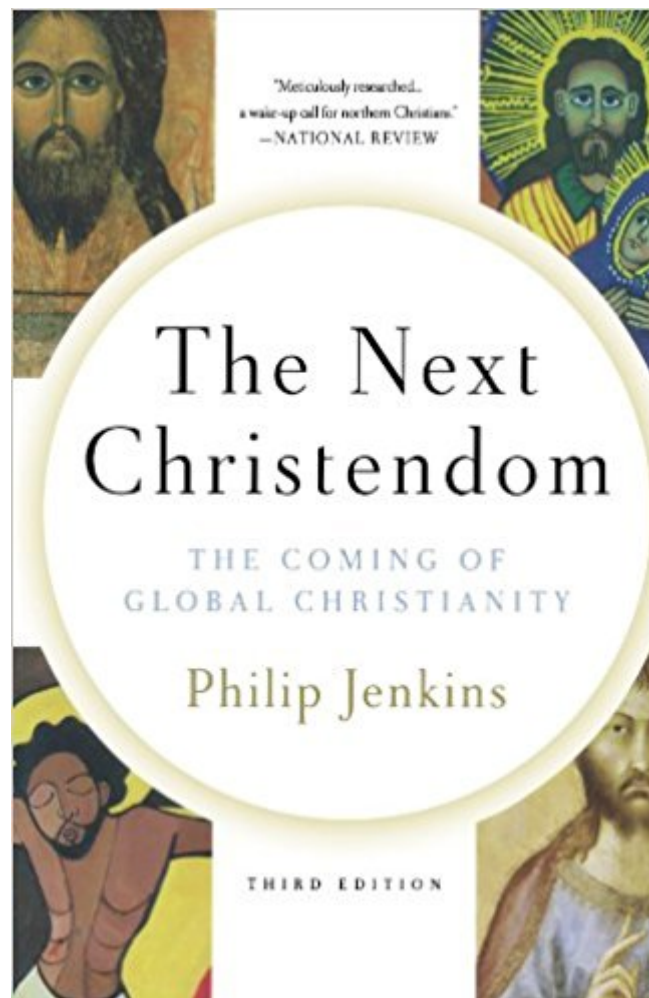




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The Next Christendom: The Coming Of Global Christianity (Future Of Christianity Trilogy)



Synopsis

In this new and substantially expanded Third Edition, Philip Jenkins continues to illuminate the remarkable expansion of Christianity in the global South--in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Drawing upon the extensive new scholarship that has appeared on this topic in recent years, he asks how the new Christianity is likely to affect the poor, among whom it finds its most devoted adherents. How should we interpret the enormous success of prosperity churches across the Global South? Politically, what will be the impact of new Christian movements? Will Christianity contribute to liberating the poor, to give voices to the previously silent, or does it threaten only to bring new kinds of division and conflict? Does Christianity liberate women, or introduce new scriptural bases for subjection?

Acclaim for previous editions of *The Next Christendom*: Named one of the Top Religion Books of 2002 by USA Today; Named One of the Top Ten Religion Books of the Year by Booklist (2002); Winner of the Christianity Today Book Award in the category of "Christianity and Culture" (2002); "Jenkins is to be commended for reminding us, throughout the often gripping pages of this lively work...that the history of Christianity is the history of innovative--and unpredictable--adaptations."--The New York Times Book Review; "This is a landmark book. Jenkin's thesis is comprehensively researched; his analysis is full of insight; and his projection of the future may indeed prove to be prophetic."--Baptist Times; "A valuable and provocative look at the phenomenon widely ignored in the affluent North but likely to be of enormous importance in the century ahead.... *The Next Christendom* is chillingly realistic about the relationship between Christianity and Islam."--Russell Shaw, *Crisis*; "If the times demand nothing less than a major rethinking of contemporary global history from a Christian perspective, *The Next Christendom* will be one of the significant landmarks pointing the way."--Mark Noll, *Books & Culture*

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Customer Reviews

"Gracefully written and skillfully argued, *The Next Christendom* shows the many changes Christianity has undergone and its capacity to survive."--CHOICE
"Philip Jenkins is a prolific writer...The book is well written and carries its reader along...This is an excellent book for theologians, missiologists, and pastors of multicultural congregations. It is essential reading for denominational and institutional strategic planners."--Seminary Studies

Philip Jenkins, one of the world's leading religion scholars joined Baylor University's Institute for Studies of Religion as Distinguished Professor of History and Co-Director for the Program on Historical Studies of Religion. He is the author of many books and articles, including the acclaimed *The Future of Christianity* Trilogy, consisting of *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South*, and *God's Continent: Christianity, Islam, and Europe's Religious Crisis*.

The following is an analytical book review of Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*. Philip Jenkins, the author of 24 books, and 120 book chapters and refereed articles, has been on the faculty of Pennsylvania State University since 1980, and in 2007, he was appointed as the Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of History and Religious Studies. He completed his undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral work all at the University of Cambridge, but it is not his work in global Christianity that got him on the faculty of Penn State. He began as an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice in 1980. In fact, his early work consists of history, criminology, and pedophilia. It was not until his publication of *The Next Christendom* that his reputation as an expert on global Christianity came to the forefront. Since then, he has spoken widely around this topic of global Christianity [...]. The thesis of this book is that the center of Christianity has shifted southward to Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Location 36). As a result, in spite of the seeming decline of Christianity in the western world, Christianity is actually growing and flourishing in most areas around the world (Location 992). *The Next Christendom* begins with an elaboration of the thesis by challenging the myth that Christianity is actually declining and disappearing in the world. It may seem like that in the western world, but soon

enough, the center of Christianity is going to be Africa and Latin America (Location 170). After elaborating on that point, Jenkins begins to paint a picture of the history of Christianity and how it has expanded across the world. He makes a point to paint a picture of how Christianity was closely tied with the western imperial expansion. He then moves to explain how Christianity is flourishing in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, using many illustrations and case studies to prove his point. Throughout the book, Jenkins is subtly asking the reader to consider how this shift of Christianity should affect how one lives out one's faith. Since "Christianity is flourishing wonderfully among the poor and persecuted, while it [is] atroph[ying] among the rich and secure" (Location 3012), what needs to change in the western world for Christianity to once again flourish here? Will the global north change at all? That is the question that begs to be asked. Although the center of Christianity is shifting south, the center of Christian thought seems to be staying in the same location - the western world. Perhaps this is because that is where the money and the publishers are. In either case, if Christianity is flourishing and growing abundantly in the south, whereas it is stagnant and declining in the western world, then would it not make sense to learn from the south? What would happen if the western world began learning from their theologians, pastors, and Christians? Perhaps following the footsteps of southern Christianity with a deeper and more personal faith, more emphasis on "communal orthodoxy, mysticism, and puritanism, all focused on clear scriptural authority" would cause Christianity to shift and transform in the western world (Location 120)? If, as Philip Yancey states, "God goes where he's wanted" (Location 215), then should the western world not learn from the contexts that God is clearly blessing and moving in? It is precisely because of this that I love being a part of the M.A. in Global Leadership. I do pray that I would never lose sight of the fact that God is not tied to one land or one people, but that he is a God of all peoples and transcends any location. As a result, I pray that I would never be so prideful to think that I can only learn from the celebrity pastors and theologians of North America, while ignoring the work that anonymous Christians are doing in some place I have never heard of. God, please protect my heart and keep me humble, with my eyes continually focused on you. In the end, I give this book 4 stars out of 5.

A MUST READ for every evangelical Christian, especially Americans. American Christians really need to see and open minds to see what's going on in the Christian world outside of this country and culture. Words cannot describe how much I appreciate Philip Jenkins for writing this book. He nailed the issue. I bought this book firstly in this English version, then later bought its Chinese version.

This book describes well the phenomenon of RAPID CHURCH GROWTH I observed during 15 years as a Lutheran missionary in Liberia, 10 years as a missionary in Peru and visits and stays in: Nigeria, Kenya, Hong Kong, Mexico, Uruguay, Argentina, and Japan. Dr. Jenkins has documented important trends for Christendom all over the world. We pray that Christians everywhere will learn to love each other, and allow people in every situation to grow into the fullness of Christ at their own pace by the leading of the Holy Spirit. J. Wold

The book is very comprehensive and gives detailed insight into what will happen to Christianity in the world both good and bad. Also, it points out news and conflicts which are often neglected by the media but really has great importance in terms of what happens in the world in the future. The severity of the religious conflicts and where we are heading in the future is discussed. Good overview of the subject is given.

Would not recommend just as a reader, but was good for Theology class.

This is a response to the reviewers who gave the book between 1 and three stars. My primary observation is that there is no way that a book aimed at a popular audience can touch all bases, personalities, issues, and prognostications. Let us be thankful that Jenkins has made known to us something about "Christianity South" and "Christianity East." I was quite surprised, for example, at the relative growth of Christianity versus Islam in sub-Saharan Africa (by the way, that is everything in Africa south of the Sahara, down to the Cape of Good Hope.) But like some of the complaints from the one and two star reviewers, there is not much said about the explanation for this fact, except to suggest that African Christianity has found its own source of inspiration, and grows on that. It is no longer driven by European and American missionaries. But there is no citation for "Liberation Theology" in the index, which I found odd. This is a sign that the author's primary interest is demographic and social, not theological. If you order a used copy, you want to be sure you are getting the third edition. I compared the table of contents for the first and third editions, and there is much added, especially on "The Rise of the New Christianity". On a contemporary topic, you will be missing something if you don't have the latest edition. If you are interested in world Christianity, you can hardly find anything as illuminating as this 3rd Edition popular book.

This is the most incredible, stunningly insightful books on worldwide Christianity in the 21st Century I have read. It should be required reading for every seminarian/church leader, foreign policy

student/adviser and politician (of every party).

Jenkins recites statistics concerning the expansion of Christianity in the southern hemisphere of which most Americans are unaware. This is a welcome antidote to statistics reflecting the contraction of Christianity in the northern hemisphere of which most Americans are well aware. His speculations as to the future are quite interesting.

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