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Tennent Chapter 7 Reflection

Summary

In chapter 7, Tennent tackles Pneumatology in Latin America. Tennent writes “This chapter is focused on pneumatology and how Latin American Pentecostals are contributing to the global discourse about the person and work of the Holy Spirit in the twenty-first century (169-170)”. The Pentecostal movement is characterized by its focus on the Holy Spirit, and his powerful work such as miracles, speaking in tongues, gifts, etc. “They are convinced that the Holy Spirit confirms the preaching of the gospel and the declaration of the resurrection of Jesus through giving signs and wonders, just as he did to those unlearned fishermen and tax collectors who were his first apostles” (182). Tennent concludes by challenging readers to learn from them but not to fall on the extreme side.

Key Learning

I had some knowledge of Pentecostal before, but Tennent helped me to understand it better. I appreciate his writing the defining features of Pentecostalism. He writes:

1. Pentecostals believe in a postconversion (or postregeneration) experience known as “the baptism in (or with) the Holy Spirit.”
2. Pentecostals believe that the full range of gifts and miraculous manifestations of the Spirit present in the New Testament are available for believers today.
3. Pentecostals are known for less formalized and expressive forms of worship, including lifting hands, dancing, shouting, and clapping.
4. Pentecostals are marked by a special urgency to evangelize the world because they believe that we are living in the last days before the return of Jesus Christ (165-166).

I like their emphasis on Holy Spirit is real, active, and He is working. Also, He empowers everyone for ministry. Sometimes we don't hear this enough at the Western churches.

Implication.

I have some pentecostal friends. I don't have problem visiting their services because "They fully affirm the authority of the Bible. They affirm the centrality of Christ's work on the cross for salvation and the historic reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. They affirm the importance of repentance, conversion, and living a holy life (165)". I don't see any problem in their major affirmation or beliefs; however, there are minor theological differences. Those differences do not stop me from loving and fellowshiping with my Pentecostal friends. They inspire them whenever I visit their services, but sometimes I don't enjoy the non-formality and lack of a system. I believe that we can definitely learn brother our pentecostal brothers and sisters but not to fall in the extreme side.