

Seed Thoughts on Paul's Commission

by Colin Peckham

God's revelation, selection, intention, creation, occupation, and expectation are all connected to His purpose for our lives, and we must respond to His constraint and know His guidance into His purposes.

Topics: "Divine Calling", "Salvation Through Faith"

Description

Colin Peckham preaches on the divine revelation and purpose in God's calling, emphasizing the selection, intention, creation, and occupation in being a minister and witness for God. The sermon highlights the importance of cognition, expectation, protection, and commission in fulfilling God's plan, leading to vision, conversion, illumination, and emancipation for those who turn to God. It concludes with the significance of remission, possession, sanctification, and appropriation through faith in Christ, urging believers to embrace the fullness of God's salvation and share the gospel with unwavering faith.

Transcript

But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which your have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you from the Jewish people as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' Acts 26:16-18 (NKJV)

'I have appeared'-there's revelation. The gospel is not thought up or worked out by human ingenuity. It is revealed by God. Paul said, 'I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you ...' (1 Cor. 11:23). The gospel is not anthropocentric, but theocentric, for its origin is in God not man.

'to you'-there's selection. Amazingly He appeared to me and spoke to me! Who am I that the Lord of glory should come to me-but He did! 'I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit' John 15:16). He could have chosen any of the many people far more gifted and far more able to bear His message, but He appeared to me and commissioned me. What a privilege, what an honour! God chose the great, wealthy and famous C. T. Studd to preach the gospel, but He also chose the stuttering cowboy Bud Robinson to blaze a gospel trail across America, as well as the unique and quaint Cornishman Billy Bray to bear a tremendous witness in the south of England. God chooses whom He will, and I can but bow humbly and gratefully before Him for calling and sending them as His special ambassador. It is undeserved in grace and unparalleled in glory!

'for this purpose'-there's intention. God's revelations are purposeful, not goal-less and haphazard. he comes with meaningful design and with an object and a direction in view. Responding to His constraint, I will know His guidance into His purposes for my life.

'to make you'-there's creation. he makes me what I never dreamed I could or would be. he develops natural gifts and imparts spiritual gifts to accomplish His purpose in and through me.

'a minister and witness'-there's occupation. I can only minister and expound matters concerning God effectively, as I know God personally. Ministry and testimony are bound together. Without personal experience of God, ministry is arid, sterile, lethal.

'both of the things which you have seen'-there's cognition. God graciously grants me experiences of Christ which are thrilling and life-transforming. Paul speaks about being caught up 'to the third heaven' (II Cor. 12:2), but the great revelation to Paul was his conversion experience when he met Christ (Acts 9). When we trust Jesus to save us He makes Himself known to us. Along the Christian pathway there are revelations and manifestations of Christ to the heart. no man can know God and not know that he knows Him.

'and of the things which I will yet reveal to you'-there's expectation. There will be further divine encounters. The initial experiences are wonderful, but God has promised more. Of the obedient soul, Jesus says, 'I will love him and manifest myself to him' (John 14:21). He will enrich my life and ministry with fresh revelations, new understandings and deeper insights. To all I will gladly and gratefully bear witness and minister.

'I will deliver you'-there's protection. 'from the Jewish people'-He will deliver from religious bigotry and unreasonable hatred and rejection. 'as well as from the Gentiles.' He will also deliver from ignorant barbarism and pagan insolence and cruelty. he is my shield and my safe dwelling-place. he will guard me and preserve me. 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe' (Prov. 18:10). 'The Lord your God is with you wherever you go' (Josh 1:9).

'I now send you'-there's commission. I am constrained, compelled by Almighty God. I must go. I can do no other. The charge is plain, persistent, personal, pressing, preparatory, powerful. Despite my sense of unworthiness, inadequacy and insufficiency, the charge is confirmed to me by the Spirit, by the Scriptures, by the circumstances of God's design, by the call of human need, and in its essence is enabling and ennobling. I am conscious of being sent. Jesus said, 'as the Father has sent me, I also send you' (John 20:21). he said, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature' (Mark 16:15).

'to open their eyes'-there's vision. They were blind to their condition, need and fate. Paul speaks of 'those who are perishing', and says 'whose minds the god of this age has blinded' (II Cor. 4:4). Their eyes must be opened to the reality of spiritual values, of heaven, of hell, of grace, of judgement, of God, of Satan, of Christ and of His great salvation. this is your commission, Paul, open their eyes!

'to turn them'-there's conversion. Conversion is used in all walks of life indicating a change, and about turn. They are to turn from their former way of life, which they now see to be distasteful and sinful, to God's way of life, which they now see to be desirable and satisfying. Peter said, 'repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out ...' (Acts 3:19). 'He who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins' (James 5:20). The conversion of sinners is the great evangelistic thrust in the charge committed to us. Sinners must be saved! 'The gospel of Christ is the

power of God to salvation for everyone who believes' (Rom. 1:16). Preach it!

'from darkness to light'-there's illumination. 'I am the light of the world', said Jesus (John 8:12), and when He is proclaimed and exalted, the light shines powerfully dispelling the darkness. All is exposed. Their failure is evident, their rebellion is revealed, their selfishness is seen, their pride is unmasked, their transgressions are disclosed, their hardness and impenitent hearts are uncovered. They stand naked and open in the radiate beams of God's pure light. The light shines in the darkness.

From this darkness they may turn to the One who is light, and who brings light and salvation to them. Oh, how wonderful is the light! They need not grope in confusion and darkness any longer, but can embrace God's great salvation, which, in His light, they can now clearly see. Their joy is to turn from darkness to light.

'from the power of Satan to God'-there's emancipation. They were bound by the devil, 'having been taken captive by him to do his will' (II Tim. 2:26). But now the chains are burst asunder and they are free from his hateful bondage. Liberated! Released! Sin no longer controls their lives. They are no longer held under its awful tyranny. They were the servants of sin but have found salvation and deliverance in Christ. he is their great Emancipator.

'that they may receive forgiveness of sins'-there's remission. No other religion speaks so clearly on the subject of forgiveness as the Christian religion. God, because of Christ's death and resurrection, forgives all their sins. The great ugly burdens drop from their backs into the depths of the sea and sink like lead. Their sins are gone! No more guilt; no more fear; no more condemnation; no more judgement; no more divine wrath; no more hell! Christ's death has atoned. They stand washed in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7:24), redeemed, justified and reconciled to God. Peace now reigns where discord had triumphed. Glory to God-they are saved!

'and an inheritance'-there's possession. In Him the redeemed have an inheritance-what an inheritance! What riches! What blessing! What glory! We are come 'to God my exceeding joy' (Ps. 43:4). 'In Him we live and move and have our being' (Acts 17:28). Our riches-eternal, imperishable, undimmed-are in God, and our inheritance is in Him. Paul speaks of 'Christ in you, the hope of glory' (Col. 1:27). Jesus says that 'I am in the Father, and you are in me, and I in you' (John 14:20). We are 'partakers of the Divine nature' (II Pet. 1:4). Ah the bride in the Song of Solomon says, 'My beloved is mine and I am his' (2:16), 'I am my beloved's and his desire is toward me' (7:10). So speak we of our illustrious Christ, our heavenly Bridegroom. he is altogether lovely. he has ravished our hearts. What an inheritance-and all eternity to enjoy it!

'Among those who are sanctified'-there's sanctification. Sanctification begins when the Holy Spirit enters our lives at the new birth, and it continues for the rest of our lives. It contains the meaning of separation to God, of cleansing and purity, and of righteousness. We have our inheritance together with all the saints of God who have been set apart for God at conversion and are being made holy in His word.

We are separated from sin, our carnality is crucified with Christ and we are cleansed in the depths of our souls. he takes possession of the purified heart with His abundant life, His overwhelming love and His mighty power.

Our faith grows and our love abounds (II Thes. 1:3) as we grow in the grace and knowledge of the One who has captivated our hearts, even our blessed Lord Jesus (II Pet. 3:18). We live in His sanctifying grace

and love, and find full satisfaction and joy as we worship and live for Him until He comes.

'by faith in Me'-there's appropriation. The great provisions of Calvary and Pentecost are to be made real to the hungry hearts by faith. the Holy Spirit will inspire faith and respond to it.

People are not asked to put their trust in the word of man, or in some particular doctrine. Faith is to be placed in God who cannot lie. 'Faithful' is He who calleth you who also will do it' (I The. 5:24). There is a moment when faith must act. 'Without faith it is impossible to please God' (Heb. 11:6). Full deliverance and God's great salvation blessings are found by trusting God, by taking Him at His word. We must come then, in all meekness and lowliness of heart, and claim with undaunted faith all the blessings which God promises. Faith opens the door and God transforms the life.

What a salvation to enjoy! What a life to live! What a gospel to share! What a charge to accept! What a commission to fulfill!

How can we do anything other than to go and tell the incomparable story of God's Almighty Christ?

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