

Living in anticipation of god's future essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Living in Anticipation of God's Future Theologians offer different views about the future of humanity. In particular, Jurgen Moltmann offers an eschatology that relates hope and faith with God's future. In "Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology" (1967) and *Hope and History*, Moltmann explains how we should live in hope as we anticipate God's future. He considers that despite the sufferings we bear in the present world, our hope and faith will be our guide in living life according to the will of God.

In "Theology of Hope", Moltmann emphasizes the relationship between hope and faith. He implies that the foundation of hope is faith in the resurrection. Because we believe in the resurrection of Christ, we bear hope in God's future—the life that God promised. Our hope and faith gives us "not only a consolation in suffering, but also the protest of the divine promise against suffering." (21) The first consolation is the reward we receive from suffering while we live on earth, while the other consolation is the reward that we shall receive beyond life on earth.

This promise of an afterlife is one that should make us strive towards God, to live a life, after death, with no suffering. By his mention of the suffering that we bear at present, Moltmann implies our predisposition to suffering. He presents the "dialectical view" which means that along with hope and anticipation, people experience suffering and despair. (Nazarene Theological Seminary) As we live in the world, we encounter sufferings which could lead to despair. Basically, our belief in the resurrection of Christ is founded on His death.

As Eckardt explains in "Luther and Moltmann: The Theology of the Cross", Moltmann perceives that Christ's death on the Cross is a way to teach us how we should tolerate the sufferings we encounter. It implies that as a prerequisite to the promise of God, we have to identify with Christ's suffering. This, in essence, means we must bear our own cross, be responsible for our own actions. On the question of how we should regard sufferings, Moltmann claims that "hope in itself is the happiness of the present." This means that our anticipation of God's future should serve as our source of hope and happiness.

While we suffer, we do not confine ourselves to loneliness, and do not concentrate on our woes. Rather, we see hope amid the sufferings, and display a happy disposition. Our hope in God's future should serve as our comfort as we strive to live each day. Because of our hope in God's promise, we are not easily crushed by the negative things that happen around us. The wars, violence, poverty, hunger that we experience should not make us lose our senses. Rather, the consolation is to feel that as we encounter them, we relate more with Jesus' sufferings on the cross.

In application, Moltmann's view implies that the poor and the oppressed should not feel sad about their condition. Rather, they should accept it, and find hope in it. Like the prophets in the Old Testament who suffered and accepted their fate in preparation for the coming of the Lord, the poor and the oppressed must suffer too in order to "engage in the activity of bringing the eschatological moment, the completion of God and His creation" (Eckardt p. 23). This means that in order to be part of the future that God prepares for us, we need to be one with Christ in His sufferings.

In *Hope and History*, Moltmann elaborates that while we hope for God's future, we "cannot passively wait...and withdraw from the world." "Rather we must seek this future, strive for it, and already here be in correspondence to it in the active renewal of life and of the conditions of life." Therefore, in addition to accepting our realities, Moltmann promotes doing works for others. This does not exempt anyone, regardless of the situation. As Moltmann views, we cannot just sit down and wait for God to come. We must live our lives, but we must live them in accordance with God.

We must do what we are set out to do in this world, learn from our mistakes, and engage with others; for if we are not participating in preparing for God's future, we may not be ready when the day comes. For the poor, the challenge is not to imprison themselves to their own miseries, but to find courage and hope, and even to serve others in the best way they can. For the rich or those who have enough, the challenge is to share in the sufferings of the poor by helping them, alleviating their sufferings, and supporting their needs. Looking at Christian lifestyle, there is two main ways to approach the preparation for God's future.

One is the individual lifestyle, while the second is the communal lifestyle. Our community must be just as strong and geared toward participating in God's future as a single member. As an individual, we have the personal right and choice to say yes or no to decisions that come our way. It is this freedom that must be used to reject things in this world that do not lead us closer to God. As Paul says to Titus (Tit. 2: 12), we must "... say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. God gave us free will so that we, as humans, have

<https://assignbuster.com/living-in-anticipation-of-gods-future-essay/>

the right to do as we please. He also, however, gave us a moral compass in a sense, a way of knowing what's right from what's wrong. It is these moral choices that matter so dearly to our final outcome. For us as individuals to live in anticipation, we must give up those things in this world that are negative to our well-being. As a community of belief in God's future, our relationship towards each other matter greatly. Peter says, " Live in harmony with one another ... be sympathetic, compassionate, and humble. (Peter 3: 8) We must love one another and be kind to each other. It is easy to be kind to people who are nice to you, but especially be kind to the people who are not so nice to you. Also, James says, " Do not criticize each other, brothers. Whoever makes it his habit to criticize his brother or to judge his brother is judging the law and condemning the law. But if you condemn the law, you are not a doer of the law but its judge. " (James 4: 11) He is saying that we should not pass judgment on others for who are we to do so.

God is the judge, and no man has the power to do so. The idea of discouragement and judgment is one that does not fit into this particular living. Instead of slandering one another we should be compassionate and humble. In accordance with both lifestyles, we must be able to forgive. Looking at the scene of Jesus' death, we are taught the ultimate way of living in anticipation. Forgiveness is a main factor in this process and Jesus does this to the full extent. He sets the standard when while nailed to the cross he says, " Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. At the moment of his most extreme suffering, Jesus prays for the forgiveness of his murderers. In a sense, there should be nothing that we cannot forgive. The challenge that Moltmann poses is in fact very easy. Simply put, our hope in

God's future should serve as inspiration to willingly sacrifice and help others, regardless of what's been done. However, since not all people have hope in the promise of God, there is also reluctance to sacrifice and help others.

Many view sufferings not as a way of life but a result of the greed that lurks in society.

Convincingly, it is more practicable to believe that by taking away greed, we can bring more hope to the poor and the oppressed. Therefore, by denouncing poverty and suffering, it could be easier to make others imagine the future that God beholds. While the hope in God's future seems to be a positive insight, some of the means by which Moltmann tries to achieve it seem somewhat impractical. Instead of persuading people to suffer in the way Christ shows us in the cross, I think it could be more effective to teach about hope by making people realize its essence while they are still living.

For instance, by helping the poor improve their economic life, authorities can immediately make a parallel picture of life that awaits us in God's future.

Works Cited Eckardt Jr. , Burnell. " Luther and Moltmann: The Theology of the Cross. " 1985. Concordia Theological Quarterly. Vol. 49, No. 1, pp. 19-30. "

Jurgen Moltmann. " Nazarene Theological Seminary. Retrieved 13 April

2009 . Moltmann, Jurgen. " Hope and History. " Essay of the lecture delivered at Princeton University. N. d. Retrieved 13 April 2009 . Moltmann, Jurgen. "

Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology. " London: SCM Press, 1967, p. 21.