(Understanding Paul’s Divine Mandate from the Lord Jesus Christ)

> *Glory and honor be to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, now and forever. Amen.*

Beloved, welcome as we come together to reflect on the Word of God. I believe the Lord has prepared something profound for us today — something that will open our understanding and draw us deeper into His will.

Today, we will meditate on “The Apostolic Commission” — the divine assignment that the Apostle Paul received directly from the risen Lord Jesus Christ.

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1. Paul’s Encounter with the Lord Jesus

Paul’s conversion and calling are among the most striking events in Scripture.

Before his encounter with Christ, Saul of Tarsus was known as a zealous Pharisee and a fierce persecutor of the early Church (Philippians 3:5–6; Acts 8:1–3).
But God, in His mercy, interrupted Saul’s life on the road to Damascus.

Acts 9:3–6 (NKJV)

> *“As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven.*
> *Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’*
> *And he said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’*
> *Then the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’*
> *So he, trembling and astonished, said, ‘Lord, what do You want me to do?’*
> *Then the Lord said to him, ‘Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.’”*

This initial encounter reveals several deep truths:

- Christ identifies Himself with His Church. When Saul persecuted believers, Jesus said, *“Why are you persecuting Me?”* (v. 4).
  → This shows the spiritual union between Christ and His Body (see 1 Corinthians 12:12–13).

- True conversion begins with revelation. Saul did not merely change his religion; his spiritual eyes were opened to see who Jesus truly is — *“the Son of God”* (Acts 9:20).

- The call precedes the mission. Before Saul was sent, he was humbled, blinded, and transformed. Only then did the Lord speak his purpose.

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2. The Full Commission Revealed

Years later, standing before King Agrippa, Paul gave a fuller account of what the Lord told him that day.

Acts 26:15–18 (ESV)

> *“And I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’*
> *And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.*
> *But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose,*
> *to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen Me and to those in which I will appear to you,*
> *delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you*
> *to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God,*
> *that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.’”*

This passage outlines four dimensions of Paul’s apostolic calling:

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1. “To Open Their Eyes” — The Call to Illumination

The first aspect of Paul’s commission was spiritual enlightenment. In Scripture, blindness often symbolizes ignorance of God’s truth (2 Corinthians 4:4).
Satan blinds the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the light of the gospel.

> *2 Corinthians 4:6 (NKJV)*
> *“For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”*

To “open their eyes” means to bring people to the knowledge of truth — to reveal Christ, the true Light of the world (John 8:12). Paul’s teaching ministry aimed to help believers discern God’s will, understand Scripture, and walk in truth.

> *Psalm 119:130 (KJV) — “The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.”*

When the Word enters the heart, blindness is removed, and truth transforms the soul.

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2. “To Turn Them from Darkness to Light” — The Call to Repentance

The second command was to turn people from darkness to light.

Darkness represents sin, rebellion, and moral corruption.
Light represents holiness, righteousness, and truth in Christ.

> *Ephesians 5:8–11 (NKJV)*
> *“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light…*
> *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.”*

Repentance (Greek: *metanoia*) means a complete change of mind and direction.
It’s not merely feeling sorry for sin but turning away from it and walking toward the light of God’s truth.

Paul preached that true repentance must produce fruit — a visible transformation.

> *Acts 26:20 (ESV)*

> *“They should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.”*

Therefore, repentance involves both confession and forsaking sin:

> *Proverbs 28:13 (NKJV)*
> *“He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”*

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3. “To Turn Them from the Power of Satan to God” — The Call to Deliverance

Thirdly, Paul’s mission was to deliver people from the dominion of Satan — from spiritual bondage, deception, and sin’s tyranny — and bring them under God’s authority.

Jesus Himself described His ministry in similar terms:

> *Luke 4:18 (NKJV)*
> *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed*

> *Me to preach the gospel to the poor;*
> *He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty*
> *to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind,*
> *to set at liberty those who are oppressed."*

Deliverance is not merely about casting out demons; it's about transferring allegiance — moving from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God's dear Son.

> *Colossians 1:13–14 (NKJV)*
> *"He has delivered us from the power of darkness and*
> *conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,*
> *in whom we have redemption through His blood, the*
> *forgiveness of sins."*

Thus, Paul's message was a message of liberation — freedom from sin, deception, and the grip of the enemy.

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4. "That They May Receive Forgiveness of Sins and an Inheritance" — The Call to Reconciliation and Grace

Finally, Paul was sent so that people might receive forgiveness of sins and become heirs among those sanctified by faith in Christ.

Forgiveness is not earned; it is received through faith in the finished work of Jesus on the cross.

> *Ephesians 1:7 (NKJV)*
> *“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”*

And those who believe become heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ:

> *Romans 8:17 (ESV)*
> *“And if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.”*

Paul’s gospel was centered on this grace — that sinners could be justified freely through faith (Romans 3:24–26).

This inheritance includes not only eternal life but the present reality of sonship, peace with God, and participation in His kingdom.

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3. The Continuity of the Apostolic Message

Every letter Paul wrote reflects these same four elements of his commission.
Whether he addressed the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, or Ephesians, the message remained consistent:

- Enlightenment through the truth of Christ.
- Repentance and transformation from darkness.
- Deliverance from sin’s power.
- Forgiveness and inheritance through faith.

That’s why the Lord exalted Paul’s writings as foundational to Christian doctrine. They reflect the full purpose of the gospel — the restoration of fallen humanity to fellowship with God.

> *2 Timothy 1:9 (NKJV)*
> *“He has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.”*

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4. A Call to Personal Reflection

Beloved, the same message that transformed Paul’s life calls out to us today.
Christ wants these same four realities to be evident in our lives:

1. That our eyes be opened to the truth.

2. That we turn from darkness to light.

3. That we forsake the power of Satan and turn fully to God.

4. That we receive forgiveness of sins and live as those sanctified by faith in Jesus Christ.

So let me ask you:

- Have your spiritual eyes been opened?

- Have you turned away from sin and embraced the light of Christ?

- Have you truly forsaken the works of darkness and submitted to God?

- Have you received forgiveness through genuine repentance and

baptism into Christ?

If not, this is your time. Now is the moment to make things right before God.
The grace of God still speaks today — but the day of the Lord is near.

> *2 Corinthians 6:2 (ESV)*
> *“Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”*

Conclusion

The apostolic commission given to Paul is the same mission Christ entrusts to His Church today:
To open blind eyes, to proclaim repentance, to deliver the captives, and to declare forgiveness and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Let us, therefore, walk in that calling — preaching not ourselves

but Christ crucified, risen, and soon returning.

> *1 Corinthians 1:23–24 (NKJV)*
> *“But we preach Christ crucified... Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”*

May the Lord find us faithful to this same commission, until He comes again in glory.
Amen.

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