

**Theology in the Context of World Christianity**  
**Timothy Tennent – Reflection Essay – Chapter 1**

**Summary of Chapter**

Tennent emphasized how, despite persecution, Christianity continues to survive as a faith due to sustained multiethnic transmissions over time.

Tennent gave a historical analysis and comparison of Christianity's global influence despite the existence and prevalence of competing faiths. For example, Islam and Hinduism are geographically and culturally concentrated in Saudi Arabia and North India, respectively (Tennent, p. 3.) Yet, despite the presence of more non-Arab Muslims than Arabic Muslims, Islam rigorously adheres to Arabic as the call to prayer and source of information (Qur'an) disregarding the language, geography and culture of surrounding cultures (Tennent, p. 3.)

Conversely, Christianity initially started in Jerusalem amongst the Jewish faith. Later, it's global message eventually spread to Gentiles, translated its texts into various languages and created multiple Christian centers in surrounding worldwide territories (Tennent, p. 6, 17.)

**Key Learning/Questions:**

Some questions: 1) Whether the Bible addresses cultural and religious resistance to Christianity and how He assists us to overcome them? 2) What are some ways the Church can offer authentic, inclusive and engaging multi-ethnic services and discipleship?

**Missional implications**

This chapter accentuated Western Christianity's lasting impact on societies and individuals, some positive and negative, which creates new avenues for "global theological discourse" (Tennent, p. 19.) As such, we will have to examine Western Christianity's history and its current positive and negative impacts. Living with a global Christian mindset, we must correct any adverse Western influences within our respective current Churches and missions, with the Lord's assistance.

Regarding the Church overall, we could have to ascertain the extent to which negative aspects of Western Christianity's have infiltrated the Body of believers. With this knowledge, the Church would be in a position to shift from formal "formal theological education" to "actual field experience" (Tennent, p. 21.) This allows missionaries to analyze and embrace the present cultural realities (recession of Christendom in the West and subsequent rise in other global areas) facing the Kingdom and create cross-cultural churches reflective of the Gospel.