

Lesson 2 Reflection Essay (Ch 4)
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When I reflect on the nature of the exchange between the Global North and South and Tennent's statement, however, I can't help but think about how inequitable the sharing of theological discourse between both groups has been. I agree with Tennent when he writes, "There is a growing realization that the Majority World Church may play a crucial role, not only in revitalizing the life of Western Christianity but also in actually contributing positively and maturely to our own theological reflection." Although, I believe the realization of the immense value of the Majority World Church and its theology came too late for many Western churches and theologians. It causes me to wonder how much of the "darkening" the Western Church has experienced is the "rotten fruit" of its lack of equal exchange with the Global South. I believe the Global North viewed believers in the Majority World as solely "receivers" of the gospel, instead of active and insightful participants and practitioners of the Gospel. Kim shares that historically, the growth of the Global Church was always attributed to the efforts of the Christians in the Global North in this part of the world, but Kim illustrates how that Western way of thinking allows the erasure of all the work done by indigenous faith leaders to further the spread of Christianity. Kim in *Theology in the Context of World Christianity* brings attention to the reader that the spread of Christianity to the Majority World has always been a grassroots movement of the people from below.

It's ironic how currently the largest population of Christians lives in the Global South, but so much of the theological discourse that's been widespread and shared with the world has come from Western theologians and pastors. As Kim and Tennent discuss in the early chapters of their books, the Global South has always been a major player in God's story since the start of the Christian church, but that is not what is constantly shared or exemplified in the Global North. Of course, for people in the Global South with such long histories with the Christian faith, the

expressions that arose from their contexts had unique and valuable fruit for the larger Christian body. In this chapter, Kim briefly brings attention to how the perspectives of theologians from the Global South are often disregarded. But when we people see statistics like, over 100 years ago more than 80% of the world's Christians lived in the global North, but now 84% of all people, and 59% of all Christians, live in the global South, it shows that there is much wisdom to be learned from our brothers and sisters in the Global South.

Isaiah 43:19 says, "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." The reality is that when the seeds of the gospel of Christianity are planted in new cultural contexts, new and fresh developments, and discourse blooms from it. If the churches and institutions in the West are still so heavily influenced by "Latin influence", as Kim puts it, I believe the Western church will continue to decline as the Church in the Global South will flourish. Even as I look at what Tennent describes as the "5 trends in theology for Majority World believers", I believe the trends all touch on issues that the Western Church is trying to tackle but struggling in! "In many ways, Southern Christians' cultures and ways of thinking resemble those of the biblical era more closely than do Northerners', creating the potential for vibrant new theologies and ways of being the Church." This quotation from Kim really hits home for me because I wonder where the Western Church completely missed the mighty moves of the Holy Spirit happening in front of its face because the movement didn't look like its Western context.