

# The Principles of Missions

by Paris Reidhead

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A missionary conference should have clear principles that you carry away. You're going to forget a great deal of what's been said, much of what you've seen, but there should be certain principles that are going to stay with you as long as you live. I assume that you've heard them. If you haven't put them together, as I will in next few moments, then this is going to help summarize them for you.

The first principle is this: The Bible is a Missionary Book. There are many who name the name of Christ, who think the Bible has something to say about missions. That's totally incorrect. The Bible is a missionary book. Oh, it talks about agriculture, but it's not a book on agriculture. It talks about money, but it's not a book on economics. It's a missionary book. It unfolds the eternal purpose in the heart of God, to bring to Himself a people that should be the objects of His love, a people for His Praise, that should show forth His Glory and Grace. A people to whom he could reveal Himself, and share all that He is. It begins when the earth, when the world was made, and it continues until there's a new Heaven and a new Earth, and in-between it's that unfolding of the eternal missionary purpose in the heart and plan and mind of God. Now, if you read the Bible that way, then you're going to expect to see something relating to this task (it's hours now at the end of the age), on almost every chapter, and every page.

The second principle is close to the first. It's this: The Church (rightly understood) is a Missionary Society. Now, many churches have missionary societies, and I have no objection to that. As long as the church is a missionary society, but, if it thinks it can have one in place of being one, it's out of order. The church is the missionary society. Now, we have a great many missionary agencies, that have called themselves missionary societies. If they think that they were raised up of God to send the missionaries, then they have misunderstood their own function. The fact of the matter is, missions as we know it began back there in Antioch, when the Holy Spirit said to the brethren in the church there, "Separate unto me Saul and Barnabas, and send them", and thus the church was constituted 'the sending agency'. Well, what about these other agencies we call mission societies? Do they have a place? Of course they do. It'd be very difficult for the pastor of a church, to have to arrange for all the visas, all of the problems that are associated with their people going into various countries. So, it's missionary service agencies that aid the local church, but it's the local church that's the sending entity, and responsible before God to get the message out to the ends of the earth. Not some society.

The third principle ties closely to the other two. It's this: Everyone born into the Family of God (who has been washed therefore by the blood of Christ. Who has truly repented of His sins, and in that new art has purpose to please God in everything. I say every child of God) is involved in this Missionary task. There is no room for spectators. The only one in a church that would be a spectator to the missions, is the one that has never been born again, but somehow has come in under false pretense and colors into the membership of the church, but still dead in their sins. You see, dear friend, it is correct to say as Oswald Smith said all around this country, and Canada, "If you are not a missionary, then you are a mission field". I believe that we need to re-emphasize that. If you've been born of God you are already by virtue of the call that he gave you. Oh, I know you hear a lot about people being called to missions, and I realize I've used the term, and I realize that it's not done with presumption. What we really should say is we believe the Lord is "leading us" to missions, to a field. He's leading; He's directing rather than calling. I'd like to reserve that word, "call" to the one that the scripture teaches. We have had a call, but it's from the Lord Jesus Christ: "Come follow me" it's a call to a person. Someone's asked me, after we had not returned to Africa but had remained home to do deputation work at the request of our society, and the leading of the Lord. They said, "I thought you were called to Africa?", and I had to reply, no, you thought incorrectly. I was called to follow Jesus Christ, and I'm going to spend my life following Him, doing what I believe He wants me to do, where and when, and as He wishes and as He directs. He lead us to Africa, and now He's lead us home, and we're responsible for this phase of His work. After all, the world is the field and from a point of vision, He has, when He sees it, He sees it all at once, and it's very hard to distinguish home and foreign. When you're looking at it from the throne in Heaven. Now, every one of us are involved. You are involved in this task, and if you'll accept that responsibility, and realize that, this conference when it's over has really just begun, because, you are going to be, engaged in your missionary responsibility. Oh, some will go back to fields over seas, but your field is the home where you live. The community where you live. The school that you attend. The place where you work and earn your living. All of this is your mission field. The city where you live, the county, the state, the country, it's all part of your place of witness, your mission field.

Now, you have to have scripture to reinforce this. Therefore, I submit to you that in Romans the fourth chapter, we have a very clear statement by the apostle Paul, that I don't think I'm having to twist at all, when I apply it to you and say, that it reinforces this matter. Paul is talking about Abraham, and he's talking about the promise that God made to Abraham, and he's talking about the fact the seed of Abraham is not only those that are the physical descendants of Abraham, but also the ones that are his spiritual descendants. That, Abraham by faith became the child of God, and the father of the faithful, and he said: "All of you who by faith have received Jesus Christ, and

who have passed from death to life, you're the children of Abraham. As well as, those that are the physical descendants." The promise that God made to Abraham was not only to his physical seed, (argues Paul), but also to his spiritual seed. Well, what is that promise? It's this: In thee, and in thy seed, shall all nations of the earth be blessed. God promised to Abraham, that he would have a worldwide blessing, and God promised Abraham a seed, who would also bless the world, and if you've been born of God, you're that seed. You have, from God, the promise, that if you will walk in the way He has commanded you to walk, and made it possible for you to walk, that you too can have a worldwide blessing and ministry for Him.

Now, it's absolutely consistent with what we have heard, in that word that the Lord Jesus gave as he was leaving his disciples. Remember what he said? "After that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, you shall receive power, and you shall be witnesses unto me" either in Jerusalem, or in Judea, or in Samaria, or unto the uttermost parts of the earth, is that what he said? No, not even the new versions will go that far. The only place you get that is from the reverse vision, no revised version would ever do it. He did not say, "either/or" He said, "You shall be witnesses unto me BOTH in Jerusalem AND in Judea, AND in Samaria, AND unto the uttermost part of the world." It's a "both" "and" situation, not an "either" "or" situation. Everyone who names the name of Christ, filled with the Spirit of God, has a worldwide ministry for Christ. You say, Well, that's some new doctrine is it? No, it's not new doctrine. It's just that which has been taught. I heard that from Robert C. McQuilkin President of Columbia Bible College. Who came up to Monarea Machitusits in the New England Keswick when we were candidates there, and spent two hours telling us about Abraham, and the promise made by God to Abraham, and the promise to Abraham's seed. Something took hold of my heart, and came a flame of fire in my heart that somehow God in his grace was going to give to me, an opportunity for a world. Wide ministry for Christ, but I had the privilege of going to Bible school, and training, seven years after High School getting ready to go, there were others who didn't.

I think of that woman, I heard about years ago; now don't ask me to give you the documentation on this because it's somewhere, but I can't put my finger on it but I read it. It burned its way into my memory, and I'm giving it to you substantially as I read it, or as it was given to me. In Edinburgh Scotland, there was a dear woman, a maiden lady. Sailing home to take care of her aging parents, who had a heart for God, long before women went to the mission field. God had begun to burden her to pray, and she asked God if he would send her. He said, no, He wouldn't send her, but He would send some of hers. She never married, she didn't know what it meant, hers. One Saturday she was doing the family shopping (they didn't have refrigerators in those days. You bought on Saturday what you'd cook, and use on the Lord's Day, and so it was they shopped every day), and she had her little woven basket, and was walking

down the street, toward the store to get the provision she needed. Out of a narrow ally, a young man, a young boy, about eight or nine, burst, bumped into her. She didn't lose her balance, but he did his, and he fell down on the cobbles and lay there sobbing. She reached down, and set him up, and took her handkerchief and whipped his running nose, and weeping eyes, and cleaned his face, got him quiet, and she asked his name: "My name is Bobby, Ma'am." Well, why are you running Bobby? He said, "Well, my fathers drunk again, and he's been beating me, and I broke away from him, and I'm running because I don't want to be beat anymore by him. Every time my father gets a drink, he beats me, and my mother too." She talked a little while, and they walked down the street, and she said, "Bobby" (as she pointed to a church) "Have you ever been in the church?" he said, "Oh no mum, I couldn't go there. These are all the cloths I got, these rags I'm wearing. They wouldn't let anybody like me in there. I hold the horses sometimes for the folks that do go in, and I've heard the music when the windows were open in the summer, but I never did go in". Would you like to?. "Oh, Ma'am I'd like to so much". She said, "Bobby, next Saturday meet me right here, I can't do it today, but next Saturday, you meet me and I will buy you cloths, and you can go with me to that church". So, the next Saturday he was there, and she bought him everything from shoes, stockings, under works, little shirt, pants; everything he needed to go neatly into the church. For several Sundays he meet her there dressed up, and went with her.

Then, one Sunday he wasn't there, and she looked for him. She looked for him for a week and didn't see him, then she saw him, and she said, "Bobby what happened?" "Oh I'm so ashamed ma'am. My father saw my package; I had been hiding it under the bed, behind a pillow, and he found the pillow and he saw the package, and he took my cloths and he pawned them for a drink, and I don't have anything to go to church in". She said, "Bobby, meet me here, I'll buy you cloths but we'll keep them at my house, and you can come there, bath, and dress, and you can go to church with me". Well, after a few months he said, "You know, I've listened to the word, and I've asked Jesus to become my Lord, and come into my heart". Then, she continued to teach him, get him ready for school, because he had no education to read, to write. Prepared him for entrance, and he was accepted, and she paid his way. He went to seminary, and he went to the mission field, and years have gone by. She has gone to be with the Lord. It's in China, late at night, a couple of candles and saucers a bear pine table, and a man (face prematurely lines cleaved) is kneeling on the floor with a packet of paper under his hands, that he's dedicated to the Lord. It's a New Testament, in the Chinese language translated by Robert Morrison. First missionary to China, who was the wee Bobby of Edinburgh, and a maiden lady, who could never leave Edinburgh, was responsible for getting the word of God into China.

What did He say? "In thee and in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed", but how's he going to do it? Did he have a plan commensured with such an enormous responsibility, and privilege, and task? You would expect our God to have such a plan, would you not? One that was logical, and reasonable. There are those people, who in their short sightedness, think that what the angels sang that night, that first Christmas night, over the plain of Bethlehem, was, "Thou shall call his name Jesus for He shall save His people from hell, and take them to heaven when they die". That too is the reverse vision. That's not what the angles said, they said, "Thou shall call His name Jesus for he shall save His people from their sins". God's purpose in salvation is not just to keep us out of hell, but also to save us from the penalty of what we have done. To save us from the tyranny of our own traits and dispositions, attitudes and habits. To save us from the power of temptation, and provide a way of escape, and also, to take these blood ransom bodies and personalities as living sacrifices to be given to the Lord Jesus. Just as Mother Mary gave her body to the Holy Ghost that He might be incarnate, and come into time, and invade time. That the one who'd inscribed the epilogue on the tables of stone, the Lawgiver could by incarnation, become a Law keeper so that He could die for Law, and break us. Like me, like you He asks us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, that He might live in us, and live through us His own life. If you look above you, you will see light bulbs twisted into sockets, and because those light bulbs are in the socket and are making connection (with the energy that's flowing from a generator somewhere) those light bulbs have become incandescent, and are dispelling the darkness that would be around you if they were not working.

So, His purpose in grace is, that somehow He might bring us into such a relationship with Him, that we could become incandescent with His presence. In John chapter seventeen and verse twenty-one, He spoke to/of His disciples, and He says to His Father:

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that the also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me, and the world may be able to believe".

Now, most of the world today does not know that the Father sent the Son. Many of those who know that fact, are not able to believe because they've seen no demonstration of the reality of His presence. But, in his prayer to His Father He said, "Father, that they all might be in union the same way that I lived in you and you lived in me, I may live in them and they will live in me, and the world will know and the world will be able to believe". The world doesn't know, and it isn't able to believe, and why? I think it's because we've tried everything else but Gods way, and I don't want

us to stop doing anything we're doing, I just want us to add to it the way the Lord Jesus saw that the task would be accomplished.

My friend, if you've got insight enough and wisdom enough from God to know that you can't save yourself by your own efforts, it's not asking too much to expect you to realize, that if you couldn't save yourself by your own efforts, you can't serve Him acceptably by your own efforts either. Why, everything I do, and everything you do in the energy of our own personalities is going to be burned up in the judgment, and in that day will be nothing but wood, hay, and stubble. The only thing that's going to endure that test, that fire will be, that which He did for us, and what He's asking now is that you will recognize, that if you couldn't save yourself, the only logical course for you is to present your body to Him, a living sacrifice. The purpose is to please Him if you're child of God, in everything, He's Lord of everything. But, how's it going to be affected? How's it going to be fulfilled? When you come to that place that you realize, "I can't Lord, I've tried; I can't". Oh my, what a wonderful thing, to come to the realization that you can't. That's the first time that He can use you, and you'll find out that what you can't do for Him, you'll find He can do for you, and is all the difference in the world. You'll have nothing but frustration, and defeat, and heartache, and sadness, if you try it in the energy of all of what you are. But, He say's, "Present your body a living sacrifice".

Present your brain. So, the Lord Jesus living in you can use your brain to think His thoughts, and get them back in the world.

Present your heart. So, that living in you, He can have a heart that's moved with compassion.

Present your eyes. So, that living in you, He can use your eyes to see the lost.

Present your ears. So, that He in you can listen to the cry of those caught in the toils of sin.

Present your feet. So, that living in you, He can use your feet to go where He wants to go.

Present your hands. So, that living in you, He can use your hands to lift the fallen, and feed the hungry, and guild the blind to light.

Present your lips. So, that living in you, He can speak through your lips, your mind; His word of redeeming love, to those to whom He sends you to bring that message.

What did Paul say? "I, I'm crucified with Christ". It took three years at the university of hard knocks for him to unlearn. He had to get a graduate course in unlearning. Three years, and all he's doing is making tents. Everything, his credit cards have lapsed, all his memberships have lapsed. Everything is gone. He's sitting out there, with a callous on his thumb pushing a needle through that goats hair canvas, and the Lord said, "Well, are you ready son? Ready to learn?". I've forgotten everything. I've forgotten how to talk. I've forgotten how to write. I've forgotten everything. Why, the

things that I used to count gain to me, I count refuge, just fertilizer, nothing. I'm nothing Lord. you know what the Lord said? "Oh, that's fine. That's fine. You have nothing?", no I haven't anything. I can't do anything Lord. I can't come into the Excellency of men's speech, I used to be quite a debater , but I can't do that anymore. All I know is Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

Now listen, "I (said the apostle), am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith, of the Son of God who loved me, and gave Himself for me". He didn't say, by faith in the Son of God, but, faith of the Son of God. What was that? That someday you'd run down. Someday you'd quit, and someday you'd say, Lord I can't. Then, you'd hear Him say, "I know you can't. I know you can't, but I can. Now, do you really mean that you can't? just present yourself to me. Let me fill you with myself. Let me move in, take over, and control". There are a lot of folks that have been filled with the spirit, that have never gotten around yet, to letting the Lord Jesus Christ live his life through them. Oh, they're filled with the Spirit, I don't have any question about that, but they've never recognized that the Lord Jesus wants to do the work through them.

That' s what we are talking about. He said, "Father◆". What did he say of his ministry? "I do nothing of myself. The works that I do, the Father that dweleth in me, He doeth the works. I won't speak of myself. I speak as I receive commandment of the Father". If He hadn't done that, He never could have said (that night at the resurrection, in the upper room. You remember what He did, He came into the upper room, He said to His disciples, "Peace be unto to you", and then what did He say? "As the Father sent me, so send I you". That word send, the Latin form of the word send, is Mitto; from which we get the word missionary. Literally what he said was, "As the Father missionaryed me, so I missionary you", but how?

Think about it for a moment. The Lord Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost. From the moment of that conception, He was indwelled by the fullness of the God head bodily. For thirty three years, He lived as a root out of a dry ground, increasing in wisdom, stature, with God and man. He went down to Jordan's banks, and He was baptized. Now to us baptism is a picture of death to sin, and alive to God, but our Lord Jesus had no sin. So, what could baptism apply? To what could it be symbolic? He was God come in the flesh, and He had a perfect right to do everything that was to be done, in His own essential deity as Son. But, there on Jordan's banks, and in that water, the Lord Jesus said, "I lay aside the right to act in my essential deity as Son, and I accept the limitation of my humanity. That, in all things I may be like unto my brethren." The spirit of God who was in Him at that moment, came upon Him clothing Him, and everything done by Christ from that moment on, was done by the power of the Father through the Holy Spirit, and not by the Son in His own essential deity.

Why? So, that He could say that night, and this morning, "As the Father sent me, so send I you".

What's the parallel? You were born of the Spirit. The Spirit of God awakened you, and convicted you, and brought you to repentance, and when you receivingly, received Him, He came in to quicken your heart. Then, you presented, you asked Him to come, and He clothed you with the Holy Spirit. You were baptized in the Holy Spirit, but, have you learned to let the Lord Jesus Christ live His life through you, the way Paul did when he said, I'm crucified. He could have said, I'm crucified with Christ, I'm buried with Him, quickened with Him, raised with Him, seated with Him, and Christ. We've tried everything else. Don't you think it's time we did this His way? Oh, it's this morning, the company of people within these walls, about twelve times, ten times at least more than there were in the upper room on the day of Pentecost,. The task the Lord gave us, could be completed, if everyone of us here would simply allow the Lord Jesus, from this day on, to live in us His own life, and through us.


My, the things that would happen. The ministries that would be taking place. The works that would be done. That's' your privilege, you were an heir to the promise, "In thee, and in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed". It's to you that He says, "Present your body a living sacrifice holy acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service". You're a missionary. Both in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and unto the utter most part of the earth. You, you're right there in the center of it all, but what are you going to do about it? What will you do about it? Will you leave, forget the sound of the voice that was in your ears for a few minutes? Or, will you do something about it? This missionary conference ought to, totally change your life. Not because I'm here, or the other speakers are here, but because you, have met with God, and you've heard God speak to your heart. You've said, Lord I want my life to count for Christ.

We were on our way back from Africa, when our ship, went from Alexandria Egypt to Pariah Greece, and we were to be there, taking on some cargo for two or three days. So, we arranged a trip to go down through Athens, and the place we ended up, the last place we saw was the coliseum, where the original Olympia games had been held. Our guild (a limousine driver), had gotten this group from the ship, and taking them. Our guild, had been a taxi driver in Chicago, and he spoke inimitable English, and we enjoyed it, him. He adds a very interesting lie, maybe untrue, but interesting comments about Athens too. I don't know how much he knew about history, but he was an exciting guild. We were standing there in this refurbished coliseum (the Natchez's had done it when the reoccupied Greece. They'd gone and got the marble, and fitted it out again), and I said to the guild, where was the bema? "Oh, (he said) you speak Greek". I said, no I don't speak Greek. "You said Bema, that's Greek". I know it's Greek. "Well, why do you say Bema?". Because, for many, many years I've



been expecting to stand before the Bema. He said, "You can't. It isn't here anymore. When they remade this they didn't put the Bema in there". I said, what was it? "Well, (he said) it was a balcony where the judges sit, and where they would bring the people that had one. they'd come up on some steps, and the judges at the bema would give them a crown of laurel leaves". Can you imagine these fellows going out, and getting killed, or someone trying to kill them, and all they got were when they finished was laurel leaves?

It faded away, and I had a vision. Now, I don't know whether I was awake, whether I was asleep, whether I saw it, or whether I imagined it, and I don't care. It was more real than anything that was around me. I saw a vast temple on a high hill, and then in a moment, I was in a line of people going into great doors at that temple, and in another moment, I was up to the door, and a servant (probably an angel) reached over, and brought a package, and said, "Here take this". I pick the package up. It wasn't large, and it wasn't heavy. I carried it with me through the doors, and there I saw the Lamb seated upon the throne. More glorious than anything that I had ever been written, or painted of Him, and in that moment, I knew what it was. I was to appear before Him, and there in my hand, was my life, and my works were going to be tried whether good or bad whether wood, hay, or stubble, or gold, silver, or precious stone.

Well, I moved, and I was next. A servant said, give me the package, and I did. There was a furnace there at the foot of the , where the Lord was seated, and a flame that burned with nothing to fuel it, and my package was put in there, and the flame covered it. A moment later, the servant picked up a tool. I didn't see the tool until later. After, I heard it grading on the furnace, and then I heard the voice of the servant say, stretch out your hands. I reached out my hand to take a crown, and the voice said, cup your hands. A little shovel with a cover on it was put over my cupped hands, and the light contents from within slid out into my palms, and when I brought it around in front of me and looked, all I had was a handful of ashes. Ashes.

Oh, I'd served. I'd given my food to feed the poor, my money to help the lost. I'd given my body to be burned. I'd been a missionary. I had the wrong motives, the wrong attitudes, the wrong relationship, wrong resources. What I'd done, so much of what I'd done, I'd done to be seen. I dropped my hands, and I looked at the Lord, and the look in His eye made me weep. I'd nothing to give Him from my life, and I knew that I would have wept, perhaps for eternity. I was there, but my life had been wasted, and I followed my filtering ashes down, and I found I was standing in a carpet of ashes. He looked at me, he dried my tears by that look of tender love and forgiveness, and I turned, and the next thing I heard was, "Mister! Hurry, hurry, we're waiting for you. What are you standing there for?", and I walked out to the Limousine shocked. I suppose there have been very few days, that I haven't thought about that, and ask the

Lord to help me so to live, and to minister, that in that day there will be something at lay at His nail pierced feet. That, it won't be just a handful of ashes, a wasted life, and wasted time, and opportunity, and privilege, and neglected truth.

You say you want a crown? What are you going to do? Strut around heaven with a crown? No, no I am not that way. God has to take the strut out of you if you're going to make it to haven. I found out what to do with crowns, and ever since then I want one, cause I found that the four and twenty elders, cast their crowns at His feet, and I want something with which to say, thank you Lord for saving my soul. Thank you Lord, fro making me whole. Thank you Lord, for giving to me, thy great salvation so full, so free. Shall we pray?

Father, Jesus, we're here today in this first annual missionary conference. The potential within this room, for Thy cause is enormous. We can't calculate what it would be, if everyone here would with Paul say, I'm crucified with Christ, Christ liveth in me. We're asking that there will be serious business done with thee today. That men and women, who have played the Christian life, will begin to realize what a marvelous privilege it is to be called the children of God, and who played a Christian work in service, will decide now is a time to get serious with the Lord. Father, we pray for the young people, who have their whole lives to give to thee. The older people that have their experience, their judgment, their wisdom of the years to give to thee, to guild and help the young people. Lord, just the potential here is so enormous, and oh how we ask, that the Lamb that was slain, might through this congregation and this people, receive the reward for His suffering. In Jesus Christ's name. Amen.