

The Gospel in summary.

Paul's claims:

1. He received this Gospel as a revelation from Jesus Christ

(see Gal. 1:11,12). *'I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not something that a person made up. I did not receive it from anyone, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.'*

2. God had set him apart 'from birth' and 'called [him] by his grace' (see Ps. 139:1-16).

3. God 'revealed his Son' to him so that he, Paul, *'might preach him [Jesus] among the Gentiles'*. Paul is called to the missionary task of taking the 'good news' to the Gentiles, those formally outside of the covenant people of God. The gospel is both a message about forgiveness and new life in fellowship with God and a person who is the good news, Jesus Christ. So, to preach the gospel (or good news) is to preach about Jesus Christ. Jesus also embodies the good news, he brings the gospel in his words, actions, and **his death**.

4. Key aspects of the Content of the gospel are:

- i. *Jesus 'Christ died for our sins'*
- ii. *'according to the Scriptures'* (i.e. as foretold).
- iii. *'that he was buried'* (i.e. really died)
- iv. *'that he was raised on the third day'* (i.e. conquered death)
- v. *'according to the Scriptures'*
- vi. *'that he appeared to Peter... the twelve...more than five hundred ...most of whom are still living... to James... to me [Paul].'* (i.e. there are many witness who have met the risen Lord Jesus).

5. 'I persecuted the church if God. But by the grace of God I am what I am'. We cannot change the past **but by God's grace – His love that we do not deserve – we can become new people.**

6. The mystery and power of God's grace. Paul claims, *'I worked harder than all of them [the other apostles] – yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.'*

Reflection/Response. Why is it crucial to hold fast to the truth that Jesus died and rose for us? Because of God's grace revealed in Jesus Christ we can be free from our past to become new people committed to serving God. How do we celebrate that we are new people, forgiven, given new eternal life and have the presence of God with us, the Holy Spirit, forever? BB