

Theology in a Global Context

Chapter 9 Reflection Paper

“Eschatology: Jonathan Edwards and the Chinese Back to Jerusalem Movement”

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Eschatology is probably one of my least favorite topics and perhaps the one topic I know the least about. I didn't have much expectancy coming into reading this chapter, but was blown away by the Chinese resiliency. Plus, Tennent brings out very interesting parallels with Jonathan Edwards and makes the topic come alive by writing with relevancy. Tennent first starts off by going over Jonathan Edwards views on Eschatology and how that played out in his life and ministry. Afterwards, Tennent goes into a brief historical background on Christianity in China and then shows an interesting connection between eschatology and mission.

I was really inspired by the devotion and resiliency of Chinese Christians. While the Christians in the West are struggling, it is refreshing to see Christianity spreading like wildflower in China. A key learning moment for me here would be the simplicity in the growth and missionary sending that is happening in China. As one of their leaders says, they are not like an elephants making a lot of noise but more like termites. It is almost like they are sending out undercover missionaries who sustain themselves and use their history of resilience as an encouragement to keep going.

The missionary implication that spoke to me the most, can be summed up in this one quote. "Unlike Western ministry training, part of the training of the Chinese missionaries includes instruction on how to be an effective witness in prison (pg244)." Wow, talk about a mind drop. I resonate a lot with the history of Chinese Christians and look forward to getting to know more. I find similarities with my own parents and grandparents who endured persecution under the former Soviet Union. I love the resiliency and find encouragement in the fact that if they were able to endure such hardship, I can too. Whether right or wrong in the various details about the BTJM, may the Lord bring many souls into His Kingdom during their missionary endeavors.