We have concluded our study on Statement 4 and 5 of our Doctrinal Statement. The conclusion is found in the last phrase of Statement 5. Based on Statement 4 which is a statement of who Jesus is, and on the first part of Statement 5, the conclusion is that Jesus' atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation. While many of us would agree with that statement, there are logical implications to agreeing with it.

I want to encourage you to spend some time in 2 Corinthians 4-7. In particular, I want us to consider 5:11-21. The problem is that those verses are contextually attached to those around them. Let me draw what I believe are some serious conclusions and then we can wrestle with them in our living rooms or around the table in restaurants.

CONCLUSION 1
The Gospel changes everything.   Paul says that in Christ we are new creations. The old has passed so the new has come. What doesn't that include? It includes who we are and who others are. We now begin to operate from a new nature which puts life in a new perspective.

CONCLUSION 2
Our perspective on people has changed. Because we are new creations we now must view ourselves, others, and even Christ with new eyes. We have to learn to see everyone from God's perspective.

CONCLUSION 3
Our purpose has changed.
2 Corinthians 5:14-15 makes it clear that we that we are to no longer live for ourselves but for Him. In 5:20-21 we read that God's desire is to reconcile the world to Himself, and the amazing thing is that His plan to accomplish his desire is us. We are His plan for reconciling others to Him. What a privilege and what a responsibility!

Remember, this is all based on the reality of the gospel. We must begin by deciding not just in our heads, but in our hearts and wills, "Is the Gospel true?"

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:
1. What does it mean that we are new creations? Is that true and how encompassing is that in our lives? How do we live in the reality of that truth rather than just saying "it should be true?"

2. How does being a new creation change our perspective on who we are? We tend to have an identity crisis as believers. How do we live in the reality that we are absolutely new creations?

3. How does that change how we perceive and thus treat others, including those who are in Christ and those who are not in Christ?

4. God doesn't need us to accomplish His purposes. What impact on our daily lives does Him choosing to involve us in His mission have? How does that purpose supersede or at least engulf all other purposes for us?

5. What one thing do you think that God is calling you to apply will you work on this week?