THE PERILS OF MISSIONARY THINKING

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Category: Observations

> *Given the fact that the church in the West now finds itself in a context in which cross-cultural mission must become its highest priority, this is very far from being an academic question. The very survival of Christianity in Europe and America depends upon the emergence of men and women able to think new thoughts and devise new strategies at the real frontiers of mission today. But such people, whether innovative church planting missionaries or Christian intellectuals seeking to move beyond the timeworn habits of thought in order to rethink the relationship of Christianity and Western Culture from the perspective of mission, are likely to face misunderstanding, criticism and serious opposition. Like Peter the apostle and generations of pioneering, Spirit-led missionaries before them, those who are ready to confront the challenge posed by Western culture must not be surprised if the are accused of unorthodoxy, even heresy, or are verbally attacked by people who interpret their missionary vision as something liable to undermine the moral purity and integrity of the church of Jesus Christ. In such situations we do well to take careful note of Peter's response to his critics in Jerusalem in the first century.*

FromÂ Mission After Christendom by David Smith (2003) Paperback; discussing the response to Peter's witness to Cornelius in Acts 10.