

Theology in a Global Context

Reflection Paper Chapter 3

“Hindu Sacred Texts in Pre-Christian Past”

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In the third chapter, Tennant focuses on how Christians should relate to the sacred texts of Buddhist, Muslims or Hindus. He starts off by highlighting very interesting points made by an Indian scholar and then seek to explore how the canon of the Bible relates to non-canonical writings and if non-canonical materials of other sacred texts serve as “preparation evangelica”. After that, he shows how the Bible interacts with other non-canonical writings of their day, explains the background of the various religious sacred texts, and then closes off with some practical ways we can interact with these texts in a ministry setting.

One of the learning moments for me while reading this section, is the realization of “preparation evangelica” in a greater way. I previously seen how some of the Biblical characters interacted with other texts, but didn’t realize that this can even be done with the Hindu sacred texts as well. I don’t know their texts very well, but often heard the extreme posture towards their texts. The posture that says all of their texts are pure demonic and need to stay as far away. This chapter helped me see in a greater way that there are more beneficial ways to interact with their texts.

The missional implication I take from this, is to pay attention and listen to some of the sacred texts of the individuals we are trying to reach. For instance, if trying to reach an individual with a Hindu background, it may be very helpful to know his or her sacred texts. But, while reading and understanding their texts, to see how any passage of theirs may point to Christ. It is important to listen and pay attention to see how God’s prevenient grace has already been at work in his or her life. The Holy Spirit has not left anyone without a witness and continues to work upon people’s hearts, not wanting any to perish. Before we ever step foot or talk with an individual, God has already been at work in their lives. Whether we call it “preparation evangelica” or prevenient grace, God is at work in their lives.