THE CALVIN'S SPIRITUALITY OF MERCY AND THE TASKS OF REFORMATION TODAY

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Abstract:

Kata kunci yang sering digunakan pada umumnya dalam dunia mistis atau spiritual adalah "pengalaman". Yang menanamkan rahmat Allah, pada kenyataannya, adalah sebuah pengalaman spiritual disapa oleh cinta kasih Allah. Pengalaman ini dibagikan kepada saudara-saudara kami dalam sebuah perubahan praksis. Allah yang Maha Pemurah selama ini menjadi pengalaman iman yang dapat dibuat sebagai pertemuan titik dalam membina sebuah cinta yang berdasarkan atas kerukunan umat beragama. Dalam tradisi Gereja Protestan, kita dapat menemukan pijakan untuk pengembangan teologi spiritual teologi rohani John Calvin, yang disebut sebagai penyayang spiritualitas. Saat ini pengalaman rahmat Allah ditantang oleh kontekstualitas kekhawatiran dari gambaran tunawisma Yesus. Para pengungsi tidak hanya "menantang" masyarakat Kristen untuk mengakui Kristus sebagai orang asing yang berkekurangan, tetapi juga ingin menyambut mereka dalam cinta dan perdamaian meskipun mempunyai agama dan keyakinan yang berbeda dengan mereka.

Key Words:

experience, spirituality, mercy, church as the mother, un-willed people.

INTRODUCTION

In the world of spirituality or mysticism, the keyword commonly used is "experience".[1] What was experienced is a God who loves. The instilling of God's mercy, in fact, is a spiritual experience accosted by God's love. The experience of a spiritual encounter with, being loved by, and loving, God.This peak experience of God's love as a determining factor in the Christian faithful life isn't just stop there. The experience is continued in an act of loving and-sharing with the fellows.

The merciful God become a faith experience that can be used as the meeting point in fostering a love-based religious life.[2] Therefore, it's very interesting if in every religious traditions, the experience of God's mercy is sought

and found to build a bridge for religions in theologizing which is based on love and compassion.

In Catholic's tradition, 2016 is called as the Great Jubilee of the Divine Mercy. As acknowleged, this is a sort of "rediscovery" after 35 years (1980) of encyclical *Dives in Miserecordia* (Rich in Mercy) of Pope John Paul II did not flourish in the Church, it had been forgotten instead.[3] To bring the Christians back to the heart of gospel, Pope Fransiscus issued the *Bulla Misericordiae Vultus*, in Indonesian language it's translated as "*Wajah Kerahiman*" (Merciful Face).[4] In Latin, *Misericordiae* is derive from "*miserere*" means compassionate, and "*cor*" means hearted-mind, heart, mind, soul. Thus, a mercyful face is the whole aspects of a human self with all its sincerity to show compassion and displaying it in real action compassionate to others with knows no limits.

The question is: is there a theme of mercy in Protestant tradition that can be used as a foothold to build a theology of Protestants' spirituality? This paper intends to explore the spirituality of John Calvin (1509-1564) which is called spirituality of mercy.[5] This spirituality of mercy, I guess, strongly coloring the theme of the implementation of the 26th Assembly of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), the *Living God Renew and Transform Us*, June 29-July 7, 2017 in Leipzig, Germany. The living God is the Onewho havingmercy on our livesmake it become a new and changed one.

Mentioning Calvin a spiritualist it makes me different from Th. van den End who said that: "Calvin was not a spiritualist, or a mystic".[6] Perhaps his viewpoint could be understand in terms of Calvin's position as a jurist. In this context, Van den End represented one of the two dogmatic-legalistic Calvin' faces.It seem the same approach could be applied to Gerrit Singgih's whoclaimed that Calvin is an intolerant (especially in the case of Michael Servetus in 1553).[7] However, Agustinus Batlajery's viewpoint become crucial because he said:

> "So it is clear that there were efforts by Calvin to save Servetus. He had worked for the redemption of Servetus [...] He was not involved in the process of making the decision, and his position in Geneva at the time was weak. On the contrary, when decision has been made for 'cruelly burning' he tried to ask for communication of the sentence as shown in a letter he wrote to Farel [...] And of course, we also agree that this case is a case of violence. But we cannot say that the idea of cruelly burning was Calvin's idea". [8]

This explanation adequately describe that Calvin is a tolerant. Even the first edition of *Institutio* stated explicitly that killing the heretics is a criminal

action.[9] It's also clear that Calvin had an eye to end the use of fire and sword in dealing with heresy including the case of Servetus.

In addition to the first side of Calvin's face, there is another one that can be traced to his book, i.e. *Institutio*. In the book, to know (*knowledge*) the God is the same with to experience (*experience*) him.[10] Further, to know the God is to know oneself and conversely. Even the misterious God is be known by way of knowing oneself. It is from this reasoning that the Calvin's spiritual face is could be found. So, instead of following Van den End, I see Calvin belong to spiritualists, at least his thoughts has a trace as a spiritualist.

The Calvin's spiritual traces is strongly felt in *Institutio*, that which is his principal work as a reformation theologian.[11] *Institutio* is an expression of Calvin's *subitaconversio* (conversion of a sudden, abrupt, unplanned) on the work of God in his life.[12] The writing of *Institutio* initially was intended to become a Christian catechism, not as a dogmatics; more practical in nature rather than formal or philosophical.[13] This work kept at bay the Calvin's rationalistic-legalistic face, let alone the intolerant one, and presented him as a spiritualist theologian that instilled faith in the experience by way of "knowing" (*knowledge*) God and bringing it into reality in the form of "piety"(*pietas*).[14]

Therefore the topic of mercy raised in this paper is very typical in the Calvin's own theology. Mercy is compassion itself. That is the God whose love knows no bounds. Have mercy is the limitless intimate and emotive activity of a mother to give love and to sustain the lives of her children since they are in her own womb. And this spirituality is closely linked with what Calvin has said that the church is a mother who having mercy on so that giving birth to a new life and giving suck for her children.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF LOVE IN THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION

The mercy is inseparable from love. The mercy itself is a symbol of love. When talked about "being in love",[15] Bernard Lonergan intended to denote that when the God who surpassing all beings is my beloved, He is really in my heart, within my self.Being in love with God is something radical because it is a quite total self-surrender. It has no limits or qualifications, without conditions and reservations. When someone fall in love his/her ability to transcend his/her-self become actual. Then he/she loves and being in love. From that love flows multiple desires, apprehension, joy and grief, and value preference, decision and action.[16]

In line with Lonergan who says "being in love with God" as a self-transcendence, William Johnston comprehends the same phrase as a mystical love as the goal of the human life. Mystical love is the culmination of a thrust

toward self-transcendence and the authenticity of which is rooted in the minds and hearts of all human beings.[17] Apparently Lonergan and Johnson refers to the mystical love as a whole, including its form in the actions in the real world. The mystical love really fire up the human life and lead it into the real love actions.

In Calvin's experience, the urge toward self-transcendence and authencity, also based upon the experience of God's love. A "sudden conversion"in response to the God's love.[18] The experience being loved by God and loves Him, gives birth to piety. In english version of the *Institutio*, the word "piety" was evidently used twice, hence its long title reads as follows: "The Institute of the Christian Religion, Containing almost the Whole Sum of Piety and Whatever It is Necessary to Know in the Doctrine of Salvation. A Work Very Well Worth Reading by All Persons Zealous for Piety".[19] Such piety (*pietas*) embodied in diligent worship, pray and be active in doing well for sanctification of life in this world. Calvin said: "I call *'piety'* that reverence joined with *love* of God which the knowledge of his benefits induces".[20] This feeling of love to God is primordially connected with what Calvin says about "consciousness of divinity" (census divinitatis) as a feeling or a strong sense of God's presence, which is given to every man. He said:

> "There is within the human mind, and indeed by natural instinct, an awareness of divinity. This we take to be beyond controversy. To prevent anyone from taking refuge in the pretense of ignorance, God himself has implanted in all men a certain understanding of his divine majesty. Ever renewing its memory, he repeatedly sheds fresh drops".[21]

That means that the burning experience of God's love is something inherent in every person and give birth to piety (pietas) as a gesture of respect to God in virtue and the real ethical action

According to Janet Ruffing, "The Christian tradition of love mysticism is rooted in the biblical tradition of a personal God revealed by the self-donating love of Jesus".[22]Jesus mediation then gives experience to many people of faith to enjoy the love of God and all at once gave birth it in action. Here, the meaning of action become important, because, according to William Johnston: "Do not assume that entering into Christ mystery it's means escaping from the world [...]that the Christ mytery is centered on His cross.It's means centering on the poor, the sick, the unfortunate, the outcaste, the prisoner, the dead, and all agonized people, because it is to whom Jesus united himself ".[23] The christian mystical experience is entering into the world.

The experience of mystical love of God is not the monopoly by men. It's also found in the experience of many women. These mystic women represent

an intimate experience of God through spontaneity, compassion, freedom and nonhierarchical.[24] The intimity of love can be seen, among other, on the case of Rabi'a Al-Adawiyah (713-801), a famous Muslim mystical woman, who in her lifetime endeavored the unity with the Divine and it has an impact on her life in the world.[25]

Women are instilling their faith in Jesus as the experience is being cared about, accompanied and given a meaningful life and engage in works of love and justice that he concerned about. He experienced as one who gives women the opportunity to find their own selves, grow and walked together to find God in the struggle for love and justice. He serves like a mother who develop and empower life.

Besides Santa Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938)—*the great apostle of mercy*—who Pope Fransiskus directly mentioned in his bulla,[26] there was another example, Julian of Norwich (1343-1416). Julian is female mystic whom affected by the legacy of liberation power of Meister Eckhart (1260-1328).[27] Julian is also a nun from England and reflects it in her work, *Showings*, containing her mystical experiences of God's love. Julian's description about the love of God was very clear in the image of Jesus as a mother.[28] She said: "in knowledge and wisdom we have our perfection, as regards our sensuality, our restoration and our salvation, for *he is our Mother*, brother and saviour".[29] Furthermore, she explained the experience on God's love in the reanimating Jesus. She said:

> "And so Jesus is our true Mother in nature by our first creation, and he is our true Mother in grace by his taking our created nature. All the lovely works and all the sweet loving offices of beloved motherhood are appropriated to the second person, for in him we have this godly will, whole and safe forever, both in nature and in grace, from his own goodness proper to him".[30]

Julian was the one who also encouraged everyone to see themselves and others as the redeemed people. In her view, we are good people and saints. It reminds us of Eckhart's concept in which everyone is "worthy person" (royal person),[31] that in Julian's appreciative words: "all will be well, all will be well, everything will go well".[32] This thought, that put a man so honored, is something rare in the days of Julian and the mystics like Eckhart. This respect for human life is the liberation side of Julian's women spirituality and it was realized in the act of compassion towards the small and the poor of every person who loves and is loved by God.

In this modern era, the experience of mystical love we found on Santa Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997).[33] Her mystical experience showed to us that a simple path to holiness are prayer and love to God through our love to our

brothers and sisters.[34] When we pray, our hearts are purified and we can see God in our brothers and sisters in need. Santa Teresa likes to quote a verse in Matthew 25:40,[35] that which is a calling to each of us to find God in the other people, who really different, while acknowledge that God oftentimes takes *other route* in introducing Himself, that is through the poor, the suffering and persecuted people.

Thus, it is clear that the mystical love as the goal and the peak of human life, in fact, is not suggest that one should pursue the mystical experience as its last peak. The experience of relationships and the love of God, which became the core and define the Christian life of faith, should be continued to acts of love.[36] Even in the love of God, men position always in emergency; while God always can be postponed. In his reflection, Eckhart once said,"When I was meditating and a poor people asked me a bowl of soup, the thing I have to do is stop the meditation dan help that fellow."[37] Attention to God can be postponed but not with the human. Due to their critical condition, immediate handling of inviduals' problems are necessary. So, it 's clear that the love of God isn't contrary to the love of fellows. Instead, the love of God is more real in the love of fellows.

In this case,we are helped by Aloysius Pieris's conception that shifts the paradigm on the peak of godly life. Pieris put forwards the alternative paradigm: *Love is Action*.[38] The real action of love is in solidarity with the poor and victims of exploitation.At this point the female mystics such as Rabi'a Al-Adawiyah, Julian of Norwich and Santa Teresa of Cacutta, in line with Pieris in giving form of realization of love for God through acts of love and justice to the weakest, the poor and the suffering fellows.

CALVIN'S SPIRITUALITY THROUGH CONCEPTION OF THE CHURCH AS A MOTHER

The reason for the rise and the speed of the church reform movement is very complex. There are various factors that play a role. The condition of the Church of Rome at that time very alarming, especially the hierarchy of the Church and the Roman Curia, in particular, has long enough incited reactions and a variety of criticisms and correction efforts.[39] The crisis of scholastics theology resulted in empty formalism. There were also political consciousness in the European countries against the Pope's authority then was considered blocked the formation of local government. Not to mention the social and economic condition in the countries of Europe, especially in Germany, that makes the lower nobility and peasants thirst for betterment.

When Lutheranism began to faded, John Calvin emerged and sustained reform. In the history of the Church, John Calvin was the first of the modern

era and the second generation of reformers, who was 26 years younger than Martin Luther. John Calvin started the church reformation in France, then was an absolute monarchy. France, with its motto *unroi, uneloi, unefoi,* (one king—one law—one faith) leave no room at all for the reformation movement to flourish.[40]

Calvin theological notion of the Church as a mother carried Calvin own struggle on the theme of unity of the church.[41] The Church is the mother of all believers, hence it is not appropriate to break away from her because the salvation can only be given by her. This notion was backgrounded, among other, Calvin own experience in France where reformation was persistently opposed.The splits of church provided valuable lessons for Calvin to return to the idea of the mother's mercy that should be the heart of the Gospel and determining criteria for the credibility of the church. Therefore, Calvin took the unity of the church very serious and rejected any tendencies toward separatism. Separatism, in his view, is the devil's work.[42]

Calvin's theology on the church was built upon his theology on the human. And the man whom Calvin meant is not a separate individual in but, first of all, in relation to the communion or social life. Calvin said: "Since man is by nature a social animal, he tends through natural instinct to foster and preserve society".[43] It is clear for Calvin that the social dimension of a man should made one become a caretaker and steward of life. A man in his/her communion is one who have been accepted in existence and difference. Because no one is rejected, then Calvin was very active in maintaining unity in society and in the church.

In the English version of *Institutio,* i.e. *Institutes of the Christian Religion,* Calvin said that because God is called as the Father, then "the church has to be called as the mother" and all of us are her children.[44] Further more, according to Calvin:

> "But because it is now our intention to discuss the visible church, let us learn even from the simple title 'mother' how useful, indeed how necessary, it is that we should know her. For there is no other way to enter into life unless this mothes conceive us in her womb, give us birth, nourish us at her breast, and lastly, unless she keep us under her care and guidance until, putting off mortal flesh, we become like the angels [Mattew 22:30]. Our weakness does not allow us to be dismissed from her school until we have been pupils all our lives".[45]

Calvin's concept of the Church as a mother and as a school should be placed in the context of the unity of the church. Talking about church means talks about its unity. Calvin said: "The Church is called *'catholic' or*

'*universal*', because there could not be two or three churches unless Christ be torn asunder [bdk. 1 Kor. 1:13]; which cannot happen".[46]

For Calvin, it is Church's catholicity that firstly need to be understood, not its holiness or apostolicity.[47] There is only one church on earth, one body of Christ in which Christ is the head.In him all the chosen people are united and grow together toward one body. In him as the head, everyone's united and *none of the members be rejected in it*. Later, the idea of union with Christ is developed in a mystical sense, which we shall see in the next description below.

The basic unity of the church is the God's own oneness. Calvin said: "God is one; Christ is God and the Son of God; our salvation rests in God's mercy; and the like".[48] In addition, according to Calvin: "all the elect are so united in Christ [cf. Ephesus 1:22-23] that as they are dependent on one Head, they also grow together into one body".[49] It is from here we find the terminology *unio cum Christo* (union with Christ) as a strong mystical unity with Christ in Calvin's spirituality.[50] In much of literature it is clearly affirmed that the unity with the Divine is a distinct language in mystical theology.[51] The notion of mystical unity, on relation to Christ and the human fellow (the two are inseparable), was learned by Calvin from Bernard of Clairvaux, a theologian an mystic, who highly influenced him.[52] This is means that Calvin's longing for unity with the Divine, besides rooted in wounds due to the splits of the church in his time, also rooted in the work of the mission of Christ that unified all in Him.

The theme of mercy in Calvin's spirituality take the unity of the church as its starting point is most apparent on the church's role as a mother who educate her children in joy. Calvin said: "The Church is our mother [...] For this education of the Church her children enjoined to meet in the sanctuary".[53] The mercy of a mother who educates her children, give a role to the church as a safe and pleasant dwelling place for growing together.

Calvin reminded that communion in the merciful church should not be arbitrarily knitted up, including when an error occurs in the implementation of teaching and sacraments. Calvin said:

> "The principle extends to the point that we must not reject it so long as it retains them, even if it otherwise swarms with many faults. What is more, some fault may creep into the administration of either doctrine or sacraments, but this ought not to estrange us from communion with the church. For not all the articles of true doctrine are of the same sort".[54]

To clarify his point, Calvin distinguish between things that are absolute and necessary to be known (i.e. two core of the true church life: Word and

Sacramentyakni),[55] and do not absolute ones. Hence, Calvin said: "a difference of opinion over these nonessential matters should in no wise be the basis of schism among Christians".[56] I try to apply what is Calvin means by this to the nowadays burning issues. How if the things which are not absolute (as Calvin means) include issues around LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transexual)? Using Calvin's perspective, these issues will be responded in twopastoral attitudes, namely: (1) it is not allowed toknitt of, separate or remove those involved in LBGBT from the church communion; and (2) the issues should not become a source of disunity among Christians.These view and attitude become advisable church's pastoral measures in Calvin's theology in which the church is seen as a mother. The mercy of a mother enable her to accept all of us as her children. Likewise, the mercy of the church as a mother permits no one (regardless of his/her life background) be denied into its communion. Above all, the mystical unity with Christ (*unio cum Christo*) result in instilling of God's love which knows no bounds. That is the mercy of God in Calvin's spirituality.

THE MERCY SPIRITUALITY AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

William Johnston gives an image of the unity between the bestowal of mystical life calling and sense of solidarity, a sense of unity with one another, with the environment and the entire universe. Johnston said:

> "*True mystics will never able to escape from the world.* He must empathized with the suffering and sorrow which are the common heritage of mankind. Even mystics who live apart in the mountain or desert have to keep relation with the world—loves the world, suffers with the world, faces the evils of the world.[57]

The question is: how do with Calvin? To dig up Calvin's spirituality which inseparable with solidarity and social engagement, it seems it's necessary to reconsider: Is it true that Calvin himself once had thought about the human depravity? Or, lest the theology about the human depravity was a contribution of Orthodox's Calvinism theology as it is mirrored in Netherlands Creed?

In my opinion, the tenet of human depravity was stemmed not from Calvin himself but from Netherlands Creed which was influenced by Orthodox Calvinism.[58] It seems Gerrit Singgih was right when he said that Calvinism did not encouraged society improvement due to its excessive emphasis on the human depravity.[59] Calvin himself didn't so. He still appreciated the reason as a part of natural state that which is bestowed by God and suffered no total damage in the event of the human fall into sin. With the reason man still able

to distinguish between good evil and have the desire to seek the truth. Calvin said completely:

> "Since reason, therefore, by which man distinguishes between good and evil, and by which he understands and judges, is a natural gift, it could not be completely wiped out; but it was partly weakened and partly corrupted, so that its misshapen ruins appear [...] in man's perverted and degenerated nature some sparks still gleam. These show him to be a rational being [...] When we so condemm human understanding for its perpetual blindness as to leave it no perception of any object whatever, we not only go against God's Word, but also run counter to the experience of common sense. For we see implanted in human nature some sort of desire to search out the truth [...]". [60]

If according to Calvin, the reason suffered no total damage, because it's a God's gift, so it seems he also saw reason, as Lonergan did, as an impetus toward self-transcendence and authenticity.[61] As a gift, reason also a medium of the divine love living in a human being and giving impetus to unites with the divine and engages in actual actions.

The reason as a gift and also the medium of divine love in actual actions most evident in Calvin's tenet on the role of church's members that, accoding to him ,should not blindly obey the will of other, including the religious leaders. Calvin said: "From this it is clear that every member of the church is charged with the responsibility of public edification according to the measure of his grace, provided he perform it decently and in order".[62] The importance of the church member' role and position can be parallelized with Meister Eckhart's sermon on"theroyal person".[63] What is meant by the royal personis avery human being without exception. There was nothing lacking in man because it was created a noble. And the human nobility should not be reduced by any one and under any circumstances. That's why Eckhart and Calvin in their respective times helped many people to find the sense of being re-humanized. It is this affirmation that encouraged many people in the times of Eckhart and Calvin to be independent and free in expressing their self-esteem and difference due to their conviction on their own self as a noble creature. It's also where which the wind of reformation was blown and be given the meaning as social emancipation.

Calvin clarified the meaning of social emancipationby what so-called *sensus divinitatis* and *semen religionis*, namely the strong awareness of the presence of God or sense of religiousity contained in man. It's this awareness or sense guiding every man to do religious activity dan various ethical righteousnessas a part of the "rebirth" (*regeneratio*).[64] On this matter, Calvinsaid: "free will is not sufficient to enable man to do good works, unless he be helped by grace, indeed by special grace, which only the elect receive

through *regeneration*".[65] And the most important is that in "rebirth" there is no dichotomy between faith and action. Here, Calvin contributed a distinctive understanding of Protestantism as a fundamental and direct human experience in the presence of God. That God's compassion bestows the fullness to human through compassion and solidarity to bring the justice into reality and doing it by grace of God.

The merciful spirituality engaging in world restlessness clearly evident in lyric of a poetry written by Marie Claire Barth Frommel:[66]

> God whom I love
> Thou draw us to seek Thee,
> Thou provide the sign of *Thee presence in Thy creation*;
> We met with *Thee in our fellow's face*
> In the challenge and intimacy of love;
> But Thou can't be hold,
> Thou are familiar yet strange,
> Thou consoling yet challenging.
> We have given up all of our heart's fancies on Thee
> And gave our selves up into the mist
> that Thou makes us according to Thy image
> more precise than all of our heart fancies.

The poetry above echoed Calvin's concern and Protestant movement in general, namely compassion and concern for the world by way of bringing justice into reality and defending the helpless, and doing it by the grace of God. Here the role of grace become important. Calvin's spirituality placed the grace as a divine power enabling a human being to do good deeds. The God's grace is a special one enabling every man come out to the world and change it.[67] There are no conflict between God's grace and the calling to fight for justice. Instead, the unity with Christ (*unio cum Christo*) get the most radical manifestation in living a fair life with the other.

The goal of kindness, compassion, and concern are to make this world as the *theatrum gloriae Dei*,[68] theatre of God's glory. As a theatre, this world is a place in which the love of God is met or forwarded in the love of our fellowsand other creatures. Knowing God is to know your own self, including in mediation of God's representatives we encounter in our suffering fellows. Thus, knowing God inseparable from the calling to "piety" (*pietas*). The piety has an anthropological meaning in which deligence in worshipping and praying are not its only manifestation, but also being active in doing good deeds for the shake of sanctification of life in this world.[69] This is "self-awareness" achieved that which is achieved by exiting from one's own self, emptying

one's own self and letting goeveryting that can distract our view from loving God.[70]

Calvin's life goals is for the greater glory of God, *Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam*. This motto directly reminds us of the same motto that was also used by Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus.[71] Indeed John Calvin (1509-1564) and Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556) lived and studied in Paris at about the same period. Ignatius of Loyola and John Calvin depicted the ideal of the faithful as *cotemplativus in actione*, namely, those who live their contemplative experiences in daily actions, who are trying to seek God in daily experiences.

Both instilled the Holy Spirit comes to work in the real world and calls men to engage in the restlessness of world. In his teachings of the Holy Spirit, Calvin first of all challenged *deism*, which says that after creating the world, God let this world runs itself.[72] According to Calvin, in *Institutio*, the Holy Spirit keep working ascreator, conservator, dangovernor.[73] The providence of God going on everlastingly through His Spirit. And His presence most evident through human mediation representing God's glory.

In Asia, efforts to make the world as a stage for God's glory is given a certain form by a theologian, C.S. Song, who inspired by Calvin.He said that efforts to glorify God means be sensitive to the problems of humanity that poured in Asia. According to Song, the problems-stricken humanity (*problematic humanity*) is the proper limelight of theology.Furthermore Song said:

> "God is not a theological problem. It is we human beings who are the problem for theology. *Problematic humanity is the subject of theology*. The business of theology is to see how God makes this problematic humanity less problematic. For this reason *theo*-logy must be *anthropo*-logy. The logos of *theos* is the logos of *anthropos*".[74]

Song wants to show his loyalty to Calvin's theology which states that God can not be studied apart from human being. God is found in relation with the human being. Why? Song explained: "God, concerned about the whole world, the whole of humanity—its welfare and salvation".[75] Through love of our fellows and the rest of creation, God's mercy is instilled as a mercy calling to real actions.

There is still one necessary issue to be discussed here. In order to the implementation of 26th Grand Council of The World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)'s in Leipzig, Jerman, 29 June-7 July 2017, andthe celebration of 500th church reformation on October 31, 2017, Calvin's thought became the one that needs to be rethought continuously. Calvin, for example, quitely

impressed with the text 1 Peter 2:9 on the idea of the chosen people. This text inspired Calvin to develops the idea of the chosen people consisting of priests and it's tested in the city of Geneva (but failed). Then orthodox Calvinism exclusively sharpened the idea of the chosen people to show the difference between Christians and non-Christians.[76]It was from here the orthodox Calvinism developed the exclusive theology which puts Christians as the sole heir of salvation while other people rejected. Of course, Calvin in his era did not not suggested a war against the islamic Turkey, but his attitude toward Islam remains unchanged in viewing Islam as contrary to the Gospel, especially its lowly morality. For Calvin the effort to find common ground between Islam and Christianity is wrong.[77] From the above explanation it is clear that the history of interpretation of the text 1 Peter 2:9 laden with the exclusive ideology of the chosen people, and often intertwined with cultural dominance.

Using postcolonial interpretation, Gerrit Singgih, for example, took critical stance to the colonial interpretation that has been firmly entrenched in the form of support for expansion, discrimination, and hatred against other. For us, who live in Indonesia, Calvin's understanding needs to be transformed by extending Calvin's ideas of the chosen people as those eletedto serve the world (election not for honor but for service).[78] Service to the world all at once the openness to the world by way of learning from others. By serving the world christians keep in touch with other communities to jointly seek a better and fairer life. It's from here the Calvin's spirituality of mercy gets it's meaning to treat diversity as the divine's grace.

Lastly, the experience of God's mercy in the present timeis challenged by contextual concerns as it simbolizedin a bronze sculpture, *The Homeless Jesus*, by Canadian artists, Timothy P. Schmalz. Since March 2016 the statue was installed in one ofthe Vatican'scorners to reflect on the Gospel's message in the midst of recent wave of refugees. The refugees are, among other, our Muslim brothers and sisters who are suffering due to the protracted conflict in various parts of the world, especially the Middle East. In Indonesia, it is not difficult to identify them as the Muslim Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, who, being discriminated in their motherland, fled to Aceh. Taking inspiration from the story of the Last Judgment (Matthew 25:40), the initial description of this refugee statue stated: "We will never recognize his face. He might be one of the wandering people in the streets and sleeps without a roof at night. However, he is none other than Christ himself. The scars of the cross' nails visible on his feet".[79]

Refugees are not only "challenge" Christians to recognize Christ in the stranger and the needy, but also welcomed them in love and peace even if

they are adopt the different religion or belief. For the sake of God's infinite mercy, we are called to rescue marginal groups, refugees, people who are underestimated and undesirable, with no other reason than for loving God. That is the praxis of God's mercy. This is also the meaning of renewal and transformation of life as be mandated in the theme of the grand council of 2017 WCRC in Leipzig.

CLOSING REMARKS

To this end, I have tried to answer the question, is there a theme of mercy in Protestant tradition that can be used as a foot hold in developing a theology of Protestant spirituality? I also have given evidence that the spirituality of mercy is typical in Calvin's theology. The spirituality of mercy have a systematic basis in the Protestant tradition, i.e. at the thought of Calvin. It also means that the theme of mercy can be used as one of the meeting points of religions in the discource of God's mercy. Unity with God yields no isolation, but the more radical instilling in an experience of the concrete engagement.

From above investigation, we find some typical ideas that can be used to instill our spirituality today. First, for Calvin, mercy is, first of all, unity with Christ (*unio cum Christo*) or mystical union (*uniomystica*) with Christ that changed his life into a new man, namely, the man who loves God totally and engaged in the sanctification of the world through a concrete action. Second, Calvin's concept of mercy also means to love as God does. God's love is a love that knows no boundaries. This is the center of all God's mission to this world. Third, the mercy also means maintaining the unity of the church, where no one should be denied to be in the church. Everyone areaccepted because they are loved by God. Fourth, Calvin's concept of mercy is an attempt to know God through knowing the human. Here, Calvin open to the mediation of other to arrive at the knowledge of God. In the mercy of God, the calling for everyone is realizing the renewal and transformation of life through active engagement in the enforcement of justice and live well with the other.

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End Notes

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