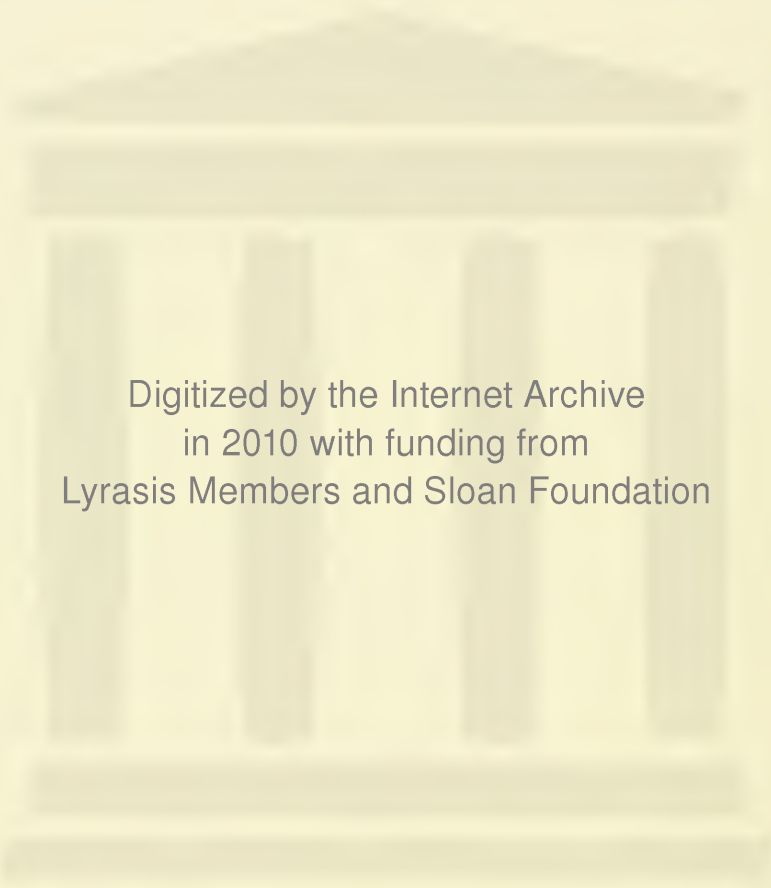

# JÜRGEN MOLTMANN AND THEOLOGY OF HOPE: A MODERN THEOLOGIAN AND THEOLOGY IN THE TRADITION OF SAINT PAUL

Cynthia Ann McKay

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Hope leads everything
For faith sees only what is.
But hope sees what will be.
Charity loves only what is.
But hope loves what will be--
In time and for all eternity.[1]

--Charles Peguy

# I

Jürgen Moltmann uses this poem by the French poet Charles Péguy to summarize his belief in the Theology of Hope. Hope, for Moltmann, is not a middle ground between the age-old theological alternation between salvation through works of love or salvation by faith, but the unifying point of the two.

> The key factor in medieval theology and sacramental life of the church was the supernatural reality of love. The Reformation shifted the focus to the power of faith and the congregation. When we come to the peculiar trends of modern times, we speak of secularization, emancipation, and enlightenment. But why did Kant believe that religion is supposed to answer the fundamental question, What may I hope for? In former epochs one did not approach religion with this question. The development of the theological doctrine of hope (eschatology) allowed us finally to take hold of the third dimension of Christianity. Only with the beginning of modern times did the primacy of hope seem to alternate with the primacy of faith and love.[2]

In order to understand how Moltmann's theology of hope unifies these two emphases of faith and works of love, one must first understand what the two are and what is their history. To make this clear, certain ideas must first be understood.

To begin, one must ask, what is this thing we seek? What is salvation? From what is man to be saved? And how is he saved from it? Salvation is a concept which has undergone a series of changing emphases

through the centuries. This change is the result of the alternating theological view points. John Killinger explains that in the Bible man's understanding of salvation is a changing understanding. In Old Testament times the Hebrew people understood salvation as a corporate matter for the nation as a whole.

> The classic notion of salvation in the Old Testament has to do with the people and the land. Salvation there is primarily corporate, not individual, and pertains to the fullness of life on earth--not to an otherworldly existence in a time beyond time....The Kingdom the Jew wanted was never a heavenly kingdom--not, at least, in the spiritualized sense...Deliverance might refer to all kinds of freeing acts--to being freed from illness, from creditors, or from persecutors. But its ultimate reference was always to the freed nation, the freed people of God, inhabiting their own land and living out in joyous fulfillment the covenant given to their fathers.
>
> Salvation was of the earth, in the highest sense of the word.[3]

In the New Testament the understanding of salvation began to change.

> Even though the Jewish Messiah viewed his work and ministry through the structures of apocalyptic thought, salvation was still, as in Old Testament days, related to the people of God and the land or the earth he had given them to occupy. It was not the isolated event in the life of a single individual which subsequent Christian history was to make of it.[4]

Paul defines salvation for Christians in his letters. Salvation is the freedom attained in the conquering of death made possible by Jesus' resurrection. It is the freedom to live righteously with God in our earthly life in the hope of fulfillment in eternal life.

Salvation is what men seek, but men throughout Christian history have questioned how salvation is attained. Two lines of thought have been taken, and these two different ideas have been the cause of the alternation which Moltmann attempts to reconcile. The two are salvation by works of love and salvation by grace. Works of love can be understood easily. Grace, however, is a more difficult concept grasp. A. T. Mollegen writes, in the Handbook of Christian Theology,:

> Grace is God's personal attitude toward man, His action and influence on him. For Christians grace is concretely manifested in, and communicated through, the historical person of Jesus Christ. St. Paul was the first Christian writer to make grace a central theological word. The word charis, which means favor, was used by him as a synonym for God's love. The attitude of spontaneous uncaused favor with which God regards man expresses itself fully in the life, words, deeds, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.[5]

William Horden gives a further explanation of grace in his book Living By Grace:

> When the Bible speaks of God's grace it is always rooted in the presupposition of God's love. To say that God is gracious is to say that God loves his children so that his relationship to them is not based simply upon what they deserve from him. When we stand before God we stand as ones who have deserved his ill favor and judgement. But gracious God does not hold our sins against us. He is ever ready to forgive. Justification by grace begins with the affirmation that our sins are forgiven by God.[6]

Some students of the tradition would argue that the lines of distinction between salvation by works of love and salvation by faith are drawn within the writings of Paul of Tarsus. However, a more complete study of the writings of Paul and the writings about Paul reveals

a unified understanding of salvation by faith with a recognition, perhaps inadequately stressed, of the necessity to act lovingly. Real faith, in formative Christianity, comes alive in deeds. Granted, Paul's letters do not overabound in practical ethical advice, but he does not advocate a life of actionless meditation or complete divorce from the world. Paul says in Galatians 3:26 "in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith." Paul also says in I Corinthians 10:31 - 11:1:

> So, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please all men in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

John Knox points directly to Paul's shortcoming, the absence in his writing of a clear case for ethical obligation. Knox indicates Paul's inability to find personal peace and fulfillment under the law. Knox cites Paul's rejection of the law in order to show why the apostle lacks practical advice and the problems which result:

> Thus we have justification "apart from law" altogether (Rom. 3:21), and Paul's opponents might well ask: "Why then not sin that grace may abound? What ground is there for ethical obligation, once one is in Christ?"
>
> Paul nowhere convincingly answers this question--and his raising it several times would seem to show that he was troubled by it. . . . In the practical sections of his letters, to be sure, Paul shows himself not only aware that Christians actually often did not observe the law of Christ, but also ready to insist that they are obligated to do so. But Paul has no persuasive <u>theoretical</u> basis for this insistence. . . . Must we not acknowledge that Paul's neglect here deprives him of a convincing theoretical ground for his insistence upon the <u>obligation</u> . . . of ethical living for the Christian,

> as well as having the effect of setting laws and grace in a wholly antithetical relation which has had fateful consequences in the history of the church?[7]

It is this antithetical relation with which the inquiry of this paper is concerned, particularly the contribution of a contemporary theologian who echoes Paul's views in this unlikely moment.

Even in the first century Paul's message was misunderstood and misinterpreted as Knox suggested above. Theologians, like other men and women, find one part of a message more to their liking than another part. Some are action-oriented and therefore prefer teachings urging personal accomplishment. Others prefer to trust in God's transcendent rule in history. These two tendencies create the basis for theological separation, one-sided emphasis, and an un-Christian polarization.

The writer of the Epistle of James reflects this one-sided emphasis. He believed that Paul's reliance on faith and grace led to a life of non-action. The writer of James attempted to counter this attitude with a strong emphasis on the necessity of works of love in James 2:18-26.

> But some will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. You believe--and shudder. Do you want to be shown, you shallow man, that faith apart from works is barren. Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered his son Isaac upon the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by works, and the scripture was fulfilled which says "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness"; and he was called the friend of God. You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the harlot justified

> by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so faith apart from works is dead.

The biblical faith emcompasses both views of salvation in a unified whole. When any faith view reaches the extreme of overemphasizing the necessity of human actions on the one hand, or the total reliance on God's action on the other, the view cannot properly be called Christian. Reconciling these two views as one faith presents a difficult paradox. The task emerges as that of including the understanding of both the immanence and the transcendence of God. The coexistence of these two truths can never be easy to see or to express.

Augustine (354-430AD) believed that man could find truth, but only through faith and reason, with faith dominant. In his view the road to God cannot be outward through action in the world, but rather inward through introspection and reflection of the soul.

> Let therefore the rational soul in its mutable nature take the warning that without participation in the immutable good it is impossible for it to attain to justice, salvation, beatitude, and that of its own volition it will find not the good but the evil. Indeed left to itself it is turned away from the immutable good, and by that turning away it is corrupted. Nor can it of itself be made whole but only by the gratuitous mercy of its Creator, which makes it live by faith in this life and stablished it in the hope of eternal salvation.[8]

Augustine is the authentic spokesman for the doctrine of universal sin. This doctrine reiterates Paul's doctrine of evil in all persons that makes salvation through deeds unattainable. Augustine believed

sin to be an action which separates man from the order of God and that this separation is the cause of evil. Evil can be overcome only by faith. Augustine does not, however, exclude deeds or suggest that they are useless or unnecessary, but always, for him, faith is the central and only method of salvation.

> All our good works are one work of charity, for love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. xiii,10). . . . For "The end of the commandment is charity from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an unfeigned faith" (1 Tim. i, 5). There is therefore one work in which are all, "Faith that worketh by charity" (Gal. v. 6).[9]

The British monk Pelagius opposed some of the beliefs of Augustine. Pelagius refuted the idea of original sin with a confidence in the possibilities of human perfectibility. Adam's sin, he believed, was personal and not for all mankind. Everyman falls into his own sin at the hands of temptation. Pelagius presupposed the goodness of man, human responsibility and free will, all of which Augustine had denied. Not only did Pelagius hold that Augustine was wrong concerning salvation, but he also insisted that Augustine's beliefs were leading to decadence in the lives of Christians. Pelagius was condemned as a heretic and, unfortunately, most of his writings were destroyed as was his influence for many years to come.

Pelagius did not completely disregard the idea of grace. He considered grace a help to salvation but not the end of all questions concerning salvation. The stance of Pelagius is summed up by one with Augustinian sympathy: "His [Pelagius'] mistake, as Augustine

repeatedly pointed out, was in teaching that man could acquire even a relative degree of justice by his own unaided efforts."[10]

Although both Pelagius and Augustine acknowledged the transcendence and the immanence of God, each over-emphasized one side to the neglect of the other. The result is two opposite and extreme tendencies in theology.

The opposites became violent during the Reformation (beginning in about 1525) with the result being bloodshed over theological ideas that never should have been separated in the first place. Each is a part of the Christian faith. Each is a corrective for excessive insistence on the other. Many explanations can be voiced concerning what brought about the Reformation. Although the whole development is beyond the scope of this paper, five points of conflict in Western Europe can be indicated as setting the stage for reformation thought. First, modernization led to the emergence of new secular powers, specifically France, England, and Spain. These and similar national states' growth throughout Europe led to a rise in nationalism and national consciousness. This period was also a time of intellectual growth, specifically the Renaissance. During this period an emphasis on the Greek ideal of a healthy mind and body led to new ways of thinking. This new way of thought, humanism, stressed man's freedom and dignity. Although the reformers were not members of this school and did not agree with all its ideas there was a mutual affirmation of the need for reform of the

Church. This awakening of thought, coincident with the spread of the hated inquisition, led to a growing opposition to the papacy.

The Roman Catholic Church of the sixteenth century was hardly an ideal model of Church life as understood by the first century Christians or indeed by Christians, Roman or non-Roman, of any century. Except for the monastic trend in Catholicism, which was later to be influential in the counter-reformation, much of the Roman Catholic Church in its decadence had totally lost the sense of the holiness of God. The Church appeared to the common man to be selling salvation to sinners in the form of indulgences from its treasury with total disregard for the individual's sin or any evidence of repentance.

Finally there was a conflict with the emerging school of rationalist thought and their faith in human reason. For the reformers, reliance on human reason was man's vanity and pride and nothing more.

This is not to imply that all the reformers shared identical philosophies. But in the interests of time and space I choose to describe only Martin Luther as he appears in opposition to the action-oriented, merit-selling Roman Catholic Church. Luther drew almost exclusively from the letters of Paul for the foundation of his theology, emphasizing the preached word and justification by faith. Paul Althaus states Luther's theology as follows:

> Justification, and there with all of salvation, is given to men through faith alone, sola fide. For justification and salvation depend only on God's mercy; and this can be received only in an act of faith. Man's ethical activity

> and "works" have no place here. They can neither cause nor preserve salvation for us. It is only through faith that we are preserved to eternal life.[11]

Luther's reading of the scriptures led him to the conclusion that salvation is received by grace through faith alone. Works can never lead to salvation. They are simply the reflection of God's love overflowing in human lives.

> Thus, for example, in the first lectures on the Psalms he [Luther] says ". . . his [the righteous man's] righteousness does not spring from works, but his works from righteousness . . . This is contrary to Aristotle, who says 'by doing right one becomes righteous.' Rather, by being righteous, one does right." Or in the lectures on Romans he says, "the situation in the sight of God is not that someone becomes righteous by doing right . . . but that the righteous man, by being so, does right . . ." "For God does not accept the person on account of his work, but the works on account of his person, that is the person before the works, as it is written: 'The Lord had regard for Abel (first) and (afterwards) his offering [Gen. 4:4].'" or in a letter of 1516: "For we do not become righteous, as Aristotle holds, by doing right--albeit in a hypocritical way--but, if I may so express it, by becoming and being righteous, we do right. The person must be changed first and then the works are also changed. Abel was pleasing to God before his sacrifice."[12]

Theologians of the first half of the twentieth century perpetuated the division rather than bridging the gulf between the understanding of God as immanent and the understanding of God as transcendent.

The twentieth century has experienced three trends in Christian theological thought which characterize the alternation in theological thought through history. The first of these emphases is known as liberal

theology. Liberal theological dominance in Western religious thought can be assigend the approximate dates from 1890 to the 1930's. Daniel D. Williams summarizes modern liberal thought:

> The most characteristic theme of liberal theology, one which has been asserted throughout Christian history in various forms, is the emphasis on the freedom of man, his capability of responding to God and shaping his life in accordance with the divine will. Christian liberals share with their classic forerunner Pelagius the insistence that even in his freedom man cannot be saved without the grace of God, but with Pelagius against St. Augustine, and against the later views of Calvin, liberals have rejected the doctrine of the total depravity of man, and have condemned theories of predestination as destroying man's freedom.[15]

The liberal theologians, with their emphasis on social justice, drew principally on the eighth century prophets, Amos and Micah for example, and the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke.

The liberal theologians share with Pelagius an optimistic view of the inherent goodness in man. In modern times this reflects the tremendous reliance on man's reason. "Theological Liberals have always asserted the claims of reason against a petrified orthodoxy, and have sought freedom for diversity of belief in the Church."[14] With the capacity of reason, man is fully capable of achieving a life of goodness. Living a proper and righteous life depends upon education and experience insofar as they tap the vein of goodness inherent in man.

Sin, the liberals believe, is something concrete. It is an offense or a series of offenses which can be battled against and defeated.

Liberal theology is very much oriented to the historical structure of the world and man's life experience. Liberal theology is very reliant on the teachings of the historical Jesus.

> In the nineteenth century, liberal interpretation of the life and teachings of Jesus stressed His prophetic expression of spiritual victory and ethical perfection.[15]

One of the outstanding spokesmen for the liberal view was an American, Walter Rauschenbusch. "In his thought the prophetic ethical impulse was welded together with the social democratic faith. Concepts of social sin and social salvation were developed in rejection of the tendencies toward individualism and quietism in pietistic Christianity."[16] Rauschenbusch recognized the role of individualism and quietism in Christianity, but rejected both in a call for a more complete Christianity. In his A Theology for the Social Gospel Rauschenbusch writes:

> The social gospel is the old message of salvation, but enlarged and intensified. The individual gospel has taught us to see the sinfulness of every human heart and has inspired us with faith in the willingness and power of God to save every soul that comes to him. But it has not given us an adequate understanding of the sinfulness of the social order and its share in the sins of all individuals within it. . . . Both our sense of sin and our faith in salvation have fallen short of the realities under its teaching. The social gospel seeks to bring men under repentance for their collective sins and to create a more sensitive and more modern conscience. It calls on us for the faith of the old prophets who believed in the salvation of nations.[17]

It seems obvious, from this distance with the benefit of decades of criticism, that Walter Rauschenbusch's less gifted followers failed to take sufficiently seriously the pervasiveness of evil and lost

Rauschenbusch's regard for the transcendence of God.

Pope Leo XIII was also an advocate of the liberal school of thought as shown in his Encyclical for the working man. He was an advocate of social and human rights, sharing the view of the basic goodness of all men.

Social action is the vehicle for the expression of liberal theology. The movement reflects an understanding of God as immanent often at the loss of the understanding of God as transcendent. God is believed to be directly present in the world. He is accessible in the present within historical structures.

In the 1920's liberal theological thought came under fire. Particular criticism came from Reinhold Niebuhr and Karl Barth. They "judged the liveral view of man as having a too shallow view of the nature of sin, and a false optimism about human history."[18] Historically the faith in the redeeming powers of reason and the inherent goodness of man and man's ability to control the world and its destiny were shaken and finally destroyed by the world-wide depression of the 1930's and the horrors of the Nazi regime in Germany and all of Europe.

> The facts of twentieth century history and the corresponding mood of tragic realism have led to a reaffirmation of the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith as central to the redemptive truth of the gospel, and thereby to a radical correction of the liberal faith.[19]

"Radical correction" are the operative words here, and they accurately describe the cause of the alternating differences of theological

emphasis. One movement tends to be the radical correction of the extremes of another movement.

The radical correction of liberalism is neo-orthodox theology.

> In place of the liberal emphasis on the immanence of God in the life of nature and of human society comes the vigorous affirmation of the transcendence of God, of His unknowableness and His consequent differences from all our thoughts about Him in cultural terms.[20]

Neo-orthodox thinkers reflect Paul and Luther in their belief that man's nature is corrupt and God's grace is the only hope for mankind. One spokesman for neo-orthodox theology is Paul Tillich. He reflects the reformers' emphasis on the importance of grace over and against false Christianity without grace.

> For there is too often a graceless acceptance of Christian doctrines and a graceless battle against the structures of evil in our personalities. Such a graceless relation to God may lead us by necessity either to arrogance or to dispair. It would be better to refuse God and the Christ and the Bible than to accept them without grace. For if we accept them without grace, we do so in the state of separation, and can only succeed in deepening the situation. We cannot transform our lives, unless we allow them to be transformed by that stroke of grace.[21]

Like the Reformers, Tillich also points to the totality of grace. "Do not try to do anything now; perhaps later you will do much. Do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything. Simply accept the fact that you are accepted!"[22] Have faith and through grace you are saved. So teach the neo-orthodox theologians.

These are the orthodox tendencies of neo-orthodoxy. Langdon Gilkey points out the "neo" tendencies as those which make neo-orthodoxy a

"synthesis" of reformation theology and liberal theology. Neo-orthodoxy looks for symbolic rather than literal truth in doctrine, acknowledges the need for historical and critical scriptural understanding and the fallibility of the "products of man's religious life" and attempts to apply the Christian faith to "man's social existence."[23] Despite this synthesis of ideas, Gilkey sees the orthodox tendencies dominating the moment. "It presents, therefore, a variety of emphasis and characteristics, but its central themes of divine transcendence, of the human predicament and of the total relevance of the Christian faith are almost universal today."[24]

The present moment in theology has not yet been given a name as it is still a moment of uncertainty and formation. One clear emphasis has emerged, however, and that emphasis is on man and the things of this world. Secularity is the description of theology in this most recent moment.

The new theology is some of its expressions is a response to criticisms growing out of the linguistic philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein. His linguistic analysis forced theologians to examine and question what their statements really mean. Terms had to be understood before they could be taken seriously. Ideas that man can understand most fully and express most concretely are those things of which he has experience. These things are the things of this world. Secularity is being defined to mean using the things of this world to celebrate

and glorify God. It is the belief that God can best be served by properly serving man with things. Although the believer insists that food and clothing and medicine are central to life, God is still ultimate for the believer. The problem with secularity is that it creates a chance for leaving God out.

Rather than leaving God out, the new theologians try desperately to explain precisely what they mean by God. Secularization of Christianity is the main thrust which is combined with movements to demythologize Christian writings or the idea of the "death of God" or a search for God in the processes of the world surrounding us. In the case of Jürgen Moltmann, the new theology means an attempt to find God not in this world but beyond this world in hope and then to apply what is found to this world.

II

"After the depressing negativities of so much recent theology--demythologizing, religionless Christianity, the praise of secularization, the death of God--a theology of hope seemed to come as a new affirmation of Christian Truth."[25]

Jürgen Moltmann's Theology of Hope is unique in this moment because of its base which contrasts with the thought of many contemporary theologians. In a moment in which much of theology tends to be man-centered, Moltmann is God-centered. In a moment which is now-centered, Moltmann is future-centered.

Moltmann writes:

> It (theology of hope) is not grounded in optimism, but in faith. It is not a theology about hope, but a theology growing out of hope in God.[26]

Moltmann believes that Christian men and women are able to have faith because of the way in which the past gives hope for the future. Faith in the past is the ground for hope in the future. This then is the starting point for the theology of hope.

Eschatology is central to this theology and must therefore be fully understood. For Moltmann eschatology is to be assumed in this

moment, as well as expected in the future. Eschatology is often defined as "the 'doctrine of last things' or the 'doctrine of the end.'"[27] Moltmann further explains what is meant by "last things."

> By these last things were meant events which will one day break upon man, history and the world at the end of time. They included the return of Christ in universal glory, the judgement of the world and the consumation of the kingdom, the general resurrection of the dead and the new creation of all things. These end events were to break into this world from somewhere beyond history, and to put an end to the history in which all things here live and move.[28]

Moltmann suggests that this separation of the world and the last things robs the Christian of the joy and hope found in the anticipation of this sort of end.

> In actual fact, however, eschatology means the doctrine of the Christian hope, which embraces both the object hoped for and also the hope inspired by it. From first to last, and not merely in the epilogue of Christianity, is eschatology, is hope, forward looking and forward moving, and therefore also revolutionizing and transforming the present. The eschatological is not one element of Christianity, but it is the medium of Christian faith as such, the key in which eveything in it is set, the glow that suffuses everything here in the dawn of the expected new day. For Christian faith lives from the raising of the crucified Christ, and strains after the promises of the universal future of Christ. Eschatology is the passionate suffering and passionate longing kindled by the Messiah. Hence eschatology cannot really be only a part of Christian doctrine. Rather, the eschatological outlook is characteristic of all Christian proclamation, of every Christian existence and of the whole Church.[29]

How then can we speak of the future? If by the future we mean "a collection of theses which can be understood on the basis of experiences that constantly recur and are open to anyone"[30] the Christian cannot

speak of the future. Moltmann says that Christian eschatology speaks of the future in a different way.

> It sets out from a definite reality in history and announces the future of that reality, its future possibilities and its power over the future. Christian eschatology speaks of Jesus Christ and his future. It recognizes the reality of the raising of Jesus and proclaims the future of the risen Lord. Hence the question whether all statements about the future are grounded in the person and history of Jesus Christ provides it with the touchstone by which to distinguish the spirit of eschatology from that of utopia.[31]

In the resurrected Christ, man has a promise of a future still to come. This future contradicts that which man experiences. "Hope's statements of promise, however, must stand in contradiction to the reality which can at present be experienced."[32] The contradiction of present and future and of experience and hope, Moltmann says, draws man not "into harmony and agreement with the given situation" but into "conflict between hope and experience."[33] Hope comes out of the hopelessness of this world, Moltmann says. It comes from the "contradiction between the resurrection and the cross."[34]

Faith and hope are intertwined. "Faith recognizes the dawning of this future of openness and freedom in the Christ event. The hope thereby kindled spans the horizons which then open over a closed existence. Faith binds man to Christ. Hope sets this faith open to the comprehensive future of Christ. Hope is therefore the 'inseparable companion' of faith."[35] Moltmann quotes Calvin to make this point more clearly:

> When this hope is taken away, however eloquently or elegantly we discourse concerning faith, we are convicted of having none. . . . Hope is nothing else than the expectation of these things which faith has believed to have been truly promised by God. Thus, faith believes God to be true, hope awaits the time when this truth shall be manifested; faith believes that he is our Father, hope anticipates that he will ever show himself to be a Father toward us: faith believes that eternal life has been given to us, hope anticipates that it will some time be revealed; faith is the foundation upon which hope rests, hope nourishes and sustains faith. For as no one except him who already believes His promises can look for anything from God, so again the weakness of our faith must be sustained and nourished by patient hope and expectation, lest it fail and grow faint. . . . By unremitting renewing and restoring, it [hope] invigorates faith again and again with perseverance.[36]

While this hope transcends that which we have experienced in our life, it does not exempt man from participation in the world. "In this hope the soul does not soar above our vale of tears to some imagined heavenly bliss, nor does it sever itself from the earth."[37] The hope of the Christian is in the earth itself. "It sees in the resurrection of Christ not the eternity of heaven, but the future of the very earth on which his cross stands. It sees in him the future of the very humanity for which he died. That is why it finds the cross the hope of the earth."[38]

This is the general outline of the theology of hope. In his second major work, The Crucified God, Moltmann goes beyond theology of hope to develop more completely that which he considers the necessary beginning of all Christian theology.

The cross and the crucified Christ are the very center, the heart,

of Christian theology, Moltmann declares. If the cross is not the center then the theology is not and can never be truly Christian theology.

> Today, too, it is considered old-fashioned to put him [the crucified Christ] in the center of Christ-faith and of theology. Yet only when men are reminded of him, however untimely this may be, can they be set free from the power of the facts of the present time, and from the laws and compulsions of history, and be offered a future which will never grow dark again. Today the church and theology must turn to the crucified Christ in order to show the world the freedom he offers. This is essential if they wish to become what they assert they are: the church of Christ, and Christian theology.[39]

In The Crucified God Moltmann calls the question of the church's role in the world into full view to be reviewed and criticized as to its effectiveness in understanding, interpreting and applying the truth of God in the society and the world in which it exists. "As far as I am concerned, the Christian church and Christian theology become relevant to the problems of the modern world only when they reveal the 'hard core' of their identity in the crucified Christ and through it are called into question, together with the society in which they live."[40] Moltmann sees the crucified Christ as giving a challenge to the Church. Christ is challenging believers to make him the center of theology and to abide by that center and live up to all that the cross of Christ requires of those who believe and follow and call themselves Christian.

"But what kind of theology of the cross does him justice, and is necessary today?"[41], Moltmann asks. He answers his own question with

four points of the meaning of theology of the cross for today.

1. To return today to the theology of the cross means avoiding one-sided presentations of it in tradition, and comprehending the crucified Christ in the light and context of his resurrection, and therefore of freedom and hope.

2. To take up the theology of the cross today is to go beyond the limits of the doctrine of salvation and to inquire into the revolution needed in the concept of God. Who is God in the cross of the Christ who is abandoned by God?

3. To take the theology of the cross further at the present day means to go beyond the concern for personal salvation, and to inquire about the liberation of man and his new relationship to the reality of the demonic crisis in his society. Who is the true man in the sight of the Son of Man who was rejected and rose again in the freedom of God?

4. Finally, to realize the theology of the cross at the present day is to take seriously the claims of Reformation theology to criticize and reform, and to develop it beyond a criticism of the church into a criticism of society. What does it mean to recall the God who was crucified in a society whose official creed is optimism, and which is knee-deep in blood?[42]

In developing the theology of the cross, Moltmann insists that it is not a step backwards from the theology of hope, but rather the basis of that theology which gives it a deeper understanding. Moltmann recognizes that any theology must be relevant to society, and assist the society of Christians in developing, determining and maintaining identity.

> The Christian life of theologians, churches and human beings is faced more than ever today with a double crisis:

> the crisis of relevance and the crisis of identity. These two crises are complementary. The more theology and the church attempt to become relevant to the problems of the present day, the more deeply they are drawn into the crisis of their own Christian identity. The more they attempt to assert their identity in traditional dogmas, rights and moral notions, the more irrelevant and unbelievable they become. This double crisis can be more accurately described as the identity-involvement dilemma. We shall see how far, in these specific experiences of the double crisis, reflection upon the cross leads to the clarification of what can be called Christian identity and what can be called Christian relevance, . . .[43]

Action in the world cannot lead to either relevance or identity unless identity is first made clear. "While the question of identity comes to a head only in the context of non-identity, the question of relevance arises only when identity is a matter of experience and belief. When something can be identified, it is possible to ask whether it is relevant to anything else and whether it has any connection with anything else."[44] The faith that Moltmann calls for is a unity in the cross of Christ. It is an escape from the opposite forces of radical or conservative politics, from churches which separate "evangelization and salvation of souls" and "social action for the salvation and liberation of real life." It is escape from the ideas of separating the vertical dimension and the horizontal dimension, or Jesusology and christology. Faith then is a call to change yourself and change the circumstances.[45]

If, however, faith calls for identification with the crucified Christ, "the 'identity-involvement dilemma' of Christian life at the present day is consequently not a dilemma, but the inevitable tension of

Christian faith."[46]

> We have said that the crisis of relevance and the crisis of identity are complementary to each other. Where identity is found, relevance is called into question. Where relevance is achieved, identity is called into question. We can now define this double crisis more closely with regard to Christian faith, by saying that each of these crises is simply a reflection of the other; and that theology must be theology of the cross, if it is to be identified as Christian theology through Christ. But the theology of the cross is a critical and liberating theory of God and man. Christian life is a form of practice which consists in following the crucified Christ, and it changes both man himself and the circumstances in which he lives. To this extent, a theology of the cross is a practical theory.[47]

How does man know God? If one holds the Platonic principle of "Like is known only by like" Moltmann says that knowledge of God becomes impossible because man is not like God. If the Platonic theory is accompanied first by the theory which is originally credited to Hippocrates that "Every being can be revealed only in its opposite Love only in hatred, unity only in conflict,"[48] then God can be revealed to man. "Applied to Christian theology this means that God is revealed as 'God' only in his opposite: godlessness and abandonment by God In concrete terms, God is revealed in the cross of Christ who was abandoned by God."[49] For the Christian community this means that the church must be made up, if fellowship is to be the result, of unlike, of dissimilar individuals. "Its power is not friendship, the love for what is similar and beautiful (philia), but creative love for what is different, alien and ugly (agape)."[50]

The call to follow Christ, to take up his cross is the central difficulty of true faith. What does it mean? The idea of accepting the dehumanization which taking up the cross of Christ requires is revolting and in itself is what Moltmann calls the contradiction to the loving God we know. It is difficult to see this dehumanization as the step to salvation. The immediate tendency of Christians is to look at the crucifixion only in the light of the resurrection, and this attitude is necessary, for without the resurrection there can be no Christianity. But Moltmann's point is that true Christianity must look at the resurrection also in the light of the cruxifixion which embodies the life and the death that makes the resurrection significant.

One who follows the call of Jesus must "break all links with one's family, job, etc., and indeed to break the link with oneself, to deny and hate oneself, in order to gain the kingdom: 'Whoever would save his life will lose it! and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it' (Mark 8.35)."[51] The point is that the call is eschatological in the sense of the future of the kingdom, but it is an immediate call to suffer with Christ on his cross. It is the offense of the gospel. "To follow Christ means to have faith, and faith is in fact an existential unity of theory and practice, as can be seen in the life of the apostles, in the life of the martyrs, and to a certain extent also in the mystical theology of inner experience."[52]

This theology of hope suggests similarities to neo-orthodox theology which cannot be denied. It is a theology which definitely recognizes the otherworldliness, the transcendence of God. But theology of hope tries not to be subject to "what Reinhold Niebuhr once called the 'transcendental irresponsibility' of neo-orthodoxy."[53] Theology of hope is God-centered, Christ-centered, but not at the expense of man. To avoid the trap of faith without deeds, Moltmann must have a practical application for the theology of hope. "Hope," says Moltmann, "finds in Christ not only a consolation in suffering, but also the protest of the divine promise against suffering."[54] He goes on to deduce from the writings of Paul:

> If Paul calls death the "last enemy" (ICor. 15:26), the opposite is also true: that the risen Christ, and with him the resurrection hope, must be declared to be the enemy of death and of a world that puts up with death. Faith takes up this contradiction and thus becomes itself a contradiction to the world of death. This is why faith, wherever it develops into hope, causes not rest but unrest, not patience but impatience. It does not calm the unquiet heart, but is itself this unquiet heart in man. Those who hope in Christ can no longer put up with reality as it is, but begin to suffer under it, to contradict it. Peace with God means conflict with the world, for the goal of the promised future stabs inexorably into the flesh of every unfulfilled present. If we had before our eyes only what we see, then we should cheerfully or reluctantly reconcile ourselves with things as they happen to be. That we do not reconcile ourselves, that there is no pleasant harmony between us and reality, is due to our unquenchable hope. This hope keeps man unreconciled, until the great day of the fulfillment of all the promises of God.[55]

Because faith must be put into practice, it cannot simply be practiced in the field of ethics, Moltmann insists. "This means that to be crucified with Christ is no longer a purely private and spiritualized matter, but develops into a political theology of the following of the crucified Christ."[56]

In the twentieth century, Jurgen Moltmann believes that the political realm is the area in which theology is to be practically applied and its relevance shown. Political theology is not the end-all of theology nor is it to be the only center of theological thought.[57] "Political theology denotes rather the field, the milieu, the realm, and the stage on which Christian theology should be explicitly carried on today."[58]

Moltmann carries the importance of the theology of the cross directly into the heart of political theology:

> If we can designate something which is beyond all doubt irreplaceably Christian, it is the relation of all theological statements, even eschatological statements of hope, to the cross of Christ. The cross is the point at which Christian faith distinguishes itself from other religions and ideologies, from unfaith and superstition. It is worthy of note that the cross of Christ is also the one truly political point in the story of Jesus. It whould therefore become the beginning point and the criterion for a Christian political theology.[59]

Christian political theology cannot fit into a political state and still remain truly Christian. If the crucified Christ is the authority, he is the one authority, and man is responsible to Him alone.

> . . . it is clear first of all that the Christian faith, for the sake of the crucified one, cannot accommodate itself to the political religions of the societies in which it lives. Rather, if it wants to maintain its identity as Christian faith, it must become the power of liberation from them.[60]

The first step to becoming the "power of liberation" from society, Moltmann says, is the destruction of idols within the society. This is in keeping with the Old Testament commandment regarding images as applied to the modern world in terms of idolizing symbols and values and material goods. In modern political practices Moltmann insists that such idolatry occurs when the people remove themselves from and subordinate themselves to the officials of the state. Moltmann paraphrases Marx to explain:

> Political idolatry and political alienation arise when--as Marx made clear--the representatives grow up over the head of those whom they are supposed to represent and when the people bow down before their own government. The consequences then show up in the people's spreading apathy. One no longer identifies himself with the politics of his country's government or his student representatives. Because their representatives elude their control, the citizens fall back into a passivity which simple abets the further misuse of power. These are symptoms of political idolatry; out of representation there develops rule, out of unburdening there develops alienation, out of a functional authority there develops a status authority.[61]

Moltmann sees the church as responsible for doing away with and destroying all that is an earthly image in politics and maintaining what he calls a "permanent iconoclasm against political personality cults and national religions and against money and commodity fetishism. It seems to me

that Christians should lead the way in the desacralization and democratization of political rule. Indeed this stands in the compass of their authentic traditions."[62]

The church is to represent the poor, the oppressed, those who really have no state or no position in the state. Moltmann stresses that the future, the hope, is that which is expressed in the Beatitudes. It is for the poor that the kingdom is available and it is the "poor who will save the rich."[63]

How do the poor save the rich? Moltmann insists that is is only the poor who truly know the suffering and oppression and misery of the world which Jesus experienced in the crucifixion, and it is these same oppressed miserable poor who are fully understanding and possessing the true Christian hope made possible in the crucifixion. These poor have no wish to be master, but rather they create a community of agape love in which the different and alien are bound together. Politics is not to become religion, Moltmann believes.

> A Christian "political theology" wants to bring the Christians as Christians, that is, as liberators, to the place where they are being waited upon by the crucified one. In the suffering and condemned ones of this earth, Christ is waiting upon his own and their presence.[64]

It is in the memory of the crucifixion that Christians become political. The politics is one of liberation which causes Christians not to accept the world as it exists and then live by oneself in a sort of other-worldly contemplative state. "The liberating memory of the

crucified Jesus compels Christians to a critical political theology."[65]

A true Christian, Moltmann believes, has a hope. Hope is that which man has when he has seen and experienced the very worst this world has to offer and he has suffered with the crucified Christ. Above these experiences he also knows the saving love of God. Then man has hope, through faith, that the best of the world, through the love of God, will triumph. "Christian hope is no blind optimism. It is the discerning hope which sees suffering and yet believes in freedom."[66] This belief in freedom leads men to freeing actions, in the political realm of this world.

Moltmann maintains the idea of salvation by faith through grace while calling for specific action as the necessary part of true faith. This was done by Paul and Luther and Augustine before Moltmann as an in-depth reading of any of these great theologians will reveal. Moltmann, I believe, hopes to avoid the trap of having his theology understood as actionless by providing a sphere of practical application. Whether Jürgen Moltmann will successfully avoid the trap of this Pauline based theology only time will tell.

FOOTNOTES

1. Jürgen Moltmann, The Experiment Hope, trans. M. Doughlas Meeks (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), p. 189.

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3. John Killinger, The Salvation Tree (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), pp. 5-7.

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6. William Horden, Living By Grace (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975), p. 70.

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8. Erich Przywara, ed., An Augustine Synthesis (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 39.

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10. New Catholic Encyclopedia (1967), s.v. "Pelagius and Pelagianism" by S. J. McKenna.

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13. Daniel D. Williams, "Liberalism," in A Handbook of Christian Theology.

14. Ibid., p. 207.

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17. Walter Rauschenbusch, A Theology for the Social Gospel (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), pp. 5-6.

18. Williams, A Handbook of Christian Theology, p. 209.

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20. Langdon B. Gilkey, "Neo-orthodoxy," in A Handbook of Christian Theology, p. 257.

21. Paul Tillich, "You Are Accepted," in Sources of Protestant Theology, ed. William A. Scott (New York: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1971), p. 338.

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23. Gilkey, A Handbook of Christian Theology, pp. 258-260.

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25. John MacQuarrie, Thinking About God (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1975), p. 221.

26. Moltmann, The Experiment Hope, p. 45.

27. Jürgen Moltmann, The Theology of Hope, trans. James W. Leitch (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1967), p- 15.

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29. Ibid., p. 16.

30. Ibid., p. 17.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid., p. 18.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid, p. 20.

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37. Ibid., p. 21.

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39. Jürgen Moltmann, The Crucified God, trans. R. A. Wilson and John Bowden (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974), p. 1.

40. Ibid., p. 3

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42. Ibid., p. 4.

43. Ibid., p. 7.

44. Ibid., p. 18.

45. Ibid., pp. 22-23.

46. Ibid., pp. 24-25.

47. Ibid., p. 25.

48. Ibid., p. 27.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid., p. 28.

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52. Ibid., p. 60.

53. John MacQuarrie, New Directions in Theology Today, Vol. III, God and Secularity (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967), p. 52.

54. Moltmann, The Theology of Hope, p. 21.

55. Ibid., pp. 21-22.

56. Moltmann, The Crucified God, p. 63.

57. Jürgen Moltmann, "The Cross and Civil Religion," in Religion and Political Society, trans. Thomas Hughson and Paul Rigby (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974), p. 19.

58. Ibid.

59. Moltmann, The Experiment Hope, p. 110.

60. Ibid., p. 111.

61. Ibid., p. 114.

62. Ibid., p. 115.

63. Ibid., p. 116.

64. Ibid., p. 118.

65. Ibid.

66. "Politics and the Practice of Hope," in Christian Century, Vol. 87, Jan.-June 1970, p. 288.

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