> The fountain and cause of God's sending Christ is his eternal love for his elect and for them alone.[62]
>
> We deny that all mankind are the object of that love of God which moved him to send his Son to die; God having 'made some for the day of evil, Prov. xvi.4; 'hated them before they were born,' Rom. ix.11, 13; 'before of old ordained them to condemnation,' Jude 4 etc.[63]

For those who find Packer's and Owen's sentiments both profoundly unbiblical and deeply inhumane, Moltmann's contention that the proper concerns of the doctrine of election lie in more pastoral and positive directions will be welcome. Moltmann could be more explicitly critical of Calvin than he ends up being and Barth's reconstructed doctrine is a welcome alternative. Yet Moltmann shows that the Reformed tradition is a lot more diverse than many assume and, whether or not we find Moltmann's universalism necessary or convincing, itself offers the resources that are needed to arrive at more constructive doctrinal expressions for those who firmly and truly believe that God so loved the *world* that he gave his one and only Son.

Conclusion

So to conclude. Whether or not Moltmann was right about what Calvin did mean to say, he was in my judgment on the right lines in terms of what Calvin should have said. The doctrine of predestination needs to be taken out of the context of an inscrutable past eternity and located within the covenantal purposes of God in history. The doctrine speaks of God faithfully pursuing the divine purpose of redemption. This same God enables those who trust in him to persevere through difficulty and hardship and to endure to the end. Our hope is in God. Whether or not Moltmann is right about a final and complete universal restoration, the doctrine carries our gaze in the direction of a greater hope more wonderful than any of us can currently predict or imagine. And whether or not Moltmann is right about federal theology being an alternative doctrinal construct to the Aristotelianism of High Calvinism rather than a possible variant of it, he is right in drawing our attention to the historical sphere as the realm in which God works out his good and saving purpose.

Abstract

For understandable reasons, Moltmann's theology prior to *Theology of Hope* has been relatively neglected. It is here that we see most clearly his identity as a Reformed theologian. His early theolo gical concerns, captured in writings unavailable in English, deal with the doctrines of predestination and perseverance as these are expounded in the development of federal theology. This progressive

62 *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ* (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1959), 119.
63 *The Death of Death*, 115.

Calvinist tradition stands in contrast to the Aristotelianism of Beza and offers a more historical, biblical way of understanding predestination as God's faithful preservation of his own people through testings and temptations. Such a view is to be contrasted with the double predestination of the hidden, divine decree, and offers a more positive variant of Reformed theology. Moltmann extends the logic of his theology in the direction of universal salvation and in this way his early theology can be seen to undergird and continue in his later theology.

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David McIlroy is a practising barrister and a theologian. He is an Associate Research Fellow of Spurgeon's College, London, and author of *A Biblical View of Law and Justice*.

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