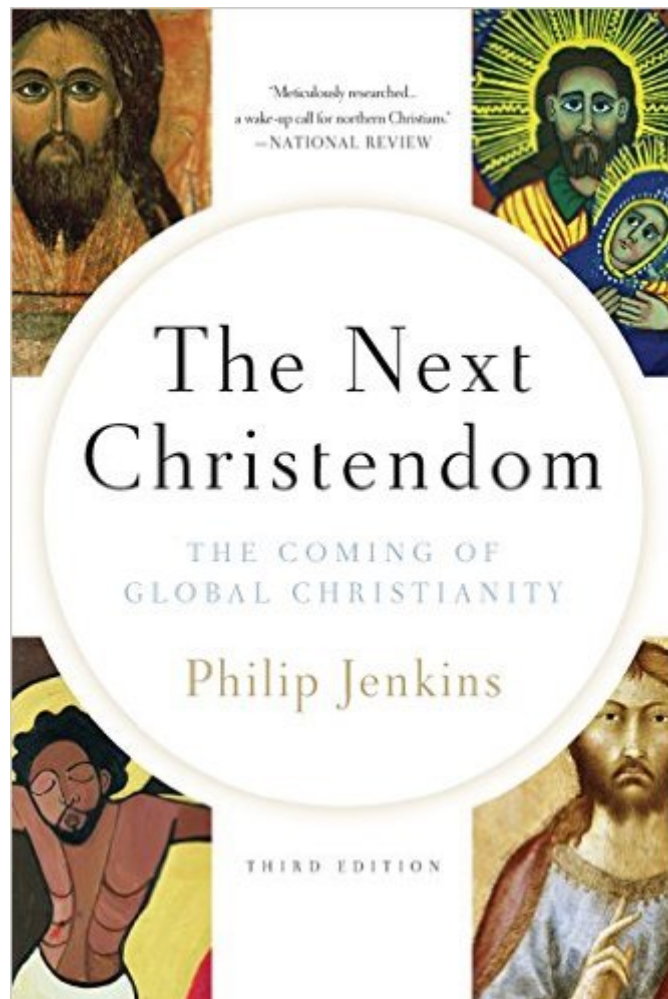


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The Next Christendom: The Coming Of Global Christianity (Future Of Christianity Trilogy)



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*

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In a memorable passage from the movie APOLLO THIRTEEN, a military man in the tense Houston control room shares with a political figure his premonition that the tragedy unfolding before them will be *the* catastrophic moment for the space program. Mission control flight chief Gene Kranz overhears their conversation and addresses it: 'With all due respect, gentleman, I believe this will be our finest hour.' The scene could stand in for the hand-wringing that often accompanies the apparent demise of the Western church when it comes to prognosticating on its fate over against the perceived adversaries of secularism and post-modernism. Philip Jenkins reminds us that, when viewed through a wide-screen lens, the immediacy of threat often yields to a broad panorama of opportunity. Over against the fear of resurgent religion that shows its face among our cultural elites, Philip Jenkins sketches the rise of 'global Christianity' in predominantly positive terms. The Penn State University scholar of religion has noticed long before most of us that the face of Christendom is already brown, southern, and confident. He helps us to work through the implications of this even as he persuades us that the hegemony of Euro-American Christianity is a thing of the past and that-unless we pay attention-we who are part of it are likely to be, as the old song says, the last to know. In the first of ten compact chapters ('The Christian Revolution', pp. 1-14), Jenkins starts out with a bang. Professional analysts of global trends have missed out on perhaps the biggest one, a fact that the title of Jenkins' opening chapter provocatively suggests. Religious revolutions are not, as Western intellectuals too often suppose, mere matters of the heart.

Jenkins's *The New Christendom* is an incredibly thought-provoking estimate of the new faces Christianity will wear in the next half century. Given that population and religious enthusiasm is waning in the northern hemisphere, and just the opposite is going on in the southern one, Jenkins predicts that Christianity's center of gravity will migrate to Africa and Central and South America in the immediate decades ahead. This will result in the emergence of new symbols, new styles of worship, new metaphors, and new ethical sensibilities, all of which mean that Christianity will no longer be dominated by an Eurocentric history and ethos. Because southern Christianity will become increasingly pentecostal, evangelical, and politically and morally conservative, northern sensibilities,

which already tend to take the Christian message with an urbane grain of salt, are likely to dismiss Christianity even more. It will be dismissed as "jungle religion," (p. 169) contrary to both enlightened and postmodern ways of viewing the world. Thus the north will find pseudo-legitimation for its steady move toward secularism in religious revival of the south. In defending this thesis, Jenkins indirectly raises serious concerns about the spiritual health of North American and European Christianity. If his predictions are in any way true--and they certainly have the ring of plausibility--then it follows that mainstream institutional Christianity, Catholic and Protestant alike, needs to reflect seriously on both its style and convictions. If it's become so indifferent to its own message that it finds enthusiastic support of that message distasteful, things have reached a sorry state.

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