Is Dual Religious Belonging Syncretistic? A Missiological Perspective

Dual religious belonging is a phenomenon of individuals who identify themselves as followers of more than one religious tradition. Syncretism is the mixture of two religions into a hybrid identity. People of faiths may find themselves in different degrees of dual or multi-religious conditions due to growing up in inter-religious marriages of their parents, exposure to multi-religious traditions or interreligious encounters. Is it possible to be a Christian and a Buddhist? In particular, should Christian converts from Asian religious traditions be required to retain or reject past religious identities? The paper will provide theological assessments of syncretism and dual religious belonging, particularly for Christians who hold on to the centrality of Jesus Christ for salvation. It will conclude with some contributions toward Christian mission and discipleship for those coming from different faith traditions with particular references to the Buddhist contexts.