

# The Great Leading

by Paris Reidhead

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*The sermon emphasizes our identification with Christ and the practical implications it has on our daily lives as believers.*

**Duration:** 36:20

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:9, Romans 12:1, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Ephesians 5:18, Philippians 4:7, Colossians 3:15

**Topics:** "Christian Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the opportunity he was given to become the Secretary of the Four Missions Fellowship. He emphasizes the importance of prayer and seeking God's guidance before making decisions. The speaker then references Colossians 3:1-15, highlighting the concept of being risen with Christ and the practical implications of this truth. He encourages the audience to put on humbleness of mind and to seek the things that are above. The sermon emphasizes the need for believers to live out their identification with Christ in their daily lives.

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## Transcript

Will you turn please to Colossians, the third chapter, the portion that was read before us? I'd like to have you notice the first verses in this chapter. Actually, our text is the 15th verse, but we must understand that in the scripture there is always a context, and the context is extremely important. If ye then be risen with Christ, but you see we've been talking about identification in these services past, and it's a rule of literature that if you have one item in a known series, the other items are also there by implication.

So we could read this this way, if ye then be crucified with Christ, and buried with Christ, and quickened with Christ, and raised with Christ, and seated with Christ in the heavenlies, if ye then be risen with him, all of those elements are there, and it takes us back to what we've been seeing Sunday by Sunday, that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for us, in our place, in our stead, to vindicate the holiness of God, to satisfy the righteousness of God, and the justice of God, and make it possible for God to pardon us, forgive us, and receive us unto himself as his own children. But not only did the Lord Jesus die on the cross for us, that would satisfy all the things we've done, but our problem was not only what we had done, but it's what we are. And so in addition to dying on the cross for us, God saw his son as though his son were you and me.

And I've tried to help you with that by suggesting that you consider that there were two people on the cross, Christ on the front of it, dying for you, but since he was your representative, dying your death, it is as though looking down on the scene from where God the Father saw it, he would see two people there on the cross, Christ on the front of it, dying for you, and you on the back of it, dying with him. Well, the scripture says that, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, or that the power of sin in our life might be annulled. Now that's what Paul is talking about to the church at Colossae.

That's what he's telling the people there. He is saying to them that since it's a fact, because this if is not a supposition if, this if is much stronger than that in the original. It could better be translated, and is in some versions, since you are risen with Christ.

But again, I say, put all of it in there. Since you are crucified with Christ, and buried with Christ, and quickened with Christ, and raised with Christ, and seated with him, then do something about it. It's not just a theory that we embrace, not just theology, but it has very practical implications.

And so he says, since this is true, then you are to do something about it. This is fact. This is history.

The day Christ died for you, you died with him. Now, based on that fact, based on that history, you are to do several things. First, you are to seek those things which are above.

You're seated with Christ. Get acquainted with what it means to be seated with Christ in the heavens. What are the implications of it? What are the privileges? What are the responsibilities? That's what it means to seek those things that are above.

If you are told that you have received an inheritance from a wealthy relative that you barely knew, but you've been told by the lawyer, the law firm, and the court that you're a residual legatee of a very vast fortune, don't you think you would have interest enough to find out about it? I think so. I think there just might be on your heart a little bit of curiosity. How much did old Uncle What's-His-Name leave me? And where is it? In what form is it? How can I get it? How can I use it? You would seek those things that are associated with your inheritance.

And that's all that the apostle is saying. Since you've been crucified with Christ and buried with him and quickened with him and raised with him and seated with him, seek those things that are above. Seek to get acquainted with all the privileges and responsibilities and opportunities that are yours because of this relationship with Christ.

Then he went ahead and said, set your affection on things about. The things you feel deeply about are the things that you think about. And what he's asking you to do then is not only to seek those things that are above, but because of your focus on them, let your emotions be focused around the privileges and the opportunities and the responsibilities that are yours in your relationship with Christ, in this identification with Christ.

For he says, you are dead. That's historical. The day Christ died for you, you died with him.

You don't have to think dead or play dead or feel dead or try to act dead. It's history. You're either married or you aren't married this morning.

It's history. And you're either here or you're not here. That's history.

And if you're here and hearing my voice, then said he, this is part of your history. You are dead. You are crucified with Christ and you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God, regardless of how you feel.

Now, there are certain things you're going to do because of this. You're crucified with him and buried with him. And therefore, there are some things that you are to do in verse 5. Mortify.

Mortify means kill or to count as killed or to reckon as killed or dead. Mortify. Therefore, count as dead your members which are upon the earth.

Fornication, that's immorality on the mental level. Uncleaness, that's in speech. Inordinate affection, evil desire, covetousness, which is idolatry.

For which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience. You also walked in them sometime when you lived in them. But because you are crucified with Christ and buried with him, here's the next responsibility.

Put off. You put it off. Anger and wrath and malice and blasphemy and filthy communication out of your mouth.

Have you ever heard anyone say, you know, I have this terrible, wrathful feeling and I'm just praying God will take it away. Well, the scripture doesn't say pray that God will take it away. It says put it off.

Put it off. Put off anger. Put off wrath.

Put off malice and blasphemy and filthy speech out of your mouth. Lie not one to another. See, you have put off the old man with his day.

There's some things you should pray about. But I'll tell you, it's one of the greatest waste of time in the world is to ask God to do what he told you to do. Because he's going to outweigh you.

And when you find out that God said you do it, don't ask God to do it because that's just a sheer waste of time. He said put off anger, then you put it off. How do you put it off? Father, the part of me that gets angry is the part that died the day Christ died and just now I reckon myself dead to it.

That's how you put it off. The moment it occurs, you deal with it in the way the scripture has prescribed. And then he says put on, put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.

And you are to put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, hearts of mercies. Put on kindness. Don't pray for kindness.

Put it on. And humbleness of mind. And meekness.

Don't pray for patience. Put it on. You pray for it and you force God to do something about it.

His treatment isn't at all pleasant. He said tribulation worketh patience. If you won't put it on, then you force him to do something about it.

But I recommend on the basis of costly experience that it's not the wise way to go because he's desirous of your being humble and meek and kind and he has told you to put it on. But if you refuse to put it on and you insist on praying about it, then very well, he's willing to go to plan B. And plan B is to bring situations

into your life which are going to do for you what you refuse to do for yourself and the more painless and the faster and the more effective and God's first plan for you. So he said put on humbleness of mind.

Well, how do you do it? How do you put on humbleness of mind? Well, if you realize that when God looked at you and saw you and wanted to bring you out of death into life and he made an inventory of you and an analysis of you and me, for I speak of myself as well as you of us, there wasn't anything in the world he could do for us but take us to the cross. When God saw me, it was such a terrible mixture, such an unholy mixture that the only thing he could do was to take it out to the cross and he did it in the person of his son. And the cross was a refuge pit, if you please, of Jerusalem.

It was a place where the offscouring of the Roman Empire was taken and that's in effect what God said about me. And so he dealt with me in the person of his son and since I was there in his son, then I have to accept the judgment that God gave of me and worked out in his son, the Lord Jesus Christ. So the Lord Jesus died for me.

But not only that, he died as me, so in that sense it was that I died with him. Now, humbleness of mind. What do we have to be proud of? Well, the opposite of humbleness of mind is pride.

Well, there's several kinds of pride, aren't there? There's racial pride and pride that wraps itself up and says, thank God I'm not like other people are. But I'll tell you, if you want to get that pride thing dealt with, you go out and stand in front of the Lord Jesus Christ hanging on the cross of Calvary and remember that he's there for you. And when God saw you, the only thing he could decide to do with you was to let you be slain on a cross in the person of his son.

And it has an amazing way of bringing humbleness of mind to realize what it cost. I think of that time when D.L. Moody was preaching in England. He gave the invitation at the end of the service and the altar was filled in this Anglican church and after a while, one of the restroom and came and said, Mr. Moody, lady so-and-so is here and she'd like to speak to you.

And so he went over and there she was and she said, Mr. Moody, I've been deeply affected by your sermon and the sermons I've heard on other days and I would like very much to go to the altar. But Mr. Moody, this isn't America. We are in England and things are done a bit differently here.

You see that man in the very center of the altar? That's my coachman. And it wouldn't be seemly in England for me, the lady of the manor, to kneel at the same altar at the same time with my coachman. What can I do, Mr. Moody? Can you help me? What can I do? And he looked at her and said, Madam, you can go to hell.

Why, Mr. Moody, yes, if your pride is so great that you can't kneel at the same altar with your coachman and ask God to forgive you, then that's all that even God can find for you. There's nothing else that even he can do. He's done everything he can.

She said, I see. She went over and she said to the person next to her coachman, please move over and leave me room. And she knelt down and she heard her coachman sobbing out his sin and asking forgiveness and then praising God that he had peace, that he passed from death to life.

And she said, now, Harry, that he saved you, pray for me. He'll save me too. But you see, humbleness of mind came about because she'd seen what it cost to redeem her.

And so he said, put on humbleness of mind and put on kindness and put on mercies and longsuffering and forbearing one another. There's only one way you can do it, because Christ forgave you, you can forgive others. And above all these things, put on love.

So we're talking about a relationship. That's the implications of this union with Christ. This commitment to present our bodies a living sacrifice and invite the Lord Jesus Christ to live in us his life, unhindered, unhampered, unrestricted.

And in that 15th verse, now that you have understood the implications of this relationship, now that you have presented your body living sacrifice, now that by the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus Christ is indwelling and infilling you and living in you, then the apostle says, let the peace of God rule in your hearts. Some years ago, actually 1953 and early 54, I was facing a very, very real dilemma. I had resigned from the Sudan Interior Mission because there had been a doctrinal difference.

I'd come into the position known and loved and cherished by the alliance and found myself unwelcome among those who did not believe in the experience of being filled with the spirit subsequent to regeneration. And my resignation was requested and given. But there were a great many that understood that what that God had done for me had been prepare me for further and more effective service, so they believed at least.

But I was at that place of not knowing quite what the Lord wanted me to do. I hadn't had much trouble up till then. I'd been planning to be a missionary.

I felt led to a certain mission. The wheels of my little truck were put on the rails, and there was only one thing to do and just keep rolling down the rails. And that was all the guidance I needed.

As long as there was track ahead of me, I was on the way. I didn't have to do a great deal of praying for wisdom and guidance. That had been pretty well taken care of.

But now that I've come into a relationship of identification with Christ and entered into the fullness of Christ initially by his spirit, it's quite a different matter. What am I going to do? Here I am without that control factor that had been so tremendously important. Well, I'd had known for some time InterVarsity Christian Fellowship.

I'd been acquainted with it. And Stacey Woods, who was the brother of InterVarsity here from Canada, from England to Canada and Canada to the U.S., met me and he said, Dave Aden, he's going back to Hong Kong. He wants to minister there.

In Paris, I want you to become the secretary of the Foreign Missions Fellowship. National opportunity. I was in missions, and I was thrilled.

But I said, I must pray and think about it. And a little while later, Hal Street, who was the founder of Evangelical Literature Overseas, said, I want you to become the associate director so that after a few years you can keep this ministry going. And then somebody else called me and asked me to take a Bible school with a CTV and a radio ministry out in Indiana.

And I was terribly confused. And I was, my wounded ego was feeding on the fact that three national ministries wanted me. Oh, it was a tremendous sort of ego nourishment, I suppose.

But I let it go day after day and week after week. And I became more perplexed and more confused. And I had no way of knowing how in the world to get myself out of these several months of having these people wait for me.

I was on my way to Santa Monica to have a conference with ministers there. And I had to fly from the east out there. And I called the man I'd come to know and love, R.R. Brown, who was the founder of the Gospel Tabernacle of Omaha, Nebraska.

I'd come to know him and appreciate him and love him. And I said, here's a pastor that needs a pastor. Can I stop in to see you? He said, well, I'll be here.

So I rerouted myself by way of Omaha, took the bus, the airport bus into downtown, went to the tabernacle and got there, oh, about 1230, I suppose. And he, Brown, had me into his office and he said, well, what'd you come for? Rather gruffly. And I said, well, I came to have you help me decide which of these three national ministry opportunities I should accept.

And he looked at me and said, well, I won't do that. What else? I said, well, you might take me out to lunch. He said, I've already eaten.

Well, I said, you might pat me on the head and say, God bless you, boy, and send me on my way. No, he said, sit down. I'm going to do more than that.

He said, a week or so ago, I was invited out to the SAC base, Strategic Air Command Base at Omaha, by Curtis LeMay, General Curtis LeMay. He had two or three of us here from the city out as his luncheon guests and talked to us about relationships with the city of Omaha and the SAC base. And in the course of time, he gave us a little information.

We talked. He said, well, I can tell you a little bit about, we asked how intercontinental ballistic missiles were guided. What was the guidance system? And he said, well, there was a time when we tried to use direct guidance and we programmed the missile so that it would stay continuously on course until it got to its objective.

But we found that it was extremely difficult to do that, that it would vary widely and it couldn't, wouldn't stay on course for a whole variety of reasons. So we next conceived of a different, a totally different approach. It isn't time yet.

I've got two more minutes. Well, I guess it's because I was talking about the Strategic Air Command. Maybe that's what it is.

But at any rate, he said, we now conceive of this as being a tunnel in the sky. Instead of direct guidance, we now think of it as though there's a, maybe a hundred mile tunnel right up through the sky. And we start the missile somewhere in that tunnel.

And as long as it stays inside that invisible tunnel, it's on course. And then when it gets within a certain time from this objective, we move it to direct guidance and it's much more effective. He said, we keep it in there.

The question was asked by one of the guests, General LeMay, how do you keep it inside that tunnel? He said, we do that by negative feedback. Dr. Brown explained that when the missile would get to the edge of

that conceived hole or pipe or tunnel in the sky, it would get a negative feedback and correct until it was inside. And just with negative feedback to keep it from straying, just to keep it inside that parameter, that perimeter of that tunnel.

And he said, as he was talking, all I could think about was Colossians 3.50. He said, you know, when we are filled with the spirit of God and Christ is living his life in us, we have the greatest guidance system that the world's ever known. Because the Holy Spirit has, as it were, a tunnel of his will for us. And as long as we're inside that tunnel, we have peace.

Now, if he wants us to change and turn to the right or left, up or down, as the case may be, he begins to give us negative feedback. Well, if you have peace, that's the positive. What's the negative? Absence of peace, distress, unrest, unhappiness.

So said Dr. Brown, there's a law of inertia. A body in motion tends to remain in motion. And when God has set us on a course and we have peace, we stay in that course.

We have no right to change, to go right or left, or stop or turn around. We're in the peace tunnel with the Lord and we stay that way. If someone asks us if we'll do something else, we have to subject it to the umpire and the rule.

Because let the peace of God rule literally means referee or umpire or decide. So said he. When we're in the will of God, we have peace.

When God wants us to change, he begins to sort of withdraw that peace and that happiness and that rest. And he gives us unrest and discontent. We may not know where it is.

He said it's rather like Israel. First the cloud lifted, the pillar of cloud of fire at night and cloud by day, and then it moved. When it lifted, they packed their tents.

But they didn't start out till they found which way the cloud was going. If God wants you to make a change in your life, he's going to take peace away from you. Negative feedback, negative feedback.

But as long as you have peace, then you stay where you are. Just continue on. If somebody says, will you do this or will you do that? Examine it in the light of this.

Now he said, Paris, when you get to California, I want you to do something. When you get into your room, first thing before you get involved with your new responsibilities, said you have the letters requesting you for these various things. Yes, I have them with me.

He said, do this. Take the one that you receive first. You've already looked at it.

You already know it's scriptural. You already know it's in accord with the word of God. You already know you can do it, that you have the ability to do it, but you're not sure if it's God's will.

I said, exactly. So said he. When you get there, read the letter again.

Think about it. And then you're going to have to make a decision. Now, he said, Paul Rader once made a decision.

He took a coin out of his pocket and he said, Lord, I got to make, I got to make a decision here. And I don't know when. So he said he took a silver dollar.

We don't have them anymore. Best I can do is a quarter. And that's not even silver.

It's sandwich. And he said, Paul Rader just took that coin and he threw it in the air. Before he threw it, he said, now, Heavenly Father, when that coin hits the floor, I've got to decide.

Now, he said, I want you to do something like that. You get there. You look that first invitation over.

And if you don't have peace to say yes, you got to say no, because you can't go against the peace of God. Then when you've either said yes or no, whatever it turns out to be, you've got two other letters to write. If it's yes, you say no to the other two.

If it's no to the first one, then you take the second one and you do the same thing. And as soon as you found out you don't have peace to say yes, or you do, write the letter right then. Don't wait anymore.

You waited too long now. And then when you get to the third one, you'll do the same. Well, I did precisely what he said.

When I got to California, I went to my room. I took three envelopes, three sheets of paper, and I prayed about the first letter. And in a few moments, I had written, Dear Stacey, thank you very much.

I'm sorry it's taken so long, but I must tell you that I do not have peace to accept. And therefore, I'm sure you have someone else you've had in mind in the event that this was my decision and I feel I cannot take it. Wrote the letter, signed it, sealed it, stamped it, put it on the desk.

Then I did. Within a half an hour, I had three letters written and all saying no. And I must say I felt a very strange mixture of feelings because I didn't have three national opportunities anymore.

I had three letters saying no and no national opportunities. Well, I came back, back after that ministry to our home then in Orlando, Florida. I was getting ready to go up to American Keswick out at Tom's River, New Jersey for an inter-varsity weekend, alumni weekend.

And just before I left in Pastor Robert Battle's car, who was taking me to the train, I got a special delivery letter. And it was from the pulpit committee of the Gospel Tabernacle Church in New York City. And they had said, Dear Brother Eadhead, we are, after some months of talking with many others, we feel the Lord is leading us to ask you to come as a candidate for the pulpit of the Gospel Tabernacle Church in New York City.

Well, I'm the guy who said one thing I'll never do is go back to the pastor. I'm just sure the Lord doesn't want me to do that. And then I'm the guy who said, but if I ever did go to the pastor, I know one place I'd never go.

And that's New York City. So now I've got a letter. I've got a romette on the train.

I've got several hours beating across Florida and up the East Coast because I'm going by train. This was Friday and then I had Friday night and Saturday and getting in late Saturday afternoon. I'm spending most of the time on my knees with that silly letter in front of me praying because I just knew when I took it that I would have peace to say no way, Jose, I am not going.

But you know, when I got off the train and was met there by one of the InterVarsity staff workers, the first thing I said was, please, where's the nearest telephone? I had to call the man whose number was in the letter saying I'll come next Sunday as a candidate. I had peace to do nothing else. And then I went on that Sunday and I prayed about it and I had three things I could tell them as conditions and I knew they wouldn't accept any of those three.

So I told them what the conditions were. After the meeting, after the service, I had a meeting with the committee, executive committee. And then I was going on up to Foxborough, Massachusetts for a meeting with all of the New England district pastors on a three-day conference.

Well, I spoke about seven hours on Tuesday and about six hours on Wednesday and it was Wednesday evening at five o'clock. And I remembered as I came home that they said they were meeting on Wednesday to decide and I said, what in the world will I do if these foolish people make the mistake of asking me to be their pastor? I hadn't prayed about that. I didn't know.

But I went to my room and said, don't call me till the last minute before supper. They said, it'll be about an hour and a half. I said, I need every minute of it.

Well, I didn't need that much because it was a very short time and I knew that if they called me, I had to go. So I came back from that service that night. I'd spoken about two and a half hours concluding this pastor's seminar.

And the girl, the daughter of the Ernie Bailey said, who was the district superintendent, said, you have a call from Reverend Lewis Isch, who's the district superintendent of that district where the tabernacle was. He wants you to call back this evening when you get in. So I called him and he said, Brother Redad? Yes.

Lewis Isch here? Yes. He said, I am instructed by the president of the Christian Missionary Alliance to tell you that you've had a unanimous call to the pastorate of the church. What shall I say to them? Now, customarily, what you say, well, thank you, brother.

I'll take a week or two to pray about it and think about it and so on. But remember, I prayed from 5.30 till 6, 5 to 6.30. So I'm certain I heard his false teeth fall out and hit the receiver because I said to him, well, Brother Isch, you can tell them that I accept. He said, huh? I said, you can tell them that I said that I accept the call to the pastor.

Oh, you mean you've already decided? I said, Brother Isch, I prayed about it and the Lord made it perfectly clear that I had peace to accept and no peace to say even ask for any time because I'm certain if I had asked for any time, I'd find a great many reasons why I shouldn't do it. But I've got to obey the Lord. Dear friends, I've given you this bit of personal history because I want to tell you I'm practicing what I preach.

The peace of God rules and referees and umpires and we have the greatest leader in the world, God the Holy Ghost. And we have been wired for guidance at Calvary. And if you will once learn the lesson of letting the peace of God, well, first you got to have peace in order to let it rule, don't you? You got to know what it is to know what isn't there anymore.

So you got to live in peace with the Lord. But once you have that peace where you are is in the will of God, then you let the peace of God rule and referee and umpire in your life. There's lots of things I plan to do and don't start or don't continue.

I have peace to think about them, but not peace to continue them. I can't do anything unless the peace of God permits me because I made a commitment back there in Dara R. Brown's study that I was going to let the peace of God rule and referee in my heart and life. And what I've been doing and trying to do, I ask you to join me in seeking to do.

It's going to mean so much to you when you learn to let the peace of God rule, be the guiding rule in your life. Father of Jesus, we're here a company of people enough to change the world for thy dear son. If we're prepared to abide in Christ, crucified with him and buried with him and quickened with him and raised with him and seated with him to present our bodies, living sacrifices, that he might live unhindered and unrestricted, unimpeded in us, and then that we can seek those things that are above, set out affection on things that are above, put off that which would hinder and put on that which would honor, and let the peace of God rule and referee in all the important steps of our life.

To that end, Father, we ask that thou would seal the word to our hearts for Jesus' sake, our joy, and his glory. Amen.

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