

# Harry & Cindy Reeder

## A Biographical Sketch

Ike Reeder

Harry and Cindy Reeder were both born in 1948 in Charlotte, North Carolina. Harry (or “Ike” as he was known until his early 20s), was born Harry Lloyd Reeder III to Harry L. Reeder, Jr. and Evelyn Sheehan Reeder, born in Augusta, Georgia, and Charlotte, North Carolina, respectively. Cindy Reeder was born to Carl and Clara Miller, from Pennsylvania and South Dakota, respectively. Harry’s father was in baseball, so by 7th grade, Harry, had lived in ten different states from North Carolina to Texas. Cindy grew up in the same house on Olinda Ln. from 1st grade until college.

Ike’s parents were both Christians and had given their lives to Jesus at a Billy Graham rally when they were nineteen years old, walking down the aisle together, carrying their first-born son, Ike. Harry Jr. had dropped out of high school to join the Marines in 1945 at the tail end of World War Two and his girlfriend Evelyn had also dropped out to follow him to Paris Island. After his discharge, he returned to Charlotte with a wife who was soon to be a mother and played football for his final year at Harding High School. They were members of a local Christian Missionary Alliance Church and faithful attendees, taking their son, Ike, and his sister Vicky, four years his junior, to church consistently.

Despite that faithfulness, Harry, Jr. traveled increasingly for work in minor league baseball and Ike began to drift away from Christ's teaching, abandoning it entirely by the time he was a student at East Mecklenburg High School. From there, he went on to East Carolina University in Greenville, South Carolina, to play baseball and golf. After two fruitless and unproductive years, he was asked to leave the school for poor academic performance, lack of attendance, and disciplinary problems. Ike returned home to Charlotte working several different jobs that summer.

Cindy grew up in a Baptist home: her mother hailed from the Mennonites in Bridgewater, South Dakota and her father from the Lutherans in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Carl had been a baseball sensation growing up and, in 1941, was drafted into the major leagues by the Washington Senators. However, within a few short months, he was drafted into service for World War Two and would spend the entire war stationed in Alaska with other prop players, such as Ted Williams. Upon being released in 1945, he traveled back to Washington D.C. to try to pick up his baseball career and instead found a wife—Clara Hofer. His career in the majors finished, and he and Clara moved to Charlotte, North Carolina in 1947 so Carl could begin a career playing in what was known as the “Textile Leagues”—one of the many regional minor leagues up and down the East Coast. Carl played with any number of teams, while Clara stayed in Charlotte, eventually working for Douglas Aircraft first and then the Selective Service. Carl eventually retired from baseball and went to work for the tax office, and they raised their two daughters—Cindy and Linda. Like Harry, Cindy graduated from high school in 1966. Cindy graduated from Garinger High School and left Charlotte to go to Mars Hill College (now University) for her freshman year and sophomore year in the mountains of northwest North Carolina. In her senior year of high school, Cindy got a job working at Sears, Co. to help defray the cost of a private college.

Unbeknownst to Cindy, in the summer of 1967, she was moved from working in records to ladies' sportswear, where her new boss happened to be a woman by the name of Evelyn Reeder.

Evelyn had, at that time, worked for Sears for over a decade. In the summer of 1968, Evelyn's favorite past time was asking her son, Ike, to come pick her up from work and then identifying young women who worked for her also in need of a ride home, trying to get her son to "settle down" and give up his partying ways. This would backfire one night in the middle of the summer when she asked him to take one young lady home but found out another young lady had caught Ike's eye—it was Cindy. So, Harry and Cindy met and shortly thereafter he asked her out. She said yes, and they began dating in the summer of 1968.

Because Cindy was from a Christian home and profoundly serious about her faith, Ike prevaricated about his relationship with Christ. He was able to say with some degree of honesty that he had gone forward to give his life to Jesus because in the Christian Missionary Alliance church he had done that multiple times. Having grown up in a Christian home, he knew what needed to be said to convince her he was a Christian. In the Fall of 1968, Ike remained in Charlotte and worked with Kinney Shoes, while Cindy went to Chapel Hill. That would only last for one semester, as when Cindy came home for Thanksgiving, Ike proposed, and they were married on January 26, 1969, in Charlotte.

After their wedding, Cindy came back to Charlotte from UNC-Chapel Hill to finish her college studies at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte, and live as a married woman. Ike's agreement with Carl and Clara was that he could marry their daughter, but only if he promised to work and pay to put her through college. Ike continued to work, while Cindy studied at UNCC in the spring of 1969. However, once married, Ike's façade of faith began to wash away. By the late summer, Ike and Cindy were not doing well. Ike was back to his old ways and out with friends engaging in activities that were characteristic of the embedded sin that had plagued his teenage years—drinking, smoking, and gambling. Finally, at their wits' end, with their marriage on the rocks, Ike decided to return to church with Cindy. But he did not want to go to his family church or her family church, so they found a small Presbyterian church—Faith Presbyterian—and decided to

visit. On their first visit, a man overheard Ike say his name, "Ike Reeder." "You're not Ike Reeder," he said. "I played high school football with Ike Reeder." The man was Harold Jones, and he was an elder at Faith Presbyterian. Eventually, Harold figured out that Ike as a baby had been at the Shrine Bowl, when Harold and Harry, Jr. had both played together at Harding High School. At that moment, Harold decided he would be God's hound of heaven and pursue Ike with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Over the Fall of 1969, Ike and Cindy also became friends with the Elliot family: Jim and Imogene and their four daughters. For some reason, the four girls had taken a shine to Ike and Cindy. So it was with great sorrow that, on Christmas Day, 1969, Ike got a phone call from Harold Jones telling them that Imogene Elliot had collapsed at the family Christmas table and died that evening of a medical condition. The Elliot girls had asked if Ike and Cindy could come over and take care of them. Over the next few days, Ike and Cindy were around the family helping with the girls constantly. Finally, the funeral service was held, and Ike went back to the Elliot home with close family friends (Cindy being sick with the flu). From there, one by one people left and only family and a few very close friends remained.

Before leaving, Ike went to speak with Jim, Imogene's husband. After asking him if he could help in any way, Mr. Elliot pulled Ike aside and told him: "Ike, I appreciate the offer. I'm going to miss my wife. We've been together since we were fourteen years old. But I know she's in heaven. I know that all things aren't good, but I believe that God promises us that all things work together for the good of those who are in Jesus and for His glory. If Imogene was standing here right now, she'd only want to ask you one question: do you know Jesus personally and trust Him for your salvation?" Ike couldn't comprehend this, and so he walked over to a side room to try to process it. Harold Jones found him there and explained what the assurance of salvation meant and how to be right with God. It was in that small side room that Ike knelt and gave his life to Christ. As he was walking out of the room, he turned back in and prayed again: "God, if you've got anything

specific you want me to do, just let me know and I'll do it for you." Little did he know how God would answer that prayer!

After his conversion, Ike became the youth director of the church. Then, through a series of events, after Cindy graduated from UNCC and their first daughter, Jennifer, was born in 1971, Ike found himself studying at Covenant College in Chattanooga, Tennessee, having felt called to ministry in the early Fall of 1970 in the middle of a tobacco field in Greenville, North Carolina. Dick Tevebaugh, the pastor of Faith Presbyterian, and Dr. Robert Rayburn, the President of Covenant Theological Seminary and Covenant College, convinced Ike that transferring to Covenant would be the next step in his journey to becoming a pastor. After completing his studies at Covenant College in 1974, a bible study Ike had been leading in Lookout Valley, Tennessee, grew to become a church plant, and eventually a church with a membership of around three hundred.

Convinced of the doctrines of the Reformed faith and drawn to the young Presbyterian Church in America denomination, Ike and Cindy left Chattanooga for Miami, Florida so he (now called "Harry") could become an intern at Pinelands Presbyterian Church and attend an extension of Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, the Florida Institute for Theological Training (FITT) with their three children—Jennifer (1971), Harry IV "Ikie" (1975), and Abigail (1976). Unbeknownst to Harry and Cindy, the senior pastor of Pinelands was stepping down and a former pastor declared that "the mark of Satan" was on the doors of Pinelands Presbyterian Church. Harry went from being an "intern" to being an "interim" student supply pastor almost overnight. Over the next three years (1980–1983), Harry completed his studies at Westminster Theological Seminary (MDiv), was ordained in the Presbyterian Church in America, and oversaw God's work at Pinelands, seeing it grow from a handful of people to a vibrant, Gospel-centered, multi-ethnic church of around three hundred members.

It was at this time that Dr. Frank Barker and Rev. Terry Gyger, senior pastor of Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Birmingham,

Alabama, and the Director of Mission to North America, respectively, contacted Harry to see if he would be willing to plant a church or replant a church that had made an effort to plant but had not succeeded: Alexander Road Presbyterian Church. After much prayer and consideration, Harry and Cindy decided God was calling them both back to their hometown of Charlotte.

Christ Covenant Church, the replant of Alexander Road Presbyterian Church, welcomed its new pastor in February of 1983. Early during this period, the church had advertised that Harry would be sharing his testimony. At the time, the church had thirty-six members and met in a double-wide trailer. The trailer had three large weight-bearing pillars in the middle of the room used for worship. As Harry shared his story to a packed house, he noticed that one young woman was almost hiding behind one of the pillars and avoiding his eye contact, especially as Harry told the story of Imogene's death and his conversation with Mr. Elliot. After the service was over, she got up and headed straight for the door. As Harry hurried to catch her before she left, she turned around to see him coming towards her and Harry saw that tears were streaming from her eyes. Harry asked her if she was OK and she said: "You don't recognize me, do you? I'm one of the four little girls! One of the Elliot girls that you and Cindy used to babysit! I heard you were here and sharing your testimony, so I had to come and hear you. I haven't been to a church in over a decade. I've been so angry at God for taking my Momma away from me and over and over again I've told him—'God, if you can show me just one good thing that's come from my mother's death, I'll come back to you.' But I haven't seen anything until now. I want to come back to Jesus!" The woman was Jane Elliot, one of the four sisters. Eventually, God used the ministry of Christ Covenant to bring all four sisters back to a right relationship with God.

In the meantime, Harry's father, Harry, Jr., had completely walked away from the Lord and his remaining three children, Harry's siblings—Vicki, Amy, and Beth—and his wife, Evelyn, through divorce. Through the continued ministry of Christ Covenant, Harry, Jr. came back to a right relationship with the

Lord and even remarried Eveyln, with a service conducted by their own son, Harry III.

Eventually, God worked through Harry's ministry at Christ Covenant to grow the church from thirty-six core members in 1983 to over three thousand individuals in regular attendance and over two thousand five hundred members by 1999. It was during these years that Harry launched the Embers to a Flame Conference on Church Revitalization. In 1999, Harry and Cindy were issued a call from Briarwood Presbyterian Church to follow Dr. Frank Barker, one of the Founding Fathers of the PCA. Briarwood had been the church that called Harry to go and plant Christ Covenant and they were now calling for him to come succeed Dr. Barker. Discerning this as God's leading, Harry and Cindy moved to Briarwood Presbyterian. Their eldest daughter Jennifer was then living in Alaska; Ike (Harry IV) was living in Vienna, Austria; and Abigail had just finished college at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina.

Harry became the Senior Pastor of Briarwood Presbyterian Church in 1999, bringing with him the Embers to a Flame Ministry. Shortly after that, he completed his Doctor of Ministry degree from RTS Charlotte. In following Dr. Barker, Harry made a conscious decision to learn how to follow great men in ministry. Dr. Barker remained as Senior Pastor Emeritus of Briarwood and the chairman of the Birmingham Theological Seminary board and the Barker family remained at Briarwood for the entirety of Dr. Barker's retiring ministry and all of Harry's ministry—a testimony to the respect and relationship between the two men.

Over those twenty-three years, Briarwood maintained its emphasis on global missions, evangelism, and church planting, and added church revitalization and leadership training to its essential ministries list. Briarwood helped plant multiple churches in Birmingham, in America, and around the world, and provided coaches for countless church revitalization projects. Ministry themes over the years included "Lifestyle Stewardship," "Everyone Evangelizing Everywhere," "For Coming Generations,"

and “Revival!” among many others. Harry helped lead Briarwood through an economic recession and a global pandemic, turning each into an opportunity for Christians to think about “For what purpose has God called me to this time and for this season?” Over those years he launched a podcast (“Today in Perspective”), a daily audio devotional guide (“Fresh Bread”), a conversational podcast series that lasted for over a decade (“Conversations with Harry”), an irregular blog with thoughts and musings, and two books (*Embers to a Flame*<sup>1</sup> and *3D Leadership*). In addition, he worked with the Gospel Reformation Network in the PCA, the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, and Ligonier Ministries as a writer and speaker. He was on the board of Westminster Theological Seminary and Birmingham Theological Seminary, teaching for both schools and teaching occasionally for Reformed Theological Seminary.

Dr. Reeder passed away on May 18, 2023 from a car accident, likely caused by a heart attack while driving. He left behind on this mortal plain his wife, Cindy Reeder; his three children, Jennifer (Philip) Toomer-Hay, Ike (Angie) Reeder, and Abigail (Ryan) Leib; his sister, Beth (Robert) Thomas; and a host of grandchildren and nephews and nieces. He also left behind thousands upon thousands of spiritual brothers and sisters and spiritual children whom he fathered in ministry with a shepherd's heart, a king's vision, a priest's intercession, and a prophet's passion for the truth.

---

1. Harry L. Reeder III, *From Embers to a Flame: How God Can Revitalize Your Church* (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2008).



1.

# On Mission, On Message, In Ministry

## The Reeder Vision

George Grant

*The 'first things' of the church are actually the lifelines of the church: Christ-centered, Gospel-driven ministry, personal spiritual formation, the ministry of prayer, the ministry of the Word, Biblical mission and vision, leadership multiplication and mobilization, small group disciple-making and a great commitment to the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.<sup>1</sup>*

Harry Reeder

It has been said of Isaac Watts, the hymn writer and successor to John Owen at London's Mark Lane Chapel, that his native tongue was iambic pentameter. From earliest childhood to aged maturity, he naturally spoke in rhymes and verse. It may

---

1. Harry Reeder, "Interview with Dr. Harry Reeder (Part 2)," Westminster Theological Seminary, April 13, 2013, YouTube Video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-uFNXgcpdJ4&list=UUquovPPE8bMQsdI6RZXiDYg&index=415>.

likewise be said of Harry Reeder that his native tongue was the alliterative adage. Memorable maxims, engaging epigrams, and apt aphorisms peppered his discourses effortlessly. He naturally spoke in witticisms, saws, and apothegms.

A host of his iconic sayings remain indelibly etched in the hearts and minds of the tens of thousands who benefited from his ministry over the years:

Never take counsel from your fears.

Salvation is free but discipleship costs.

The Promise Maker gets it done through His Son, the Promise Keeper.

The world is not your measuring stick, it's your mission field. If I didn't cause it, can't cure it, or can't control it, I ought to stop worrying about it.

Occasionally, the best action is no action.

Satan's three schemes are Infiltration, Imitation, and Intimidation.

Leadership revolves around Character, Competency, and then Content.

Under the radar is a beautiful place to be.

We are called to be the light of the world, not the light of the church.

The Gospel is the Foundation, the Formation, and the Motivation of the Christian life.

We want a Great Commission church with a Great Commandment culture.

Motivation and mission eventually determine the message.

The Gospel must be the priority, the parameter, and the preeminent point of our ministry.

The Gospel of salvation by grace is the foundation, formation, and motivation for a first love church.

These were not merely clever oratorical quips; they were the embodiment of Reeder’s indefatigable vision for pastoral care and communication; they were anchors for his theological convictions; they were arrows to send his exhortations straight and true to hearts and minds. As well as anyone since perhaps the time of Charles Simeon, Thomas Chalmers, and C.H. Spurgeon, he was powerfully able to match rhetorical means with ministerial ends.

But of all his maxims, there was one that he reiterated time and again, one that succinctly captured his life purpose, one that summarized his expansive vision for a prayer-drenched, Gospel-focused, love-marked, Christ-centered, evangelistically-engaged calling: *On Mission, On Message, In Ministry*.<sup>2</sup>

In a very real sense, this epigrammatic declaration defined Harry Reeder and—he would argue—it ought to define every believer, every family, and every church. All the abiding principles that he taught—Biblical preaching, church vitality, shepherding the flock, replicating leaders, and personal and family spiritual formation—emanated from this idea.

## On Mission

“Our mission,” Reeder asserted, “is very narrow: we are to make disciples.”<sup>3</sup> And again, “The Great Commission is our great calling.”<sup>4</sup> God is sovereign over all. As David puts it, “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world and all who live in it” (Ps. 24:1). Despite the disruption of the Fall, the Lord’s authority remains unabated, uninterrupted, and unimpeded. There is “nothing outside His sovereign control” (Heb. 2:8). He rules and reigns from His “throne on high” (Ps. 11:4) for His is “an everlasting dominion” (Dan. 4:3).

---

2. For just one example, see: “Conversations with Harry Reeder and Bruce Stallings, Part Twenty Seven,” Briarwood Presbyterian Church, September 27, 2020, [https://briarwood.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/157960\\_9-27\\_20\\_pm.pdf](https://briarwood.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/157960_9-27_20_pm.pdf).

3. Harry Reeder, “Reflecting on 50 Years in the PCA,” Gospel Reformation Network, May 16, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZyJngy2nnE>.

4. Ibid.

Simultaneously, though, the Lord graciously mobilizes and deputizes His people to affirm His purposes at all times in all places. He commissions us to exercise careful stewardship over His creation. We are to be more than just salt, preserving; we are to be light, reclaiming (Matt. 5:13-16). Justice, mercy, and humility, grace, courage, and kindness, faith, hope, and love: these are among the many virtues we are called to joyfully manifest before a lost and dying world.

This is the crux of the Biblical worldview. It is what Christ dramatically underscored in His final instructions to His disciples in the Great Commission. He said,

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I will be with you always, to the very end of the age (Matt. 28:18-20).

All authority in heaven is His, of course. The heights and the depths, the angels and the principalities, are under His providential rule. But all authority on earth is His as well. Man and creature, as well as every invention and institution, are under His sovereign prerogative. There are no neutral areas in the cosmos that escape the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ (Col. 1:17).

On this basis then, the Great Commission calls upon believers to do the work of extending Christ's Kingdom, making disciples in all nations by going, baptizing, and teaching. This mandate is the essence of the New Covenant which is but an extension of the Old Covenant: go and begin the process of restoring every broken thing in heaven and on earth for His Name's sake (Gen. 1:28). We are called to be a part of that which will, in the fullness of time, "bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one Head, even Christ" (Eph. 1:10).

This is the thrust of the Great Commission. It is the spiritual, emotional, and cultural mandate to bring light into the darkness, to win a fallen world for Jesus. And though we know that only Christ Himself can fulfill that mandate in its entirety at the

close of human history, our duty is but to trust and obey by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. We are to “occupy until He comes” (Luke 19:13).

Commenting on this comprehensive mission, Charles Haddon Spurgeon said:

There are certain pious moderns who will not allow the preacher to speak upon anything but those doctrinal statements concerning the way of salvation which are known as ‘the Gospel.’ We do not stand in awe of such criticism, for we clearly perceive that our Lord Jesus Christ himself would very frequently have come under it. Read the Sermon on the Mount and judge whether certain among the pious would be content to hear the like of it preached to them. Indeed, they would condemn it as containing very little Gospel and too much good works. They would condemn it as containing all too much of the legal. But we must never let be forgotten Christ’s emphasis: the law must be preached, for what the law demands of us, the Gospel produces in us, else ours is no Gospel at all.<sup>5</sup>

A biblical worldview, as Spurgeon asserts, embraces the comprehensive implications of the Great Commission. It applies Scripture to every area of life and godliness. The salvation of souls is the immediate aim of the Great Commission. But the more ultimate aim is the promotion of the glory of the Triune God (Rom. 16:25-27). We must have a passion for souls (2 Cor. 5:11). We must take every opportunity (Col. 4:5), expend every energy (2 Cor. 6:4-10), and risk every expense (Acts 4:29), beseeching men to be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:20). But individualistic redemption is not the do-all and end-all of the Great Commission. Our evangelism must include sociology as well as salvation; it must include a new social order as well as a new birth; it must include reform and redemption, culture and conversion, a reformation as well as a regeneration. Read the sermons of the great evangelists through the ages and you will immediately see that kind of balance—they invariably begin by addressing the

---

5. C. H. Spurgeon as quoted in, Harold Latternic, *Spurgeon and Society* (London: New Baptist Union, 1981), p. 33.

grave injustices of the day, proceed to tender examples of human need, and conclude with a vital appeal to reconcile with Christ.

This principle runs all through the Bible. God's redemptive work involves making "all things new" (2 Cor. 5:17). We are to "make disciples," not merely converts. As Francis Schaeffer once said:

If Christ is indeed Lord, He must be Lord of all of life—in spiritual matters, of course, but just as much across the whole spectrum of life, including intellectual matters and the areas of culture, law, and government.<sup>6</sup>

And again:

Evangelism is primary, but it is not the end of our work and indeed cannot be separated from the rest of the Christian life. We must acknowledge and then act upon the fact that if Christ is our Savior, He is also our Lord in all of life. He is our Lord not just in the religious things and not just in cultural things such as the arts and music, but in our intellectual lives, and in business, and in our relation to society, and in our attitude toward the moral breakdown of our culture.<sup>7</sup>

The Great Commission, therefore, necessarily means we must "go" into the world and not merely invite the world to "come." Harry Reeder explained,

The Greek text literally reads, 'As you are going, make disciples.' The participial form of the verb 'go' assumes that believers will be going out into the world, and the point is that while we are going, we should be making disciples. ... The church should be going. We are not waiting for the seekers to come—we are going, like Jesus, 'to seek and save the lost.'<sup>8</sup>

But that presents something of a perplexing paradox. We know, for instance, that the world is only a temporary dwelling place. It is "passing away" (1 John 2:17) and we are here but for a little while as "aliens and sojourners" (Acts 7:6). Because we are a part "of God's household" (Eph. 2:19), our true "citizenship is in

---

6. Francis Schaeffer, *The Great Evangelical Disaster* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1984), p. 11.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

8. Harry Reeder, *From Embers*, p. 173.

heaven” (Phil. 3:20). Our affections are naturally “set on things above” (Col. 3:2).

In addition, the world is filled with “dangers, toils, and snares” (Jer. 18:22). In tandem with “the flesh and the devil,” it “makes war” on the saints (John 15:18). “All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life are not of the Father” (1 John 2:16). The world “cannot receive the Spirit of Truth” because “the cares of this world choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful” (Matt. 8:22).

Thankfully, Christ “overcame the world” (John 16:33) and then “chose us out of the world” (John 15:19). Thus, we are not to be “conformed to the world” (Rom. 12:2), neither are we to “love the world” (1 John 2:15) because “Christ gave Himself for us, that He might deliver us from this present evil world” (Gal. 1:4). Though we once “walked according to the course of the world” (Eph. 2:2), now we are to keep ourselves “unspotted by the world” (Jas. 1:27). Indeed, “friendship with the world is enmity with God” so that whoever is “a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (Jas. 4:4).

Not surprisingly then, warnings against worldliness, carnal mindedness, and earthly attachments dominate Biblical ethics. But, therein lies the paradox. We must continue to live in the world. We must be “in” it but we are not to be “of” it. And that is no easy feat. As John Calvin wrote, “Nothing is more difficult than to forsake all carnal thoughts, to subdue and renounce our false appetites, and to devote ourselves to God and our brethren, and to live the life of angels in a world of corruption.”<sup>9</sup>

To make matters even more complex, we not only have to live in this dangerous fallen world, but we have to work in it (1 Thess. 4:11), serve in it (Luke 22:6), and minister in it (2 Tim. 4:5). We have been appointed ambassadors to it (2 Cor. 5:20), priests for it (1 Pet. 2:9), and witnesses in it (Matt. 24:14). We even have to go to “the uttermost parts” of it (Acts 1:8), offering “a good confession of the eternal life” to which we were called (1 Tim. 6:12).

---

9. John Calvin, *The Golden Booklet of the Christian Life*, trans. Henry Van Andel, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1952), p. 26.

The reason for this seemingly contradictory state of affairs—enmity with the world on the one hand, responsibility to it on the other—is simply that “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16). Though the world is “in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19) and “knows not God, neither the children of God” (1 Cor. 1:21), God is “in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself” (2 Cor. 5:19). Jesus is “the light of the world” (John 1:12). He is the “savior of the world” (John 4:14). He is the “lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Indeed, He was made “the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world” (1 John 2:2). Through Christ “all things are reconciled to the Father” (Col. 1:20) so that finally “the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ” (Rev. 11:15).

The Great Commission necessitates cognizance of both perspectives of the world—treating them with equal weight. We must be engaged in the world and with the worldly. We must be unengaged in their carnal worldliness. We must somehow correlate eternal spiritual concerns with temporal physical concerns. We must coalesce heavenly hope and earthly life. We must coordinate heart-felt faith and down-to-earth practice. By vitally connecting the head with the hand with the heart, by placing emphasis on hard-hitting issues, gentle human compassion, deep and abiding relationships, and unflinching holiness, and by establishing the priorities of cultural, interpersonal, and devotional integrity, the high ideals of a Biblical worldview are happily instituted by the grace of God.

That’s what it means to be “On Mission.” Thus, Harry Reeder declared, “No Bible passage should inform our mission and shape our vision, more than the Great Commission.”<sup>10</sup>

## On Message

According to Reeder, “The Gospel-framed-and-wrapped-ministry presents a sufficient Christ by means of a sufficient Word.”<sup>11</sup>

---

10. Reeder, *From Embers*, p. 167.

11. Reeder, “Reflecting on 50 Years in the PCA.”