God.

In summary, therefore, it must again be noted that Calvin understood Prayer as an aspect of faith through which the Spirit effects sanctification in the Christian life. As believers engage in the exercise of Prayer, the Spirit renews them into the Image of God.

Since we have discussed each of the aspects of faith individually to determine how Calvin understood each in relation to the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of a believer, it is necessary that we now conclude our study by giving a summary of the discussion concerning how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in relation to faith, aspects of faith, and, more so, to the sanctification of the Christian life as a whole. This is therefore the objective of the following brief section of the study.



3.4.3 Conclusion

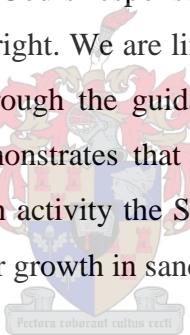
This section of the study on 'sanctification and "the Christian life"' demonstrates that Calvin understood the work of the Spirit to be related closely to sanctification. He believed that the Spirit is the power that produces faith in the Christian life and the power by which sanctification of the Christian life takes place through repentance, the Christian life, or a life of righteousness and Prayer; while Justification was seen as a singular action rather than a process like sanctification which continues throughout the Christian life.

Firstly, the present study has shown that, according to Calvin, the Spirit is the power through which faith comes to be in the Christian life. As the Spirit produces faith in a believer, it also transforms and renews a believer into the Image of God.

Secondly, Calvin understood that sanctification in the Christian life is due to the work of the Spirit in the aspects of faith, namely through repentance, a life of righteousness, and prayer.

Concerning repentance, Calvin saw the Spirit as the power through which “turning” towards God takes place. Furthermore, with the Spirit enabling us to “turn” towards God, He renews us into the image of God, hence, our sanctification. With regard to the Christian life, Calvin saw the Spirit as the power through which practical Christian living takes place. He saw the Spirit as the power that enables individuals to exercise a life pleasing to God, the power that renews us into the Image of God during the exercise of practical Christian living.

With regard to Prayer, Calvin taught that every believer must be inspired by faith in pray to God. He saw the Spirit as the power through which such faith comes forth. Furthermore, he believed that the Spirit is the Person who intercedes on our behalf before God. Due to our sinful nature, our prayers do not necessarily invoke God’s response. The Spirit is therefore the aid through which our prayers invoke God’s response. Calvin furthermore believed that the Spirit teaches us how to pray to God aright. We are limited in finding the right words to utter before God in prayer and so it is through the guidance of the Spirit that we present our prayers. More so, the study also demonstrates that Calvin taught and emphasized human responsibility in prayer. During such activity the Spirit, through our prayers, renews us in the image of God; hence there is further growth in sanctification.



Concerning Justification, although Calvin saw Justification as an aspect of faith through which transformation and renewal into the Image of God take place, he did not believe that the work of the Spirit in Justification was a process continuing throughout the Christian’s life. He saw Justification as one-time activity, an activity in which God imputes his righteousness to us, once and for all, not a process through which the work of the Spirit continually takes place in the Christian life. He believed that the Spirit is involved in Justification in the sense that the Spirit functions as One with God the Father and God the Son. When God the Father imputes to us his righteousness in Justification, He also functions with God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is, therefore, directly involved in the activity of our Justification, even as He is involved in repentance, the Christian life and prayer through which sanctification in the Christian life takes place.

Calvin’s views, however, do not end with his understanding of sanctification in “the Christian life,” but more of his views on sanctification are seen in his interpretation of “the Christian

life as a life of Grace and Gratitude.” In our study of this section on “sanctification and the Christian life,” we have focused on how Calvin understood the Spirit effecting sanctification from within a believer. In our study of the next section, we will go a step further to interpret how Calvin defines sanctification in a believer through the external elements he discusses through which “Grace” is attained and “Gratitude” demonstrated to God.

In the following section, we therefore look in detail at how Calvin understood the Spirit to effect sanctification through such life of “Grace and Gratitude.”

3.5 On “the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude

Before we go into detail defining Calvin’s views of sanctification in the life of “Grace” and “Gratitude,” we must first define what we mean by a life of “Grace” and “Gratitude” to God. Definition of what we mean by these concepts is necessary because these concepts constitute the foundation upon which the study of this section is based.

To begin with, by the term life of “Grace” we refer to the life that God has passed on to humanity apart from humanity producing it. This is the life acquired through faith in Jesus Christ. After humanity sinned and fell, in order to redeem humanity, God graciously sent Jesus Christ to die on behalf of humanity so that man may be reconciled to Him. Though humanity did not deserve this life, they obtained it. This is the life which Calvin understood as a life of “Grace.”

Furthermore by the term, “Gratitude,”¹⁶⁸ we refer to that life that is lived to demonstrate thanksgiving to God for his work in creation and salvation. In creation God has brought everything into existence, while in salvation he has redeemed humanity through his Son Jesus Christ. Life (the Christian life) that results from faith in Christ must, therefore, be lived to

¹⁶⁸ Work on *The Piety of John Calvin An Anthology Illustrative of the Spirituality of the Reformer*, translated and edited by Ford Lewis Battles and with a section on music edited Stanley Tagg (1978), gives an excellent outline of Calvin’s own statements from which his teachings on the subject of the life of *gratitude* are also seen. His statements are particularly well outlined in Chapter three in his discussion on the subject of the *Christian Life* (See p. 51). Battle’s concern, however, is not to deal with the subject of sanctification, which is the primary object of the study of this section.

demonstrate gratitude to God for his work in the two areas. The Christian life that results from faith in Christ is what Calvin understood as a life of “Grace” and “Gratitude.”

As already highlighted in the introductory sections of the study of this chapter, the theme of the life of “Grace” actually begins from Book Three and runs through to Book four. The theme of the life of “Gratitude” is developed from Book One.

In Book One, Calvin already pointed out that, “... though the effulgence which is presented to every eye, both in the heavens and on the earth, leaves the ingratitude of man without excuse, since God, in order to bring the whole human race under the same condemnation, holds forth to all, without exception, a mirror of his Deity in his works, another and better help must be given to guide us properly to God as Creator” (*Inst.1:6:1*). Calvin’s words here teach that though “another and better help” had to come (in the Word), God had already held humanity accountable for not responding in gratitude to Him for the knowledge of him previously made available in God’s own works in creation. The works of God in creation reveal the truths about God’s existence through nature, and from these arise the need for a response of gratitude. Calvin, however, pointed out that the help that already existed in God’s works of creation was deemed insufficient for humanity to acquire adequately the knowledge of God. It is for this reason that the need for “another and the better help” arose. While the help that was deemed insufficient for humanity to acquire knowledge of God is discussed in Book One of the *Institutes*, where, again, the subject of the Word¹⁶⁹ is also introduced; the subject of “another and better help” is developed in Book Two and in the discussion on the Person and Work of Jesus Christ. Book Two discusses how Christ himself becomes the Word and brings redemption for humanity through his crucifixion and death on the cross, hence becoming “another and better help” through which humanity can now access the knowledge of God as far as the matter of salvation is concerned. From Book Three to Book Four, as in the case of our study in the previous section on ‘sanctification and “the Christian life,”’ the theme of the life of “Grace and Gratitude” is well developed. Individuals experiencing the benefits of God’s “acts” of creation and salvation discussed in the two books ought to respond by demonstrating gratitude to God for His work in effecting this. Calvin noted that:

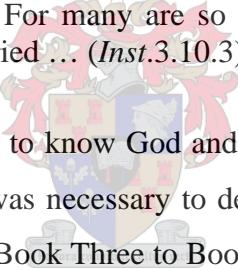
Ever since God exhibited himself to us as a Father, we must be convicted of extreme ingratitude if we do not in turn exhibit ourselves as his sons. Ever since Christ purified us by the laver of his blood, and communicated this purification by baptism, it would ill become to be defiled by new pollution. Ever since he ingrafted us into his body, we, who are his members, should anxiously beware of

¹⁶⁹ The subject of the Word is introduced in Chapter Six of Book One of the *Institutes*.

contracting any stain or taint. Ever since he who is our head ascended to heaven, it is befitting in us to withdraw our affections from the earth, and with our whole soul aspire to heaven. Ever since the Holy Spirit dedicated us as temples to the Lord, we should make it our endeavor to show forth the glory of God, and guard against being profaned by the defilement of sin. Ever since our bodies and soul were destined to heavenly incorruptibility and an unfading crown, we should earnestly strive to keep them pure and incorrupted against the day of the Lord. These, I say, are the surest foundations of a well-regulated life, and you will search in vain for anything resembling them among philosophers, who, in their commendation of virtue, never rise higher than the natural dignity of man. (*Inst. 3.6.3*)

Furthermore, when Calvin exhorted concerning the “lusts of the flesh,” the lust that deters humans from demonstrating gratitude to God, he pointed out that “one restraint is imposed when we hold that the object of creating all things was to teach us to know the author, and feel grateful for his indulgence” (*Inst. 3.10.3*). Following this, Calvin wondered:

Where is the gratitude, if you so gorge or stupify yourself with feasting and wine as to be unfit for offices of piety, or the duties of your calling? Where the recognition of God, if the flesh, boiling forth in lust through excessive indulgence, infects the mind with its impurity, so as to lose the discernment of honour and rectitude? ... Where our recognition of God, if the glare of these things captivates our minds? For many are so devoted to luxury in all their senses, that their mind lies buried ... (*Inst.3.10.3*).



For Calvin it was not enough merely to know God and to enjoy the benefits of his works in creation and salvation, but more, it was necessary to demonstrate gratitude to God for these works of his. In the discussion from Book Three to Book Four, Calvin dealt with a number of elements that he relates closely to the subject of the life of “Grace” and “Gratitude” to God. These elements include the Word, Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and the Church.

In this section of the study we therefore examine each of the elements individually to determine how Calvin understood each in relation to sanctification of a believer in the life of “Grace” and “Gratitude.” From among the four outlined elements, the Word constitutes the foundation upon which Calvin’s views on a life of “Grace” and “Gratitude” to God were based. For this reason, we begin our study in this section by dealing with the subject of the Word.

3.5.1 The Spirit and the Word

With the term, “Word,” we refer to the written Word of God. “Word” for Calvin was an external element, constituting a foundation upon which his views on the Christian life were

founded. The Word is God's Word and instituted by God himself. In this section, we explore how Calvin understood the Word in relation to the sanctification of a believer in the life of "Grace" and "Gratitude."

To begin with, Calvin saw the Word itself as a means through which the grace of God is attained. Though he seldom mentioned the Word throughout the discussion on the subject of the Christian life in Books Three and Four, it must be noted that his views on the Christian life were based upon the teachings of the Word. There is no single aspect that is discussed in the two books that does not concern the Word. For instance, when Calvin taught on the work of the Spirit in bringing forth faith in an individual, he believed that the Spirit acted upon the Word in bringing forth faith in an individual. It is in this manner that Calvin believed that the Word constituted an important means through which the grace of God is attained. As the Word is proclaimed, individuals respond to it in faith in Christ, hence becoming believers.¹⁷⁰ But in Calvin's teaching, did the Word by itself become efficacious without the power of the Holy Spirit?

No! For Calvin, the Word by itself was never efficacious in the life of an individual without the power of the Spirit. It was only through the power of the Holy Spirit that the Word became efficacious. It is the Spirit that opens the minds of individuals to understand the Word. Such is evidenced in Calvin's own teaching when he noted, "... nothing is accomplished by his¹⁷¹ preaching unless the inner teacher, the Spirit, opens the way into our minds. Therefore, only those come to him who have heard and learned of the Father. And in what is the method of this hearing and learning? It is when the Spirit, with a wondrous and special energy, forms the ear to hear and the mind to understand" (*Inst. 2.2.20*).

Elsewhere in the discussion, Calvin pointed out: "Hence also, although he¹⁷² had taught the Apostles with his own divine lips, it was still necessary to send the Spirit of truth to instil into their minds the same doctrine which they had heard with their ears" (*Inst. 3.2.34*). His thoughts here affirm the same truth. To make his point clear, Calvin drew an exemplary

¹⁷⁰ Even in his discussion on the subject of baptism, Calvin alludes to the fact that it is through the Word that forgiveness of sins comes about. He notes that "the sinner receives forgiveness by the ministry of the Church; in other words, not without the preaching of the gospel" (*Inst. 4.15.4*). Here Calvin's words reaffirm to us that his views on regeneration are based upon the Word.

¹⁷¹ Refers to the preaching of Christ and his works.

¹⁷² Refers to our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

analogy to demonstrate that the Word, without the efficacy of the Holy Spirit upon it, is useless. He narrated that, “The Word is, in regard to those to whom it is preached, like the sun which shines upon all, but is of no use to the blind. In this matter we are all naturally blind; and hence the Word cannot penetrate our mind unless the Spirit, that internal teacher, by his enlightening make an entrance of it” (*Inst.3.2.34*). Without the power of the Holy Spirit, therefore, the Word cannot be properly understood nor become efficacious.¹⁷³ But how does this work of the Spirit upon the Word relate to the sanctification of a believer?

¹⁷³There are references in Calvin’s own works and in secondary literature which reaffirm the fact that, for Calvin, the Word only becomes efficacious through the power of the Holy Spirit. To begin with, some of the references in his own works include:

Where (in *C.C.P.* 119:133) he noted that ‘God deals bountifully with men, when he invites them to himself by his word and doctrine; and secondly, by his Spirit those whom he has already taught his word “we may learn that he did not hunt after revelations, and set the word at nought, as many fanatics do, but connected the external doctrine with inward grace of the Holy Spirit; and herein consists the completeness of the faithful, in that God engraves on their hearts what he shows by his word to be right.” Here it comes out clearly that Calvin took the Word and the Spirit as inseparable.

Further (in *C.C. Isa.* 59:21), Calvin noted: ‘Yet although the prophet commends the value excellence of doctrine, I have no doubt that still it is not separated from its effect. But because God regulates and dispenses his grace in such a manner, that, as long as believers remain in this world, he always trains patience, does not in every instance answer prayers, therefore brings them back to the doctrine; as if he had said, “thou wilt indeed find that I am kind to thee in various ways; but there is no happiness which will be of greater importance to thee, or which thou oughtest to desire more earnestly, than to feel that I am present in the “the Word and the Spirit.” Hence we infer that this is a most valuable treasure of the Church, that he has chosen for himself a habitation in it, to dwell in the hearts of believers by his Spirit, and next to preserve among them the doctrine of his gospel.’ Here again Calvin ties the subject of the Word to that of the Holy Spirit.

Also (in *C.C. Jn.* 5:25) Calvin noted: “Thus the grace of Christ is a true resurrection from the dead. Now this grace is conferred on us by the gospel; not that so much energy is possessed by the eternal voice, which in many cases strikes the ears to no purpose, but because Christ speaks to our hearts within his Spirit, that we may receive by faith the life which is offered to us.”

Furthermore, (in *C.C. Jn.* 15: 27) Calvin also observed that “Christ means that the testimony of the Spirit will not be of such a nature that the apostles shall have it for their private advantage, or that they alone shall enjoy it, but that by them it will be widely diffused, because they will be organs of the Holy Spirit, as, indeed, he spoke by their mouth. We now see in what way Faith is by hearing, and yet it derives its certainty from the seal and earnestness of the Spirit. Those who do not sufficiently know the darkness of the human mind imagine that Faith is formed naturally by hearing and preaching alone; and there are many fanatics who disdain the outward preaching, and talk in lofty terms about secret revelations and inspirations. But we see how Christ enjoins these two things together; and, therefore though there is no faith till the Spirit of God seal our minds and hearts, till we must not go to seek visions or oracles in the clouds; but the Word, which is near us, in our mouth and heart, must keep all our senses bound and fixed on itself.”

On the secondary literature, the references include:

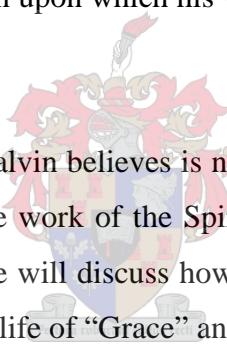
Wallace (1982:128), who pointed out that “The Word of God can have no efficacy unless at the same time the Holy Spirit works in the hearts of the hearers, creating faith and making men’s minds open to receive the Word ... there is a veil within that prevents us from seeing God even when he is there before us in His Word. The removal of this inward veil is the gracious work of the Holy Ghost. Every man is blind until the Spirit enlightens the eyes on his understanding.” In a later work by Brian Gerrish (1993:82), Gerrish also pointed out the same when he noted that “the Word of God is not only reassuring doctrine but also powerful instrument of the Spirit, and it is both these things together.”

A very recent study by Donald G. Bloesch (2000:59) furthermore argued “though John Calvin is sometimes acclaimed as a propositional theologian and at other times as an existential theologian, the truth of the matter is that neither of these designations does justice to Calvin’s theological contribution. He cannot be reduced to a propositional theologian because his appeal was not to scripture alone but to scripture illumined by the Spirit. But neither was he an illuminist or existentialist, for the Spirit’s illumination must always be tested by the

Calvin did not understand the work of the Spirit upon the Word merely as an end in itself which enables a believer to respond in faith to Christ and thereby creating the Christian life; but the Spirit further works in the Christian life, transforming a believer into the likeness of God. This happens as a believer comes into contact with the teaching of the Word and lives according to such teachings. It is the power of the Spirit that enables a believer to live in obedience to the Word, the process through which the believer is renewed into the Image of God.

More so, as a believer is renewed into the Image of God, the life that results becomes a life of “Gratitude” to God. The life becomes one that expresses thanksgiving to God, not only for his works in creation but also for God’s work in salvation.

For Calvin, therefore, the Word becomes the immediate means through which grace of God is attained, a believer sanctified, and a life of gratitude demonstrated to God. The Word, therefore, for Calvin, is the foundation upon which his views on the life of grace and gratitude are founded.



Furthermore, the next element that Calvin believes is necessary and that must be observed by an individual regenerated through the work of the Spirit upon the Word is the sacrament of Baptism. In the following section we will discuss how Calvin understood sanctification of a believer through the sacrament in the life of “Grace” and “Gratitude.”

3.5.2 The Spirit and Baptism

To begin with, the sacrament¹⁷⁴ of baptism is discussed in chapters fifteen and sixteen¹⁷⁵ of Book Three of the *Institutes*. Beginning from that chapter, Calvin dealt extensively with the subject, defining the sacrament as well as demonstrating the role of the sacrament in the life

product of the Spirit’s inspiration – the written Word of God. Like Augustine and Luther, Calvin is best described as the theologian of the Word and Spirit, one whose appeal rests on the dialectical interplay between the present work of the Spirit and his past revelation.”

That, for Calvin, the Word and the Spirit are closely related, is indisputable.

¹⁷⁴ Calvin defined the word, “sacrament,” as “an external sign, by which the Lord seals on our consciences his promises of good-will toward us, in order to sustain the weakness of our faith, and we in turn testify our piety towards him, both before himself, and before the angels as well as men” it is “a testimony of divine favour toward us, confirmed by an external sign, with a corresponding attestation of our faith towards Him” (*Inst.* 4.14.1).

¹⁷⁵ In chapter sixteen Calvin’s discussion focuses more on Infant baptism (Paedobaptism).

of an individual believer and in the life of the Church. It is from this discussion that we see the manner in which he understood the sacrament in relation to the sanctification of a believer in the life of “Grace” and “Gratitude.”

As we interpret his views on sanctification, it is necessary to demonstrate how he understood the sacrament. How then did he understand or define the sacrament of baptism?

For Calvin, baptism was “the initiatory sign by which we are admitted to the fellowship of the Church, that being ingrafted into Christ we may be accounted children of God” (*Inst. 4.15.1*).

According to the definition, the sacrament is an “initiatory sign” by which individuals are admitted into the fellowship of the Church. But the act of being ingrafted into Christ is experienced first in the life of an individual, before the actual occasion of baptism, upon which individuals are admitted into the fellowship of the Church. An individual must first be ingrafted into Christ before being admitted into the fellowship of the visible Church.

In Calvin’s teaching, he advocated the conferment of baptism upon mature individuals as well as Infants. Though according to his definition given above, that faith in Christ is a prerequisite for baptism, so that only mature individuals who confess faith in Christ are eligible for baptism, Calvin stressed that Infants too, though incapable of responding by faith to Christ, needed to be baptized since they are children of the promise, in the sense that they are children of Christian parents who share in the Community of God on account of their faith in Christ. He argued that:

The sacrament is afterwards added as a kind of seal, not to give efficacy to the promise, as if in itself valid, but merely to confirm it to us. Hence it follows that Children of believers are not baptized, in order that though formerly an aliens of the Church, they may then, for the first time become children of God but rather are received into the Church by a formal sign because in the virtue of the promise they previously belonged to the body of Christ (*Inst. 4.15.22*).

Though Calvin did not explain in detail the meaning of each of the two kinds of baptism, it is clear from his arguments that he taught that baptism should be conferred upon mature individuals who have confessed faith in Jesus Christ,¹⁷⁶ and also upon Infants¹⁷⁷ born of Christian parents. Though the two kinds of baptism differ in the sense that, the former is

¹⁷⁶ Individuals who have acknowledged Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

¹⁷⁷ Though Calvin allowed room for the possibility of Infants being brought into salvation through the power of the Holy Spirit, he at the same time saw Infants as immature and not in a position to respond by faith to Christ.

meant for mature individuals and the latter for Infants, the two are conducted in similar forms.¹⁷⁸

Furthermore, as baptism conferred upon mature individuals served as a means by which individuals are admitted into the fellowship of the Church, Calvin also believed “Infant Baptism” was an ordinance through which Infants are admitted into the Community of believers.

From his definition of the sacrament, it is immediately clear that Calvin understood the sacrament as a means of “grace.” Because Calvin refers to the sacrament of Baptism as an “initiatory sign” by which believers are admitted into the life of the Church, this points to the fact that in Calvin’s view, it would be difficult to determine who is a legitimate member of the Church without the sacrament. As we shall see in greater detail later in the study, Calvin understood the Church as an important means of grace through which sanctification of a believer is enhanced. Therefore, every believer needs to be a part of the visible Church. The sacrament is a means through which true believers are known and admitted in the life of the Church according to Calvin. More over, because he believes the sacrament is conferred upon those ingrafted into Christ, it demonstrates how the sacrament is a vehicle that conveyed visibly the inward change in a believer where the transforming work of the Spirit takes place. This is what Calvin taught when he noted that:

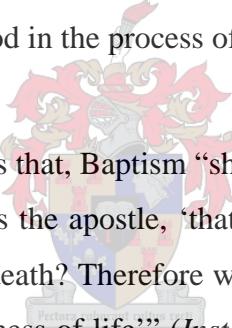
Baptism serves as our confession before men, inasmuch as it is a mark by which we openly declare that we wish to be ranked among the people of God, by which we testify that we concur with all Christians in the worship of one God, and in one religion; by which, in short, we publicly assert our faith, so that not only do our hearts breathe, but our tongues also, and all the members of our body, in every way they can, proclaim the praise of God. In this way, as is meet, everything we have is made subservient to the glory of God, which ought everywhere to be displayed, and others are stimulated by our example to the same course (*Inst.4.15.13*).

Moreover, the sacrament is a means through which “others are stimulated by our example to the same courses,” this further demonstrates how Calvin saw the sacrament to be an important means of grace. As others are stimulated by our example, they are drawn to God through God’s “acts” of grace.

¹⁷⁸ According to Calvin, “Whether the person baptised is to be wholly immersed, and that whether once or thrice, or whether he is only to be sprinkled with water, is not of the least consequence: churches should be at liberty to adopt either, according to the diversity of climates, although it is evident that the term *baptise* means to immerse, and that this was the form used by the primitive Church (*Inst 4.15.19*). Calvin, therefore, advocated any of the above mentioned forms.

How then did Calvin see the sacrament in relation to the sanctification of a believer? It is clear in Calvin's discussion that he saw the sacrament related closely to the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of a believer for the three reasons he outlines why baptism should be observed.

The first reason Calvin gives is that baptism is a “a sign and evidence of our purification, or (better to explain my meaning) it is a kind of sealed instrument by which he [God] assures us that all our sins are so deleted, covered, and effaced, that they will never come into his sight, never be mentioned, never imputed” (*Inst.4.15.1*). The sacrament would never be “a sign of our purification” if the work of the Spirit would not be involved in the purification. The sacrament is merely an external sign of the purification taking place within a believer, pointing also to the ongoing transforming work of the Spirit in a believer. The place of the transforming work of the Spirit becomes clearer when Calvin noted in the section that the sacrament assures us that all our sins are forgiven. As we saw in our study on “justification” (see. section 3.4.2.3), it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that our sins are forgiven and thereby being counted as righteous before God. As the Spirit does all this work in us, He renews believers into the Image of God in the process of sanctification.

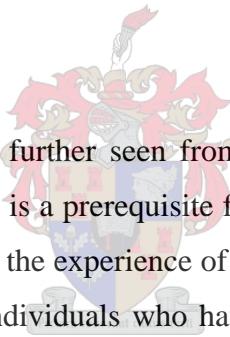


The second reason that Calvin gives is that, Baptism “shows us our mortification in Christ and new life in Him. ‘Know ye not,’ says the apostle, ‘that as many of us as were Baptised into Jesus Christ, were Baptised into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death,’ that we, ‘should walk in newness of life’” (*Inst. 4.15.5*). The “mortification” and the new life, which Calvin discusses here, all concern the work of the Spirit. It is the Spirit that brings forth mortification and the new life in a believer. Furthermore, as the Spirit does the work, He also renews a believer into the Image of God. The sacrament of Baptism for Calvin, therefore, is a pointer to the inward renewing work of the Spirit in a believer. This teaching becomes clearer when Calvin explained that:

By these words [Christ] not only exhorts us to imitation of [him], as if he had said, that we are admonished by Baptism, in like manner as Christ died, to die to our lusts, and as he rose, to rise to righteousness; but he traces the matter much higher, that Christ by baptism has made us partakers of his death, ingrafting us into it. And as the twig derives substance and nourishment from the root to which it is attached, so those who receive baptism with true faith truly feel the efficacy of Christ’s death in the mortification of their flesh, and the efficacy of his resurrection in the quickening of the Spirit (*Inst.4.15. 5*).

From this it becomes apparent that he did not merely see the sacrament as an external sign but as a pointer to the inward renewal of a believer into the Image of God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The third reason Calvin gives is that baptism assures us not only “that we are ingrafted into the death and life of Christ, but so united to Christ himself as to be partakers of all his blessings. For he consecrated and sanctified baptism in his own body, that he might have it in common with us as the firmest bond of union and fellowship which he deigned to form with us; and hence Paul proves us to be the sons of God, from the fact that we put on Christ in baptism” (*Inst.4.15.6*). The “blessings” which Calvin refers to here concerns the entire purpose for which Christ died for us. The saving work of Christ becomes efficacious through the power of the Holy Spirit. Without the power of the Holy Spirit, the death of Christ would never become efficacious in us; hence, we would not be able to be partakers of all his blessings. But as the Spirit makes the work accomplished in Christ efficacious in us, the Spirit also transforms and renews a believer into the Image of God. From this third reason that Calvin gives why Baptism should be observed, it becomes clear that Calvin not only saw the sacrament as an external sign but an activity that pointed to the inward renewal of a believer through the power of the Holy Spirit.

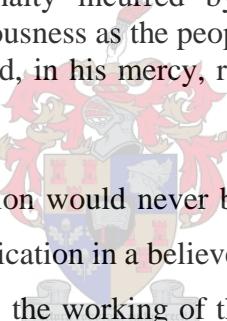


Calvin’s views on sanctification are further seen from his definition of the sacrament. He believed that the experience of Christ is a prerequisite for the conferment of baptism. Since it is through the power of the Spirit that the experience of Christ is realised, it is clear, therefore, that for Calvin, only those mature individuals who have the Spirit already at work in them should be baptised. Yet, as we have seen, in Calvin’s teaching the Spirit begins to work in an individual at the point when repentance begins and continues throughout the Christian life. During the entire process, the Spirit transforms and renews a believer into the Image of God. Those expected to undergo baptism, therefore, not only have the Spirit working in them but experience the efficacy of the Spirit renewing and transforming them into the likeness of Christ.

Moreover, the sanctifying work of the Spirit, according to Calvin’s teaching, is also evident in his attempt to counteract heretical teachings. In his response to the teaching that baptism marked the beginning of the work of the Spirit in an individual, he explained that the work of the Spirit begins earlier, at the point when the process of repentance begins. At Baptism, however, the efficacy of the Spirit is experienced more deeply and thus brings forth further sanctification in a believer. This is the teaching which Calvin advanced when he noted:

Here we say nothing more than the apostle Paul expounds most clearly in the sixth and seventh chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. He had discoursed of free justification, but as some wicked men thence inferred that they were to live as they listed, because their acceptance with God was not procured by the merit of works, he adds, that all who are clothed with the righteousness of Christ are at the same time regenerated by the Spirit, and that we have an earnest of this regeneration in baptism (*Inst. 4.15.12*).

His teaching on sanctification becomes clearer when he later pointed out that, “... if baptism was of God, it certainly included the promise of forgiveness of sin, mortification of the flesh, quickening of the Spirit, and communion with Christ” (*Inst. 4:15:16*). Of course the “forgiveness of sins,” “mortification of our flesh” and the “communion of Christ” all concerns the work of the Spirit in transforming and renewing a believer into the likeness of Christ. Furthermore, his argument earlier established that, through the conferment of the ordinance:

Believers become assured by baptism, that this condemnation is entirely withdrawn from them, since (as has been said) the Lord by this sign promises that a full and entire remission has been made, both of the guilt which was imputed to us, and the penalty incurred by guilt. They also apprehend righteousness, but such righteousness as the people of God can obtain in this life – viz. by imputation only, God, in his mercy, regarding them as righteous and innocent (*Inst. 4.15.10*).

In Calvin’s teaching, this condemnation would never be withdrawn without the efficacy of the Spirit that also brings forth sanctification in a believer. The forgiveness of sins, as we saw in our study of justification, concerns the working of the Spirit in a believer through which renewal into the Image of God also comes forth.

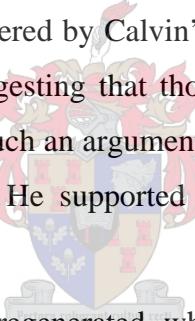
Having seen how Calvin understood sanctification of a believer in relation to Baptism conferred upon mature individuals, it is important to see what his views on sanctification are with regards to “Infant Baptism.” We have noted, in our discussion above, that “Infant baptism,” according to Calvin, is a baptism conferred upon Infants of Christian parents. It may take the same form as that of baptism conferred upon mature individuals though, practically speaking, it would not be possible to immerse an infant in water if the “immersion” is the form adopted.

According to Calvin, “Infant Baptism” is a necessary ordinance. The conferment of this ordinance signifies that children Baptised are born into the kingdom. These children are born into a generation where the curse that affected humanity through Adam is no longer there.

Calvin therefore strongly opposed those who taught against the practice of “Infant Baptism” when he pointed out that:

They seem to think they produce their strongest reason for denying baptism to children, when they allege, that they are as yet unfit, from nonage, to understand the mystery which is there sealed – viz. spiritual regeneration, which is not applicable to earliest infancy. Hence they infer, that children are not only to be regarded as sons of Adam until they have attained an age fit for the reception of the second birth. But all this is directly opposed to the truth of God. For if they are to be accounted sons of Adam, they are left in death, since, in Adam, we can do nothing but die. On the contrary, Christ bids them to be brought to him. Why so? Because he is life. Therefore, that he may quicken them, he makes them partners with himself; whereas these men would drive them away from Christ, and adjudge them to death (*Inst. 4.16.17*).

As already alluded to in this study, regeneration of children in the strict sense of the word did not form part of Calvin’s thinking. He only saw regeneration taking place in Infants when the Infants, through God’s own predestined plan, were enabled through the power of the Holy Spirit. The question, however, as to how children are able to believe in Christ without the knowledge of God, is not clearly answered by Calvin’s arguments. Calvin tied his argument here to the matter of the “elect,” suggesting that those whom the Lord had elected would surely be brought to faith. It is with such an argument that he saw the possibility of the work of the Spirit in regenerating Infants. He supported this by arguing against his critics as follows:



But how, they ask, are Infants regenerated, when not possessing a knowledge of either good or evil? We answer, that the work of God, though beyond the reach of our capacity, is not therefore null. Moreover, infants who are to be saved (and that some are saved at this stage is certain) must, without question, be previously regenerated by the Lord. For if they bring innate corruption with them from their mother’s womb, they must be purified before they can be admitted into the Kingdom of God, into which shall not enter anything that defileth (*Inst. 4.16.17*).

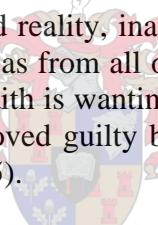
In Calvin’s discussion on “Infant Baptism,” therefore, the possibility of the transforming work of the Spirit into the Image of God is only seen in the case where a child is regenerated through the power of the Spirit through God’s own plan of election. There is no possibility of the unregenerate Infant being renewed into the Image of God through sanctification.

More so, whether conferred upon mature individuals or Infants, Calvin understood the sacraments as instituted by God for the purpose of responding to his work in salvation. Through such a response, gratitude is expressed to him for instituting salvation. As the saving

work is a prerequisite for baptism conferred upon mature individuals,” so, in the same manner, it is a prerequisite for parents who present their children for Baptism.

The exercise is about responding to God in obedience. This is achieved by observing what God has instituted, hence, the observance of the sacrament expresses gratitude to Him.

The theme of “gratitude” also arises when Calvin refers to the way the sacrament relates to the Person of Jesus Christ, God the Father and the Holy Spirit. Calvin pointed out that Christ should be called “the proper object of baptism” (*Inst. 4.15.6*). In the same text, he made it clear that this should be so since all the divine gifts held forth in baptism are found in Christ alone. The exercise of baptism is, therefore, merely a pointer to what is already established or accomplished in Christ. Calvin further noted, “he who baptises into Christ cannot but at the same time invoke the name of the Father and the Spirit” (*Inst. 4:15:6*). Elsewhere, Calvin observed:



In Baptism, the Lord promises forgiveness of sins: receive it, and be secure. I have no intention, however, to detract from the power of baptism. I would only add to the sign the substance and reality, inasmuch as God works by external means. But from this sacrament, as from all others, we gain nothing, unless in so far as we receive in faith. If faith is wanting, it would be an evidence of our ingratitude, by which we are proved guilty before God, for not believing the promise there given (*Inst. 4.15.15*).

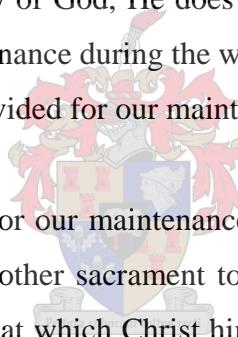
Calvin furthermore pointed out that, “... by baptism we were initiated not into the name of any man, but into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and, therefore, that baptism is not of man, but of God, by whomsoever it may have been administered” (*Inst. 4:15:16*). The exercise pointed to God as the author to whom the glory should be directed when observed. All these references, therefore, point to the fact that the sacrament is for the purpose of honouring God, hence for demonstrating gratitude to Him.

For Calvin, therefore, the sacrament of baptism was an eternal element through which the grace of God is attained, a believer sanctified, and gratitude demonstrated to God. While discussing the sacrament of baptism, Calvin also discussed the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. In the following section we shall explore and determine how he understood the Lord’s Supper in relation to sanctification of a believer in the life of “Grace” and “Gratitude.”

3.5.3 The Spirit and the Lord's Supper

Calvin discussed the subject of the Lord's Supper in chapter seventeen of Book Four of the *Institutes*. From his discussion, it becomes clear how he understood the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in relation to the sanctification of a believer in the life of "Grace" and "Gratitude."

In his discussion, the place of the sacrament becomes evident when he noted: "...after God has once received us into his family, it is not that he may regard us in the light of servants, but of sons, performing the part of a kind and anxious parent, and providing for our maintenance during the whole course of our lives" (*Inst.* 4.17.1). Reception into the family that Calvin refers to here takes place through the observance of the sacrament of baptism. We saw in the previous study that Calvin understood baptism as an initiatory sign through which individual believers are admitted into the family of God. In his discussion here he goes a step further to teach that when we are in the family of God, He does not regard us as mere servants but as sons, and He provides for our maintenance during the whole course of our lives. In which way then did Calvin believe that God provided for our maintenance?



Calvin believed that God provided for our maintenance through the Lord's Supper. Calvin noted, "to this end, he has given another sacrament to his Church by the hand of his only-begotten Son – viz. a spiritual feast, at which Christ himself testifies that he himself is living bread (John vi. 51), on which our souls feed, for a true and blessed immortality" (*Inst.* 4.17.1). According to Calvin's teaching, the sacrament is the spiritual feast of which Christ testified that he is the living bread on which the soul feeds in a life that does not end.

We can understand Calvin's teaching in a clearer manner when we understand what he says about the elements of the Lord's Supper. What did Calvin understand to be the elements used? He understood the elements to be that of bread and Wine. The bread represents the body of Christ and the wine represents the blood of Christ. With regard to the bread, when Christ attested to the fact that he is the living bread, he is simply saying that the physical element of bread is merely a symbol which represents the real body of Christ. Christ himself is the living bread. In view of Calvin's teaching on the element of bread, the same applies to the wine which represents the real blood of Jesus Christ. As these are celebrated, believers are maintained in the fellowship with God. For this particular reason, therefore, Calvin believed

that the sacrament is a means through which God provides for our maintenance. Hence it is a means through which the grace of God itself is attained.

What about the elements themselves, did they add any other value in the celebration of the sacrament apart from representing the real body and blood of Jesus Christ? No, they just serve as signs since they don't constitute the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ. In Calvin own words, he noted:

The signs are bread and wine, which represent the invisible food which we receive from the body and blood of Christ. For as God, regenerating us in baptism, ingrafts us into the fellowship of his Church, and makes us his by adoption, so we have said that he performs the office of a provident parent, in continually supplying the food by which he may sustain and preserve us in the life to which has been begotten us by his word (*Inst. 4.17.1*).

But how do the mere elements of bread and wine exactly become our spiritual food through which believers feast with the Lord? Calvin explains how it happens:

When the bread is given as a symbol of the body of Christ, we must immediately think of this similitude. As bread nourishes, sustains, and protects our bodily life, so the body of Christ is the only food to invigorate and keep alive the soul. When we behold wine set forth as a symbol of blood, we must think that such use as wine serves to the body, the same is spiritually bestowed by the blood of Christ; and the use is to foster refresh, strengthen, and exhilarate (*Inst. 4.17.3*).

For Calvin, therefore, the elements of the Lord's Supper played an important role in the celebration of the sacrament. For this reason, he did not accept any kind of teaching which failed to place any value on the elements in the sacrament. Such reaction is evidenced particularly when he noted:

I am not satisfied with the view of those who, while acknowledging that we have some kind of communion with Christ, only make us partakers of the Spirit, omitting all mention of flesh and blood. As if it were said to no purpose at all, that his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed; that we have no life unless we eat that flesh and drink that blood; and so forth (*Inst. 4.17.7*).

This is further supported later in the chapter by Calvin's argument when he wrote: "But if we are carried up to heaven with our eyes and minds, that we may there behold Christ in the glory of his kingdom, as the symbols invite us to him in his integrity, so, under the symbol of bread, we must feed on his body, and, under the symbol of wine, drink separately of his blood, and thereby have the full enjoyment of him" (*Inst 4.17.18*). For Calvin, therefore, the elements were of great significance and had to be observed by every individual believer.

If this is how Calvin understood the sacrament as constituting a means of grace, how did he understand the work of the Spirit relating to the sacrament itself? Did he find the efficacy of the Spirit in the sacrament?

Yes, Calvin did find the efficacy of the Spirit in the sacraments. He believed that the Spirit worked through the sacrament by making it efficacious in the life of believers. Calvin asserts that the Spirit is the bond that unites us to Christ. With the power of the Holy Spirit, therefore, the bond between Christ and the believers is strengthened through the Lord's Supper. Hence the Lord's Supper is God's provision for our maintenance. Calvin explained in detail how this happens when he asserted:

Indeed, there is no need of this, in order to our partaking of it, since the Lord by his Spirit bestows upon us the blessing of being one with him in soul, body, and spirit. The bond of that connection, therefore, is the Spirit of Christ, who unites us to him, and a kind of channel by which everything that Christ has and is, is derived to us. For if we see that the sun, in sending forth its rays upon the earth, to generate, cherish, and invigorate its offspring, in a manner transfuses its substance into it, why should the radiance of the Spirit be less in conveying to us the communion of his flesh and blood? (*Inst. 4.17.12*).

Without the power of the Holy Spirit, the bond would not exist, hence the sacrament would not be efficacious.

Though we see that Calvin did teach that the Spirit is the bond in such union, exactly how would the Holy Spirit instil such a union since this union appears incomprehensible from a human perspective? The answer to the question is found in Calvin's own argument where he further demonstrated the certainty of the work of the Spirit in effecting such a bond, by pointing out that:

Though it seems an incredible thing that the flesh of Christ, while at such a distance from us in respect of place, should be food to us, let us remember how far the secret virtue of the Holy Spirit surpasses all our conceptions, and how foolish it is to wish to measure its immensity by our feeble capacity. Therefore, what our mind does not comprehend let faith conceive – viz. that the Spirit truly unites things separated by space. That sacred communion of flesh and blood by which Christ transfuses his life into us, just as if it penetrated our bones and marrow, he testifies and seals in the Supper, and that not by presenting a vain or empty sign, but by there exerting an efficacy of the Spirit by which he fulfills what he promises (*Inst. 4.17.10*).¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ In the work of Gerrish (1993), especially in the last chapter (Chapter five), the author discusses the subject of "The Mystical Presence." Though Gerrish is concerned with ascertaining whether Calvin indeed perceived of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist or not, the discussion largely concerns the role and place of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist. If Christ was to be present at all in the Eucharist, then it would be through the power and in the Person of the Holy Spirit. It is perhaps due to the doubts that clouded Calvin's thoughts on the matter that Gerrish entitled the chapter "The Mystical Presence."

Calvin not only understood the Spirit to be the efficacy and power in the sacrament but more so, he understood the Spirit as being the power through which a believer is renewed into the Image of God and thereby sanctifying believers. As pointed out above, when Calvin notes that communion is a “sacred” communion of flesh and blood by which Christ “transfuses” his life unto us, such transfusion would not take place without the Spirit transforming and renewing the Image of God. Furthermore, Calvin noted:

It is not the principle part of a sacrament simply to hold forth the body of Christ to us without any higher consideration, but rather to seal and confirm that promise by which he testifies that his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, nourishing us unto life eternal, and by which he affirms that he is the bread of life, of which, whosoever shall eat, shall live for ever – I say, to seal and confirm that promise, and in order to do so, it sends us to the cross of Christ, where that promise was performed and fulfilled in all its parts (*Inst.* 4.17.4).

The Spirit seals and confirms the promises by which Christ testifies that his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, nourishing us unto life eternal, thus transforming and renewing us into the Image of God. That this key role is played by the Spirit is evident when Calvin noted: “We say that Christ descends to us, as well by the external symbol as by his Spirit, that he may truly quicken our souls by the substance of his flesh and blood” (*Inst.* 4.17.24).¹⁸⁰ The “quicken” refers to the work of the Spirit in the transformation of a believer. The Spirit, according to Calvin, would never quicken our souls without transforming us.

More so, as believers are sanctified through the sacrament, they express acknowledgement and honour to God for the work accomplished in salvation.¹⁸¹ That is the work of God in the salvation of humanity through the person of Jesus Christ. Calvin noted, however, that it is

¹⁸⁰ Hesselink (1997:147), in the section where he discusses the subject of “The Role of the Holy Spirit,” also discusses the subject of the Holy Spirit and the Lord’s Supper. In his discussion, he affirms that Calvin saw the efficacy of the Spirit in the sacrament.

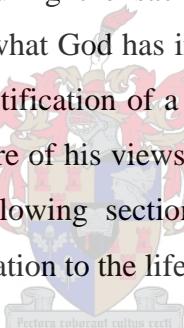
For further study on the sacrament according to Calvin, see the work, *Tracts and Treatise on the Doctrine and Worship of the Church* (1958), pp.163-245; and the work edited by Donald K. Mckim (2004) and entitled *The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin*, pp.193-6.

¹⁸¹ Alister McGrath (1988:194) has commented on Calvin’s thinking on wine in stating, “When we see wine as a symbol of blood, we must reflect upon the benefits which wine imparts to the human body. We thus come to realize that the same benefits are imparted to us in a spiritual manner by the blood of Christ. These benefits are to nourish, refresh, strengthen and gladden” McGrath asserts, ‘Calvin developed the point at length in the *Institutes*, pointing out how we are able to appreciate and enjoy the good things of life. “All things are made for us, in order that we may know and acknowledge their author, and celebrate his goodness towards us by giving him thanks.”’ In his statement here, McGrath, therefore, also confirms the thought that the sacraments indeed constituted an important aspect of the life of thanksgiving to God.

only those who genuinely¹⁸² partake of the Lord's Supper who experience the Spirit working in them to demonstrate honour to God. How all this happens is incomprehensible from a human point of view, but Calvin exhorted that such must be held as true through faith. This is the teaching Calvin meant to advance when he exhorted that:

Therefore, what our mind does not comprehend let faith conceive – viz. that the Spirit truly unites things separated by space. That sacred communion of flesh and blood by which Christ transfuses his life into us, just as if it penetrated our bones and marrow, he testifies and seals in the Supper, and that not by presenting a vain or empty sign, but by there exerting an efficacy of the Spirit by which he fulfills what he promises. And truly the thing there signified he exhibits and offers to all who sit down at that spiritual feast, although it is beneficially received by believers only who receive this great benefit with true faith and heartfelt gratitude (*Inst. 4.17.10*).

For Calvin, therefore, the Lord's Supper constituted a means through which the grace of God is obtained since God provides for the maintenance of believers through it. The Lord's Supper is a means through which a believer is sanctified and renewed into the Image of God as the Spirit bonds believers with Christ during the sacrament. Furthermore, it is a means of gratitude to God as believers observe what God has instituted for the honour and glory of his name. Calvin's teaching on the sanctification of a believer, however, did not end with his teaching on the Lord's Supper, but more of his views are seen on his teaching of the Spirit in relation to the Church. In the following section, we therefore focus on how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in relation to the life of Church as an institution.



3.5.4 The Spirit and the Church

Calvin's discussion on the subject of the Church features large in Book Four of the *Institutes*. The theme of the Church, however, is developed from Book Three where Calvin dealt with the matter of how individuals attain faith and the subsequent life such individuals are expected to live. In Book Four, such individuals are portrayed as forming the assembly of believers, hence being the Church. From the book, therefore, we explore how Calvin understood the Spirit in sanctifying individual believers in the life of "Grace" and "Gratitude."

¹⁸² Those who didn't or do not partake over the Lord's tables genuinely according to Calvin; the sacrament is never beneficial to them.

As we explore Calvin's views on sanctification in the Church, it would be important to point out that the Word and Sacrament constituted an important place in the life of the Church. Calvin saw the visible Church as an assembly of believers and as an institution where the Word and the Sacraments were administered. In Calvin's context, however, it is probable that some of those who constituted the visible Church may not have experienced the regenerating work of the Spirit. This can be supported by the fact that in Calvin's teaching, he endeavoured to instruct the people in correct biblical doctrines with an aim of luring his audience to commit themselves to such teaching. Calvin would not have made such efforts, as seen in the teaching of correct doctrines in the Institutes, if his audience (members of the visible church) were fully enlightened and committed the correct biblical teachings. A clear distinctive mark of the church in Calvin's context was the Word and the Sacraments. In the study of this section, our focus will not be on the study of the Word, or the sacraments,¹⁸³ but instead on the Church as an institution.

Calvin's thinking on the role and place of the Church in the life of an individual believer is clear from the discussions in his *Institutes*. Thorough study of his views, particularly as recorded in Book Four, shows that Calvin believed the church was an important element through which the grace of God is attained. Through the Church God provided for both the spiritual and material needs of his people, hence extending his gracious acts to them. Furthermore, in Calvin's thinking, it was through the preaching of the Word in the church or by the church members that individuals were brought to faith in Christ Jesus.

Due to the important role of the Church in the lives of believers, Calvin taught that it was necessary for every believer to be a member of the Church. The teaching is evidenced when he noted: "... as it is now our purpose to discourse of the visible Church, let us learn, from her single title of Mother, how useful, nay, how necessary the knowledge of her is, since there is no other means of entering into life unless she conceive us in the womb and give us birth, unless she nourish us at her breasts, and, in short, keep us under her charge and government, until, divested of mortal flesh, we become like the angels" (*Inst. 4:1:4*). For Calvin the Church is the visible institution from where believers mature in Christ to the fullest level possible. The teaching is further evidenced in Calvin's own words when he exhorted:

But let us proceed to a full exposition of this view. Paul says that our Saviour "ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave

¹⁸³ The elements of the Word, as well as those of the sacrament, were discussed in the previous section. Since we are dealing with the subject of the sanctification of individual believers in this study, it is in order that the Word and the sacraments be discussed before the Church, as demonstrated in this study.

some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. iv. 10-13). We see that God, who might perfect his people in a moment, chooses not to bring them to manhood in any other way than by the education of the Church (*Inst. 4:1:5*).

In this way, therefore, Calvin saw the Institution of the Church as an element through which the grace of God is attained.

Furthermore, Calvin taught that participation of members in the life of the Church was necessary for their sanctification.¹⁸⁴ As the members become actively involved in the life of the Church, they are transformed and renewed into the Image of God. Furthermore, Calvin saw participation in the life of the Church as a means through which gratitude was demonstrated to God. Since God instituted the Church, individual members of the Church participate in its life, and therefore, acknowledge God and honour him, particularly for his work in salvation and hence demonstrate gratitude to Him.

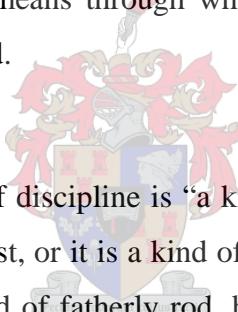
In Calvin’s teaching on the Church, his discussion on the subject of “Discipline” and “Service to the Community” demonstrates how he understood the Church as a means through which the grace of God is attained, a believer is sanctified and gratitude demonstrated to God.

In the following sections, our study will therefore centre on Calvin interpretation, firstly in relation to the subject of “Discipline” and, secondly, in relation to the matter of “Service to the Community.” This is to establish how he understood the Spirit to renew believers through the exercise of such “discipline” and “service to the Community.”

¹⁸⁴ The work of Wallace (1959:195) has demonstrated that Calvin indeed saw life in the Church to be extremely necessary for a believer. Participation in the life of the Church enhanced the sanctification of an individual believer. He argued particularly that “it is obvious that for Calvin the sanctification of the individual, and the growth, nurture and discipline of his Christian life, takes place within the life of the church, and the attitude and the loyalty of the individuals towards the Church is an extremely important factor in this matter.” In a later work (1988:27) he also noted that, “It was Calvin who took the lead in defining the new forms of Christian service and Christian living, of Church and Community life, that under the newly discovered teaching of the Bible, and the power of the Spirit, were now possible and adequate for the task and witness of God’s people in the sixteenth century.”

3.5.4.1 The Spirit and Discipline

Calvin believed that the Spirit sanctified believers through the exercise of discipline. The place of discipline in regard to the sanctification of believers is clearly evidenced from his teachings in the *Institutes*. To begin with, Calvin discussed the subject of "discipline" in chapter twelve of Book Four of the *Institutes*. It is worth noting that his discussion on the subject of discipline comes earlier than that of baptism (discussed in chapter fifteen of Book Four), as well as that of the Lord's Supper (discussed in chapter seventeen of Book Four). In this research project, however, the sacraments of baptism and of the Lord's Supper are discussed earlier, since, according to Calvin's thinking, individuals needed to be baptised before being admitted into the fellowship of the Church, from where they would then share in the Lord's Table. In the order of Calvin's teaching on the successive events that take place in the life of an individual believer brought to faith in Jesus Christ, the two sacraments therefore precede the matter of discipline. Discipline, however, contributes to the life of "Grace" and "Gratitude" whereby it becomes a means through which the grace of God is attained and gratitude toward God is demonstrated.

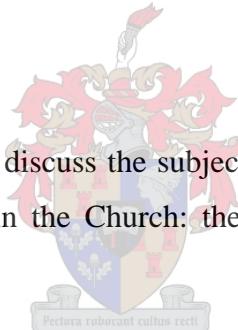


In Calvin's argument, the exercise of discipline is "a kind of curb to restrain and tame those who war against the doctrine of Christ, or it is a kind of stimulus by which the indifferent are aroused; sometimes, also, it is a kind of fatherly rod, by which those who have made some more grievous lapse are chastened in mercy with the meekness of the spirit of Christ" (*Inst.* 4:12:1). Through these words, Calvin advanced the teaching that discipline serves as a means through which God checks his people and keeps them in line with what he expects of them. Whenever believers fail to live in accordance with God's expectation as stipulated in his Word, He uses discipline to remind them of what is expected of them and with an ultimate aim of drawing them in total obedience to him. In this way Calvin believed that discipline would serve as a means through which the grace of God is attained.

Furthermore, as the exercise of discipline is observed, Calvin believed that the efficacy of the Spirit would be deeply experienced, hence bringing forth renewal into the Image of God. Since Calvin understood discipline to be an exercise through which God brings his people into a right relationship with him, the exercise also concerned the work of the Spirit in

renewing believers through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit again would not bring back such restoration without transforming and renewing believers into the Image of God.

More so, as the exercise is observed, God is honoured, hence Gratitude is demonstrated to him since He is the one who instituted the discipline. Calvin saw discipline as an extremely important activity that must to be observed in the Church. Calvin pointed out that: “If no society, nay, no house with even a moderate family, can be kept in a right state without discipline, much more necessary is it in the Church, whose state ought to be the best ordered possible” (*Inst. 4:12:1*).¹⁸⁵ Calvin observed that within the Church, “discipline depends in a very great measure on the power of keys and on spiritual jurisdiction” (*Inst. 4:12:1*). He saw the fellowship of the Church as comprising of young believers as well as those who are mature in matters regarding the Christian faith. He further identified two categories of people within the Church, namely those with responsibility over others and the ordinary people. For Calvin, the Church comprised people with varying degrees or levels of spiritual maturity.



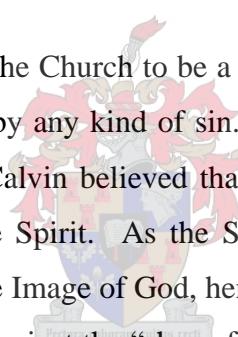
For this reason, Calvin moved on to discuss the subject of discipline under the categories of two the groups of people existing in the Church: the categories of “the clergy” and “the people.”

Calvin asserted that he used the term “clergy” “in the common acceptation for those who perform a public ministry in the Church” (*Inst. 4:12:1*). He therefore referred to those entrusted with the spiritual responsibility of taking care of the Church. He also discussed discipline that concerns all the people, the clergy included. He referred to this latter discipline as “common discipline.” We shall discuss each of the categories, beginning with “common discipline,” to see how Calvin related this to the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of believers.

¹⁸⁵ Wallace (1988:31) noted that, according to Calvin, “discipline is a means through which certain basic, high standards of morality and, indeed, of virtue are set for and expected of everyone. Those standards need not always be clearly defined or written down. They are embodied in the educational system, in the current ideals for family and home life. They are upheld strictly by enlightened public opinion. When the basic standards fail to be attained the erring individual is urged on by encouragement or reproof or by more progressively severe sanctions administered by those in authority who are themselves expected to prove exemplary.”

According to Calvin, every participant in the Church had to observe some good set ways for the purpose of enhancing harmony in the fellowship of the people of God. These good set ways do not come forth without the efficacy of the Spirit. It is through the power of the Spirit that such ways can be lived and demonstrated. He therefore regarded discipline as an extremely necessary exercise in the life of the Church. For him, discipline served several purposes in the life of the Church. It is through the purposes which he outlines that it becomes clear how he understood that the Spirit would sanctify believers through the exercise. He outlined this as follows:

The first is, that God may not be insulted by the name of Christians being given to those who lead shameful and flagitious lives, as if his holy Church were a combination of the wicked and abandoned. For seeing that the Church is the body of Christ, she cannot be defiled by such fetid and putrid members, without bringing some disgrace on her Head. Therefore, that there may be nothing in the Church to bring disgrace on his sacred name, those whose turpitude might throw infamy on the name must be expelled from his family (*Inst. 4.12.5*).



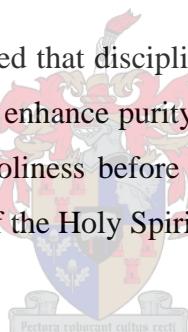
It is evident that Calvin understood the Church to be a holy institution. God would therefore not desire his Church to be defiled by any kind of sin. But how could the Church maintain her holiness in Calvin's thinking? Calvin believed that the Church could only maintain her holiness through the efficacy of the Spirit. As the Spirit works in the lives of individual members, it renews believers into the Image of God, hence making the Church itself holy. For this reason, Calvin strongly argued against the "shameful" and "flagitious" lives that did not bring holiness to the Church of God.

Further, Calvin asserts that, "A second end of discipline is, that the good may not, as usually happens, be corrupted by constant communication with the wicked. For such is our proneness to go astray, that nothing is easier than to seduce us from the right course by bad example" (*Inst. 4.12.5*). Through these words, Calvin taught that discipline ought to be observed so as to keep the wicked (those who have fell into sin or stayed from God's ways) out of the Church so that they might not corrupt the faithful through their ways. In Calvin's thinking, if the wicked shared closely with the faithful, they would corrupt the faithful and lure them to follow their wicked ways. As they would stray from godly ways, the efficacy of the Spirit would be experienced less and they would be given to the wicked ways. On the other hand, if Christians who fell into sin are kept away from the faithful, they would be warned to live according to God's ways; hence, the Spirit would work more deeply in the

lives of the faithful. As the deep efficacy of the Spirit is experienced, the Spirit transforms and renews them into the Image of God.

Calvin also observed, "...A third end of discipline is, that the sinner may be ashamed, and begin to repent of his turpitude. Hence it is for their interest also that their iniquity should be chastised, that whereas they would have become more obstinate by indulgence, they may be aroused by the rod (*Inst. 4.12.5*). Through these words, Calvin taught that the third purpose of discipline is to make a believer ashamed of his wicked deeds so that he would subsequently repent of his sins. The repentance that Calvin teaches here is only realized through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is through the power of the Holy Spirit that such a believer who has strayed from God's way would be convicted of his sinful deeds and turn back to God. Furthermore, in Calvin's teaching, the Spirit does not merely make a person turn back to God but in the process also transforms and renews the person into the Image of God.

From these reasons why Calvin believed that discipline should be observed, it is evident that the ultimate purpose of discipline is to enhance purity in the fellowship of the people of God. Since such purity is about a life of holiness before God, it cannot be realised, even to the smallest degree, without the efficacy of the Holy Spirit.



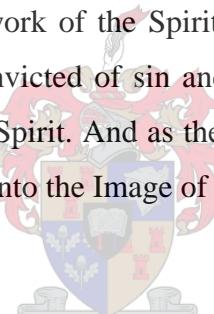
Even while Calvin discussed the subject of discipline, his views were built on the fact that the Spirit is the power through which purity before God can be realised. Furthermore, as the Spirit brings forth such purity, it transforms and renews believers into the Image of God. Though he did not often refer to the work of the Spirit, his views were indeed built upon the work of the Spirit in the Christian life.

For Calvin, the Word was the primary instrument upon which the judgement on the rights and wrongs of the Church were based.¹⁸⁶ As we saw in our study of the section on "the Spirit and the Word" (see. section 3.5.1), Calvin did not speak of the Word without seeing the efficacy of the Spirit upon the Word. So it is the same with Calvin's understanding of the role played by the Word in effecting discipline in the Church. The Spirit works upon the Word to

¹⁸⁶ Alluding to the same idea in the discussion regarding "Discipline Under the Word", Wallace (1959:215) rightly observed that for Calvin, "The Christian life is lived under the influence and guidance of the Word of God. A Christian is one who gives himself up in a spirit of utter docility to the teaching of the Word, to be ruled and disciplined by its precepts, even though its teachings and discipline is alien to our own corrupt nature."

show what is right and what is wrong. Where individuals are deemed to conduct themselves in a manner contrary to Scriptural teaching, the same Scriptural teachings were observed through the guidance of the Holy Spirit in order to show how discipline was to be effected in an individual.

What did Calvin teach concerning the way discipline was to be practised? Calvin's teachings presented one way in which discipline was to be practised, namely, through "excommunication" from the fellowship of believers of the individuals in question. Calvin, however, noted that "excommunication" should be intended for the purpose of the good of the individual and for the fellowship of members. He pointed out that, "the object of excommunication being to bring the sinner to repentance and remove bad examples, in order that the name of Christ may not be evil spoken of, nor others tempted to the same evil courses: if we consider this, we shall easily understand how far severity should be carried, and at what point it ought to cease" (*Inst. 4.12.8*). Here again as we have already seen above, repentance for Calvin concerns the work of the Spirit. Through "excommunication" Calvin taught that the believer would be convicted of sin and repent. Such repentance only comes about through the power of the Holy Spirit. And as the Spirit brings forth such repentance, it also transforms and renews believers into the Image of God.



Furthermore, whenever such discipline was effected upon an individual, the individual was barred from the Lord's Table. The Lord's Table, as we saw in our study of the section on "the Spirit and the Lord's Table" (see. section 3.5.3), is the sacrament that all those baptised and admitted into the fellowship of the Church are expected to partake of immediately. For Calvin, it was indeed necessary to bar individuals who were "bad examples" from the Lord's Table. He noted that this was necessary so that:

There may be nothing in the Church to bring disgrace on his sacred name, those whose turpitude might throw infamy on the name must be expelled from his family. And here, also, regard must be had to the Lord's Supper, which might be profaned by a promiscuous admission. For it is most true, that he who is intrusted with the dispensation of it, if he knowingly and willingly admits any unworthy person whom he ought and is able to repel, is as guilty of sacrilege as if he had cast the Lord's body to dogs (*Inst. 4:12:5*).

Our study of "the Spirit and the Lord's Supper" has shown that Calvin saw the efficacy of the Spirit in the Lord's Supper as a means through which the sanctification of individual believers takes place. Those who were excommunicated from the Lord's Supper were,

therefore, temporarily cut off from the additional blessing in sanctification experienced through the efficacy of the Holy Spirit in the Lord's Supper. On the other hand, when the individuals are finally restored into the fellowship of the Church and allowed to celebrate the Lord Supper, the efficacy of the Spirit would be experienced by them in a deeper manner; hence, the process of sanctification through which individuals are transformed and renewed into the Image of God would continue.

Though Calvin pointed out that “excommunication” was one of the ways in which discipline ought to be observed, he also noted that going about effecting discipline had its complexities as situations varied wherever discipline was exercised. In some situations, the immediate solution could be reached, while in others it could not. For this reason, Calvin stated that he concurred with Augustine in his thoughts on how such discipline should be approached. He pointed out that, “... what Augustine [said was] perfectly true: ‘whoever corrects what he can, by rebuking it, or without violating the bond of peace, excludes what he cannot correct, or unjustly condemns while he patiently tolerates what he is unable to exclude without violating the bond of peace, is free and exempted from the curse’” (*Inst. 4:12:11*). Calvin therefore felt that all had to be done to the best possible level to ensure that discipline was observed among the common members of the Church. If this is how Calvin understood sanctification taking place through discipline practised among the “common people,” how did he understand the matter of discipline with regard to the life and work of the clergy?

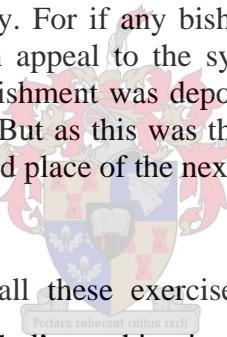
Regarding the life and work of the clergy, Calvin exhorted that, “a similar account is to be given of the other exercise by which the people may either be aroused to duty, or kept in duty or obedience” (*Inst. 4.12.14*). Calvin here was basically looking at those kinds of discipline that may be aroused through the effort of the clergy for observance in the life of the people. Put differently, those kind of disciplines that the clergy may inspire people to do or observe. For Calvin, the clergy, in particular, had a responsibility of teaching, encouraging and guiding people in the kind of discipline that ought to be observed. A detailed description of the nature of this kind of discipline is seen where Calvin pointed out that:

The remaining part of discipline, which is not, strictly speaking, included in the power of keys, is when pastors, according to the necessity of the times, exhort the people either to fasting and solemn prayer, or to other exercises of humiliation, repentance, and faith, the time, mode, and form of these not being prescribed by the Word of God, but left to the judgement of the Church (*Inst. 4.12.14*).

By observing all the above-mentioned exercises, believers are giving themselves fully to the control of the Spirit. And as the Spirit's efficacy is experienced in the life of believers, the Spirit renews believers into the Image of God.

Besides all the other aspects cited in Calvin's own words, fasting was also intended to characterize the life and work of the clergy; and therefore, an exercise through which the work of the Spirit and renewal of believers into the Image of God is experienced. Clergy were expected to exhort people to fast for the spiritual well being of the Church. Calvin urged, "...let no clergyman spend his time in hunting, in gaming, or in feasting; let none engage in usury or in trade; let none be present at lascivious dances, and the like" (*Inst. 4:12:22*). They were to dedicate their time to the service of the Lord. Calvin instructed:

For this purpose, certain annual visitations and synods were appointed, that if any one was negligent in his office he might be admonished; if any one sinned, he might be punished according to his fault. The bishops also had their provincial synods once, anciently twice, a-year, by which they were tried, if they had done anything contrary to their duty. For if any bishop had been too harsh or violent with his clergy, there was an appeal to the synod, though only one individual complained. The severest punishment was deposition from office, and exclusion, for a time, from communion. But as this was the uniform arrangement, no synod rose without fixing the time and place of the next meeting (*Inst. 4:12:22*).



As the clergy gave themselves to all these exercise, they inspired the members to give themselves to living in obedience to God's teaching in the Word, hence giving themselves fully to the work of the Spirit. Through these mentioned offices, the life of the clergy was checked to ensure that they conducted their duties to the standards expected of them. Calvin also alluded to marriage, which fell directly under the office of the clergy. In echoing Paul's teachings, he noted:

I omit Paul's injunction, in numerous passages, that a bishop be a husband of one wife; but what could be stronger than his declaration, that in the latter days there would be impious men "forbidding to marry"? (1 Tim. iv. 3) Such persons he calls not only imposters, but devils. We have therefore a prophecy, a sacred oracle of the Holy Spirit, intended to warn the Church from the outset against perils, and declaring that the prohibition of marriage is a doctrine of devils (*Inst. 4:12:23*).

For Calvin, discipline is an important exercise through which God warns believers and restores them to his fellowship. The exercise must therefore be observed in the Church. More so, Calvin understood discipline as a means through which gratitude is demonstrated to God. Since God is pleased that things be dealt with in accordance to his Word, when

discipline is observed, honour is demonstrated to him; hence, gratitude is offered for his work in saving us.

In conclusion, it must be pointed out that all the topics in this section on discipline concern spiritual growth, and hence, sanctification. When Calvin taught the subject of discipline, he conceived of the Spirit as the central power through which a life is lived pleasing to God and as the power giving guidance through the Word whenever discipline was to be applied. Now, having seen how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in relation to the matter of discipline, we move on to examine how he understood the work of the Spirit in relation to the life of the Community of the people of God.

3.5.4.2 The Spirit and Community

As in the case of “discipline,” Calvin saw the Spirit sanctifying believers as they actively take part in the life of the Community of the people of God. The term, “Community,” as applied here, refers to the fellowship of believers which gives support and care for one another as members of one family. Calvin understood the Spirit to be the source of such care and support. As the Spirit enables believers to care for and support one another, the Spirit also transforms and renews the believers into the Image of God, hence sanctifying them in the life of “Grace” and “Gratitude.” Calvin saw this active participation of believers as constituting a means through which the needs of God’s people are met, hence a means through which the grace of God is attained. Furthermore, he saw such active participation of members as a way through which gratitude is demonstrated to God, particularly for his work in salvation. Through the saving work of Jesus Christ, believers have become part of one family, hence caring for and supporting one another. As believers care for each other, they honour God, hence demonstrating gratitude to him. How does Calvin then develop his argument on the subject from the *Institutes* itself?

Calvin’s discussion from Book Three to Book Four of the *Institutes* has a special message for those who share membership in the family of God. The message is that they, as a “Community” of the people of God, must support and care for each other, especially for the needy among them. Such support and care by itself becomes a means through which the grace of God is attained since through this exercise God meets the needs of his people.

In Calvin's discussion in the *Institutes*, the section where he clearly spelled out the matter of support for one another is found in Book Three, dealing with the subject of the Christian life. We have already discussed the subject of the Christian life in Section 3.4.2.2 and have become acquainted with Calvin's understanding of the Christian life, and how such a life relates to the work of the Spirit in his discussion in chapters six to ten of Book Three. In chapter seven, he focused on "A Summary of the Christian Life: Of Self-Denial." His discussion there centred on "consecration" and the demonstration of "charity."

While Calvin, on the subject of consecration, taught the need for demonstrating a holy life before God, he, on the demonstration of "charity," exhorted that there is a real need for believers to demonstrate care and support for each other. It is from this latter focus on "charity" that his teaching on how believers should take care of each other begins. The theme, however, is developed in the later sections and more so in Book Four. Though Calvin did not often exhort on the need for showing support for one another, his views on the life of the believers as a Community were built on the fact that believers need to care for and support each other, especially with regard to the needy among them.¹⁸⁷ Believers, according to Calvin, have to live to care for and support one another, especially in times of need.

How then did Calvin understand the matter of service to the "Community" and its relationship to the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of a believer? As has been noted from the beginning of our study in this chapter, all the matters that Calvin discussed on the subject of the Christian life were founded on the belief that it was through the power of the Spirit that all aspects of the Christian life came to be. Furthermore in Calvin's thinking, as the Spirit works in the Christian life, it also transforms believers and renews them into the Image of God. Therefore, though Calvin seldom referred to the work of the Spirit in his discussion on the subject of service to the "Community," he did understand the Spirit to be the Power through which believers can effectively give themselves to the care and support of each other. As the Spirit enables believers to give support to one another, the Spirit also transforms and renews them into the Image of God.

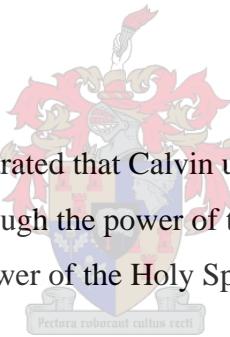
¹⁸⁷ In Section 3.4.2.2 we noted that Calvin focused on "... how difficult it is to perform the duty of seeking the good of our neighbour! Unless you leave off all thought of yourself, and in a manner cease to be yourself, you will never accomplish it. How can you exhibit those works of charity which Paul describes unless you renounce yourself, and become wholly devoted to others? 'Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked' (*Inst. 3.7.5*). His thinking here demonstrates vividly how he saw the matter of care and support for each other as a necessity.

Furthermore, as such support and care are demonstrated, believers honour God, hence expressing gratitude to Him, firstly for his work in creation and, secondly, for his work in salvation. What have we already seen that God has done with regard to creation and salvation?

In his work of creation, God created humanity in his own image. Every individual therefore deserves support and care, not only from God, but also from one another. In salvation, God redeems humanity through his Son Jesus Christ, and those who have already experienced the saving work of God in Jesus Christ must live together as a family, hence carrying each other's burdens as members of one family.

Having seen how Calvin related the issue of service to the “Community” to the issue of sanctification of believers in the life of “Grace” and “Gratitude,” we now give a brief summary of his views. The summary is the focus of study in the following section.

3.5.5 Conclusion



This section of our study has demonstrated that Calvin understood the life of “Grace” and “Gratitude” to be a life sanctified through the power of the Holy Spirit. That is, a life renewed into the Image of God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Calvin believed that the Spirit sanctifies believers through the elements of the Word, Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper, and through that of the Church. Whenever such elements are observed according to God’s direction, the Spirit through them transforms and renews believers into the Image of God. Calvin again understood the elements as a means through which the grace of God itself is attained and gratitude demonstrated to God for his work in creation and salvation.

God’s teaching in the Word is the foundation upon which Calvin’s views on sanctification were founded. It is through the teaching of the Word, that God expects believers to observe all these other elements, beginning with the life of obedience to the Word.

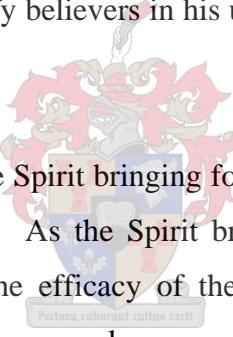
While the Word is the foundation upon which Calvin built his teaching on sanctification, his theme, although beginning in Book One, is only well developed through Books Three to Four of the *Institutes*. It is in these two books that his discussion on the elements of the Word,

Baptism, the Lord's Supper and the Church is developed to relate to the matter sanctification of believers in the life of "Grace" and "Gratitude." It is in his discussion of these elements that it becomes apparent how Calvin saw the Spirit sanctifying believers through the elements.

In concluding our study of John Calvin, it would therefore be important to recap his views on how he saw the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of the Christian man, as a reminder that Calvin indeed understood the Spirit to sanctify believers in "the Christian life" and in his understanding of the Christian life as a life of "Grace" and "Gratitude." This will be the focus of our study in the following section.

3.6 The Spirit in Sanctification

Calvin believed that the Spirit is the power involved in the sanctification of "the Christian life." He also saw the Spirit to sanctify believers in his understanding of the Christian life is a life of "Grace" and "Gratitude."



In "the Christian life," Calvin saw the Spirit bringing forth faith, the first mark of the work of the Spirit in the individual believer. As the Spirit brings forth faith, sanctification in the Christian life takes place through the efficacy of the Spirit through the aspects of faith, namely, repentance, a life of righteousness and prayer.

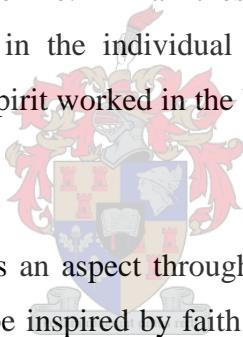
In "repentance," the efficacy of the Spirit is the power through which the process of repentance takes place. Calvin understood repentance as a process of "turning" towards God, a process that continues throughout a lifetime; it is through the power of the Spirit that such "turning" towards God is realised. As the Spirit enables individuals to turn towards God, it also transforms and renews a believer into the Image of God, hence sanctifying them.

In the Christian life, or the life of righteousness, the Spirit is the power through which the practical Christian life is demonstrated. The Spirit enables individuals to live according to God's expectations, hence at the same time transforming and renewing a believer into the likeness of Christ.

Calvin's views of the sanctifying work of the Spirit in a believer become more evident in the study when he pointed out that Scripture supports the argument that a life of righteousness

ought to be demonstrated. In Calvin's teaching, the Scripture would never be efficacious without the power of the Spirit. As the Spirit works through the Scripture in the life of a believer, it transforms and renews a believer into the Image of God.

Furthermore, Calvin pointed out that a life of righteousness necessarily involves sacrifice. The individual who is seeking to live a righteous life must be ready to sacrifice since such a life is not easy to live. It is a life of challenges and one lived through self-denial. In order to exercise such a life, one must be ready to forgo the pleasures of this world since the pleasures of the world hinder us from giving ourselves fully to righteous living. A life of righteousness must, instead, be lived in such a manner that the focus is not on the gains of this life but on the life to come. It is in the future life where true and everlasting treasures are found. Individuals in this life must therefore prepare for the future life. Preparation for the future life entails care and support of the poor and the needy in this life. Calvin strongly emphasised that the poor and the needy must be taken care of. It is in this manner that this temporal life can be well-utilised to prepare for the future life. In all these teachings, Calvin believed that the Spirit was the power that worked in the individual believers, enabling the believers to demonstrate such lives. And as the Spirit worked in the believers, it also transforms them into the likeness of Christ.



Furthermore, Calvin saw "prayer" as an aspect through which a Christian life is sanctified. He taught that every believer must be inspired by faith in pray to God. He saw the Spirit as the power through which such faith comes forth. Furthermore, he believed that the Spirit is the Person who intercedes before God on our behalf. Due to our sinful nature, our prayers do not necessarily invoke God's response. The Spirit is therefore the aid through which our prayers invoke God's response. Furthermore, Calvin believed that the Spirit teaches us how to pray to God aright. We are limited in finding the right words to utter before God in prayer and so it is through the guidance of the Spirit that we present our prayers. More so, the study also demonstrates that Calvin taught and emphasized human responsibility in prayer. During all such activity in prayer, it is the Spirit who is the efficacy and power. As the Spirit becomes part of the exercise of prayer, He renews believers into the image of God; hence, there is further growth in sanctification.

In each of these three aspects of "the Christian life" (repentance, the life of righteousness and prayer), therefore, the Spirit sanctifies us. That is, we are renewed and transformed into the likeness of Christ.

The aspect of justification, which Calvin discussed under “the Christian life” immediately after the aspect of the Christian life and before that of prayer, is a one-time activity and not a process like that of sanctification. The Spirit is seen to function with God the Father and God the Son as One, in imputing righteousness to us. The role played by the Spirit in our justification is equally significant since it is through justification that righteousness is imputed to us; hence, we are counted sinless before God. As God imputes righteousness to us, the Spirit also transforms and renews us into the Image of God.

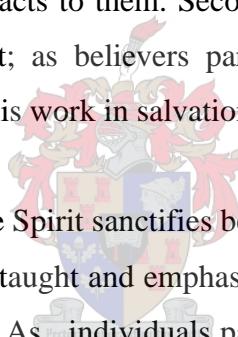
Furthermore, the study has shown that Calvin believed that the Spirit sanctified believers in his interpretation of the Christian life as a life of “Grace” and “Gratitude.” Calvin understood sanctification taking place through the elements he discusses. He also sees them as the means through which the grace of God is received and gratitude demonstrated toward God. These are the elements of the Word, Baptism, the Lord’s Supper and the Church.

Among the above-mentioned elements, Calvin believed that the Word constituted the important foundation upon which the Christian life is built. He believed that the Spirit sanctifies believers as they live in obedience to the teaching of the Word. At the same time, he saw the Word as a means through which the grace of God is attained. This is in the sense that through the teaching of the Word, individuals are drawn to faith in Christ and enabled to live in obedience to God. Furthermore, as believers live in obedience to the Word, they honour God since the Word of God is given by God for the purpose of instructing believers to demonstrate gratitude to him for his works in creation and salvation.

The study further demonstrates that Calvin believed that the sanctification of believers is experienced in a deep manner during baptism. Calvin understood baptism itself as a sacrament which every individual brought to faith through the teaching of the Word needs to observe. He taught that it was necessary for a believer to observe baptism. Calvin understood the sacrament as an initiatory sign through which believers are initiated into the life of the Church. It plays an important role by demonstrating who should be regarded as legitimate members of the Church. As individuals observe the ordinance, therefore, he believed the efficacy of the Spirit was experienced by those baptized in a deep manner. More so, he believed that the Spirit transforms and renews believers into the Image of God during the process. Furthermore, as in the case of the Word, Calvin also saw baptism as a means through which the Grace of God is attained and Gratitude is as well demonstrated to God. It

serves as a means through which the Grace of God is attained in the sense that through the exercise, God draws us to faith, hence extending his gracious act of salvation to us. More so, it is a means through which Gratitude is demonstrated to God in this sense: that since the sacrament is instituted by God, as believers observe it, they honour God, hence demonstrating Gratitude to Him particularly for his work in salvation.

While discussing the sacrament of the baptism, Calvin also taught about the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He believed that the Spirit sanctifies believers through the Lord's Supper. He believed that the Spirit itself was the efficacy and power in the observance of the Lord's Supper as well as the bond of union between believers and Christ. As the Spirit plays such role in the Supper, it also transforms and renews believers into the likeness of Christ. Here again, as in the element of the Word and Baptism, Calvin saw the Lord's Supper as a means through which the grace of God is attained and gratitude demonstrated to God. Firstly, the sacrament becomes a means of grace in the sense that through it God draws individuals to faith, hence extending His gracious acts to them. Secondly, it is a means of gratitude in the sense that it is instituted by Christ; as believers partake of it, they honour God, hence expressing thanksgiving to Him for his work in salvation in Jesus Christ.



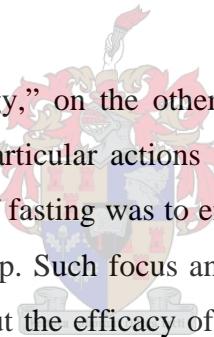
Furthermore, Calvin believed that the Spirit sanctifies believers as they actively continue to be part of the life of the Church. He taught and emphasised that individual members ought to participate in the life of the Church. As individuals participate in the life of the Church, the Spirit transforms and renews them into the likeness of Christ. More so, he believed that the institution of the Church is a means through which the grace of God is attained and gratitude is demonstrated to God. Firstly, it is a means through which the grace of God is attained in the sense that through the Church God draws his people to faith in Christ and also further provides for their needs, hence extending his gracious acts to them. Secondly, as believers participate in the life of the Church, they acknowledge what God has instituted, hence demonstrating Gratitude to him for his work in salvation.

In the life of the Church, Calvin believed, the sanctification of believers takes place through “discipline” and “service to the Community.” This is in the power of the Holy Spirit.

To begin with, concerning the matter of “discipline,” Calvin taught two different kinds of discipline: “common discipline” and discipline that concerns “the clergy.” Regarding “common discipline,” Calvin emphasised that discipline for all believers is extremely

necessary in the life of the Church and ought to be observed by all, including the clergy. When such discipline is observed, believers seek to live according to God's expectations and in fellowship with each other, hence yielding to the work of the Spirit in them. As the Spirit's efficacy is experienced in the believers, the Spirit transforms and renews believers into the likeness of Christ.

According to Calvin, "discipline" was enforced through "excommunication." Those under discipline were excommunicated from the fellowship of the Church and not allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper. To miss out on the Lord's Supper had further implications on the efficacy of the Spirit in the lives of the individual believers, since Calvin saw the efficacy of the Spirit in the Lord's Supper, as discussed earlier. As believers partake of the Lord's Supper, the efficacy of the Spirit is deeply experienced in them, hence the Spirit brings forth further sanctification. On the other hand, when believers are not partaking the Lord's Supper, such sanctifying work of the Spirit is not taking place since the efficacy of the Spirit is not deeply experienced.



"Discipline" that concerns "the clergy," on the other hand, involved the clergy's work in exhorting the members to observe particular actions that move people to worship, such as fasting. The intent of the discipline of fasting was to enable believers to focus on God and to dedicate themselves to him in worship. Such focus and dedication to God in worship is not something that can be realised without the efficacy of the Spirit. It is, therefore, through the power of the Spirit that worship becomes meaningful in such moments of focus and dedication to God; hence the Spirit, at the same time, renews the individual believers from within.

On the matter of "service to the Community," Calvin taught and emphasised the need to care for each other. He exhorted on the need of care and support for each other in the "Community" or the fellowship of the people of God. He stressed that the people of the Community of God must indeed demonstrate care and support for each other. For Calvin, the Spirit is the source and power through which such care is demonstrated. As the Spirit enables believers to demonstrate such care, it also transforms and renews believers into the Image of God.

For Calvin, all these elements form part of the life of "Grace" and "Gratitude." He saw the elements as those through which the Spirit would sanctify believers in the life of "Grace" and "Gratitude."

In summary, therefore, Calvin saw the sanctifying power of the Spirit working in “the Christian life.” He further saw the Spirit to sanctify believers in his understanding of the Christian life as a life of “Grace” and “Gratitude.”

Having seen how Calvin understood the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of a believer, we next move on to evaluate his view of sanctification from the perspective of the Luo of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya. This is to establish how the Luo respond to Calvin’s views already discussed in this chapter.



CHAPTER 4

A LUO CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE ON CALVIN'S VIEWS

4.1 Introduction

The chapter evaluates Calvin's views from a Luo perspective. Though the Luo have embraced the Christian faith and are active members of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya, they are of a different cultural background from Calvin's.

It would therefore be interesting to see how the Luo have responded to the Christian faith and in particular to Calvin's views on sanctification from within their own social lifestyle and cultural context where belief in the ancestral spirits is firmly rooted.

This evaluative study is based on Calvin's views established in chapter three. Calvin's teaching is reconsidered in this chapter and assessed from the perspective of the Luo of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya. It is in this process that the manner in which the Luo beliefs, relating to those of Calvin, will emerge.

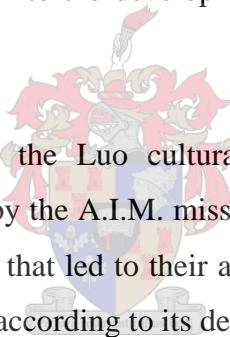
4.2 Relationship: The Luo in relation to the study of Calvin

On beginning this chapter of the study, it is necessary to affirm that there indeed exists a relationship between the beliefs of the Luo and that of John Calvin. The kind of relationship that exists has already been demonstrated in Chapter two, which demonstrated that the relationship exists in the sense that Calvin's influence, particularly with regard to his teachings on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, is seen to have found their way into the Christian beliefs and practices of the Luo. Such influence has in turn had an impact on the Christian faith and beliefs of the Luo. This is in spite of the fact that Calvin lived in a different historical context from that of the present Luos in Kenya. Moreover, the cultural background which informs the views of the Luo also differs radically from the one that gave rise to Calvin's.

Firstly, then, the context of the Luo is far removed historically and culturally from when Calvin lived and taught about the Christian faith and doctrines. While the Luo are actively engaged in the practice of the Christian faith in the twenty-first century, John Calvin lived and

made his contribution to the development of the Christian doctrines of the Protestant Church in the sixteenth century. The time gap between the period in which Calvin lived and that in which the Luo live is nearly five centuries, so the Luo of this present generation are far removed from the time of Calvin's contributions. He is long since dead. His image or the person of John Calvin himself is not known by the people; yet his influence has found its way into the Christian beliefs and practices of the people.

Secondly, the cultural background in which the Luo understand the Spirit is totally different from Calvin's. While the Luo are typically African and at the same time practicing their Christian faith with a background deeply rooted in their ethnic traditional cultural values and practices and with such values and practices influencing the manner in which they have responded to the Christian faith, John Calvin was influenced by his western origin, having been born in France and spending most of his lifetime in Geneva, Switzerland. Calvin's views, unlike those of the Luo, were largely influenced by the western cultural values of the regions where he made a contribution to the development of the doctrines of the Protestant Christian Church.



Furthermore, the Luo people from the Luo cultural background simply embraced the Christian faith as passed on to them by the A.I.M. missionaries. The people were not literally engaged in any controversial debates that led to their acceptance of the Christian faith. They simply accepted it and sought to live according to its demands. This was unlike Calvin, whose views developed from a contentious background. Calvin came from a Roman Catholic background and most of his views were developed in reaction to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. As a result, his teachings were generally considered by the Church as heretical.

A good number of the present Luo of the Africa Inland Church know about John Calvin. They do so through the reading and studying of his works, as well as other literature based on his writings. While some Luos have come to know of him through their own efforts in study, others have heard of him during formal preaching and teaching in Church services, or informally through interaction with people who have knowledge of him.

A good number of Calvin's works are published in English and are available in Kenya. As already alluded to in our study of chapter two (see 2.3.3), the English language is understood by all educated Kenyans as English is the official language used in Kenya and the medium of

instruction in all Kenya's national schools, colleges and universities. Therefore, all educated Kenyans understand the language very well and a number of Luos have come to know about Calvin because of this knowledge. The Luos who are not educated have access to Calvin through those who are educated.

In addition, the Luo also come to know about John Calvin through the Bible and theological institutions affiliated with the Africa Inland Church. As already mentioned elsewhere in this study, there are about twenty-one such institutions in the country. It is in such institutions that the Ministers (Pastors) who serve with the Africa Inland Church are trained. All such institutions are largely founded on biblical teaching influenced by Calvin's theological positions. Those who train in such institutions graduate with at least some knowledge of John Calvin and his theological teachings. Upon completing the training, such ministers share what they know of John Calvin with the people to whom they minister, either through formal preaching and teaching or through informal interaction. Many Luo who know about John Calvin get to know about him through the ministry of such Ministers. It is again mostly through the ministry of such Ministers that the knowledge of the historical background of the Church is accessed by the Luo.



There is however a section of the Luo of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya who do not know that they share in the legacy of John Calvin. This is largely due to the fact that the influence of John Calvin found its way into the Christian practices of the people in a quiet and unexpected manner so that those who have not accessed this knowledge through the means mentioned above would not know of him. As the Africa Inland Mission personnel advanced the gospel to the Luo people of Kenya, they passed on their Christian beliefs to the people, influencing the people with beliefs whose nature and characteristics can be traced back to the legacy of John Calvin. A detailed discussion of how the legacy of John Calvin found its way into the Christian beliefs of the Luo people has already been presented in Chapter two. The Luo who have knowledge of the historical background of the Church also access this knowledge through the ministry of such Ministers. Though a large number of Luos do not know that they form part of the legacy of Calvin, the people indeed form part of such a legacy through the teachings of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya. This being so, how do the Luo understand the concepts of the "Holy Spirit" and "sanctification" on which the study of Calvin is largely based?

4.3 Understanding the Concepts in Luo Thought

In our study of Calvin’s views as presented in chapter three, we dealt with his interpretation of the “identity” of the “Holy Spirit.” That is, who He is, as well as Calvin’s understanding of the meaning and process of “sanctification.”

In our evaluation of Calvin’s views of the Spirit in this section, it is necessary to follow the same order by demonstrating how the Luo understood the “identity” or “who” the Holy Spirit is before focusing on how the Luo respond to Calvin’s views of the work of the Spirit in the process of sanctification. Approaching the interpretation of a Luo’s response to Calvin’s views in this manner will guide us into a clear understanding of how the Luo interpret such terms, and more so, the people’s response to Calvin’s views of the work of the Spirit in sanctification.

The interpretation of the terms, and of the entire scope of Luo views on the Spirit, will be based on the Luo Bible, the *Muma Maler*. Why the *Muma Maler* translation and not the *Muma Manyien Kod Zaburi* translation?

As was mentioned in chapter two in this study, *Muma Maler* is the only Luo Bible existing in “Dholuo” with all the sixty-six books (thirty-nine books of the Old Testament as well as the twenty-seven books of the New Testament). The newly launched translation which was also discussed in chapter two, *Muma Manyien Kod Zaburi*, only constitutes the New Testament books and the Old Testament Book of Psalms (*Zaburi*). It is, therefore, in itself not a complete translation of the sixty-six books contained in the Bible used by the Protestant Churches. Of the two existing translations in “Dholuo,” the *Muma Maler* has more advantages compared to *Muma Manyien Kod Zaburi* when one is engaged in an extensive study of the Luo views since it contains all the books of the Bible. Furthermore, the *Muma Manyien kod Zaburi* translation is largely based on the modern English Bible translation, the *New International Version*. Moreover, it uses the modernised Luo language and is, therefore, inadequate when one intends to engage with the totality of the Luo worldview which is definitely encoded in the original version of the Luo language, especially given the fact that language is a repository of a people’s culture.

In this study, therefore, since the focus is on *Muma Maler*, the translation will be read, studied, interpreted. The manner in which the concepts are translated into “Dholuo” will be outlined and utilised as the basis for the Luo views.

The following section, therefore, deals firstly with the study of the concept of the “Holy Spirit,” and secondly, with that of “sanctification.” It is necessary that the study be ordered in such a manner since it is in the same order that Calvin’s views are developed in chapter three.

4.3.1 The Holy Spirit

The term or concept “Holy Spirit” is known, understood and well established among the Luo. Educated Luos who speak English often refer to the concept in the English language as the “Holy Spirit.” Those who understand Swahili better and therefore prefer to speak in Swahili, refer to the concept as “Roho Mtakatifu.”

In “Dholuo,” however, the term that is used is “Roho Maler” or “Chuny Maler.” In the Luo Bible or *Muma Maler*, the former is the term applied. The noun “Roho,” however, is not a Luo word. It is originally a Swahili word and was borrowed by translators from the Swahili language to refer to the “Spirit.” The probable reason is the fact that the term was actually borrowed from the Swahili translation of the Bible which was took place much earlier than the translation of the Luo Bible. The Swahili Bible was used prominently in the Protestant Christian Churches in Kenya, especially in the Africa Inland Church before the Bible translation into “Dholuo” was completed. Since the term “Roho” is what appears in the translation of the Swahili Bible, it was used in the translation of the Luo Bible.

The eminent Luo scholar and Bible translator Mojola also affirmed the same. He narrates: “... it is interesting to note that for the “Holy Spirit” a borrowed word “Roho” is used. Roho is normally used in Swahili in the same way, instead of the indigenous Swahili word “moyo.”¹⁸⁸ “Roho” is of Arabic or Semitic origin. It is cognate of Hebrew “ruach.”(Mojola, 170:1990). The words of Mojola later came to be echoed by Mbiti,¹⁸⁹ when he noted that the use of the noun “Roho” in the Luo Bible may actually have been influenced by the Hebrew word “ruach,” which is behind the Swahili “Roho” through Arabic.

¹⁸⁸ The word “Moyo” in Swahili is translated into English as “heart.” The word is mostly used in Swahili to refer to biological heart or liver.

¹⁸⁹ Personal Interview on 24th June 2003 in Capetown, South Africa.

In plain “Dholuo,” the noun “Spirit” is translated as “Chuny.” The word “Chuny” in “Dholuo,” however, may be used to refer to a number of things depending on the context, which include the “biological heart” of human beings or living creatures. The Luo, for example, would refer to those suffering from heart sickness as “en gi tuo Chuny” (the person is ailing from a heart disease).

In addition, the spirit is believed to constitute a part of every human being. The activity of spirit possession itself is referred to as “juogi.” Ayayo, in our study of chapter two, rightly observed that “every individual has his own ‘juogi’ (spirit) and it is not worthy that both malevolent and positive ‘juogi’ exist in the same individual. The evil ‘juogi’ assumes the name of ‘tipo’ or ‘jachien’ if a man is dead, while it is known as “Chung- marach” if he is still alive.”

The opposite of “Chuny marach,” on the other hand, is “Chuny maber.” “Chuny maber” refers to a “good spirit.” “Good spirit” would generally refer to any spirit through which one would intend good or wanted to do well. “Chuny Maler,” in plain “Dholuo,” as already noted, would refer to the “Holy Spirit” with the noun “Chuny” referring to the Spirit and the adjective “Maler” meaning “Holy.” The literal translation, therefore, reads “Spirit, Clean” or, otherwise translated, “Clean Spirit,” which in Christian terminology is translated as “Holy Spirit.” In spite of the differing understanding and use of the term “Chuny” in “Dholuo,” the Luo Christians distinguish “Roho Maler”¹⁹⁰ (Holy Spirit) from the other kinds of spirits mentioned, which also include ancestral spirits. When the people speak of “Roho Maler” or “Chuny Maler” they are aware that they are referring to the “Holy Spirit” and the Spirit of God whose story is only found in the Luo Bible – *Muma Maler, Muma Manyien Kod Zaburi* and *Wende Nyasaye* – “songs sung in praise of God”.¹⁹¹ Having established that the Luo do indeed understand the “identity” of “Holy Spirit,” we move on to interpret how the people understand the term “sanctification.”

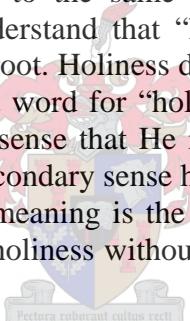
¹⁹⁰ Or “Chuny maler”

¹⁹¹ However, when the terms “Roho Maler,” “Chuny Maler”, “Chuny Maber” or “Chuny Marach” and all these other categories of spiritual beings are referred to in a context where the audience comprises non-believers, it is not easy for them to make a distinction between the categories of spirits referred to.

4.3.2 Sanctification

The English term “sanctification,” which is found in the English translation of the Bible, is translated in the Luo Bible, the *Muma Maler*. In “Dholuo,” the verb for the terms, “sanctification” and “sanctify” is translated as “walruok.” “Walruok” by definition has the connotation of “coming out.” Those being sanctified (“jomowalore”) are those seen to be “coming out” or “being set aside” for the purpose of God. In John 17:17¹⁹² the term “walgi” is used for the English term “sanctify” which denotes an “activity of being removed from or being separated from the rest of whatever people.” Jesus prayed for his disciples that God would “sanctify” them with the Word of Truth (“Walgi gichiewreni kuom adiera. Wachni en a diera”). The term, “sanctification,” according to the Luo can be more clearly defined and understood in view of TAG’s¹⁹³ definition.

The English words “sanctify” and “holy”, are used to translate the same word root in Greek¹⁹⁴ it might have been helpful if the English verb for holiness would have been “holify” and the adjective “holy” to show both English words are related together and refer to the same idea. Despite this deficiency in English, it is important to understand that “holy,” “sanctify” and “saint” all translate the same Greek word root. Holiness describes the very essence of God, his essential nature... The root word for “holy” in Hebrew carries the idea of separation. God is holy in the sense that He is totally other than man and the world. He is separate... In a secondary sense holiness refers to “separation from moral impurity”. This second meaning is the more prominent in the Scripture though one cannot understand holiness without understanding the root meaning of separation (Tag, 2000:119).



In this sense, therefore, TAG views “sanctification” as an activity of being “made holy.” As such, the individuals being sanctified would be those seen as separated from moral impurity and set ready or set apart for the use of God. Similarly, in “Dholuo,” “walruok” (sanctify) denotes a process of “coming out” or “being separated,” but more so being identified more closely to the things of God. Anyone seen to be closely related to God is thought to be living a holy life, so that “walruok” in the final analysis would also denote a process through which one is being made holy as understood in TAG’s definition of the term “sanctification.” The Luo distinguish this kind of walruok from all other kinds of rituals performed for the purpose of purification. In the event, for instance, of an individual being mistaken to have died, and mourned while still alive, if such a person would show up in a home, the ritual of purification

¹⁹² In the Luo Bible.

¹⁹³ A detailed account of what “TAG” is has already been cited in our study of chapter two.

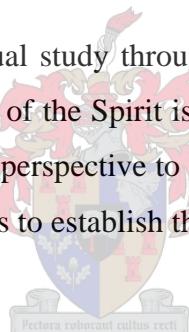
¹⁹⁴ Baur (1957:8) also alluded to the same definition by asserting that “hagiodzo” is the verb, meaning, “make holy, consecrate, sanctify,” while “hagios,” the adjective, means “holy,” “Hagioi” means holy ones or saints.

would be performed on the person. The ceremony would include the use of herbs referred to as “manyasi.” The individual would then be regarded as cleansed. Any misfortune that may befall the person as a result the mourning would not be expected anymore. In such ceremonies, belief in the spirits, including ancestral spirits, also characterises the rituals. The Luo therefore distinguish between sanctification and walruok and cultural values of this kind. Furthermore, according to the Luo, “Roho Maler” is the power through which the process of sanctification (walruok) takes place.

If, as in Calvin’s case, the Luo understand the Spirit to be the power through which sanctification occurs, how then do the people respond to Calvin’s views on the work of the Spirit in sanctification? The answer to this question constitutes the material for the next section.

4.4 Luo and Calvin in Dialogue on the Spirit in Sanctification

“Luo and Calvin dialogue” is the actual study through which the manner in which the Luo response to Calvin’s views on the work of the Spirit is assessed. The study critically evaluates Calvin’s views of the Spirit from a Luo perspective to determine how the Luo’s views relate to those of John Calvin. In addition it seeks to establish the sense in which the two views relate to each other.



As in the case of the study of Calvin’s views in chapter three, this section is organised according to the perspective of “the Christian life” and specifically of “the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude.” Further, the study is ordered sequentially as explored in Calvin’s study, beginning with the perspective of “the Christian life” and subsequently focusing on “the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude.” This is premised on the fact that it is upon these two perspectives that the study of Calvin is founded. To engage meaningfully with Calvin’s views from a Luo perspective, it is necessary that this section be approached from the two perspectives.

However, the aspects and elements discussed under each of the sub-titles outlined in the study of Calvin in chapter three are not discussed individually as is in the case of Calvin’s study but instead treated holistically under its respective perspective.

The rationale for such an approach, obtains from the fact that each of the views, that of the Luo and of Calvin, arises from different socio-historical and cultural backgrounds, motivated by completely different factors. While the Luo simply embraced the Christian gospel as preached to them by the personnel of the Africa Inland Mission and consequently sought to live practically according to the Christian values as taught in *Muma Maler* and explained by the Africa Inland Church, Calvin's views, on the other hand, are greatly influenced by his own Roman Catholic background. Unlike the Luo who imbibed the teaching of the gospel, Calvin on his part challenged contentious issues which he felt were not consistent with the Scriptural teachings. Calvin, therefore, had to deal extensively with each individual aspect and element highlighted in each of the perspectives, that is, on "the Christian life" and of "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude" as a way of rationalising the views for the position he had taken. It is in this sense, therefore, that he had much more to say on each of the aspects and elements.

On the other hand, the Luo understanding of the Christian life has nothing to do with the contentious issues which Calvin had to address since the Luo had to deal with and respond to the issues of sanctification and "the Christian life" and of "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude." Such aspects and elements just form part of the values that the Luo people have to live out in the process of exercising their Christian life. There are, therefore, no controversial issues whatsoever from a Luo cultural background which would repel neither the Luo from accepting the Christian faith nor anything from their cultural background apart from the reality of the saving work of Christ¹⁹⁵ that would make them accept the Christian faith.

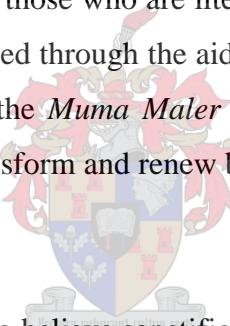
The Luo simply received the gospel of Jesus Christ as preached to them. There is, therefore, no need of complicating the study by discussing all the aspects and elements covered in the study of Calvin under each individual sub-titles as in Calvin's study. Instead, this study will simply deal generally with a Luo response to Calvin's views on how the Spirit brings forth sanctification in "the Christian life" and in "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude" beginning with the former.

¹⁹⁵ The people have only responded to Christianity because it is in Christian faith where salvation is found in Jesus Christ. Christian salvation is not found in the people's traditional cultural values. Controversial issues of the kind addressed by Calvin do not exist among the Luo. It is true that the Luo have their own cultural values that they value including belief in ancestral spirits, but these are not controversial issues that would be similar to those that Calvin was involved in. By asserting that there are no controversial issues from a Luo cultural background, the researcher is referring to contentious issues as was in Calvin's own content and background.

4.4.1 On Sanctification and “the Christian Life”

The Luo of the Africa Inland Church, Kenya, understand the “Holy Spirit” play an important role in the sanctification of the “the Christian life.” They see the Spirit as the power that transforms and renews a believer into the Image of God.

“The Christian life” itself, according to the people, is a life that is practically lived and demonstrated according to the Christian values founded on the teachings of the *Muma Maler*. When a Luo lives in obedience to the teaching found in the *Muma Maler*, both by believing what the *Muma Maler* teaches and by practising what it teaches, the individual is then said to be demonstrating a Christian life. On the other hand, *Muma Maler* is the Book which contains an account of the values which believers are expected to observe and practise in their Christian life. Literate Luos,¹⁹⁶ therefore, simply read the *Muma Maler*, interpret and articulate ideas and apply those teachings to their daily lives. The illiterate Luos, on the other hand, get to know the values through those who are literate. It is believed that the application of values in the *Muma Maler* is realised through the aid of the Holy Spirit. It is in the process through which the values taught in the *Muma Maler* are applied in the lives of individual believers that the Spirit is seen to transform and renew believers into the Image of God, hence bringing forth sanctification.



From what point, however, do the Luo believe sanctification of the “the Christian life” begin? According to the Luo of the Africa Inland Church, the journey of “the Christian life” itself is seen to commence from the point at which the Spirit produces faith (“yie”)¹⁹⁷ in an individual; that is faith in Christ, belief in Christ as one’s personal Saviour who alone can forgive the sin of disobedience to God. The sinful nature is inherited from the first created man as described in Genesis 2-3. One cannot be a Christian, therefore without confessing such faith in Christ. Faith in Christ is believed to be essential for every individual. This is due to the fact that the entire human race is dead in their trespasses and sins. The sin committed by the first man created by God is recorded in Chapter 3 of the book of Genesis (“Chakruok”) in the *Muma Maler*.¹⁹⁸ Adam and Even disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden

¹⁹⁶ These include ministers in the Africa Inland Church through whom the teaching in the *Muma Maler* is taught and understood by the people.

¹⁹⁷ “Yie,” as understood by the Luo, is defined in detail in the subsequent argument.

¹⁹⁸ The story of the first sin is found in the book of “Chakruok” (Genesis 2:15-3:1-24). See particularly the section which states: “Eka Routh Nyasaye nokawo dhano, moketo e puoth Eden mondo opure kendo orite” (vs.15), “Nowachonwa niya, “Oyieni chamo olemb yiend duto manie puodho” (vs.16) “Mak mana olemo

by eating the fruit He had forbidden. They therefore sinned against God through disobedience, hence the effect of that sin befell the whole human race. The Luo do not speculate about what the fruit may actually have been but simply believe that it was fruit in the literal sense.

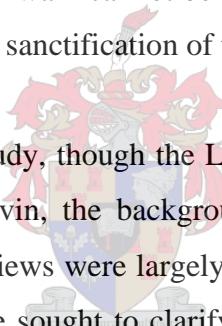
Therefore, it was the sin of eating of the forbidden fruit in disobedience that brought forth separation from God, alienating all of humanity from God. In this spiritual condition, God reached out to provide a remedy so that humanity could be reconciled to God. It is in the Person of Jesus Christ that the remedy is provided. The popular Scripture normally referred to when people are called to faith in Jesus Christ is John 3:16. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” In *Muma Maler* the verse is translated as, “Nyasaye nohero piny a hinya kama, omiyo nochowo Wuode ma miderma mondo ng’ama oyie kuome kik lal, to obed gi ngima ma nyaka chieng.” Those who respond to God by demonstrating faith in Jesus Christ have their sin forgiven; they are reconciled to God and are regarded as Christians. The individuals who have become Christians are thereupon called to live according to the Christian values found in the *Muma Maler*, as enabled by the power of the Holy Spirit. Such a life is “the Christian life,” according to the Luo in the Africa Inland Church.

It is in the process through which faith is produced in an individual that the Luo also see sanctification of a believer to begin. As the Spirit produces faith, it also brings forth transformation and renewal into the likeness of Christ.

Such an understanding of the how sanctification begins in the Christian life and more of the Christian life itself, according to the Luo, compares favourably with the teachings of John Calvin. As in the case of the Luo of the Africa Inland Church, Calvin understood faith in

manyiso ber gi rach ema kik icham, nikech chieng’ michame to ititho” (vs.17) “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it” (vs.15), ‘And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the Garden;” (vs.16) “but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die” (vs.17).’ Also, “Thuol nodwoke niya, “Ngang’! Ok unutho”(vs.4), “Nyasaye nowacho kamano nikech ong’eyo ni ka uchame to wang’u noyepi, mi unubed machal kode, Kendo unung’e ber gi rach.” (vs.5), “Dhako noneno ni olemb yadhno ber chamo, kendo lombo wang,’ mi noparo kaka onyalu miyo ng’ato doko mariek. Kuom mano, nopeno olemb moko, mochamo.Chwore bende nomiyo moko, mochamo” (vs.6), “Kane gisechamo olembego wengegi noyepo, mi ne gifwenyo ni gin duge. Omiyo ne gitwang’o oboke, mi gigeng’orego” (vs.7) (“You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman (vs.4), “for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be open, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (vs.5). “When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and ate it (vs.6), “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves” (vs.7).

Christ to be the first mark of the work of the Spirit in an individual believer. As the Spirit brought forth faith in an individual, Calvin also saw the Spirit transform and renew believers into the Image of God. Furthermore, as is the case with the Luo, Calvin also saw “the Christian life” as a life lived practically according to the Christian values taught in the Scripture and enabled by the power of the Holy Spirit. For Calvin, the Scripture dictated how “the Christian life” was to be lived. The manner in which such a life ought to be lived is only found in the Scripture and nowhere else. The teachings in the Scripture should be fully and appropriately observed. In the study of Calvin, particularly in chapters six through ten of Book Three of the *Institutes*, we saw how the practical Christian living was indeed primary in Calvin’s thoughts. From these particular chapters, Calvin demonstrated most vividly how a Christian life ought to be lived despite the fact that his theme on the Christian life covers both Books Three and Four of the *Institutes*. His strongest emphasis on how a Christian ought to live is found in these chapters. All these teachings are based on the fact that the Spirit is the power through which a Christian life can be lived. Without the work of the Spirit, the Word that must be observed in the Christian walk cannot be appropriately lived. Without the Spirit, the Christian life is impossible; hence sanctification of the Christian life itself.



As already noted elsewhere in the study, though the Luo understand “the Christian life” in a more or less similar manner to Calvin, the background in which the two views arose is radically different. While Calvin’s views were largely formed in reaction to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church when he sought to clarify his argument against the teaching of the Church by using Scripture as his basis and authority, the Luo are simply seeking to live according to the teaching found in the *Muma Maler*. What is in the *Muma Maler* is what the people believe is taught by God (“Nyasaye”).

Moreover, according to the Luo, a Christian life is a unique life in the sense that it is a life that is lived above mere cultural values. Any cultural value that contradicts the teaching found in the *Muma Maler* is considered inappropriate in the exercise of the Christian life. The people understand that when they become Christians, there are certain cultural values that they must forgo or forsake, since such values are incompatible with the teachings found in the *Muma Maler*.

An example of such values is that of the veneration of the ancestral spirits. The Luo Christians believe that ancestral spirits can bring forth neither sanctification in the Christian life, nor the Christian faith itself for an individual. The people know that the belief in the

ancestral spirits is purely a cultural value and has nothing to do with the Christian faith. For this reason, those who have embraced Jesus Christ do everything they can to reject any engagement with the ancestral spirits. They distinguish “Roho Maler” (Holy Spirit) or “Chuny Maler” from ancestral spirits.

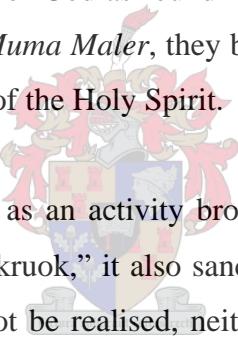
The Luo, therefore, understand that the Christian life must be lived above the mere worship or veneration of the ancestral spirits. It is only then that the efficacy of the Spirit is deeply experienced, with further growth in sanctification. The Holy Spirit is believed to be supreme compared to ancestral spirits. It is the Holy Spirit that brings forth sanctification in the Christian life and not the ancestral spirits.

For this reason, cultural practices that concern the belief in ancestral spirits are seen to be distinctly different from things associated with the Holy Spirit. For instance, the congregation of the Church where people meet for the purpose of the worship of God is seen to be distinct from other social gatherings where attention is given to the voices of the ancestral spirits. In such social gatherings, the people may name their children after an ancestor who was thought to speak out whenever a child is born and cries incessantly. In traditional Luo beliefs, it is believed that the ancestor is the one causing the child to cry since that ancestor wishes that the child would be named after him or her. In Church congregations, the Holy Spirit is seen to be the power and focus in worship and not the ancestral spirits. The Luo would not worship in church through the ancestral spirits. Furthermore, the Luo who have demonstrated faith in Jesus Christ no longer hold to such cultural beliefs, since the Holy Spirit is now held to be the centre of everything in worship, and not the ancestral spirits. However, the majority of the Luo still name their children after the forefathers or grandparents, regardless of whether they are Christians or not.

The Luo who have become Christians, who are therefore expected to demonstrate a Christian life, are referred to in “Dholuo” as “Jo Christo” (people of Christ), “Jomowar” (those who are saved) or “Jo Nyasaye” (People of God). Any of these terms refer to those who have put their faith in Christ through whom they become the people of God.

Faith in “Dholuo” is translated as “yie.”¹⁹⁹ The term, “yie” in “Dholuo,” means literally, “acceptance.” Those who have demonstrated faith in Christ are said to have “accepted” Christ.

The process of acquiring faith (or the process of “acceptance” of Christ), as already noted elsewhere in the study, is seen to be entirely the work of the Holy Spirit (“Roho Maler”). “Roho Maler,” however, does not bring forth “yie” on His own, but through His work through the written Word of God. As the Word is preached, the Spirit works in the hearts of the people (“Chunje Ji”),²⁰⁰ thus enabling the people to understand the Word and to yield to its teachings. “Yie” subsequently is realised. As “yie” occurs, the Spirit also effects “repentance.” “Repentance” in Luo is translated as “lokruok,” meaning “change.” The individual who has repented (“molokore”) is the one who has turned from his worldly ways unto God. The individual no longer seeks to live according to the worldly things, which contradict the teachings found in the *Muma Maler*. Instead, they become wholly committed to live in accordance with the teachings of God as found in the biblical text. As individuals live according to the teachings found in *Muma Maler*, they become transformed and renewed into the Image of God through the power of the Holy Spirit.



The Luo see “lokruok” (repentance) as an activity brought forth by the power of the Holy Spirit. As the Spirit brings forth “lokruok,” it also sanctifies believers. Without the work of the Spirit, therefore, “lokruok” cannot be realised, neither can sanctification (“walruok”) of believers.

The Luo refer to the actual point of the work of the Spirit in bringing forth “lokruok” as the baptism of the Holy Spirit (“batizo mar Roho Maler”). The Spirit is believed to baptise a new believer into the Body of Christ and to continue working within the individual believer. Through such continual work of the Spirit in a believer, further growth in sanctification is also realised. Upon such a baptism, which then leads to a change of life (“lokruok”) in an individual, the individual seeks to live and demonstrate “the Christian life” according to the values found in the *Muma Maler*. The written Word, therefore, plays an important part in the

¹⁹⁹ “Yie” in Luo can mean a number of other things: the term can refer to a boat; it is also used to refer to the payment made to the parents of the girl to be married, or to the man himself. It is the first payment made upon the girl’s acceptance to marry someone. The Luo would refer to those who are bringing the payment as “gikelo ayie” “they have brought acceptance payment”).

²⁰⁰ “Hearts” in Luo is translated as “Chuny.” “Spirit of man” is also termed “Chung.” In this case, “Chung” is used to refer to the spirit of people.

demonstration of the Christian life among the Luo. It is the Word that tells the believer how the Christian life ought to be lived. More so, as the Word is obeyed in the Christian life, the Spirit works through the Word to transform and renew a believer into the Image of God.

The Luo also believe that the Spirit sanctifies them as they demonstrate their dependence on God in the process of living their Christian life through the activity of prayer (“lemo”). The Luo pray to God (“Nyasaye”) to guide them in their daily activities, as “Nyasaye” is the creator of everything and the sustainer of life. In the activity of “lemo,” the “Roho Maler” is present with the people, and more so the power through which believers are transformed and renewed into the Image of God. The people see “Roho Maler” as the aid through whom their prayer requests are presented to “Nyasaye” to invoke “Nyasaye’s” response. The Luo believe that they are limited in themselves due to their sinful nature in humanity, so without the aid of the Spirit, their prayers would not necessarily invoke God’s response.

The activity of “justification” through which Calvin saw a believer transformed and renewed into the Image of God, however, is only translated in “Dholuo” as “winjrouk” (Being in good relationship). The relationship in this case is with God. It is believed to be initiated by God. The process through which such a relationship develops is believed to be characterised by the work of the Spirit in transforming and renewing a believer into the Image of God. Though the Luo do not see justification as constituting a process through which a believer is sanctified, they believe a believer is renewed into the Image of God by the work of the Spirit in justification.

In the process of the demonstration of the Christian life, the Spirit is not only said to bring forth “yie,” effect “lokruok,” aid the prayers which are accepted by God, and also function with God in imputing justification, but the Holy Spirit is also seen as a distinct and all-powerful Spirit above the ancestral spirits. In the moments when they are confronted with calamities, the people pray to God in the name of Jesus Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Luo know that “Roho Maler” does not bring forth “Chuny Marach” (bad spirit), the kind of spirit which the Luo know bring forth “Chuny Marach” is therefore not “Roho Maler” but spirits already discussed in chapter two which characterise the cultural beliefs of the Luo people of Kenya.²⁰¹

²⁰¹ S. A. Moreau (1990) published the work *The world of the spirits: A biblical study in African context*. The work covers a study of the spirits that are believed to exist by African people, compared to Biblical teachings. The study, however, just deals generally with African beliefs compared to Biblical concepts. The work is useful in the sense that it demonstrates how biblical values are uniquely distinct from cultural values.

Such Luo understanding of how sanctification comes about in the Christian life, and more so, “the Christian life” itself in the Africa Inland Church, compared to Calvin’s understanding, demonstrates that the Luo understand the role of the Spirit in the sanctification of the Christian life, and “the Christian life” itself more or less in the same manner as shown in Calvin’s teaching.

What about a Luo understanding of sanctification in relation to the elements through which Calvin understood the Grace of God to be attained and Gratitude demonstrated to God for his works in creation and salvation? Did the Luo here again understand the Spirit to sanctify believers through such elements as Calvin did? In the following section, this is the subject that is explored.

4.4.2 On “the Christian Life as a Life of Grace and Gratitude”

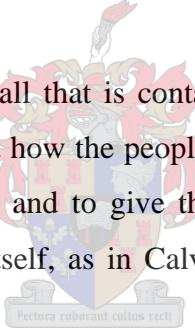
We began the study of Calvin’s understanding of the Christian life as a life of “Grace” and “Gratitude” by defining what is meant by the life of “Grace” and “Gratitude.” We saw that, by a life of “Grace” we refer to the life that God has passed on to humanity apart from humanity producing it. This is the life acquired through faith in Jesus Christ. After humanity sinned and fell, God graciously sent Jesus Christ to die on behalf of humanity, in order to redeem humanity so that man may be reconciled to Him. Though humanity did not deserve this life, they obtained it. This is the life which Calvin understood as a life of “Grace.”

Furthermore, by the term life of “Gratitude,” we noted that it is a life that, as lived, expresses honour to God, hence gratitude to Him for his work in creation and salvation. In creation God has brought everything into existence, while, in salvation, he has redeemed humanity through his Son Jesus Christ. For Calvin, therefore, Life (the Christian life) that results from faith in Christ must be lived to demonstrate gratitude to God for his work in the two areas. The Christian life that results from faith in Christ is what Calvin understood as a life of “Grace” and “Gratitude.”

In beginning to study the Luo in this section, it is important to state that the Luo also understand the Christian life to be a life of “Grace” and “Gratitude.” They understand that the Christian life is a life of “Grace” in the sense that it has been passed on to them by God without them producing it. Secondly, it is a life of “Gratitude,” since they believe that the life

as lived must demonstrate honour, hence thanksgiving, to Him for his work in creation and more so in salvation. The Luo therefore interpret the life of “Grace” and “Gratitude” in the same manner as “Calvin” did. How then do the Luo respond to Calvin’s views on the life of “Grace” and “Gratitude”?

To begin with, the elements discussed in the study of Calvin through which Calvin believed sanctification of believers to take place, are also seen to constitute the Christian life and practices of the Luo Christians. These elements are those of the Word, baptism, the Lord’s Supper and the Church. In our study of this section, we therefore discuss each sequentially as outlined since this is the same order in which the elements are discussed in the study of Calvin. We desire to see how the Luo interpret each with regard to the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of individual believers. Moreover, the study of this section seeks to interpret how the Luo understand each in relation to Calvin’s understanding of the manner in which the grace of God is attained and gratitude demonstrated to God. We begin our discussion here with the element of the Word.

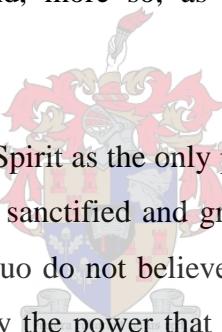


The Word, as already pointed out, is all that is contained in the *Muma Maler*. The Word teaches about God, and more so, about how the people of God are expected to live. Through the Word, people come to know God and to give themselves to live in accordance in his expectations. In this way, the Word itself, as in Calvin’s case, is seen as a means through which Grace is attained.

Furthermore, the Luo understand that the Spirit is the power that works through the Word, hence bringing forth sanctification in believers. Firstly, the Spirit and the Word are more or less synonymous in the sense that, whenever the Word speaks, the Spirit also speaks. Often when a Luo preacher preaches through the Word, the preacher would say: “Roho mar Nyasaye wacho niya...” (The Spirit of God says this...), conveying the idea that the Spirit is the power who communicates through the Word. It is through the work of the Spirit upon the Word that faith (“yie”) is derived. This has already been discussed in the above section. As the Word is preached, the Spirit works upon the Word and in the life of the individual, enabling that person to understand the Word who yields to it in submission. As the Spirit enables individuals to understand and yield to the Word, it also transforms and renews the persons into the Image of God, hence bringing forth sanctification. The Luo do not believe that the Spirit can work in them without bringing forth transformation and renewal into the Image of God.

More so, in seeking to live in obedience to the Word, the people acknowledge God for his works in creation and salvation, hence demonstrating gratitude to Him. The Luo understand that those who do not live in obedience to the Word do not honour God nor demonstrate gratitude to him. The Luo would always talk of “giving God the glory” (“Miyo Nyasaye duong”). “Miyo Nyasaye duong” is an activity achieved by living in obedience to God’s Word. As the people live in obedience to God’s Word, they therefore demonstrate thanks to God, for He is the creator of the heavens and the earth and He brings forth salvation to humanity through Jesus Christ. In this way, therefore, the Luo see the Word as a means through which Gratitude is demonstrated to God.

Such interpretation of the Word in relation to the work of the Spirit, by the Luo Christians of the Africa Inland Church, is similar to Calvin’s interpretation. Calvin also understood the Word as the means through which the Grace of God is attained, a believer is transformed and renewed into the Image of God and, more so, as a means through which gratitude is demonstrated to God in being obeyed.



Furthermore, the Luo understand the Spirit as the only power through which the grace of God (“Nyasaye”) is attained, a believer is sanctified and gratitude is demonstrated to God as the Spirit works upon the Word. The Luo do not believe that the ancestral spirits inspire such acts or activities, or that they are they the power that works through the Word. The people, therefore, see sanctification in the life of Grace and Gratitude purely as the result of the work of the “Roho Maler” (Holy Spirit) through the Word.

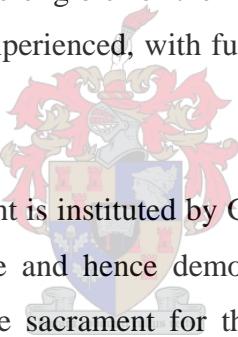
By the work of the Spirit through the Word, the individuals brought to faith in Christ are subsequently required to undergo baptism (“batizo”).²⁰² The baptism is understood and observed exactly in the same manner as taught by the Africa Inland Church. We already discussed the manner in which the Africa Inland Church understands and observes the sacrament in chapter two of our study. In the study of the chapter, we noted that the Church confers baptism upon mature individuals and also dedicates Infants. Infant Dedication²⁰³ is observed instead of Infant baptism as the Church does not baptise children.

²⁰² The Luo refer to this kind of baptism as water baptism. This is the manner in which the Africa Inland Church refers to the baptism.

²⁰³ The occasion of dedication, as already outlined in Chapter two of the study, occurs during the Sunday morning congregational service of worship. On that occasion, prayers are offered by the ordained minister in thanksgiving to God for the birth of the child and in dedicating the child to God for His care. Prayer is also

With regard to Baptism conferred upon mature individuals, therefore, the Luo also see this exercise as an activity that symbolises the individual's Dying and Rising with Christ. The individual is seen as having died to sin and made alive again in Christ. The exercise is conducted through immersion. As the exercise is observed, believers (both baptised and witnesses) are inspired to yield more in faith to Christ. Because it serves as a means through which people are drawn to faith in Christ, the Luo see the exercise as a means through which the Grace of God is attained, since, through it, God's gracious acts of salvation through Baptism is extended to them. What about the sacrament in relation to the sanctification of a believer? Do the Luo see the sacrament as contributing in any way to the sanctification of a believer?

Yes, the Luo indeed see the sacrament to relate closely to the sanctification of a believer. To begin with, according to the Luo, it is only those in whom the Spirit has already worked, in granting them faith in Christ, who are eligible for the Baptism. At the occasion of Baptism, the efficacy of the Spirit is deeply experienced, with further transformation and renewal into the Image of God.



More so, for the Luo, as the sacrament is instituted by God himself, individuals, in observing it, acknowledge what God has done and hence demonstrate gratitude to him. The Luo, therefore, do not merely observe the sacrament for the sake of observing it, but with an ultimate goal of expressing thanks to God, particularly for the work of salvation accomplished through Christ.

Such Luo understanding of baptism is again similar to Calvin's teaching on baptism conferred upon mature individuals. Calvin, as we have seen, understood baptism as an ordinance through which the Grace of God is attained, a believer sanctified and Gratitude is demonstrated to God.

The difference in Calvin's understanding of baptism is found in the area of Infant Baptism. While Calvin taught and emphasised the need to Baptise children, the Luo of the Africa

offered for the parents of the child, for God's care and wisdom to be granted to the parents who bring up the child. The prayer is not directed to God for bringing the child to saving knowledge of Christ but merely for God's guidance.

Inland Church do not Baptise children but instead dedicate them to the Lord. Infant Baptism as taught by Calvin, however, took the form as that conferred upon mature individuals.

Furthermore, a difference found in Calvin's teaching on the subject, compared to that of the Luo, is seen in this, that, while Calvin saw the possibility of the Infants being saved or brought to faith in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit on that occasion, the Luo do not see the possibility of children who are being dedicated to the Lord being brought to faith in Christ. Though the Spirit is present at the ceremony of dedication, it is not expected that He would bring Infants to the saving knowledge in Christ.

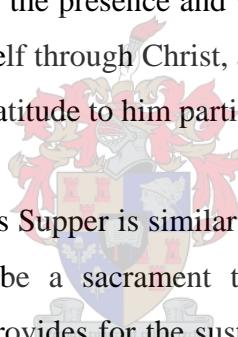
It is significant to note that the Luo believers in the Africa Inland Church make a clear distinction between the practice of dedication of children and the naming ceremony of children where ancestral spirits are seen to play important roles. This was already alluded to in the above section, which discussed this aspect of Luo cultural values. At the occasion of the dedication of children, the Luo in the Africa Inland Church only acknowledge the Holy Spirit being involved, not the ancestral spirits which are part of the naming ceremony of Infants. When a child is named after an ancestor at the request of such an ancestor, it is also expected that the spirit of such an ancestor will watch over and guard the child. Luo Christians, however, though a child may be named after an ancestor, never believe that the spirit of the ancestor will watch over the child, since the Holy Spirit is believed to watch over the life of the child, especially as the parents continuously pray for the child.

After Baptism, the Luo Christians in the Africa Inland Church become eligible to partake in the Lord's Supper. Only those who are Baptised are eligible for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Here again, the Luo observe the Lord's Supper as taught in the Africa Inland Church and as already outlined in Chapter two of the study. Those who have any known sin are expected to refrain from partaking of the Lord's Supper. The text usually referred to at the occasion of the Lord's Supper is I Corinthians 11:17-33²⁰⁴ where the Apostle Paul teaches on the Lord's Supper. The elements taken during the Supper normally involve baked wheat bread to symbolise the body of Jesus Christ and any soft drink to symbolise the blood of Jesus Christ. The Supper itself is seen as a means through which the Lord maintains his people in the right fellowship with him and other believers. Since the Supper itself was instituted by Christ, it is seen as a means through which the Grace of God is attained since God extends his Gracious acts to his people by providing the Supper for their sustenance. How do the Luo

²⁰⁴ In *Muma Maler*, 1 Jo-Korintho 11:17-30.

understand the Sacrament in relation to the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of a believer? Do the Luo see the Sacrament as constituting a means through which a believer is sanctified?

Yes, the Luo see the sacrament as a means through which a believer is sanctified. The Holy Spirit is thought to be present and working in the lives of the people on the occasion of celebrating of the Lord's Supper. Such efficacy of the Spirit is believed to bring forth transformation and renewal of believers into the Image of God. The elements of bread and wine are simply taken in remembrance of the crucifixion and death of Christ. No any other mystical work of the Spirit is seen in the celebration of the ordinance apart from the perceived work of the Holy Spirit in transforming and renewing believers into the Image of God. Due to the presence of the Spirit among the people on the occasion, they understand that the activity and occasion of the Supper is a sacred occasion where no form of sin is accepted. Individuals, therefore, confess their sins before partaking of the elements of the Holy Communion to ensure harmony with the presence and work of the Spirit. More so, since the sacrament is instituted by God Himself through Christ, as the Luo observe the ordinance, they honour God, hence demonstrating gratitude to him particularly for his work in creation.



This Luo understanding of the Lord's Supper is similar to Calvin's interpretation. Calvin also understood the Lord's Supper to be a sacrament through which the grace of God is maintained, since God, through it, provides for the sustenance for his people, as a sacrament through which a believer is sanctified and as a means through which gratitude is demonstrated to God, like the Luo do, although Calvin saw more of the mystical union of Christ with the individual through the Eucharist. He saw the Spirit as the vivid bridge or point of union between Christ and the individual members of the Church.

The Luo Christians of the Africa Inland Church, compared to the traditional Luo who accept the cultural practices involving ancestral spirits, make a distinction between the Lord's Supper and such traditional Luo practices. An example of this is the pouring of libations to the ancestral spirits. Culturally, the Luo believe that the ancestors, though physically dead, continue to commune with the living in the daily meals. Remains of served food are normally poured out for the spirits since they are expected to feed, just like the living. The Luo Christians of the Africa Inland Church, however, do not believe that ancestral spirits are involved in the Lord's Supper. The Luo Christians know that the Lord's Supper is primarily intended for the purposes of God, as the Holy Spirit of God Himself is involved in it.

Furthermore, similar to what we saw in studying Calvin, the Luo see the Church as the institution that serves as a means through which the grace of God is attained, a believer sanctified and gratitude demonstrated to God. How, then, do the Luo interpret the role of the church in each of these areas?

Firstly, they see the Church as a means through which the Grace of God is attained since God, through the Church, meets both the spiritual and physical needs of his people. This takes place when members are nurtured to grow spiritually through the preaching of the Word in the Church and members demonstrate care and material support for each other. It is God who is believed to provide all these through the mentioned sources. What about the sanctification of believers? How do the Luo see the Spirit sanctifying believers through the Church?

The Luo indeed see the Spirit sanctifying believers through the Church. Though the notion of the “Universal Church” of Christ exists in the thoughts of the Luo, the work of the Spirit is vividly seen in the congregational meetings and among the community of believers. In the Africa Inland Church, such congregational meetings, as already noted in chapter two of our study, are referred to as Local Churches. The people believe that the Holy Spirit is present in the Church and indwells individual believers. As believers therefore join together in worship and praise to God, they experience the efficacy of the Spirit deeply, hence the process through which they are transformed and renewed into the Image of God. More so, the Luo see the Church as a means through which gratitude is demonstrated to God. As members become part of the life of the Church, they join as commanded by God. In their participation in the life of the Church, they offer thanks to God, particularly for his work in salvation through Christ who is the head of the Church, hence demonstrating gratitude to him. Like Calvin, the Luo also see the Spirit to be the power present in the life of the Church.

Further, in studying Calvin, we saw that Calvin, from within the life of the Church, saw sanctification of believers to take place through “discipline” and “service to the Community.” In this section on the Church, we, therefore, begin by discussing how the Luo respond to Calvin’s views on the matter of “discipline” before focusing on “service to the Community”.

To begin with, similar to what we saw in Calvin’s teaching, the Luo engage in “discipline” in two dimensions: the kind of discipline practised when individuals have contravened the

Church laws and the kind of discipline involving worship such as fasting. Both of these kinds of discipline are therefore viewed as important by the Luo.

First, we discuss the matter of discipline concerned when individuals have contravened the Church laws and requirements as stipulated in the Church's constitution and as found in the Scripture. Examples of such matters which call for discipline among the Luo include cases concerning individuals who are found guilty of engaging in cultural practices such as those of wife inheritance. Among the traditional Luo, the widow of a man who dies, is expected to be "inherited" ("Tero") by someone else, in most cases a close relative. If this is not done, it is seen as against the customary laws and the wishes of ancestors. The Luo Christians, however, do not expect a Luo Christian man to inherit such a widow if he is already married and his wife is alive. If it happens that such a person inherits the widow, then such a person would be liable for Church discipline since this practice is understood to be contrary to Scriptural teachings. Though the Luo come from a cultural background where polygamy was largely practiced, as we have seen in Chapter two of our study, those who have become Christians are not permitted to have more than one wife. Such would be treated as adultery, which is against the teachings found in the *Muma Maler*, and the individual involved would be disciplined. How do all these relate to the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of a believer? The Luo believe that individuals experiencing the efficacy of the Spirit in a profound manner would not be involved in such acts that are forbidden in the Church. They therefore see individuals engaging in such acts as experiencing lesser efficacy of the Spirit, hence achieving minimal growth in sanctification.

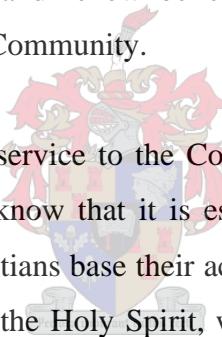
Furthermore, as found in Calvin's teaching, the Luo also excommunicate those found guilty of contravening Church laws. The purpose of excommunication, however, is to restore the individuals in question to the fellowship of the Church where they would then experience the efficacy of the Spirit in a deeper manner, hence with further growth in sanctification. Calvin, as we have seen observed that "the object of excommunication is to bring the sinner to repentance and to remove bad examples, in order that the name of Christ may not be evil spoken of, nor others tempted to the same evil courses: if we consider this, we shall easily understand how far severity should be carried, and at what point it ought to cease." This also is the reason why the Luo observe discipline. It is, therefore, expected that during the course of discipline the individual would confess, change and be restored to fellowship to experience further growth in sanctification through the efficacy of the Spirit.

The place of the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of believers is also evidenced in the sense in which the Luo respond to Calvin's views with regard to the matter of discipline in relation to the Lord's Supper. The Luo of the Africa Inland Church, as in Calvin's case, do not allow those under discipline to partake of the Lord's Supper, yet, as we saw in studying Calvin and the Luo concerning the Lord's supper, both see the Spirit to sanctify believers through the sacrament. When individuals are not allowed to partake at the Lord's Table, they don't experience the deep efficacy of the Spirit, hence there is no further growth in sanctification. The Lord's Supper is regarded as sacred and those under discipline can only be expected to rejoin in the Lord's Supper after discipline is lifted. Furthermore, the efficacy of the Spirit is involved in the exercise of discipline in the sense that discipline is applied against any action or behaviour that is deemed to grieve the Holy Spirit. So, if the Spirit is not grieved, he is in full control of his life and discipline is not expected. This is similar to the understanding or teaching of Calvin with regards to this kind of discipline.

On the matter of "discipline" with regard to worship, the Luo Christians dedicate time for worship and fasting for the purpose of directing full attention to God. On such occasions, the people vividly experience themselves to be in the presence and under the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit enables the people to pray earnestly to "Nyasaye." During such moments, the Spirit transforms and renews believers into the Likeness of Christ, hence bringing forth sanctification. Comparison with Calvin's teachings shows that Calvin taught the same thing with regard to this kind of discipline. The Luo, therefore, interpret discipline in the same manner as Calvin.

With regard to the Luo cultural background, when prayers are offered to "Nyasaye," the Luo Christians make a clear distinction in worship and fasting compared to the practice of prayers offered to God from the traditional cultural point of view. The Luo Christians worship God through Christ, with the Spirit as the power enabling them to worship God effectively. On the other hand, from a Luo cultural point of view, the people worshipped and prayed to "Nyasaye" with the ancestral spirits having a vital role to play in their worship. The Luo of the Africa Inland Church do not involve the ancestral spirits in their worship of "Nyasaye" but only worship through Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is seen as the vital power at work during such occasions. The people, therefore, go through the activity of fasting with the idea of being sanctified and made holy before God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, as in Calvin's teaching, Luo Christians observe and see "service to the Community" as a means through which believers are transformed and renewed into the Image of God. The Luo function as a Community, seeing each as being part of the other, hence caring for each other and carrying each other's burdens. There are a number of practices within the congregations which vividly demonstrate the fact that people indeed live to bear each other's burdens. Examples of these include weddings, misfortunes such as sickness, death and the like. When such an event occurs, people pull together to assist each other, particularly those who are affected. It is thought that those who are not moved to carry each other's burdens are not under the full control of the Holy Spirit and are therefore not able to see the need. The Holy Spirit is therefore seen as the power through which service to the Community is effectively realised. In the process, the Spirit is believed to renew and transform believers into the likeness of Christ. Compared to Calvin's teachings, it is indeed clear that the Luo understand the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of believers to also occur through the matter of service to the Community, in the same manner as Calvin who also understood the Spirit to transform and renew believers into the Image of God as they effectively engaged in service to the Community.



In the Luo culture, the practice of "service to the Community" is not unknown. The Luo, even those who are not Christians, know that it is essential to assist each other. The only difference is that those who are Christians base their actions on the teaching found the *Muma Maler* and more so on the power of the Holy Spirit, while those who are not Christians are simply doing so because it is a cultural demand. They do not believe the teaching of the *Muma Maler* concerning the Holy Spirit's involvement in their service to the Community.

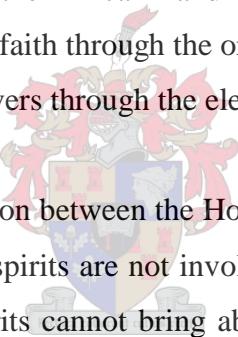
Having seen how the Luo Christians of the Africa Inland Church respond to Calvin's view on "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude," we now move on to summarise briefly how the Luo respond to Calvin's understanding of the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of "the Christian life" and in his understanding of the Christian life as a life of "Grace" and "Gratitude." This will be the focus of this study in the following section.

4.4.3 Conclusion

John Calvin's teaching on the sanctification of "the Christian life" and of "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude" is well accepted among the Luo Christians. Firstly, like Calvin understood the Christian life to be a life sanctified through the work of the Spirit in

bringing forth faith in Christ through repentance, a life of righteousness and prayer, the Luo also understand the Spirit to sanctify believers in a similar manner. The Luo also speak of faith (“yie”), repentance (“lockruok”) and prayer (“lemo”) through which they see the Spirit to sanctify believers. The term justification however is only translated into Luo Bible *Muma Maler* as “Winjuok”(being in good relationship). The relationship in this case is between believers and God. It is God himself who initiates it. The Luo belief that such relationship is characterised by the work of the Spirit since the Spirit is One with God. In the process through which the relationship comes forth, they believe that a believer is transformed and renewed into the Image of God by the Spirit.

Secondly, the elements, namely of the Word, Baptism, the Lord’s Supper and the Church which Calvin sees as a means through which the grace of God is attained and gratitude demonstrated to God are also seen to characterise the beliefs and practices of the Christian Luo of the Africa Inland Church. More so, except for the practice of Infant baptism, which Calvin teaches and which the Luo of the Africa Inland Church do not observe, as they do not believe that a child can be brought to faith through the ordinance, as Calvin does, the Luo also believe that the Spirit sanctifies believers through the elements.



The Luo furthermore make a distinction between the Holy Spirit and the ancestral spirits. The people understand that the ancestral spirits are not involved in the things that the Holy Spirit does. For example, the ancestral spirits cannot bring about “yie” or “lokruok;” nor are they the Spirit through whom “lemo” brings them near to God. More so they don’t believe that ancestral spirits are involved in the process through which “winjuok”(justification) is initiated by God.

Concerning the elements through which the grace of God is attained and gratitude demonstrated to God, the Luo understand that it is only through the work of the Spirit through the elements that a believer is sanctified and not through the work of the ancestral spirits upon the elements. The Luo do not associate such elements with ancestral spirits.

Having seen how the Luo respond to Calvin’s views on the Spirit, what can be said about the Luo view of the work of the Holy Spirit in the sanctification of believers in the light of the teachings of the Africa Inland Church and beliefs in ancestral spirits which form the background of the people’s cultural beliefs? To what extent have the teachings of the Africa Inland Church influenced the Luo Christians? And to what extent are the Luo of the Africa

Inland Church no longer engaged with ancestral Spirits? In the light of the study that has been conducted, these are the questions that will be addressed in the following section.

4.5 Reappraisal: Luo Views of the Holy Spirit

A study of the beliefs of the Christian Luo of the Africa Inland Church and their views on sanctification points to the fact that the people have been greatly influenced by the teachings of the Africa Inland Church and that, despite the fact that they come from a cultural background where belief in the ancestral spirits is firmly rooted, the Luo Christians make a distinction between the “Holy Spirit” and the “ancestral spirits.” They see the Holy Spirit, and not the ancestral spirits, as the power involved in the sanctification of believers.

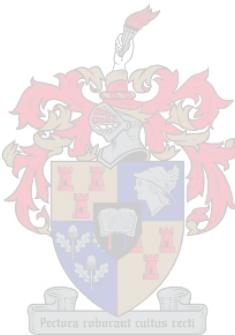
With regard to the influence of the doctrinal teaching of the Africa Inland Church among the people, we have seen that the Christian beliefs of the Luo are basically founded on the teachings of the Africa Inland Church. The Luo would not have had an understanding of Christian beliefs as demonstrated in the study of this chapter without a basis which, in this case, is the Africa Inland Church. Christian values were not known from the people’s cultural background. The people, through the teaching of the Church, understand that the work of the Holy Spirit is taught in the *Muma Maler*, whereas the beliefs in ancestral spirits are not derived from Scripture. Belief in the ancestral spirits derives from the cultural beliefs of the Luo people.

It must be pointed out, however, that, although the Luo have been greatly influenced by the teachings of the Africa Inland Church, the manner in which the term “Holy Spirit” has been translated in the *Muma Maler* does not bring out the clear meaning of the identity of the Holy Spirit as taught by the Church. We saw, in chapter two of our study that, according to the Church, the Holy Spirit is understood to be the Spirit of the Triune God (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit). In Dholuo, the Spirit is simply understood as “Roho Maler” or “Chuny Maler,” which simply means “Clean Spirit.” The term, “Clean Spirit,” does not have any immediate reference to God the Father and God the Son as taught by the Church. Therefore, if one were to use the term in a Luo cultural context where not all present were Christians, the distinction between the “Clean Spirit,” and “good spirits” which are believed to exist in the Luo culture, may not be clearly understood by those who are not Christians. It is only those who are Christians who understand who “Roho Maler” is and his role in the sanctification of believers. This, as has already been stated, is all due to the teachings found in

Muma Maler and explained by the teachings of the Africa Inland Church to which the people belong.

But even as we think about the influence of the teachings of the Africa Inland Church on the people, we need to be reminded that the Church was established through the work of the Africa Inland Mission, through which the Church adopted its own teachings. The origins of the teachings of the Mission, on the other hand, have been traced back to the legacy of John Calvin. Through the Mission, therefore, the teachings of John Calvin found a way through the Africa Inland Church into the Christian practices and beliefs of the Luo of Kenya.

As we therefore conclude our study in this research project, what would be our assessment of the extent to which Calvin's views on sanctification have influenced the Luo? In the following section, this is our subject of discussion.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Reassessment: The Views of Calvin and the Luo concerning the Spirit

Calvin's views on sanctification, evaluated from the perspective of the Luo of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya, reveal similarities rather than differences. This affirms that Calvin's legacy has had a remarkable influence on the Christian faith and the beliefs of the Luo of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya. The elements of Calvin's teaching and the positions he took on the Holy Spirit and sanctification are characteristic of the beliefs and practices of present-day Luo members of the Africa Inland Church.

The similarities of the two views are evidenced by the fact that most of Calvin's teaching on the sanctification of "the Christian life" and of "the Christian life as a life of Grace and Gratitude" also characterise the beliefs and practices of the Luo in the Africa Inland Church, Kenya, including a more or less similar understanding of the work of the Spirit as related to it.

To begin with, faith, which Calvin sees as the first mark of the work of the Spirit in an individual, is also viewed by the Christian Luo of the Africa Inland Church as the first sign of the work of the Spirit within an individual. Furthermore, Calvin believed the Spirit to transform and renew a believer into the Image of God in the process through which faith is produced, and the Luo also believe that the Spirit brings forth transformation and renewal into the Image of God in the process through which faith is produced.

Faith ("yie"), which in "Dholuo" translates as "acceptance," according to the Luo, is produced through the work of the Holy Spirit, even as Calvin taught that faith is produced through the power of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, like Calvin, who understood faith as an activity directed towards Christ, the Luo also interpret faith as an activity towards Christ. The aspects of faith through which the Spirit renews and transforms a believer into the Image of God, according to Calvin, include repentance, a life of righteousness, and prayer. These aspects of faith through which the Spirit brings forth sanctification also characterise the beliefs of the Luo Christians of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya, and are the aspects through which the

people see the Spirit to bring forth sanctification in individual believers. The Luo believe that repentance (“lockruok”), a life of righteousness (“Gima ja nyasaye”), and prayer (“lemo”) are all aspects through which the Spirit brings forth sanctification in the Christian life.

The activity of “justification” through which Calvin saw a believer transformed and renewed into the Image of God, however, is only translated in “Dholuo” as “winjrouk” (Being in good relationship). The relationship in this case is with God. The process through which such a relationship develops is believed to be characterised by the work of the Spirit in transforming and renewing a believer into the Image of God. Like Calvin, the Luo therefore see the Spirit as transforming and renewing believers when justification (“winjrouk”) takes place.

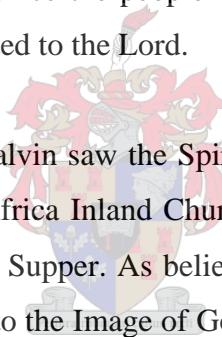
Regarding Calvin’s understanding of the Christian life as a life of “Grace” and “Gratitude,” the elements through which Calvin believed the grace of God to be attained and gratitude to be demonstrated to God also characterise the beliefs and practices of the Christian Luo of the Africa Inland Church. Moreover, like Calvin, who believed that the Spirit transforms and renews a believer through the elements of the Word, Baptism, the Lord’s Supper and the Church, the Luo also believe that the Spirit brings forth transformation and renewal into the Image of God through these elements. Similarities between Calvin’s views and those of the Luo even emerge more clearly in the manner in which Calvin and the Luo interpret each of the elements in relation to the work of the Spirit in the sanctification of a believer.

To begin with, Calvin taught that the Spirit sanctifies believers through the Word. The Luo also see the Word as constituted in the *Muma Maler* as an element through which a believer is sanctified. Calvin and the Luo similarly believe that, as individuals live in obedience to the Word, the Spirit that works upon the Word transforms and renews them into the Image of God.

The Luo also see the Spirit as sanctifying believers in baptism, as Calvin did. In baptism, the efficacy of the Spirit is deeply experienced, with the result of further growth in sanctification. Moreover, Calvin observed that baptism does not mark the point at which the Spirit begins to work in an individual, since the Spirit begins his work much earlier, at the first point of repentance, and the Luo also understand that the Spirit does not begin work merely at the point of baptism but much earlier at the beginning of repentance. Calvin and the Luo of the

Africa Inland Church share the belief the Spirit works in the individual beyond the exercise of baptism itself.

The major difference between Calvin and the Luo lies in the matter of Infant Baptism. While Calvin and the Luo of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya entertain similar ideas about the significance and meaning of water baptism with regard to the sanctification of a believer, the two differ on the matter of Infant Baptism. Calvin taught and emphasised Infant Baptism, but the Luo of the Africa Inland Church do not practice Infant Baptism. Instead of baptism, the Luo of the Africa Inland Church practice child dedication. Furthermore, Calvin, in his emphasis and teaching on Infant Baptism, sees the possibility of the Infant being brought to faith in Christ through the regenerating work of the Spirit, whereas, the Luo believers of the Africa Inland Church do not expect the child to be brought to faith in Christ at the occasion of child dedication. More so, while Calvin sees the possibility of sanctification taking place in an Infant in the case of an Infant being regenerated by the Spirit, the Luo do not believe that sanctification takes place in Infants since the people do not see any possibility of an Infant being regenerated when being dedicated to the Lord.



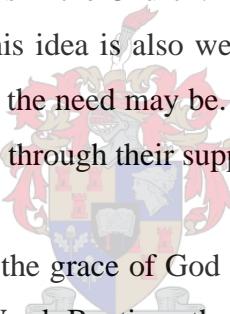
With regard to the Lord's Supper, Calvin saw the Spirit as sanctifying believers through the Lord's Supper, and the Luo in the Africa Inland Church of Kenya also believe the Spirit to sanctify believers through the Lord's Supper. As believers partake of the Lord's Supper, the Spirit transforms and renews them into the Image of God. Also, like in Calvin's teaching, the Luo do not believe that the elements of bread and wine in the sacrament actually change into the real body and blood of Christ. The elements are simply taken in remembrance of the crucifixion and death of Christ and as Jesus himself commanded.

Regarding the Church, Calvin taught the efficacy of the Spirit in the life of the Church, in bringing forth sanctification among individual believers. In similar manner, the Luo see life within the Church to be of extreme importance with regard to the sanctification of individual believers. Being part of the Church enhances the sanctification of believers through the power of the Holy Spirit. For this reason, Luo Christians are actively involved in the life of the Church.

The elements of "discipline" and "service to the Community," which Calvin taught as important aspects within the life of the Church through which the Spirit sanctifies believers, are also characteristic of the Luo beliefs.

To begin with, Calvin's teaching of and emphasis on the necessity of discipline in the life of the Church, is echoed in the fact that the Luo believe that Church discipline is extremely important. Calvin observed that Church discipline should be rehabilitative and that the individual under discipline should not be allowed to share in the Holy Communion. The whole purpose of discipline was to ensure that individuals lived in accordance with God's teachings, hence follow a way of life through which the efficacy of the Spirit could transform and renew them into the likeness of Christ. The Luo understand Church discipline in the same way.

Calvin also taught sanctification through the discipline of worship and fasting. He stressed that such disciplines were necessary and had to be observed. As these disciplines are observed, the Spirit transforms and renews believers into the likeness of Christ. The Luo in the Africa Inland Church believe in the same way that discipline is extremely necessary with regard to the sanctification of believers in the Church. Regarding the matter of "service to the Community," as taught by Calvin, this idea is also well grounded among the Luo. The Luo seek to support one another wherever the need may be. As in Calvin's teaching, the Luo also believe the Spirit to sanctify believers through their support and care for one another.



Furthermore, as Calvin believed that the grace of God is attained and gratitude demonstrated to God through the elements of the Word, Baptism, the Lord's Supper and the Church, so the Luo do, too. As already stated in the study, the "grace" of God is attained through the elements in that God, through each, extends his gracious acts to the people. More so; since the elements are instituted by God, individuals, in observing them, honour God, and thereby demonstrate their gratitude to him.

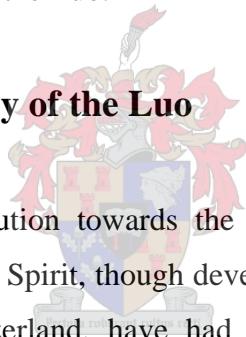
Such similarities are far greater than the differences, since the only major difference identified is that of Infant baptism already cited in the study. While Calvin taught and stressed that children must be baptised, the Luo in the Africa Inland Church, Kenya, do not baptise children, but only dedicate them, as already shown in the study.

The study furthermore also points to the fact that the Luo make a clear distinction between the "Holy Spirit" and "ancestral spirits." The Luo understand that it is the Holy Spirit who is involved in the sanctification of the Christian life and not the ancestral spirits. The people

know that the ancestral spirits purely are beliefs that concern cultural values and that they have nothing to do with the matter of the Christian life.

Though we have investigated the nature and characteristics of Calvin's views and how his views have impacted the Luo of the Africa Inland Church, Kenya, one important point to note is that Calvin, like any other human being, was not without limitations. He may have been limited in one way or the other with regard to his understanding of the work of the Spirit. Though influential, Calvin is not the ultimate authority in matters regarding sanctification and the work of the Holy Spirit. However, one useful aspect of Calvin is that he was a biblical exegete. He sought to focus all his skill in interpretation on the understanding of Scripture. For this reason, the Luo of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya should not focus on embracing Calvin's views but rather should lean towards understanding what the Scriptures (*Muma Maler*) teach about the Holy Spirit and to appropriate principles in their Christian lives. With all these issues in mind, we conclude this research project in the following section with the outlined remarks on John Calvin and the Luo.

5.2 Calvin's role in the study of the Luo



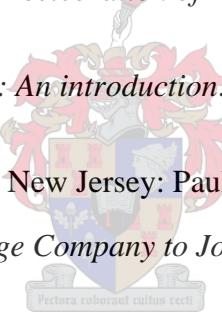
Calvin made a remarkable contribution towards the study of the work of the Spirit in sanctification. His views of the Holy Spirit, though developed in his own context of sixteenth century France and Geneva, Switzerland, have had a remarkable influence upon many Christians worldwide, including the Luo of the Africa Inland Church of Kenya. His views, as we have seen in the study, have been useful in interpreting Luo views of the Spirit.

A meaningful study of the Luo in the Africa Inland Church in Kenya can only be done by going from the “known” to the “unknown.” The “known” are the already formulated teachings and doctrines, such as those advanced by early Church fathers like John Calvin. The “unknown” is the context of the Luo where there was no biblical teaching before and where belief in the “Spirit World” was firmly rooted. The study of the Holy Spirit in a Luo context must begin from the “known” to form a clear understanding of biblical concepts such as that of the Holy Spirit in a Luo context. This understanding must be sealed by going a step further to eliminate existing teaching which is not founded on Scripture, although passed down to African peoples, and to appropriate only biblical principles for a Luo context. The Luo need the Scripture itself more than anything else.

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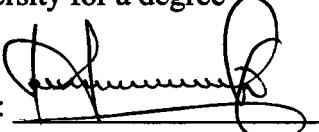
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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this Dissertation is my own original work and that I haven't previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any University for a degree

Signature: 

Date: February 2007

