

THESIS ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies
Emphasis in Systematic Theology

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

TITLE: THE CONCEPT OF BAPTISM: COMPARISM OF THE THEOLOGY OF
MARTIN LUTHER AND JOHN CALVIN

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One of the important bible teachings, is been born again as express by bible scholars as baptism, form the framework of this research. Before the Reformation, scholars expressed divergent views to resolve the controversy over the type of baptism found in the scriptures and the forms practised by Christians.

Martin Luther and John Calvin expressed opinion about the system of baptism which needed consideration in the Church. The study attempts explicitly to review the main facets of the theology of Luther and Calvin concerning baptism. The purpose of the study is to compare and contrast the two reformers view and examine the extent to which their theology has a vital role in the theological enterprises and the Christian Church as a whole.

Theologically, the words of Jesus have revealed the importance of baptism during the dialogue between Him and Nicodemus “truly, I am saying to you until one is baptize of water and spirit, the one would not be able to go to God’s Kingdom.(John.3:5)The new birth of water and spirit in the quotation is a symbol of baptism. This paves the way for baptism’s essence an initiation into the church and the righteous way to the Kingdom of God. Given this, correct rendition about the words of Jesus should be that, no one could go to heaven without baptism. Thus, the right biblical concept of baptism is fixed

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OF MARTIN LUTHER AND JOHN CALVIN

A Thesis

presented in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies

by

David Boakye Yiadom

February 2021

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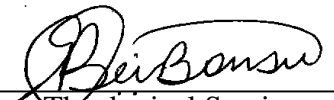
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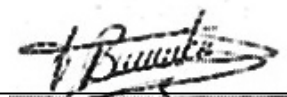
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This research work is dedicated to my dear spouse, Comfort Boakye
and my children, Bernice Arhin Sam, Dorcas Boakye
Yiadom, Evelyn Boakye and Christian Boakye

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Background of the Study	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Purpose and Significance of the Study	3
Delimitation	4
Methods and Procedure.....	4
Organization of the study.....	4
Definition of Terms.....	4
2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE	6
3. ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.....	12
Old Testament System of Baptism	12
New Testament System of Baptism.....	14
Baptism in the Pauline Epistles.....	19
Baptism in the History of the Christian Church.....	22
Theological Synthesis of Major Themes Related to Baptism.....	23
Regeneration	23
The Lord's Supper in the Early Christian Church.....	24
Relationship between Baptism and Eucharist.....	28
4. BAPTISM IN THE THEOLOGY OF MARTIN LUTHER AND JOHN CALVIN	30
Martin Luther's Concept of Baptism	30
The Background of Martin Luther	30
Martin Luther and the Reformation	32
Martin Luther's Concept of Baptism	35
John Calvin's Theology of Baptism	37
The Background of John Calvin	37
Calvinistic Theology	39
Calvin's Theology of Baptism.....	43
Infant Baptism.....	46
Summary	47

A Theological Comparison of Baptism between Martin Luther and John Calvin.....	47
Similarities and Differences in Luther and Calvin’s Concept of Baptism...50	
Similarities	51
Differences	51
5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	53
Summary	53
Conclusion	56
Recommendations	56
BIBLIOGRAPHY	58
VITA.....	66

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The English verb baptize comes from the Greek word “βαπτίζω”, which means "to dip frequently or intensively, plunge, or immerse." The term "baptism" also connotes "washing." Baptism is the noun version of the word, which refers to John's or Christians' baptism. Baptismos is a term that can be applied to dipping or washing (Mark 7:4), ritual washings (Heb 9:10), or John's baptism. In the New Testament, the word "bathing" is used to refer to both ordinary and ceremonial baths; it is also used exclusively to allude to baptism. It alludes to ritual bathing (Lev 15:11KJV) and (possibly) Christian baptism in the compound form of 1 Cor 6:11.

In the Christian perspective baptism is similar to the Jewish purification rite “*tevilah*” in which an individual was immersed in water for purification. Through baptism or purification rite, before a Jew enter a holy area, should purified himself from sin, destruction, and the profane sphere (Lev 15; 16:4, 24; 15; Josephus. Antiquity. 18.117). This was usually applied to a proselyte.¹ Biblically, baptism is a rite that symbolizes the death and the resurrection of Jesus.² However, there has been disagreement as to how baptism should be performed. The meaning of Christian baptism has created so many challenges in the development of theological dogma.

¹ “ Converting to Judaism ” *Religion and Ethics* 2004 <http://www.bbc.co.uk>

² Christa Pongratz-Lippit, *Churches Mutually Recognized Baptism Tablets* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans, 2010), 55.

There have been several opinions from the early church fathers and medieval church leaders explaining the dogma. The Early Christian Church Fathers believed that baptism was administered for remission sins, while the medieval church leaders believed that baptism was performed to ward off original sin. Augustine comments that because of original evil, infant baptism is essential, he urges that children were unclean, but now through baptism they are holy. Therefore, he infers that there was no necessity for children of believers to be baptized again.³ Also, Tertullian commenting on the importance of baptism explains that baptism is to equip the believers to guard against heresies. Tertullian teaches that baptism is necessary one needed to demonstrate real faith in Jesus Christ. He opines that faith and baptism do not give salvation but both depend on other for redemption to occur.⁴

According to Calvin, baptism is the first evidence of acceptance into the church's fellowship. Calvin emphasizes that baptism aims to increase an individual's faith by first providing certainty and then showing us our connection with Jesus Christ and, as a result, how all of Jesus Christ's blessings affect the Christian. However, Calvin agrees and supports infant baptism. Quoting from Matthew 19:14, he indicates that, since children have the right to be brought to Christ, they should also have the right to be admitted for baptism.⁵

On the other hand, Martin Luther states that for a Christian to be saved, he/she must be baptised, which is the most solemn and strict command. Luther also taught that baptism by immersion saves a person, which is, it gives eternal life even without

³ *Religious and Ethics, Converting to Judaism* , 14.

⁴ Pongratz-Lippi, 55.

⁵ Frank L Cross and Elizabeth Livingstone, *Baptism. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*(London: Oxford University Press, 1994), 46.

faith. The contributions of these theologians notwithstanding, the meaning of baptism, and how it should be administered still seems to pose a considerable challenge in theology.

Statement of the Problem

The doctrine of baptism is essential in Christian practices. However, diverse opinions have been expressed about this doctrine concerning the meaning of baptism and how it should be administered. This issue has generated intricacy in explaining the meaning of baptism. Whereas the early Church fathers subscribed to baptism by immersion, the medieval church leaders advocate for effusion, submersion and aspersion.

Despite the various studies into this issue, there are still some questions remaining. These include: Is baptism administered to forgive sins or ward off original sin as taught by John Calvin and some Early Church Fathers? Is baptism by immersion or sprinkling? Is infant baptism required? This study seeks to compare Martin Luther and John Calvin views on this crucial Christian Church doctrine.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The study is to compare Martin Luther and John Calvin views in light of biblical meaning of baptism. The study will help simplify the fundamental problem that deals with the early Christian Church and the Medieval Church on baptism. Besides, the task may resolve difficulties in understanding baptism and reshape the current perceptions about baptism. More importantly, it will add to the existing knowledge about baptism.

Delimitation

The diverse opinions on baptism within the Christian Church need comparison. However, this study is limited to the views on baptism expressed by Martin Luther and John Calvin. This study seeks to concentrate on the early Christian church view and the medieval church on baptism from ca500 to 1500AD and how it impacted the Luther and Calvinistic theology.

Methods and Procedure

This study employs the comparative study method, the views of Martin Luther and John Calvin. The review uses information obtained from published works, such as books, articles, journals, periodicals, bulletins, and other unpublished works from the internet, thesis and others. Relevant information from related literature is reviewed.

Organization of the study

The research is divided into four sections. The study's introduction is covered in the first chapter. The second chapter looks at a literature study or other scholars' contributions to the biblical, historical, and theological perspectives on baptism. The third chapter assesses Martin Luther and John Calvin's view on baptism, compares and evaluates their ideas. The final chapter is the summary and conclusion of the study.

Definition of Terms

Baptism: Baptism is a Christian ceremony of admission and adoption into the Christian church that is nearly often performed using water.

Theology: It is the deliberate and systematic examination of God's thoughts and the nature of religious truth.

Covenant: A formal agreement between two or more parties to perform some actions. In scriptures, God made an agreement with His people in which He makes certain assurances and promises to them in return of particular conduct and behavior.

Catechumen: In ecclesiology, the word catechumen is derived from the Greek "*Catechumens*" one being instructed, a person who is being instructed in the Christian religion by a catechist in preparation for baptism.

Purification: It is the process of ceremonial purging to get rid of impurities, defilement or uncleanness, usually the removal of sin or guilt, a moral or spiritual cleansing.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In the early church baptism seems to have accompanied the proclamation of the gospel and conversion. It is administered in the name of Jesus Christ "for the forgiveness of sins" and the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit".¹ (Acts 2:38, ESV), Paul states that baptism "to Christ" is baptism "to his death" (Rom 6:3, ESV). It relates the believer to Christ's redemption power.² In the writings of Tertullian (ca-155-ca 220) and Hippolytus (ca 170-ca 235), it was customary for baptism to take place in the Easter Vigil service Saturday night, leading to the celebration of Easter. Catechumens were baptised naked, the men apart from the women, apparently wading into water kneeling in it and water poured on them three times.³ They were then anointed with chrism, after which hands were laid upon In Easter; they were dressed in white and led into the crowd.⁴ After the ascension of Jesus, believers demonstrated their acceptance of the Gospel according to (Acts 2:38 ESV), "You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit if you repent and are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for

¹Collin Brown, *The New International Dictionary of the New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapid, MI: Zondervan, 1975), 146.

² Ibid, 147.

³ Justo L Gonzalez, *Essential Theological Terms* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 26.

⁴ Jestic G. Phyllis, *Holy People in the World: A Cross-Cultural Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC Clio, 2004), 1: 393-394.

the forgiveness of your sins. “He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be damned,” Jesus said in Mark 16:16, KJV.

During medieval period, infant baptism was standardized. The theology of original sin was ingressed which replaced⁵ the old custom of postponing baptism till one's deathbed. Eventually, the rite became less important as many people converted from paganism, and it was conducted quickly, baptism was typically performed soon after delivery. It was now evident that baptism's principal goal was to cleanse the new born infant of original sin and to drive out all evil. Pre-baptismal catechesis was left out, as a result of the belief in original sin, and the fear that a child may not survive birth, infant baptism became prominent. If a child was born and there was no man nearby to perform the rite,⁶ it created fear because it was believed that the sacrament cleansed the person from original sin.⁷

The early and medieval Christians held fast to the rite of baptism. In both periods' baptism was followed by the proclamation of the gospel and followed by conversion (Acts 2:28). However, the Early Christian church believed that baptism was administered to forgive of sins, while the medieval Christians believed baptism was performed to ward off original sin.⁸ That gave way to infant baptism and baptising children at the point of death. During medieval period, the rite lost its importance. Anybody could administer it include midwives. Early Christians Baptism was a sign of Jesus' death and resurrection in the early church, as well as a symbol of

⁵ F. L. Cross, E. A. Livingstone, “*Immersion*,” 3.

⁶ Barbara Hanawalt, *Growing Up in Medieval London: The Experience of Childhood in History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 44.

⁷ Richard H Helmholz, *Baptism in the Medieval Canon Law Rechtsgeschichte Legal History* (London: Oxford University, January 2013), 116-127.

⁸F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, “Baptism” 3

fresh life practised baptism of immersion in rivers and ponds. During the medieval period, sprinkling and other forms of baptism were introduced.⁹

John Charles Ryle is commenting on infant baptism says that infant baptism is indisputably a delicate and intricate subject. Unfortunately, converted and sanctified believers are not able to see alike upon it. They arrive at a different conclusion about this sacrament although they read the same Bible and confess to being led by the same spirit. He continued that these churches hold the view that infant baptism is spiritual and a right.¹⁰

William Blackley emphasises that leaders like Thomas Hallways, John Murton and John Smyth used the word baptism included in the true church's nature. They believe that the true church should be recognised for its covenant relationship with each other and with Christ by a new and valid believer's baptism. They held the opinion that baptism of infants was not valid because they were not able to yet claim faith by themselves.¹¹

Many scholars have contributed a lot to the discussion about baptism. David F. Wright mentioned in his lectures in 1987 about the necessity of double baptisms. He indicates "that some of my audience have undergone two baptisms. Two water baptism, that is, they may not regard their first one as baptism." He said that after all baptism in mind is necessary"¹². In his book review, Everett Ferguson in 2009

⁹ Thomas Charles, *Christianity in Roman Britain to AD 500* (London, UK: University of California, 1981), 8.

¹⁰ John C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospel: Mark* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth 1985), 204.

¹¹<http://www.centerforbaptiststudies.org/pamphlets/style/turningpoints.htm>. Accessed 1 June, 2021

¹² David F. Wright, "One Baptism or Two? Reflection on the History of Christian Baptism," *Vox Evangelica* 18 (1988), 7.

expressed his objection to the churches which either practice is pouring water or sprinkling. He acknowledged that the original and ancient mode of baptism was immersion. He indicates that while pouring may occasionally be found, it was not the rule.¹³

According to scholars like James V. Brownson, and Sinclair B. Ferguson there was an instructional book in the first century called *Didache*. This contains the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles giving public instructions on all these points. Baptism should be done in running water¹⁴ In case one cannot be baptised in cold water, then it can be done in warm water. If there is neither cold nor warm water, then it could be done in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, baptism can be done in other ways if there isn't access to running water. Furthermore, those who baptize and those who are baptized should fast before the baptism, as should others who are able was supposed to fast for one or two days beforehand.¹⁵

At the central sacrament of the messianic movement of John the Baptist was baptism; he is considered Christianity's forerunner. As the Pauline epistles and Acts of the Apostles demonstrate, baptism from the start has been part of Christianity. Jesus Christ is considered by Christians to have instituted the doctrine of baptism. However explicit his plans were, and if he anticipated a long-term relationship with the organisation in the church are disputes among most scholars. Scholars are in a consensus that Christian baptism in the earliest Church was usually immersion others;

¹³ Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, Liturgy in the Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids, MI: William E. Eerdmans, 2009), 9.

¹⁴ Philotheos Bryennios World History Encyclopaedia, *Didache, The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1909-1976), 27.

¹⁵ Ibid.

on the other hand, see immersion as not necessarily meaning submersion beneath the water.

In the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries, the baptism rite was simplified as fewer baptised were converted from paganism. The rite was not critically looked at, it was conducted quickly, and the pre-baptismal catechesis was abandoned. However, in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth and even to the late of the sixteenth centuries, the rite of baptism was different.¹⁶ Therefore, throughout the Middle Ages, the type of facility necessary for baptism varied greatly, from the half meter deep basin of the 13th century baptistery at Pisa to baptismal prowls large enough to immerse many adults simultaneously.¹⁷

Baptism was first recorded in the Bible by John the Baptist. John performed a “repentance baptism for the remission of sins”(Mark 1:41 KJV). He reminded them of the Messiah’s baptism of the spirit and fire (Matt- 3:11KJV).¹⁸ The baptism of Jesus and his humility demonstrated His sympathy with sinful men. The voice of God’s approval and the divine response of the opened heaven began the church mission to the world (Matt: 3:17KJV).¹⁹

Paul argues that baptism through immersion is required, rather than any other method, because it symbolizes a connection in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. “Do you not realize that all of us who have been baptized into Christ have been baptized into his death?” Paul asks. As a result, we were baptized into

¹⁶ Luther, *Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation* (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1991), 43,

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Collins Brown “*Baptism*” 146. in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. “Do you not realize that all of us who have been baptized into Christ have been baptized into his death?” Paul asks.

¹⁹ Ibid, 46.

death with Him, so that, just as Christ was resurrected from the dead by the glory of the Father, we might also live in newness of life” (Rom 6: 3-4). In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Jesus directed His disciples to baptize (Matt 28:19). Other forms of baptism do not portray death, burial and resurrection as was done to Jesus when He died.²⁰

The right reaction to hearing the Gospel, according to Scripture, is to believe, repent, and be baptized. Truth is that the real nature, purpose and significance of baptism of repentance is sometimes misunderstood. Today, some Christians believe that baptism, which is a crucial part of our response to Christ, is simply a baptism in the Holy Spirit, and therefore water baptism is no longer required or desired. Although God gives us a great and precious promise of forgiveness in baptism, it would be a mistake to assume that one can have that forgiveness merely by being baptised, without faith in Christ (2 Cor 1:20, Gal 3:22RSV,). In Luther's theology, Christ is of primary importance; baptism is the only identical to purity to Christ if it is being used to hold up the promised of forgiveness in clouds, while purity, men to him as a source of forgiveness (Acts 2: 38).

Gordon W. Kuhurt asserts that Christian baptism is built on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He believes that Jesus' order in(Matthew 28:19-20 KJV) to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all I have taught you," is the true foundation for the study of Christian baptism.²¹

²⁰ Steven J. Schroeder, 113.

²¹ Gordon W Kuhurt, *Believing in Baptism, Christian Baptism: Its Theology and Practice*(London, UK:Oxford University Press, 1987), 13

CHAPTER 3

ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

This chapter seeks to look at Christian baptism from biblical and historical perspective. It discusses the Old and New Testament baptismal systems, the Theology of Baptism in Christian History, and the relationship between baptism and the Eucharist.

Old Testament System of Baptism

Among the Jews, cleansing by water and washings was well known. The Levitical system of worship was of “divers washing” (Heb 9:10). The priests needed to be washed as they began their religious services (Exodus 29:4). Each Priest required washing before he entered upon his daily service (Exodus 30:19, 20). Proselytes, both male and female, were to be baptised in a nude state and by submersion of the entire body in water, according to old traditions passed down to us in the Talmud.¹ Baptism has been for thousand years, a sign of admission into Judaism. In the ancient times, everyone agreed that immersion of the whole body (not the clothes) in water was necessary for a new member of the Jewish and not sprinkling of water as can be seen today. The Greek word Baptismal, which first appeared in the New Testament, means that the complete body must be immersed in water.

¹ James William Dale, *Johannics Baptism* (Philipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1993), 23.

This procedure appears to signify a purifying effect. Gentiles were regarded ritually impure and required purification and initiatory rituals. Proselytes baptism also implied the proselytes were obliged to accept the "yoke of the Torah" in order to convert to a new way of life. It is not easy to find out the times the Jews started the practice of proselytes' baptism, an initiation sacrament for the Gentiles to convert to Judaism. As a result, we cannot conclude that it was the Jewish and Christian baptism yardstick.

Although John Baptised Jews and not Gentiles, Christian baptism is not the same as Jewish proselytes' baptism of the Gentile converts to Judaism. Mishnaic passages like M. Perah 8:8 say, "If a man chooses to become a proselyte on the day before Passover, he may immerse himself and eat his Passover offering in the evening." This verse discusses proselyte baptism in the context of the Levitical washing in preparation for Passover.

There was a system of religious practices called Mithraism, in mystic Oriental religion. This religion also practices a form of cleansing, "They believed themselves purified of their guilt by the ritual cleansing, and this baptism lightened their conscience of the weight of their heavy responsibility."²

Among the Jews washing is very important because it is a form of consecration or purification from uncleanness. Priests could not perform their duties unless they purify themselves. It is also believed that baptism is a form of cleansing to ward off original sin.

²Henry F. Brown, *Baptism Through the Centuries* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1965), 2.

New Testament System of Baptism

The New Testament's baptismal system began with John the Baptist's baptism. The general activities of John the Baptist are described in all four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; John baptized Jesus at the Jordan River. Furthermore, the disciples of Jesus conducted baptism (Mark 1:10-11).³

In the Gospel of Mark, the occurrence of baptism can be found in Mark 1:4-9. Mark quoted from Malachi 3: 1, and Isaiah 40: 3. "John came baptizing in the desert and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins," according to Mark 1: 4. It calls God's people to prepare Yahweh's way in the wilderness in its original context in Isaiah 40:1-9.

Though, he did not say how it is to be done is by way of repentance. The people were to be called to repentant of their sins. Isaiah 40: 12 states that the ultimate purpose of God is not judgement but salvation. John's message was met with tremendous response. Many came from Jerusalem to Jordan for confession of their sins and for baptism by John the Baptist who wore clothes in the Old Testament Prophet Elijah's manner. John pointed out to the people, the one who comes after him, who is more powerful than he is, and whom he is not worthy of untying the thong of His sandals, one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit rather than water (Mark 18; Joel 2:28-29; Isa 32:15).

Jesus came to John the Baptist to be baptised, from Nazareth of Galilee. After the baptism the Spirit descended upon Him and from Heaven, a voice came testifying Jesus' As the Son of God, His (Mark 1:10) baptism, there was the Trinitarian manifestation of the Fathers voice of Jesus the Son receives permission and the Holy

³ Andreas J. Rosenberger, "John," *Commentary in the use of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids, MI: Bakers Forth, 1997), 224.

Spirit descends on him (Mark 1:10-11). Jesus' baptism appears to be a prophecy of the cross and his identification with sinful Israel.

Mark demonstrates how John's baptism fulfils the prophecy from the Old Testament and prepares people for Jesus' Ministry. This Jordan's wilderness baptism was of salvation-historical importance which involves the Exodus idea in continuity with passages in Isaiah (Isa 40:1-5; 42:1). In contrast to the baptism of water, the baptism of the Holy Spirit will be performed by someone "more powerful" than he. Given these allusions to God's wrath, John's baptism, and Jesus' death. Baptism is described as an introduction ceremony into the "real Israel," or remaining believers, subsequent "baptism" can't be dismissed as having an apocalyptic significance. Mark's Gospel references to baptism, present six occurrences as the following: the baptism of repentance by John the Baptist and the baptism of Jesus Mark 1:9. John's beheading and a rumour that Jesus is the resurrected John the Baptist; (Mark 6:14, 24-25). In the person of John the Baptist, Elijah has returned (Mark 7:13). Some people believe Jesus is the same person as John the Baptist (Mark 8:28). Jesus' reference to a future "baptism" that He must go through—his crucifixion (Mark 10:38-39) Finally, Jesus challenges the Jews to figure out where John's baptism came from. (Mark 11:30).

Matthew's Gospel narrates about half of his references in Matthew 3:1-16, the beginning of John the Baptist's career is described. Using John's discourse on the Kingdom of Heaven as an example, he calls for repentance (Mark 3:12 KJV) and in Matthew 3:7-10, John referred to the one more powerful than he and added the one would baptise with "fire." Here the fire serves as an emblem of God's judgement.

Matthew provides details of (In his account of Jesus' baptism by John, John raises an issue and Jesus encourages him to "fulfil all righteousness."Matt 3:15).⁴

The book of Matthew concludes with a final reference to baptism," In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus says, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been handed to me." As a result, go make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have ordered you. And, without a doubt, I will always be with you, until the end of time.⁵ The message is deeply intertwined with the entire Gospel.⁶ The text greatly supports the opinion that Matthew rather than⁷ taking over, he composed the "Great Commission" as a whole from another source, he took it on himself. Here, the disciples were to go, and "make disciples." The aorist participles "go" is an imperative "make disciples," reinforcing Jesus followers to "go" to evangelize throughout the entire world. John's baptism is described as a "baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins," and he provides examples of what repentance means to the multitudes, tax collectors, and soldiers who were baptized by John. In Luke 3:10-14, he expresses his awareness that many people questioned whether John might be the Messiah. Luke responds in Luke

⁴ Benno, Przybylski, *Righteousness in Matthew and His World of Thought*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 41. Hartman, "Baptism" 1:585, suggests that Jesus' baptism served as a model for believers, citing Matthew 5:9, 20, 45; 28:18-20.

⁵ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, WBC (Dallas, TX: Word book, 1995), 878-880; Charles S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 715-721.

⁶ Daniel Stony Brooks, "Matthew xxxviii 16-20 and the Design of the First Gospel," *Journal for the Study of New Testament*, 3 no 10 (1981): 2-18; David P. Scaer, "The Relation of Matthew 28:16-20 to the Rest of the Gospel," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 55 no. 4 (1991): 245-266.

⁷ Jack D. Kingsbury, *The Composition and Christology of Matthew 28:16-20*, (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Seminary, 2005), 2.

3:15, repeating the Baptist's sermon in wording that are identical to that of Matthew's.⁸

John's disciples also questioned if Jesus was the Messiah, according to Luke (Luke 7:18-35). Except for Luke's added remark in Luke 7:29-30. "And when everyone heard this, including the tax collectors, they recognized God's approach as righteousness, because John the Baptist had baptized them. it appears Luke and Matthew's accounts are fairly similar. Jesus also revealed the date of his upcoming 'baptism. He emphasized the context based on judgment: Jesus has come "to bring fire to the earth" and not "to bring peace to the earth," but rather "to bring division to the earth" (Luke 12:49-51)' This demonstrates that "baptism" encompasses the persecution resulting from Jesus' crucifixion, which is understood as part of an eschatological tribulation.⁹

The Gospel of John uses the term *baptizo* concerning baptism at three different places (John 1:25-27; 1:33-34; 3:5) Concerning the similarity to the Synoptic Gospels is, concerning John's baptismal ministry, If John the Baptist was not the Messiah, Elijah, or one of the prophets, the Pharisees asked him to explain why he baptized (John 1:25). He acknowledges that he baptizes with water in John 1:26, 33, but Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit., he did not reference baptism by fire. John made it known that his baptism was meant to reveal the Messiah to the Israelites (John 1:31).¹⁰ Secondary, a baptismal reference in John's Gospel refers to a time before

⁸ Richard J Erickson, "The Jailing of John and the Baptism of Jesus, Luke 3:19-21," *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 36/4 (1993): 465-466.

⁹ Duckery, *Baptism* 58. It is also possible as Flemington W F, *Baptism, Journal of the Doctrine of Baptism* 1:349, Suggests that a parallelism is intended between Jesus first baptism by John.

¹⁰ Andreas J. Rosenberger and John Baker, *Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 123. Hartman, *Baptism, 1:592*: H Mueller, *Baptism (in the Bible)* New Century Edition 2:56.

John's was put in prison when both John and Jesus' disciples were engaged in baptismal ministries (John 3:23). The disciples make it clear that baptism marks the beginning of Jesus' ministry. The final segment of John's Gospel is a reference made of Jesus returns to the spot where John baptized in the beginning. John's Gospel does not mention Jesus' baptism by John. Also, he does not include baptism in the Great Commission as in Matthew's gospel.

In the Apostles book Acts; it appears the writer did not describe the mode of baptism practised by the early church. Though the water was involved in the case of the Eunuch's question in Acts 8:36 "See, here is water, what prevents me from being baptised?"¹¹ It did not specify if it was by the sprinkling of water, pouring of water, or immersion in water. According to Hartman, instruction had earlier been given about the baptism mode that was practised by John and Jesus' disciples.¹² Saint Luke had written to Theophilus to instruct and teach him what Jesus did before being taken to heaven. He believes Theophilus will interpret the allusion to baptism in Acts in light of his own baptism experience and what Luke had already stated in the Gospel about baptism (Luke 24:44-53).

Acts 1:5; 11:16; 19:2-5 make various comparisons Between John's baptism and Christian baptism, there is a significant difference. The gift of the Holy Spirit is associated with Christian baptism, but repentance and forgiveness of sins are associated with John's baptism. Christian baptism is associated with the gift of the Holy Spirit, whereas John's baptism is associated with the gift of the Holy Spirit, prepared the people to receive Jesus. It is worth noting that Acts is not silent about the

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

manner of baptism that was practised, in the baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:36).¹³

Furthermore, in the Philippian jailor story, immersion may also be implied as the manner of baptism. (Acts 16:25-29). The account is a summary and does not mean that they were baptised in the house, for in Act 16 34, the Jailor brought Paul and Silas back into his house after the baptism, according to the Bible account. In the book of Acts of the Apostles, there are several instances of household baptism; an example is a conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10:48 and 11:14), Crispus, the ruler of the Synagogue (Acts 18:8) and the household of Lydia (Acts 16:15). These exclude children because they cannot believe. The Bible said if one believes he or she can be baptised.

Baptism in the Pauline Epistles

Paul's writings are many references to baptism. For example, the book of Romans, Galatians, and Colossians among others. Baptism is depicted in the book of Romans as a union of Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (Rom 6:3-7).¹⁴ Paul did not command the Roman believers to be baptised, but he reminded them of the importance in Jesus Christ.¹⁵ He indicates that Jesus Christ was "made sin" and "a curse for us," For our redemption, He took on our sins in the flesh, died on the cross, and rose again. As a result, everybody who is baptized into Christ must sacrifice

¹³ See Banabas 11:11 where baptism is described as "we descend into the water" and "we rise up", the Shepherd of Hermas 4:31 where in baptism they "descend into the water. Arrington L. French and Roger Stronstad, *Full Life Bible Commentary to New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 731.

¹⁴ Arrington L. French and Roger Stronstad, 732.

¹⁵ Kenneth Boa, William M. Kruidenier and Anders Max., *Holman New Testament Commentary: Romans* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 187.

himself. For the righteousness of Christ and has been recreated anew. Baptism is for believers who have accepted Jesus as their saviour and Lord.¹⁶

Because “as many as were baptized into Christ has put on Christ,” a believer is baptized in order to rise and walk in newness of life, just as Christ did. (Rom 6:4). “Baptism has been instituted so that it should lead us to the blessing of His death and through eternal life,” Martin Luther wrote in his commentary on Romans. Therefore, we must baptise into Jesus Christ and His death.”¹⁷ Though Luther believed that grace justifies a believer through faith in Christ, he also held that salvation by faith did not obviate baptism’s necessity.

Paul taught in his Epistle to the Galatians that baptism is a part of becoming God's sons via faith in Jesus Christ (Gal 3:26-27). Thus, he defended the doctrine of Justification by Faith; he indicates that Abraham was justified. Paul went on to say that the Galatians' gift of the Holy Spirit was obtained by faith.¹⁸ Paul posits that those in Christ by faith are the seeds and heirs of Abraham due to the promise. The people of Israel are known and accepted as the descendants of Abraham. However, those who by faith have accepted Christ and been baptised into His death are also descendants of Abraham. Paul states that the believers have been grafted into Christ and become partakers of the covenant of grace. Thus, Gentiles believers have become the Spiritual descendants of Abraham.¹⁹

¹⁶ Robert Jamieson, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1871), 2725.

¹⁷ Martin Luther, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregal Publications, 1982), 101.

¹⁸ Louise Berkof, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1915), 95.

¹⁹ Craig S. Keener, *The Bible Background Commentary - New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014), 528.

Paul uses “sons” and “heirs” of God to refer to those who are in Christ through faith (Rom 8:17). In Galatians 4:6-7, Paul declared “you are all sons of God,” the word “all” includes both Jews and Gentiles who have been incorporated into one body of Christ; if all are in Christ, then all are God's children. Baptism should be given to those who embrace and believe in Jesus Christ.. Baptism is an outward sign, signified a union with Christ by faith. When a believer receives the spiritual grace, the faith precedes by baptism.

The book of Colossians also has more to give concerning baptism. Paul explains the Christian life in these terms to the Colossians as well. In this epistle, baptism occupies a critical position between God's action in Christ (Col 1:11-20; 2:9-10), and the life the Christian leads after being raised to a new life in Christ (Col 2:16-46). With the death and burial of the “body of flesh,” baptism has taken place (Col 2:11). By nailing the bill of indictment against the sinner to the cross, the sinful person, as God cancels it, receives forgiveness of sins, then there comes a new life for those Christ has freed from death.

Concerning baptism and salvation, Cottrell states that one's works are of no use when it comes to baptism and salvation, this is however not our work but God's.²⁰ According to Fleming, baptism is a relationship with Christ that includes the old life's death and burial, as well as the new life's resurrection.

Titus 3:5 describes baptism as "washing and regeneration," which is consistent with Jesus' statement, "Unless one is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." (John 3:5) To summarize, according to Paul, baptism symbolizes Christ's death, burial, and resurrection from the dead. Believers are crucified with

²⁰ David W. Fletcher, *Baptism and Remission of Sins* (New York: College Press, 1990), 30.

Christ and die to sin through baptism. The resurrects with Christ, walking in newness of life, via baptism. Baptism also symbolizes spiritual circumcision, in which the sins of the sinner are washed away. Baptism is God's action in which we are buried with Christ, made alive by the forgiveness of our sins, and then raised with Him. Baptism is an act of God's compassion and mercy in which the believer is washed in the Holy Spirit's regeneration and renewal. All of these things are obtained through baptism; hence baptism is a must for every born-again Christian.

Baptism in the History of the Christian Church

This section examines the development of the notion of baptism theologically in the context of the Early Christian church. By the end of the first century, all of Christ's disciples had died. The church Fathers realized that there was a need for an alternative to the "mysteries" that dominated Christians' lives. As a result, the rite of baptism is classified as a "mystery" inside the Church. Baptism became one of the church's rituals in the third century.²¹

The Clementine Homilies mentions baptism frequently. It deals with the "privileges of the baptised" in chapter XIX. It posits that: You will not only be able to drive away the spirit that lurks within you in this life by bathing in a flowing river, a fountain, or even the sea with the trice - blessed incantation, but you will also be able to drive out evil spirits and demons with horrible sicknesses from others by no longer sinning and unquestionably believing God.²²

The development of Christian baptism can be traced back to Christian constructions, such as catacomb paintings, church mosaics, and floors, walls, and

²¹ Henry F. Brown, *Baptism Through the Centuries* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1965), 9.

²² Brown, 9.

ceilings, as well as sculptures, reliefs, and drawings in their manuscripts. Immersion was the technique of baptism used in the early Church, according to the records of these witnesses.²³

Some cisterns exist at Qumran, where water was collected when it rained, serving the purpose of baptism by immersion. Baptism was done in the Apostolic age wherever there was enough water, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, and the sea etc. In the old archaeological structures' baptisteries could be located and in catacombs at Rome. Neophytes were baptised by immersion either by kneeling and bending forward by the administrator.²⁴

Theological Synthesis of Major Themes Related to Baptism

The major themes that are of theological significance to baptism deserve to be considered in this section. To be specific, this section deals with the issue of "who should participate" in baptism. Regeneration and the Lord's Supper are among the topics discussed.

Regeneration

Issue of regeneration (repentance) as a prerequisite to baptism is paramount in the theology of the Christian Church. According to Daniel L. Bock, the early church held that only regenerated believers could be associated with the local church as followers of Christ. They alone qualify to share in the new covenant that Jesus

²³ Brown, *Baptism Through the Centuries*, 36. cf William L. Lampkin, *A History of Immersion* (Nashville, TN: Boadman, 1962),19.

²⁴ Nelson Cote Wolfred, *The Archeology of Baptism* (London: Yates and Alexander, 1876), 152-153.

instituted just before his crucifixion (Acts 2:38; 3:19).²⁵ He further explains that in Acts of the Apostles, Luke records that it was only those who were being saved who were added to the church daily and engaged in the community lifestyle, including Baptism and bread breaking.²⁶ This fellowship leads to God's blessing.

Wayne Grudem also feels that because baptism is a Christian sign, it should only be done by individuals who believe in Christ. By participating in Baptism, one renews and strengthens his faith in Christ and experiences the gift of salvation which is an act of Grace bestowed on humans without works.²⁷ This seems to suggest that only those who come in faith through Baptism will experience the blessing that comes as a result of repentance and constant trust in Jesus.

The Lord's Supper in the Early Christian Church

The first mention of the Lord's Supper is in Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, which was presumably written in 55 CE. (1 Cor. 11:23-26; Acts 2: 4) and the *Didache* (ca. 120 CE). In Paul's Epistle, he challenges the Corinthian believers' behaviour, especially the abuse of the "love feast" (agape), which was intended to assist the poor.²⁸ The liturgical sections of the *Didache* (9, 10), gives specific instructions on how the Lord's Supper should be observed. It includes examples of pre- and post-meal prayers, as well as a list of those who are eligible to partake.²⁹

²⁵ Darrel L. Bock, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 141.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Wayne Grudem, 955.

²⁸ Daniel G. Powers, *Salvation through Participation. An Examination of the Notion of the Believers' Corporate Unity with Christ in Early Christian Soteriology* (Leuven, Belgium: Peters, 2001), 179-180

²⁹ Cyril C. Richardson, *Early Christian Fathers* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 9.

Baptised Christians who are in good relationship with the Lord could participate in the Lord's Supper, emphasizes by Henk Jan de Jong, University of Leiden emeritus professor of New Testament exegesis and early Christian literature. This aims at ensuring unity among the participants. Henk Jan de Jong's assertion appears to mean that those who have not been baptised are forbidden to participate in the Lord's Supper. De Jonge analysing Cyprian's, view explains that those who are baptized receive the Holy Spirit, and those who have received the Holy Spirit are permitted to drink from the Lord's cup. Justin Martyr, writing in the mid-second century, gives a more detailed account of the Lord's Supper. He observes the usage of wine mixed with water and bread, which is "the body and blood of Christ," through "word prayer."³⁰ Those who partake in the supper, according to Justin's view of the Eucharist, become bodily united with Jesus Christ's body, resulting in redemption. The Eucharist, he believes, is the ultimate cultic form through which Christians shape and expresses their faith.³¹

Kiesler, by shedding further insight on how the early Church saw the Lord's Supper was symbolic early in the Church's history. However, with time, divergent views among some prominent Church fathers stated that the elements should be regarded as Christ's "real body and blood." Irenaeus, (c. 130-c.200) arguing against Docetism, (a heresy which denies the reality of the incarnation and resurrection) When the Eucharist receives the invocation from God, it is made up of two realities: earthly and heavenly." According to Irenaeus, participating in the Eucharist resulted in incorruptibility and the hope of eternal life. According to Irenaeus, the transformed elements nourish the human flesh of the participants and make them a part of the

³⁰ Justin Martyr, *The First Apology* (Edinburg, UK: Nabu Press, 1948), 65.

³¹ Ibid.

resurrection of Christ.³² It appears that the consecration of the elements, by the efficacy of holy prayers as Ambrose Aurelius (339-397) and Cyril of Jerusalem, too, agrees that Jesus' corporeal body and blood are strangely transformed. Cyril of Jerusalem also agree, is mysteriously changed into the physical body and blood of Jesus.

Further, Hippolytus (c. 170-c. 236) drawing inspiration from Paul's warning to the Corinthians suggests that "no crumb of the Holy Communion should fall. Hippolytus states, "For it is the Body of Christ that believers should consume, and it is not to be taken lightly." It's worth noting that the early Church saw the celebration in different ways. One of them appears to be in the context of sacrifice found in the prophecy of (Mal 1:10-11) in contrast with the pure and worthless offerings.

Irenaeus comments that this sacrificial view was also tied to the words of Jesus regarding one's gift on the altar (Matt 5:23-24).³³ Here Irenaeus meant before you sacrifice be accepted by God there should be reconciliation between you and your offended brother. Tertullian uses the term sacrifice to mean the bread and the wine. His explanation suggests that the elements were not just empty symbols; instead, It portrays Christ's actual corporeal body and blood.³⁴ Theodore from Mopsuestia (c. 350-428) in Catechetical Homilies also opines that upon the Priests presentation of the bread and wine, Christ was being laid on the table to be sacrificed.³⁵ Cyprian also

³² Ambrose Aurelius, *Christianity Today the Emperor Theodosius and the Establishment of Christianity* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1984), 56.

³³ Gregg Allison, 637.

³⁴ On the Resurrection of the Flesh, 8, in *Ante Nicene Fathers*, 3:551. Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh, 8, in *Ante Nicene Fathers*, 3:551. Allison, 639,

³⁵ *Ibid.*

affirms that as the Priest offers the wine, he, was just repeating the sacrifice of Christ, the reality of his body on the cross. For him, Christ has first presented himself as a sacrifice to the Father, and he has commanded that this be done in his memory.³⁶ John Chrysostom (c. 347-407) describes the Eucharist as “the dread sacrifice, the unutterable mysteries.”³⁷

Furthermore, the early Christian Church recognizes a number of advantages that arise from one's taking part in the Holy Communion. The Eucharistic bread according to Ignatius is “the medication of immortality, the antidote one takes so that he will not die, but instead live forever in Jesus Christ.”³⁸ Irenaeus and Origen synthesise Ignatius' view and seems that the Holy Communion nourishes the believer's body and encourages them to give thanks and worship to God.³⁹ Clement of Alexandria accentuates the Lord's Supper benefits and that it sanctifies the sinner from sinful activities.

Finally, Augustine also discusses the Lord's Supper from two angles. On the one hand, he believes in the literal presence of Christ in the elements; while on the other hand, he believes in the symbolic approach, believing that the Lord's Supper is "an outward and visible sign of an unseen yet genuine grace."⁴⁰ While he thought that the bread and wine were Christ's body and blood, he made a distinction between the "symbol" and the object signified. He didn't believe in substantive changes (element).

³⁶ Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, 8.

³⁷ Kiesler, 601

³⁸ Allison, 639.

³⁹ Ibid. See also, Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*.

⁴⁰ Augustine, *On the Catechizing of the Uninstructed*, 26.50, in *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1900), 3.

Instead, he promotes member unity, emphasizes the commemorative aspect of the Holy Communion, and pushes them to live authentically as the body of Christ.

The aforementioned of the Early Church Fathers tend to agree on the fact that the materials used for the Lord's Supper, or Eucharist, appear to represent the true physical sacraments. The components' change is a mystery, because the bread and wine are transformed immediately after the priest consecrates them. For them, it is not symbolic; instead, it is the actual presence of Christ that manifests itself in the Holy Communion. As a result, the early Church took the phrase "This is my body, and this is my blood" literally. Despite the fact that many scholars have questioned this attitude, they have continued to practice it as they saw fit.⁴¹

Relationship between Baptism and Eucharist

When Jesus was preparing to leave this world, The Eucharist, commonly known as the Lord's Supper, was founded by him. "Through the broken bread and wine, Jesus' body and blood are represented." (Matt 26: 26, 27). The Lord's Supper points out Christ's second coming and it is to keep the hope clear in the minds of the disciples. You do show the Lord's death by eating this bread and drinking this cup as often as you can until He comes (1 Cor 11:26).

Baptism was started by John the Baptist in anticipation of Jesus Christ's first advent. Jesus was baptised not as a sinner but to the fulfilment of all righteousness. Baptism symbolised the death and resurrection of Jesus, the sinner's baptism served as the death and resurrection of the one being baptised to live a newness of life and

⁴¹ Ibid., 3:313. See also, Augustine's, sermon 272, in *The Works of St. Augustine* ed. John E Rotelle, vol.7: sermon, trans, Edmond Hill (Hyde Park NY: New City, 1993), 300, Louis Berkof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996), 645.

forsake all the old life. Baptism and Eucharist point to the saving grace of the death and resurrection, and the second coming of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 4

BAPTISM IN THE THEOLOGY OF MARTIN LUTHER AND JOHN CALVIN

This chapter of study explores the concept of baptism in Martin Luther and John Calvin's theology. In doing this, the background of each of these two theologians and reformers, would be considered. Also, the chapter will expose the similarities and differences between the teachings of these two theologians.

Martin Luther's Concept of Baptism

Martin Luther, the most significant magisterial reformer, who changed the world's religious landscape, wrote insightfully on baptism. Martin Luther's on baptism are articulated in this section, but his background and reformed ideas are considered before then.

The Background of Martin Luther

, Martin Luther, a German by birth, was born on November 10, 1483, in Eisleben, Saxony, in the Holy Roman Empire. He was a theologian, composer, priest, and monk, among other things. as well as a key in the Protestant Reformation, he was a key figure. In 1483, his family relocated from Eisleben to Mansfield, where his father Hans Luther worked as a smelter in the copper mines.¹ He started his education at Mansfield, the then Magdeburg in 1497. It was the father's ambition to see the son

¹ Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther* tr. James L. Schaaf (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1985), 93, 1:3-5.

become a lawyer. Thus, Luther after learning his schooling was equated to purgatory and hell by language, rhetoric, and logic he changed his decision..

He studied in the University of Erfurt when he was 19 years old, and graduated with a master's degree in 1505. He enrolled in a university law school, according to his father, but dropped after deciding that law was too risky. Luther later turned to theology and philosophy for answers to his life's questions. He did it by displaying his interest in thinkers such as Aristotle. Reason, Luther believed, may be used to examine man but not God. He emphasized that only divine revelation could teach humans about God, and Scripture became increasingly essential to him as a result. When a tremendous storm transformed Luther's viewpoint on life in July 1505, he decided to become a monk. He made a vow to Saint Anna that, he would dedicate his life to her service in a monastery if he were saved from the storm.² To keep his vow Luther dropped out of law school, sold his belongings, and enrolled in Erfurt's St. Augustine's Monastery.

Luther was dedicated to the Augustinian order which he belongs. Long hours of prayer, fasting, travel, and regular confession were all part of his daily routine. He regarded this time his life was marked by great spiritual adversity. "I lost connection with Christ, my Savior and Comforter, and turned Him away," Luther declared, into my wretched soul's jailer and hangman."³ A friend and superior to Luther, Johanna Von Staupitz pointed Luther's mind to Jesus. He taught him that true repentance does

² Brecht, *Martin Luther*, 93, 1:48.

³ James Kittleson, *Luther the Reformer* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1986), 79.

not involve self-imposed penances, affliction, and punishment, followed by a change of heart.⁴

Luther was ordained as a priest in Brandenburg, at the Erfurt Cathedral. He was later asked at the University of Wittenberg, to teach theology. He received a Doctor of Theology degree at Wittenberg in 1512 where he preached, the rest of his time.. In 1515, Luther's religious order appointed him Provincial Vicar of Saxony and Thuringia. Luther's responsibilities included visiting and oversight of each of the eleven monasteries within the province.⁵ During this time, Martin Luther, a preacher and lecturer, saw many practices within the church that were inconsistent with the God's word. Luther hoped to see the Church reformed in its practices and preaching, and thus become consistent with God's word.⁶

Martin Luther and the Reformation

Being considered the Father of the Reformation, Martin Luther's role in the Reformation cannot be overlooked. This sub-section looks at Luther and his role in the Reformation which shook Christendom in the sixteenth century.

One of the Reformation architect was Staupitz, the Augustinian Order's Vicar-General in Germany, who had learned the way of salvation from the Bible. He recognized the flaws and vices of his time, but lacked the bravery to be Christendom's reformer.⁷ Staupitz had already tasted the cup Luther was about to drink, but he had lost. Staupitz admonished the people about the real character of God; and urged them

⁴ Le Roy Edwin Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1948), 249.

⁵ Scott H. Hendrix, *Martin Luther: Visionary Reformer* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 44.

⁶ Erick H. Erikson, *Young Man Luther* (New York: Norton, 1962), 255.

⁷ Adam Vita Staupitz D'Aubigne, *History Reformation, Vol. 1* Book 2, Chapter 4.

to loved God. He emphasized the mercy and compassion of God and assured them that through the blood of Jesus, sinners could be freed from their sins. For him, trusting in the mercies of the Lord was the way.⁸

This is the "star that shines before the face of repentance, the pillar of fire that guides her in the night of her sorrows and gives her light," and it leads her to God's throne. Luther recognized on his sickbed in Erfurt that he had died, be buried, and rise again into a new life. The grave, death, and sepulcher of Christ gave the church new life. At the beginning of Christian period. We must die and be buried before we can put on immortality. Martin Luther, the monk, died in Erfurt, and Martin Luther, the Christian, was born there. The Reformation in Germany and European Christianity began with the birth of Luther the Christian.⁹

The Vicar-General Staupitz admonished Luther when parting. When they parted, the Vicar-General Staupitz warned Luther. "Make Bible study your favorite pastime. Luther spent the majority of his life in conflict with emperors and Popes, and it was through these confrontations that he learnt that man is created to achieve, not to enjoy, and that in order to achieve anything substantial, he must give himself up, turn away from humanity, and rely exclusively on God.

Reformation was sparked by Luther during the period of the sale of Indulgence, which was to raise money for the construction of the building of The Basilica of St. Peter in Rome. On October 31, 1517, Luther wrote to Bishop Albert of Mainz, condemning the sale of indulgences. His hatred of the sale of Indulgence and other religious practices that did not conform to the Scriptures induced him to paste at the All Saints Church entrance at Wittenberg his 95 theses Luther objected to the

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

sayings of Johnson Tetzl, “The soul from purgatory springs as soon as the coin in the coffer rings,” Luther said, “anyone saying that Indulgences absorb the purchaser from all punishment and provide them salvation commits an error.” Later, the 95 theses were published, that were initially written in Latin were translated into German by Luther’s friends.

The 95 theses were nailed on the Wittenberg doorpost, by Martin Luther marks the new and starting point in religious freedom that spread in all Christendom, which had the premises that a pardon is not bought a gift through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It also marks the start of the opening of the enormous prison-house door, where the human soul had been imprisoned for eons and moaned in chains. The printing press intensified the spread of theses. And instead of the people buying the indulgences, they purchased the theses in a fortnight this proposition was circulated throughout all Germany, and within a month throughout all Europe. They were translated into all the languages.¹⁰

Luther was summoned to the Diet of Worms in a matter of days, highest ecclesiastical court to defend his incriminated writings opinion.¹¹ This is how one writer described the appearance of Luther at the Diet of Worms,

This appearance was a declaration of victory over the Papacy in and of itself. The man had been convicted by the Pope, and he now stood before the tribunal that had been established by this very act. Despite the fact that He was summoned in respectful manner and received before the world's most august assembly after the Pope imposed an interdict on him and isolated him from all human civilization. He'd been sentenced to a life of penance. Rome was well on her way down from her throne when she was humiliated by the words of a monk.¹²

¹⁰ Martin Luther, *Works of Martin Luther* Vol. 1 (Albany, NY: Ages Software, 1997), 17.

¹¹ *Itinerar Ital.*, part 2, De Coron. Ram. Pont (Venice, Italy: Word Press, 2019), 415.

¹² “Petrus Damianus,” Opusc. p. 5. *Allix, Churches of Piedmont*, p. 113. M’crie, *History of Reformation in Italy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), 2.

Luther was urged to retract his books, but boldly before the ecclesiastical powers, King Charles V, the emperor and the dignitaries, he refused. Luther replied, “It is a sin to go against one's conscience.”¹³ He warned the Emperor and Kings of the coming judgement by emphasizing the kings of Egypt, Babylon, and Nineveh who stood against God and brought upon themselves utter ruins.¹⁴ Luther continued,

I am unable to surrender my faith to either the Pope or the Council because it is obvious that both have made several errors and contradicted one another. I can't and won't retract unless I'm My conscience binds me to make an acknowledgment of error, because it is neither safe nor prudent to do so, because I am convinced by the evidence of Scriptures or on obvious and unambiguous grounds of reason. Amen, may God be my helper. In 1521, Pope Leo X excommunicated Martin Luther from the Roman Catholic Church. Following his excommunication, Luther got married to a former nun Katherine von Bora. They had six children. Luther died in 1546 in Eisleben, Germany¹⁵ being the father of the Protestant Reformation.

Martin Luther's Concept of Baptism

Having put into perspective the background and Martin Luther's role in the Reformation, this section seeks to articulate Luther's views on Christian doctrine. Martin Luther received his baptism whilst still an infant. For that matter, after the Reformation, he spoke a lot about the scriptural concept of baptism. Luther taught the German Christians the biblically recommended form of baptism. He showed them that the best method of baptism was immersion as practised by Jesus. In Greek, the word

¹³ Wylie, *History of Protestantism vol. 1*, 535.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ *Luther: Protestant Saint or Devil* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 250.

baptismos mersio in Latin and Taufe in German both imply immersion. Each of these three words means “to immerse something entirely in water” for that matter, Luther emphasised that baptism by immersion is the proper and biblical method, and thus should be practised as such.¹⁶ Luther made it clear that immersion is the mode of baptism instituted by Christ.

“Just as Jesus Himself revealed the Ten Commandments, the Christian creed, and the Lord's Prayer, baptism is useful for every Christian,” Luther emphasized. For every Christian to pray by it, and live by it. “Baptism is not a trifle, but a divine institution,” he said. It is not a pastor or a priest who administers this sacrament in Jesus' name, but God Himself.”¹⁷ Luther placed baptism in the context of God's word. He claims that anyone who rejects Baptism rejects God's truth, faith, and ultimately, salvation and Christ. Luther did not see baptism and the Bible as two independent concepts, but rather as one. He used Augustine’s very words which carried the conception that The Sacrament is the result of combining the word with the components or natural material.

According to Luther, baptism has many benefits for the Christian believer. He believes that Baptism transforms a Christian into a priest. Luther's vision of all Christians serving as priests is a well-known innovation. Luther stated in his book *Commentary on Galatians*: “All ye who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ, wherefore baptism is a powerful and effective thing.”¹⁸ In his book, *Commentary of Peter and Jude*, Luther, stated that one would “be saved by baptism,

¹⁶ Luther, *Holy and Blessed Sacrament* in LW (Minnesota, MN: Fortress Press, 1517), 35-39.

¹⁷ Martin Luther, *Concerning Rebaptism, in Luther's Works* (55 vols.) Yaroslavl Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehman eds. (Philadelphia, PA: Muhlenberg Press, 1955), 40:239.

¹⁸ Martin Luther, *Commentary on Galatians* tr.by Erasmus Middleton (Grand Rapids MI: Kregel Publications, 1977), 221-222.

just as that water swallowed all that is of the flesh and the corrupt nature is washed away, and we are transformed into spiritual beings.” Luther attached great importance to baptism. When the Devil assails him, he would answer, “I am baptised.”¹⁹ Thus, it can be said that for Luther, baptism was a Sacrament.

John Calvin’s Theology of Baptism

John Calvin, a Frenchman and father of all Reformed churches,²⁰ did not leave baptism out of his theology. He clearly articulated his views and understanding of the Christians doctrine of baptism. This section seeks to discuss who John Calvin was and his knowledge of theology of baptism.

Background of John Calvin

During the Protestant Reformation, John Calvin was a powerful French theologian, preacher, and reformer. He was born on the 10th of July, 1509, in Noyon, Picardy, France, and died in Geneva on the 27th of May, 1564.²¹ He was the first born child of Jeanne le Franc and Gerard Chauvin. His father wanted his three sons, Charles, Jean, and Antoine Calvin, to think about becoming priests.²²

Calvin traveled to Paris when he was 14 years old to attend the College de Marche in order to prepare for university studies. He studied language, rhetoric, logic, mathematics, geometry, astronomy, and music at the College de Marche. Calvin was

¹⁹ Martin Luther, *Commentary on Peter and Jude* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications 1872), 169.

²⁰ Joseph A. Olanrewaju and Robert Osei-Bonsu, “Infant Baptism: Evaluation of Calvin’s Argument,” *Valley View Journal of Theology* 2 (2012):14-16.

²¹ Olanrewaju and Osei-Bonsu, “Infant Baptism: Evaluation of Calvin’s Argument,” 14.

²² Robert Dean Linder, *The Reformation Era* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Press, 2008), 139.

eventually transferred to College Montaigu, a more well-known college.²³ In 1525, Calvin was withdrawn by his father from the school to pursue his education at the University of Orleans to study law, and then to the University of Bourges in 1529. He stayed there for 18 months to learn *Koine Greek* to help him study the New Testament.²⁴ In 1532, Calvin received his license in Law. He became a master of the Greek language while studying law.

Consequently, after completing a degree in Law, his father Gerard died in May 1531, which provided occasion to change from the law to the classics when he was twenty-one years old, he released his first book, a Seneca commentary.

During the All-Saints Day in 1533, Calvin preached Christ as God's and man's intercessor. The sermon sparked a controversy which forced him to flee for his life from Paris to a town in Switzerland called Basel. Calvin's comprehensive theological exposition, "The Institutes of the Christian Religion," was published in Basel at the age of twenty-six. Calvin authored commentaries on twenty-three Old Testament books and the entire New Testament, with the exception of the book of Revelations. He authored many pamphlets, letters, and devotionals, doctrinal and controversial material.²⁵

In the book, *John Calvin and His Passion for God Majesty*, he is not an original thinker as Luther and Erasmus were. Luther did the same. He never uncovers any ancient wisdom secret like Erasmus did. However, he later desired to see France

²³ Richard A. Muller, *The Unacomodated Calvin, Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 23.

²⁴ Parker, *Commentary of the Old Testament* (London: Oxford University Press, 2000), 22-25.

²⁵ Olanrewaju and Osei-Bonsu, "Infant Baptism: Evaluation of Calvin's Argument," 16.

converted to Protestantism. which failed. However, Calvin became content with England and Scotland instead.²⁶

Calvin was remarkable not for his creativity or accomplishments, but for his deep understanding of the coherence of Christian messages, which he derived from his deep relationship with God. Calvin was a Christian who had been possessed by the Holy Spirit. He felt he had been called to meet with God in Christ and to spread God's Word to a world that was hungry and dying, and he never wavered in his commitment to.²⁷

In short, John Calvin was a Bible scholar, a theologian and an ecclesiastical statesman with a high reputation.²⁸ He was considered as one of the greatest and the most controversial Christian leaders the world has known. John Calvin is identified as “one of the Reformed Church's founders.”²⁹

Calvinistic Theology

Many theologians have written about Calvin's Theology. The first three of his theologies: God's Glory, the Bible's Authority, and the Historical-Grammatical Approach to the Bible These sources articulate Theology of Calvin

Calvin's fundamental theological views are articulated in The Glory of God. The book is an insightful reflection of the high eminence of God as the most significant good in the Universe. We know ourselves because of the contemplation of

²⁶ John Piper, *John Calvin and His Passion for the Majesty of God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2009), 8.

²⁷ Ibid., 9

²⁸ Olanrewaju and Osei-Bonsu, “Infant Baptism: Evaluation of Calvin’s Argument,” 16.

²⁹ Robert C. Jones, *A Brief History of Christian Baptism: From John the Baptist to John Smyth* (Acworth, GO: n.p, 1998), 19.

this crucial issue. At the beginning of the writing of the *Institutes*, Calvin stated,³⁰ He again, until he first gazes upon God's face and then lowers from observing him to scrutinize himself, he never acquires a clear awareness of himself therefore, concluded that we must infer that man would not see himself as sufficient unless he compares himself to God's majesty.³¹ Based on his argument about the glory of God, Calvin emphasized that there are only two kinds of knowledge: God's knowledge and man's knowledge. The actual knowledge of man can be profoundly manifested if he actually, acknowledges the knowledge of God. This principle not only made it a divine mandate but a human necessity. In the vast doctrine of scripture, Calvin aimed to magnify God's glory in the vast doctrine of scripture as revealed by the universe.

“Man cannot open his eyes without being obliged to view Him; His nature is unknowable, but He has inscribed undeniable evidence of His grandeur upon His works,” Calvin emphasizes.³² In all of Calvin’s writings, he postulated God’s glory in creation, election, and justification. Calvin emphasized the doctrine of justification when he had the opportunity to discuss it with the Italian Cardinal Sadolet. Calvin emphasized the doctrine of justification when he had the opportunity to discuss it with the Italian Cardinal Sadolet that Rome's understanding of this doctrine has been marred pointing out that the brightness of Christ is extinguished whenever the understanding of Faith-based Justification is revoked.”³³ The main issues of Calvin's writings were based on the glory of God.

³⁰ John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Lewis Battles (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press 1960), 1: 37.

³¹ *Ibid.* 1:39.

³² Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, 1:54.

³³ *Ibid.*, 1:76.

Another key issue in Calvin's theology was the authority of Scripture. "It is entirely ludicrous, then, to suggest that the church alone has the competence to judge scripture, that certainty is contingent on church acceptance," Calvin emphasized.³⁴ Scripture is authoritative in Calvin's opinion since it comes from God. In *The Bondage and Liberation of the Will*, Calvin argued against Pighus that "the rule of faith should be found in God's word, Scripture, and the Oracles of God, not in tradition." "If the context were to be established by patristic authority," Calvin explains at the commencement of the *Institutes*, in the Prefatory Address to King Francis, "the tide of victory would flow to our side."³⁵

Calvin desired for all teachings to be subjected to the authority of scripture. Calvin also emphasized the historical-grammatical approach to Scripture interpretation. His approach to Scripture interpretation differs from the Catholic Church's allegorical interpretation. Calvin believed that the Devil was the originator of the allegorical method of interpretation. Through this method, Satan attempted to undermine the veracity of biblical teaching. In the *Institutes*, Calvin explains the dangers of sliding into heresy "without the word of God": "If we turn aside from the word," he says, "we have gone from the path, and we will never attain the goal." Calvin believed that the authoritative Scriptures were the only hermeneutically sound path to take.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, 1:1-4

Calvin here concluded that the enduring influence of his theology is a testament to the rock-solid foundation on which it is built—the Bible Theologians today would do well to start with the same fundamental presupposition that he did. Calvin's belief is based on a passion for God's greater glory, a historical-grammatical approach to interpreting God's word and the supremacy of scripture over all other authorities.

In Calvin's work, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, he clearly articulated his religious teachings. Here, Calvin emphasized the absolute Sovereignty of God, the scriptures and Divine Predestination. The Five Points of Calvinism are frequently quoted in the Institutes of Christian Religion. A common acronym used to help remember the *TULIP*. These are:

- i. Total Depravity: Human beings are spiritually dead, with sin infiltrating every area of their existence to the point where they must be supernaturally regenerated by the Holy Spirit's sovereignty before they can embrace God's gracious gift.
- ii. Unconditional Election: God picked a specific group of people to be rescued from the beginning of time, while the remainders were condemned to face His wrath. God's decisions are made in no way based on what they would do or on the Holy Spirit's foreknowledge of what they would do.
- iii. Christ died just for the elect, not for the rest of humanity, according to limited atonement.
- iv. Irresistible Grace: God's chosen people are incapable of rejecting the gospel or resisting the Holy Spirit's supernatural regeneration and sanctification work.

- v. Saints' Perseverance: Because the elect are divinely chosen and their faith is divinely empowered, they persevere in their faith until the end of their lives and ascend to heaven.
- vi. However, some passages biblical interpretation rules. Some of the passages in contention are Isaiah 6:5; 53:5-6; Matthew 23:37; John 3:16; 21:17; 1 Timothy 2:1-6; 4:9-10; Hebrews 12:14.³⁶

Calvin's Theology of Baptism

The official entrance into the membership of the church, for Calvin, is only through baptism. In other words, without baptism, a person cannot be considered as a member of the church, which is Christ's body. Calvin explained, "Baptism is the emblem of initiation by which we are admitted into the brotherhood of the church, so that, engrafted in Christ, we may be reckoned among God's children."³⁷ Only a minister or coadjutor should administer baptism during a worship hour, according to him.

Also, Calvin was of the stand that baptism has effects on the person's faith. In the first place, baptism is a seal of assurance that one's sins are forgiven. Second, it attests to our new life in Christ after our death in Him. Finally, baptism ensures our relationship with Christ and our right to claim His blessings.³⁸ Through baptism, the gospel becomes real in one's life. The reason being that during baptism the blood of Jesus cleanses us. Seeing baptism as a symbol that cleanses both present and future

³⁶ Zondervan's *New International Dictionary of the Christian Church* (177-182), Paul Enns, *The Moody Theology Handbook* (Dallas, TX: Moody Publishers, 1989), 503-516.

³⁷ Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4.15.1; See also, Olanrewaju and Osei-Bonsu, "Infant Baptism: Evaluation of Calvin's Argument," 16.

³⁸ Viola Larson, "John Calvin on the Sacraments: A Summary," *Theology Matters* 13 (4) (Sep/Oct 2007), 4.

sins, Calvin advocated that it be administered once in one's lifetime.³⁹ Calvin wrote that we are "washed, and cleansed our life through baptism."⁴⁰ If this is the case, it implies that one baptized should remain in the church offers from sins continually. The effect, then, is that withdrawal from the church is not a favorable decision for a baptized Christian. For Calvin, the church has the task of leading sinners to salvation through confession and repentance.⁴¹ The church provides the opportunity for the truth to abide in the one baptized. His view was contrary to that of the medieval church, which was that when one sin after baptism, he or she forfeits the baptism received and thus needs penance to be accepted once again.⁴² Calvin again stressed that through baptism; we suffered from Christ and attained a in Him, a new life. As the apostle writes, those of us who were baptized into Jesus Christ were also baptized into His death; as a result, we are buried with him in baptism and should walk in newness of life. (Romans 6:3–4). Here we are admonished by the Apostle that we should die to sin, and afterwards resurrect to new life. Baptism makes us the partakers of Christ death and, thus, rises to righteousness after that.

Also, Calvin asserted that the Old Testament practice of circumcision points precisely to the same grace as baptism, which is forgiveness and mortification. "We have a spiritual promise given to the Fathers in circumcision, which symbolized both the remission of sins and the mortification of the flesh to them."⁴³ Here, he

³⁹ Olanrewaju and Osei-Bonsu, "Infant Baptism: Evaluation of Calvin's Argument," 17.

⁴⁰ Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion* (Philadelphia, PA: West Minster Press, 1960), 4.25.3.

⁴¹ Thomas Henry Louis Parker, *John Calvin: A Biography* (London: J.M. Dent, 1975), 60, See also, Olanrewaju and Osei-Bonsu, "Infant Baptism: Evaluation of Calvin's Argument," 17.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 161.

⁴³ Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1960), 4:14: 3&4.

emphasized that circumcision has been replaced by baptism, and it contains similar spiritual promise as received by Abraham and the Patriarchs.

Furthermore, baptism has been proposed to us, as a sign and a token of our cleansing. It resembled a legal instrument or property attested to by which God tells us that all of our sins have been cancelled, removed completely, and erased so that they will never appear in His sight or be attributed to us.⁴⁴ The church, according to Calvin, is the realm of God's Fatherhood and acceptance into God's family, with baptism functioning as a sign of adoption. When we are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we are welcomed into God's family. Our adoption as God's sons and daughters is symbolized by this.

Moreover, Calvin reiterated that the unfolding of the baptized action resurrection side is reserved for the next world. On this account, Calvin said that our baptism is an antitype to Noah's so that this day, the death outlined in baptism is an entrance into life, nor can salvation be hope for except we are separated from the world (1 Peter 3:21).⁴⁵ Calvin used the flood as a type of baptism, which indicates that he recognized eschatological significance as a sign of participation in the age to come (2 Tim 2:16-18).⁴⁶

⁴⁴ John Calvin, *A Compend of the Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1939), 188.

⁴⁵ Ronald S. Wallace, *Calvin's Doctrine of Word and Sacrament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publications Company, 1957), 182.

⁴⁶ Wilhelm Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1956) 27.

Infant Baptism

Calvin also stressed the need for baptizing infants, based on the frequent death of unbaptized infants in his time. For that matter, Calvin candidly declared his mind upon the imperative and necessity of infant baptism. He couldn't stand up for what he thought, which was that baptism was not required to enter the kingdom. He couldn't declare that the nature of God's decree for every new born was demonstrated by its baptism or lack thereof. Basing on the concept of "election," God elected us before we were born. Calvin defended infant baptism.⁴⁷

Calvin's baby baptism theology is based on the belief that baptism and circumcision have an anagogic link. Both rituals, according to Calvin, announced God's promises to a person while also introducing them to the covenant people.

Calvin maintained that because one sign of the covenant was given to babies, the New Covenant is as inclusive as the Old Covenant. Infants cannot be excluded from the New Covenant. Calvin also made an argument for infant baptism based on the values Jesus displayed. He invited infants to come close to Him when He invited them to do so. If Christ welcomed children and stated, "The kingdom of God belongs to them," he concluded. Why should we deny baptism to children due of their age? (Matthew 19:14) Calvin also responded to the Anabaptists' claim that no infants were baptized in the Bible. Calvin bases his argument on the baptism of the entire family in Acts 16:33. Infants, he claims, are included despite the fact that they were not specifically mentioned.

In terms of Christian experience, a reflection on Calvin's theology of baptism provides tremendous explanatory power and demonstrates the link between baptism

⁴⁷ Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion* (Philadelphia PA: Westminster Press, 1960), IV.XVI. 21

and faith effectively. It is believed that infants are part of God's Kingdom as Jesus stressed it and welcome them into His bosom and blessed them so by faith baptism or not it is believed that infants qualify. As a sign, Calvin's baptism doctrine is the only view of baptism that allows for child baptism, although his ideas can be inconsistent at times.

Summary

John Calvin was a Bible scholar, a theologian and an ecclesiastical statesman with a high reputation. He was considered as one of the greatest and the most controversial Christian leaders the world has known. As a theologian, Calvin candidly articulated his views on the doctrine of baptism. He saw baptism as a means to gain membership in the church. Also, Calvin saw baptism as a continuation of the Old Testament circumcision as such supported infant baptism. Lastly, Calvin saw a link between baptism and salvation. For him, one cannot hope for salvation without baptism.

A Theological Comparison of Baptism between Martin Luther and John Calvin.

The doctrine of baptism is embedded in Martin Luther's and John Calvin's theologies. When one scrutinizes baptism idea concept of baptism critically, there seems to be similarities and differences of opinion among both theologians.

Luther seems to articulate his views. "As God's words and promises indicate, it works for the forgiveness of sins, deliverance from death and the devil, and eternal salvation to all who believe." Simply said, the believer is saved by baptism, according to scripture. "Our churches teach that baptism is a requirement for salvation and that baptism is a means of receiving God's grace." Furthermore, baptism is more than a symbol of grace received. It also extends and bestows grace on the receiver. It is not,

however, the same as the Roman *ex opera operato* view of baptism, as is frequently claimed. When a person is baptized, regardless of their faith status, they are placed in a condition of grace, which they only lose when they commit a fatal sin. We understand that no one can be saved unless they have faith. As a result, faith is required for baptismal regeneration. God appropriates the gift of faith to the recipient, including an infant, for faith is a gift from Him. It should also be stated that a person can be saved without baptism because faith in Christ alone is sufficient to justify a believer. Nonetheless, rejecting baptism completely is equal to rejecting God Himself. As a result, there can be no genuine faith. Baptism is always the result of true faith.

What does Calvin think about baptism? Baptism, for him, is a symbol of initiation into the Christian religion, by which one becomes a member of Christ's body. Through baptism, new believer would be engrafted into Christ and is considered as a child of God.⁴⁸ Calvin does not consider baptism as merely a sign of the new birth. As he expresses in the same chapter, “those who see baptism as nothing more than a sign and a mark to express our beliefs in front of others... haven't determined what the primary objective of baptism was: He will be saved if he believes and is baptized, are to be told when we accept baptism (Mark 16:16). Some Presbyterians may be surprised by these comments because they are close to the Lutheran perspective, which many Protestants consider “Romish.”

The perspectives on baptism of Calvin and Luther, however, are vastly different. In the view of Luther, when one is baptised, he or she receives the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, Calvin held that when one is baptised, they are granted grace to one's membership in the Church. Although the baptized Christian has a

⁴⁸ Ibid

relationship only when the Holy Spirit is present in the church may one receive the Holy Spirit through baptism. This viewpoint supports Calvin's claim that one might be regenerated and then fall away, which Luther also believes. Both believe, however, that the elect will be saved in the end by grace. Abraham Kuyper, whose teaching has been dubbed "presumptive regeneration," was inspired by Calvin's notion. Unless signs indicate otherwise, a kid is considered a Christian following baptism. As a result, though the Spirit can regenerate through baptism, he does not always do so.

Luther and Calvin agreed that baptism is administered in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The connecting of God's children to Christ in His death and resurrection is known as baptism. The same divine force that raised Jesus from the dead also raised the believer from death to sin. Both reformers agree that through baptism, we suffer from Christ and live a new life in Him. We now walk in newness of life because those of us who were baptized with Christ were baptized into His death and buried with Him, Paul said. "For to be baptized in the name of God is to be baptized not by man, but by God Himself," says Romans 6:3–4. Luther said in his "Larger Catechism." Therefore, although human hands accomplish it, it is nevertheless indeed God's labour. Everyone can easily deduce from this fact that it is a far higher work than any work done by humans or a saint. What labour, after all, is more excellent than God's?

Luther, who was known for his "faith only" approach, believed that baptism was required and that it in no way contradicted salvation by faith in Jesus and not by works. Calvin considers salvation to be "unconditional" and "irresistible." He taught that before creation, God randomly chose some to be saved, and that those who have been chosen cannot oppose God's saving activity. Thus, the saved all have had salvation experiences in which God quickly transformed the lost soul. In the absence

of a saving experience redemption cannot be attained, by prayer, not by Bible study and not by baptism. Luther coined the phrase “faith alone” and saw no conflict with the requirement of baptism. Calvin, on the other hand, considered baptism as bestowing nothing because of his unique situation.

For the infant baptism, the reformers have some comments to be made. According to John Hannah, church historian “Calvin defended infant baptism, Calvin believes that “under the hereditary nature of the Abrahamic Covenant, Children of the godly are born church members, circumcision being replaced by baptism in the New Covenant, with baptism serving as a symbol,” and that “infants were circumcised under the old dispensation, allowing infants to be baptized under the New Covenant. “Baptism of an infant does not result in regeneration, but it does assure that the kid will be taught everything he needs to know about Christ when he is old enough to practice his faith. If he dies before he can exercise his faith, Calvin believes that God could rescue him since he is not limited to saving only those who exercise faith.

Luther and Calvin shared a similar viewpoint. Because of their parents' and church family's faith, he believed that infants, who are unable to exercise faith, should be baptized. Though the faith of the church family could not save the infant directly, the faith would eventually assist the youngster in growing in faith, .knowledge and receiving his faith from God.

Similarities and Differences in Luther and Calvin’s Concept of Baptism

In baptism, there are certain similarities and distinctions between Luther and Calvin. This section discusses the similarities and differences between the two.

Similarities

Both agreed that baptism could be administered in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, respectively. They also believed in immersion baptism, which involves submerging one's entire body in water. The importance of baptism as a symbol of death, burial, and resurrection was also emphasized and to live in newness of life. Thus, one who baptised live a new life, the old life of fornication, stealing, rivalry, idolatry etc., and the law's total disobedience is made away.

They also agreed on baptism as an initiation through which one enters the church. One cannot enter the church without being baptised. Both Luther and Calvin continue to believe that if one is baptised, the person has put on Christ and received the new birth, the old life has been put away because the one becomes a new person

Luther was baptised in his infancy both of them stressed the need of infant baptism. They believed that death of infants at that time and the fact that Jesus welcomed the infants as the inheritance in heaven confirmed that children should be baptised. They also believed in baptism, followed by Justified by faith in Christ. Baptism is for everybody who believes in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Both Luther and Calvin expressed baptism symbolised it as death and resurrection. It also provides salvation, remission of sins, a way to be free of death and the devil, and salvation for all eternity in keeping with Luther and Calvin's comparable views on baptism; they agreed that believers are adopted as God's sons and daughters via baptism.

Differences

About the differences, it was made known that Luther compared the importance of baptism as the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments. Luther also made known that during baptism as soon as the water swallowed the candidate the

water swallows the flesh and gives the spirit. He also made known that baptism was instituted by God and not man though Calvin did not mention it but believed. Luther emphasised the amalgamation of water and God's word during baptism, which made the water very special due to the outcome of water and the word of God. Luther also stressed that a believer obtains complete justification covering one entire life and convert the most hardened sinner.

On the other hand, Calvin posted it that concerning the administration of baptism, could be performed by a minister or a coadjutor, an assistant to the minister or the bishop. Calvin also posed it contrary to Luther's concept of baptism where he stressed that if one is baptised it takes all entire life, Calvin said that when one sin, after baptism, it is forfeited penance is needed again. Therefore, it is essential to continue to live on exemplary life after baptism to avoid falling into sin again.

Calvin stressed that in the Old Testament it was circumcision that identified God's people from others; likewise, in the New Testament, baptism had replaced the circumcision. In contemporary Christianity, circumcision has lost its essentiality, and baptism is needed to enter God's Kingdom.

Calvin also emphasized that Noah's Flood in the Old Testament is an antitype of baptism experienced by the people in a time of the exodus from Egypt to Canaan. Calvin stressed the need of baptism given to man by God to express our faith in God and our confession before man. Calvin overstressed these, whereas Luther never mentioned them.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This last chapter seeks to put forth the summary and conclusion of the study. It ends by making some recommendations.

Summary

Baptism was there in the form of initiation in the Jewish Religion before the advent of Christianity. *Tevilah* refers to the act of immersing oneself in water.¹ Immersion was required of new as part of their conversion process, a person converts to Judaism.² Baptism has been part of Christianity from the beginning, as shown in Acts of the Apostles and Pauline epistles, the disciples were given instructions by Jesus to baptize the converts as could be found in the Great Commission.

There are many biblical proclamations of the importance of baptism as instructed by Jesus. Truly, truly, I say to you, no one can enter God's Kingdom unless he has been born of water and the Spirit. (John 3:5). "Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her by washing her with water and the word, that he could present her to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or anything like that, that she might be pure and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25).

In the first century, John the Baptist preached on the banks of the Jordan River, according to the New Testament. John the Baptist baptized Jesus, and Christian baptism has its roots in Jesus' baptism. Baptism is depicted in the Pauline epistles as a

¹ *Jewish Encyclopaedia*, 'The only concept of baptism at variance with Jewish ideas are displayed in the declaration of John, that the one who would come after him would not baptise with water, but with the Holy Ghost (Mk 1:8; John 1:27).

²"Converting to Judaism," *Religion & Ethics*, May 1, 2015, 21 July 2020, accessed <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/2015/05/01/may-1-2015-converting-judaism/25921/>

symbol of Christians', linked to Christ's body and is related with His death and resurrection. The baptism of Jesus is depicted in Matthew 3:11-17 and Matthew 28:18-20 in the Gospels.

Martin Luther viewed baptism as the perpetually linked to the teaching of Justification based solely on faith. He built his baptismal doctrine on the concept of baptismal regeneration. One of the key doctrines of Justification by Faith is Luther's understanding of baptism. Baptism is depicted by Luther as good, glorious, elevated, and valuable of the utmost value, as well as an expressible treasury with gushing praise. In his book: *The Large Catechism* he discussed those who are to receive baptism. He stressed that only those who believe received baptism's promise and offer he added, "In truth, only faith qualifies a person to productively receive the saving, divine water."

Luther authored three tracts after being excommunicated by the Pope. including the *Church Babylonian Captivity*. A large number of his discussions are a discourse on baptism. He wrote mainly against the medieval understanding of the Sacrament. "Luther asserted that God saves humans through baptism, which is "infused" with grace. Justification, according to Luther, begins and concludes with baptism, with baptism signifying "death and resurrection, satisfying the completion of justification." Luther argues that baptism is the washing away of sins because one actually dies and rises from the grave.³ Baptism, according to Luther, transforms a person into a Christian who has been reborn, raised from the dead, and accepted into God's kingdom. The sinner is given faith, righteousness, and wisdom, and is linked to

³ Transvik, *Luther on Baptism* (New York NY: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 96.

forgiven, justified, sanctified, and redeemed from sin, death, and the devil through faith in Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, Calvin was able to carry out the sacrament of baptism by following Martin Luther ideas as washing with water is visible on the outside. He contended that it was secondary to God's promise to forgive sin as a proof of God's commitment to pardon sins. Calvin's baptismal doctrine was comparable to Luther's. It contrasts from Calvin's approach in which the Sacrament is subjugated to the preaching of God's message. Luther, on the other hand, equated preaching with sacrament. Calvin's contribution to the preaching of religion⁴ Calvin emphasized that baptism is a method of grace that confers the gift of God to the elect, prepares the way for the sacrament, and causes them to bear fruit.⁵

Calvin's theology on baptism, he explained about infant baptism. He made mention that baptism is a sign that ordinarily follows faith. He said of course, in an infant, the case is different: faith follows baptism. "For an elect infant who does not have faith at the time of baptism, the baptism becomes a means of grace later in life when it comes to faith."⁶ Similarly, stated baptism is an ongoing process of grace for the elect. The Holy Spirit communicates to the believer the faith in Christ whenever he looks back. Calvin doctrine on baptism avoids whether the baptized baby has the Faith is required in order to receive the gifts symbolized by baptism. For him, the fundamental goal of baptism is a rite that promises forgiveness, salvation, and new life to those who receive it.

⁴ Trigg, *Baptism in the Theology of Martin Luther*, 218.

⁵ Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, 4.14.17.

⁶ Luther, *Large Catechism* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia 1991), 167.

Baptism is also an oath of obedience to God and a public confession of faith. according to Calvin, it is also signified a shift in temporal and everlasting realities. On the surface, he considered as a sign of acceptance into the Christian church's community, baptism is performed.as well as an invisibly engrafted into the visible church. Only God has spiritual access to them. According to Calvin, the water of baptism has no inherent power to wash away sins; rather, the gospel is one which offers the word of cleansing, while the blood of Jesus serves as a means of purification. Calvin, on the other hand, considered baptism as a promise from God that our sins would not win. Calvin came to the conclusion that our new converts' mortification began at baptism. This represents our baptism into death and subsequent resurrection into new life (Romans 6:3-4).

Conclusion

Finally, Luther began the Protestant Reformation in Germany by declaring that only the Bible is the source of all faith and belief, and that no one, including the Pope, bishops, priests, or others, should stand between a man and God. During the Reformation, Calvin founded Calvinism in France. His belief was that everyone is going to hell and that only a select few have been picked to go to heaven regardless of circumstances. Luther and Calvin preached that baptism is essential for salvation and that it is through baptism that God's favor is received. They also chastised Anabaptists who opposed baby baptism, emphasizing that babies can be saved without it.

Recommendations

Martin Luther and John Calvin, the two contemporaries, emphasized the importance of baptism to the Christian believer. This is due to the fact that it acts as a

rite of passage into the church. One cannot enter God's Kingdom without being baptized (John.3:3-5).

A Christian who believes performs baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These Contemporaries thought that the greatest baptism procedure was to immerse one's entire body in water, symbolizing death, burial, and resurrection in preparation for a new life free of sin. This is the assurance that corruption has been exposed and that the believer in Christ is living a life of innocence. As a result, the justification of faith has an impact on a person's life. Luther and Calvin agreed in many aspects of baptism but there are other divergent views. For example, Luther expressed that baptism covers the entire life and is capable of converting the most criminal. On the other hand, Calvin posed it that after baptism if one sin again the baptism forfeited and penance is also needed again. This research is not a copied of any work but the researcher's own production. There is therefore more room for others to research and improve.

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