

Theology in the Context of World Christianity
Timothy Tennent – Interaction Paper – Chapter 5

Summary of Chapter

African Christology is the reflection of not only who Christ is but, on His works as well (Tennent, p. 113.) This enables Africans to have deep “holistic” and “integrative” experiences with a relational Christ wherein the two aforementioned reflections are found. This version of Christ has a meaningful impact on the daily lives of Africans who see and experience the tangible ways Christ provides for their health, food and spiritual sustenance instead of reading who Christ is in a “book theology” (Tennent, p. 112-113.)

Currently, Western churches have lost their Christ focus and instead use fluctuating forms of entertainment and business models to stave the decline of Christians from their congregations (Tennent, p. 106.) Conversely, the numbers of Africans embracing Christianity has risen exponentially given its focus on Christ (Tennent, p. 113.) The African worldview recognizes there is no division “between the visible and invisible worlds” (Tennent, p. 113.) Successful African missions understand this and use African culture and identity to share the Gospel in impactful ways, which address any challenges an African may have (Tennent, p. 130, 132.)

Key Learning/Questions:

1) Given the vitality and move of the Holy Spirit in Africa, has Western Christianity taken some steps to integrate the approaches of African Christianity to revitalize the current Western Christian experience? (Tennent, p. 106.) 2) What some current methods Christians have connected, missionally, with Africans: both internationally and state-side?

Missional implications

In the African culture, there are many divisions present resulting in genocide, ethnic and tribal conflicts (Tennent, p. 130.) With this information, Christians would be able to address issues of African identity and how it correlates with one’s universal identity in Christ wherein no divisions are present.