

Paul's Commission

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"Introducing the gospel to Jew and Greek alike"

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"Commission" definition

1. An instruction, command, or duty given to a person or group of people.
2. Give an order for, or authorize the production of something, such as a building, piece of equipment, or work of art.
3. Bring something newly produced, such as a factory or machine into working order.
4. A group or person officially charged with a particular function.

Google dictionary

In the last lesson I taught, we discussed the Jewish traditions that had carried over into the church age. We find that Saul became a believer after his confrontation with Jesus on the road to Damascus. **God can use anyone to fulfill his plan.**

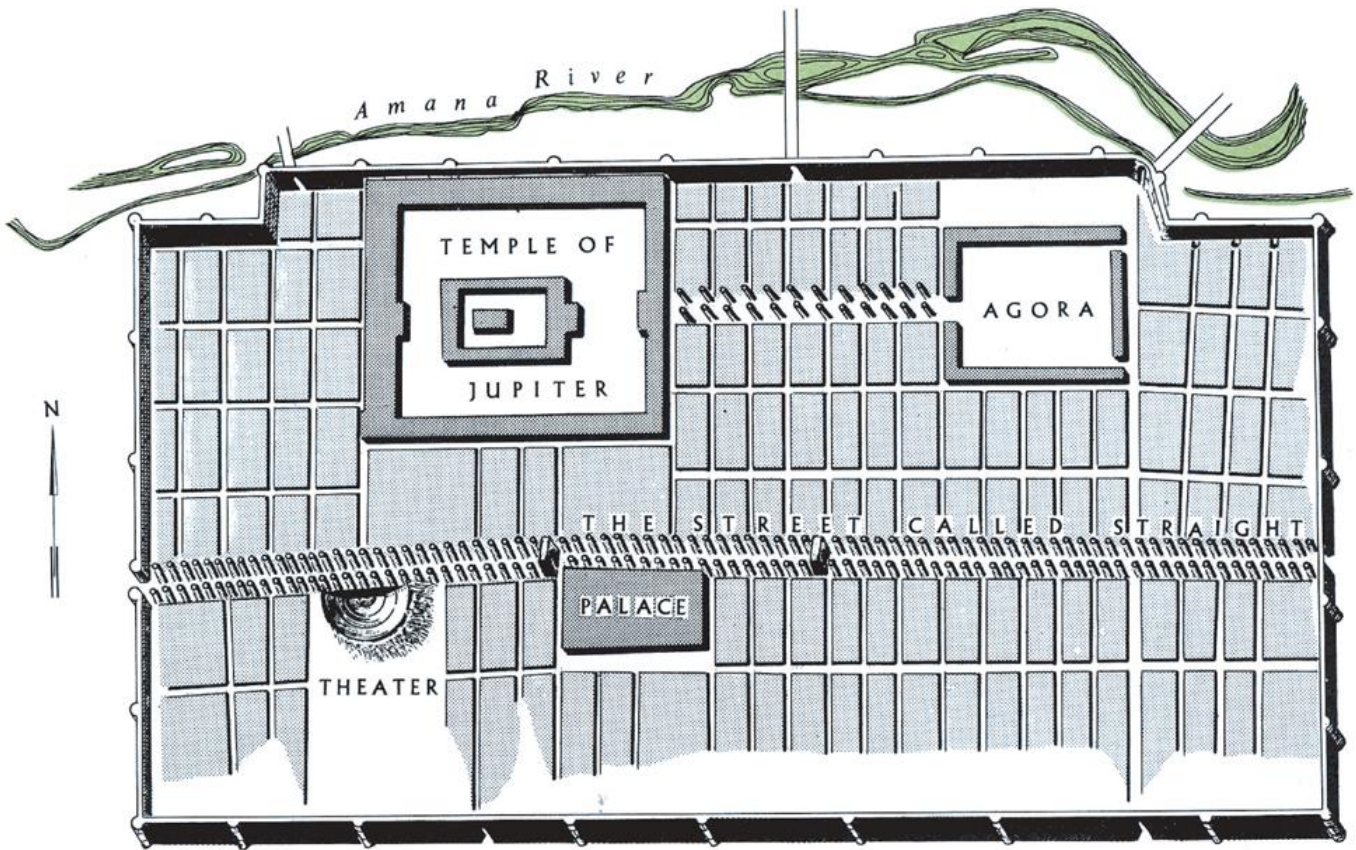
God's plan for Saul (Paul) was for him to introduce the gospel to the Gentiles and the (Hellenistic) Greek speaking Jews. But while Paul eagerly started teaching the gospel in Damascus and all were amazed at his transformation, he still needed to be prepared for the task God would have him do.

What do you think he needs to do to be prepared?

We don't just get saved and immediately have all the answers to our questions. We need to be prepared spiritually, before we teach.

Paul immediately starts preaching to the Jews and Gentiles that Jesus is the Messiah.

Although, many are amazed by his transformation, many still do not trust Paul. This is the same man that was persecuting Christians. Guards were placed at the East and West gates of Damascus with the intent of capturing and killing Paul. This is the only way in and out of the city. Paul is forced to flee from Damascus. The Disciples help him escape by lowering him in a basket over the city walls. Hellenistic Jews were not ready to hear this gospel and had already killed Stephen for teaching it. Furthermore, this was the man who had been persecuting Christians. They didn't trust him.



After escaping, he goes to Arabia. (Gal 1:15-18)

What was he doing for 3 years in Arabia?

After his encounter with Jesus, Paul said he did not consult any man or go to Jerusalem to see the apostles. He immediately went to Arabia for 3 years and then went to Damascus and then to Jerusalem to meet with Peter. I believe this is where Paul learned from Jesus personally. Remember Jesus' ministry on earth was for 3 years teaching his chosen Apostles, who recalled his teaching after receiving the Holy spirit. Everything we read in Paul's letter is what Jesus has revealed to him which he recalled through the Holy spirit.

Paul is **boldly** declaring that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah in Damascus. The people can't help but listen, because this was the man who had left Jerusalem as a Pharisee with intent to kill Christians. Many Christians had fled from Jerusalem for this very reason.

When we become new believers and our eyes are opened to the truth, we want to share our new conversion with everyone. Paul was energetic to share the gospel of Christ after he became a believer. A new believer is more likely to feel like charging Hell with a water pistol.

But without knowing Bible doctrine, and applying it, we can easily make mistakes trying to teach others. Learning Bible doctrine is how we understand the mind of Christ.

Many new believers get used to ritualistic religion but fail to understand that our ways are not the same as Christ's. **(Isa. 55:9)** They have no clarity in their understanding of God's word. God picks the unexpected to fulfill his plans.

This was the case with Paul. No-one could believe he was the same person. Even the disciples were scared of him. **Do people see the change in you? They should. Are you ashamed? Be bold for Christ!**

God uses the lowliest of us to fulfill his plan.

Think about a bunch of kids on a playground where we choose team captains and then one by one, we pick the **best player** for our team.

As the picks go on, the only 2 or 3 kids left, whom, are dainty, not fast, not athletic and not skilled in the sport are becoming not very important picks and at times, one team, feeling that they have chosen the best players may say, "you can have the last 2

players as they won't contribute to our team anyway." **God's picks are different.** God takes the **least of us** and prepares us, teaches us and builds up our spiritual muscles so that we can perform the things he needs us to do. This doesn't happen immediately, but by meticulous and perfect instruction (the Holy Spirit). We are taught and tested and then taught more.

Our lessons are applicable to our daily lives and become muscle memory over time **if we remain faithful.** **Do you continue to apply God's word?**

We are winners! (Royal family members of God)
Why are we Royal family?

God prepares us for the largest events ever recorded here on Earth, but we must start out with the charge of the mosquito before we get to the charge of the elephant.

He intends to make us his team captains (Metachoi). While we train for these large events, the Heavenly hosts (Angels) cheer for our improvement and encourage our involvement in the Spiritual events that we are a part of. (The Angelic conflict)

Saul, an **unlikely person** to be used by God, has now been given a Revelation by God and is now teaching to the Gentiles and Hellenistic Jews that Jesus Christ is the Messiah!

"REVELATION," = The disclosure of divine secrets, knowledge, or other information **from the divine realm** to humans."

Jesus Christ himself reveals the gospel to Paul.

(Gal 1:11-12) For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12) For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

How do we get our instruction?

We use Bible doctrine and the Holy Spirit today as our source for spiritual knowledge.

Saul, (Paul) had been on a team of Mankind. He was not the lowliest in the terms of the example I gave though. Paul was taught by Gamaliel. He was a top pharisee teacher of the time for the Jews.

Paul knew the Mosaic law and lived it to a near perfect way. Except for his mental attitude sins, he did a pretty good job following the law. Paul would have been a team captain for mankind if he was on that playground team picking sides.

But Paul was on the other side of that team when we look at God's ways. Early training for Paul had been given to him by Gamaliel, **a man**. Paul could not yet understand God's ways, he was spiritually naive.

Jesus Christ gave Paul personal instruction and prepared him for service.

Acts 9:26-30

26) When he came to Jerusalem, he was trying to associate with the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.

27) But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had talked to him, and how at Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus. 28) And he was with

them, moving about freely in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord.

29) And he was talking and arguing with the Hellenistic Jews; but they were attempting to put him to death. 30) But when the brethren learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

He was there preaching locally for 14 years in the area of his home town of Tarsus.



The Council at Jerusalem

Gal. 2:1-10

1) Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also.

2) It was because of a Revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation (seemed to be leaders), for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain.

(*not wasting his effort)

Paul went to Jerusalem on his second visit in response to a revelation. That is, he went because God directed him to, not because the Jerusalem leaders had summoned him or called him "on the carpet" for preaching to the Gentiles.

The reference may well be to Agabus' prophecy of a famine which prompted Paul and Barnabas to go to Jerusalem on a relief mission (**Acts 11:27-30**). Paul seized this opportunity to consult with the other

apostles privately concerning the message he was preaching to the Gentiles. This does not mean Paul sought their approval of its truth and accuracy, for he had received the gospel from God by revelation. Rather, he wanted them to consider its relationship to the gospel they were proclaiming. But if the Jerusalem leaders insisted on circumcision and other requirements of the Law for Gentile converts, Paul's labor (running) among the Gentiles was in vain. It was not that the apostle had any doubts or misgivings about the gospel he had preached for 14 years (*Gal. 2:1*), but that he feared that his past and present ministry might be hindered or rendered of no effect by the Judaizers.

Donald K. Campbell, "Galatians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2

(Gal. 2:3-5)

3) But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.

Why was this important?

4) But it was because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in (the Judaizers) to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage. (to try to enforce them living by the Mosaic Law)

5) But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you. (STANDING UP for the truth)

It now becomes apparent why Paul brought Titus along on this Jerusalem trip. He was a test case. Would the Jerusalem apostles force the rite of circumcision on a Gentile believer? Paul knew that both Jews and Gentiles are accepted by God through faith in Jesus Christ without circumcision being an issue and we should do the same. The apostle declared that this truth was affirmed in Jerusalem because Titus was not ... compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek. But this victory did not come easily. Pressure to have Titus circumcised was brought to bear by certain false brothers (2 Peter 2:1). No doubt these were

Judaizers, whose chief slogan is found in (Acts 15:1) "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved." These "false brothers," (sham Christians), were like spies who penetrated personal spaces to search out weaknesses according to the Mosaic law. They were literally sneaking around in bath areas checking for circumcision. In this case they intruded without invitation into the apostles' private areas. Their goals were twofold: first, to spy on (κατάσκοπος, kataskopos, the freedom we have in Christ. With hostile intent they decided to observe if Titus or Barnabas was circumcised or not.

Second, they intended to make Christians slaves. (They wanted to bring believers back into bondage, to enslave them to the Law's rules and ceremonies). Specifically, they strongly insisted that Titus be circumcised. But Paul stood absolutely firm, because the truth of the gospel was at stake for the Galatians, and the entire Christian church.

What would it mean to impose circumcision on Titus? Would it deny that salvation was by faith alone?

They intended to affirm that in addition to faith there must be obedience to the Law for acceptance before God. Thus, the basic issue of the gospel was involved and Paul would not deviate or yield for a moment. We should also stand against untruth,

Donald K. Campbell, "Galatians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 593-594.

Gal. 2:6-8

6) But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality) well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me.

7) But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised. 8) for He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles,

It should be noted that Peter and Paul did not preach two gospels, as might be inferred from the KJV rendering, "the gospel of the uncircumcision" and "the gospel of the circumcision." There was one gospel though it was preached by different apostles to two distinct groups of people. The reason the apostles concluded that Paul's commission was equal to Peter's was the fact that God gave success to both as they preached. This was sealed by James, Peter, and John in their extending to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. This was a sign of agreement and trust and an indication to all present that they endorsed the division of labor whereby the Jerusalem apostles were appointed to evangelize the Jews and Paul was entrusted to carry the gospel to the Gentiles.

Donald K. Campbell, "Galatians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 594.

Gal. 2:9-10

9) and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right

hand of fellowship, so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised (Jews).

10) They only asked us to remember the poor—the very thing I also was eager to do.

God would use Paul and the disciples to establish churches throughout the regions. They would bring in Elders, or mature believers to lead these churches. Now they could, through missionary work, visit each of these churches and teach the congregations. They would communicate through letters to the elders.

Some converts of Paul, ie... Timothy, Titus and others were left in these churches to be Pastor-Teachers.

God's word was now multiplied throughout the regions by qualified pastor-teachers.

You will notice that each church is autonomous.

Why do we have so many individual churches?

If they were all under one leadership, Satan could easily corrupt the complete church. There are thousands of local churches that are independent, so for Satan to corrupt the church, he would have to go into every single one and corrupt them all.