

The Suffering and Flourishing of Nature: In Search of a “Common Green Missiology”

A Comparative Exercise between Christian and Buddhist Resources

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The purpose of this presentation is to seek resources for Christian theology and missiology to combat the raping of nature and facilitating the flourishing of environment in a sympathetic-critical collaboration with representatives of other faith traditions. Call it a “Common Green Missiology.” To make this task manageable, the comparative task will be limited to Christian-Buddhist engagement. At the same time, suggestively, it may point to the wider comparative perspective between the Semitic and Asiatic living faiths with regard to green values.

The presentation argues that against the widely spread popular misconception, Asiatic faiths’ basic structure and orientation makes extremely difficult the constructive task of a robust environmental “theology.” This is not to deny many potential nature-supporting ideas Buddhist religion; rather, it is to help uncover foundational orientations not in keeping with the care for environment.

On the contrary, a number of scriptural and theological resources in Judeo-Christian tradition are available to facilitate a solid Green theology. The infamous claim by White Lynne and others about the environmentally catastrophic effects of Abrahamic traditions will be shown to be mistaken. That said, this presentation is neither apologetic nor an uncritical defense of a particular faith tradition’s green resources: instead, it is a hospitable and critical invitation for collaboration and mutual learning. As said, its ultimate goal is to work towards a framework for interreligious collaboration in “green theology.”