

Theology in the context of World Christianity

Reflection Paper Chapter 1

“The Emergence of a Global Theological Discourse”

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In the first chapter, Tennent shares of the importance of listening and paying attention to what God is up to in the majority world. Very often there has been a lot of ignorance from many of us in the West, essentially doing all the talking and not listening to other theologians in the majority world. He also introduces the rest of the book and highlights some of his purposes for writing such a wonderful and much needed book. Tennent gives various examples, of places that were at one point the center of gravity for Christianity, later shifting and the very mission field they once tried to reach, becoming the center of gravity for Christianity. What an interesting reversal, of which ought to be eye opening for us in the West. Tennant shows how Christianity is theologically translatable into very culture and closes off by highlighting the importance of the dialogue between both theologians and missiologist.

One of the learning keys that jumped out to me the most, is the important of listening to the questions presented in the mission field. For us not to be in some ivory tower away from the nitty gritty of life. Also, the topics brought up in the majority world, can lead to wonderful theological breakthroughs. I remember when finishing my undergrad, wanting to simply visit a country in the majority world and see how God is on the move there. Not necessarily with an agenda, but to simply listen, see, and learn from how God is on the move there.

I think an essential missional implication to grasp, is to come with a posture of listening. To have a holy curiosity, which can help open the door for wonderful discussions. It can help serve as a great blessing to learn from each other and open our eyes to our own cultural blind spots and greater mysteries of God. Being connected to the global church, can help point to how much bigger God is than our finite understanding. Seeing how God is at work in the world, among different cultural groups, ethnicities, and so forth, I can't help but say it gives a bit of a glimpse of heaven. Of the Kingdom of God breaking into our world that can be seen globally.