WORLD THEOLOGY 2

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Category: Observations

> *Here I must address my fellow Westerners: not only do non-Western perspectives give us insights into God that we in the West could never get on our own; Western theology also has some serious flaws in it. For example, we are often beholden to Platonic dualism, which has filtered down to us through the millennia, and it is so hard for Western Christians to shake this dichotomistic thinking about the spiritual and physical worlds (this is played out in missions in the sense that evangelism is seen as more important than social justice). Another example is the influence of the Enlightenment on Western thought, which all but killed Christianity in Europe. Today, Europe is the most secular continent on earth, thanks to the Enlightenment and rationalism. Yet we unthinkingly and unwittingly export that mindset to the non-Western world because we cannot see past our own cultural lenses. A third example is individualism. Most cultures throughout world history have been communal, but we have reduced salvation to "me and the Jesus prayer." Now we have Korean Christians who come to the West to study in our seminaries, imbibe individualistic theology and then take it back to their communal Asian contexts. It is destructive, because the pastors end up doing theology completely wrongly in their native context, but they think this individualism is normative because their Western theology professors told them it was so. One of the dangers of Westerners providing theological education to the Two-Thirds World is uncontextualised mechanical mimicry. A fourth example of problematic Western theology is a poverty in our pneumatology. The rest of the world understands spiritual realities far better than the West does; we are effectively "Binitarian" (rather than Trinitarian) in our theology: we have a great theology of God the Father, a wonderful Christocentrism, but very little knowledge or experience with the Holy Spirit. The irony is that the third person of the Trinity is the one who is with us on earth today! Pentecostalism is the fastest-growing segment of Christianity in the non-Western world today, for a good reason; perhaps we in the West can teach the rest of the world about Christology, but the rest of the world can teach us about pneumatology.*

Allen Yeh in Polycentric Missiology.