

Summary of Chapter 2

This chapter is Tennent's exploration of the word Allah, and if all people, namely Christians and Muslims, mean the same thing when they speak of Allah. He starts by establishing that Allah was a word used for God by monotheistic religions before the time of Muhammed, but that the reality of today is that Allah is known as the name of the Islamic God. He then goes through the predicates of God in both the Bible and the Qur'an, lists that undoubtedly have similarities but hold two key differences: Islam firmly does not believe in the Trinity or the Divinity of Jesus, and both things are central to Christian faith. Tennent establishes by the end that he does not believe that the Father of Jesus is the God of Muhammad, but he does believe that Christians need to take time to understand Islam and Muhammad in order to engage with this growing group of people around the globe that do not believe that Jesus reigns.

Key Learning/Questions

I learned so much about Islam, primarily the contents of the Qur'an in that it acknowledges that Abraham, Moses, and Jesus did have revelation from God. There is this natural and powerful connection that exists between Muslims and Christians through the roots of both beliefs. I also did not know that Allah was a term used for God before the start and spread of Islam. My biggest take-away is now knowing that the two greatest places of contention relate to the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus.

Missional Implications

As Tennent says, we must take the time to learn about the similarities and differences between the beliefs laid out in the Bible and the Qur'an to be able to talk with Muslims well. I also appreciate his push for Muhammad to be treated with kindness rather than being made into a villain. Our mutual acknowledgement of monotheism is a connection to remember.