**A. APOSTLES’ TEACHING – Part 1 (v. 42).**

**First in importance**.   For it reflects our Lord’s emphasis in the **Great Commission** -  (*Matt. 28:19*)

The Word of God is vital (Luke 21:33)

 1) The Scriptures are essential to the Christian life.

**Transformation,**

**Increase of faith,**

**See God’s glory,** Scripture reveals to us the character and glory of God.   A better light than nature (Rom. 1).

**Sanctification ,** 2Tim. 3:16  1Pet. 2:

**Source** for spiritual revival, Psa. 119:50 This is my comfort in my affliction, That Your word has  **revived** me. Like **smelling salts** for boxer.

**Needed for conviction,** Heb. 4:12 Heb. 4:13

**Vital for fruitfulness – Ps. 1**

2) Apostles’ DOCTRINE.    Some sects claim **“no creed but the Bible”** but as **Derek Thomas** points out they fail to see that this statement itself is a creed.  The point is that many go to the Bible and pervert its meaning and end up in a cult or heretical movement.   At this point in time, they had little of the NT, only the teachings of Jesus passed on to the disciples.   The **APOSTLES’ TEACHINGS** were **more than just reciting the words of Jesus,** rather it implies they were **explaining** it and giving the **correct understanding** of what Jesus taught.  This became **AUTHORITATIVE.**The words of Jesus can be correctly understood and incorrectly understood and they were learning from the apostles the correct understanding.   These truths were **formulated into statements of** orthodoxy to clarify the meaning.   We see this in the rest of the NT along with practical applications to marriage, home life, work, relationships with others, etc.

                        Later on, **heretics** would arise and challenge the **two natures** of Jesus, His bodily **resurrection,** etc and the early Church Fathers like Tertullian, Athanasius and others would defend from Scripture the proper understanding to refute the heretics.    Thus, CREEDS and STATEMENTS OF FAITH are a helpful tool to distinguish between false doctrine and sound doctrine.

            The church is to be the **pillar and support for the truth** (1 Tim. 3:15).

            3) CHALLENGE:

                        a) read through the Bible this year;   regular family devotions.

                        b) The REPETITION method:  Joe Carter

**1. Choose a book of the Bible.  2. Read it in its entirety.  3. Repeat step #2 five to ten times.  4. Repeat this process for all books of the Bible.**

The benefits of following this process should therefore be obvious. By fully immersing yourself into the text you'll come to truly *know* the text. You'll deepen your understanding of each book and knowledge of the Bible as a whole which will sharpen your Christian worldview and impart to you many of the blessings of the Word of God.

1.**Choose shorter books and work up to longer ones.**

2.**Read at your normal pace.**   Read for comprehension.

            3.**Skip the commentaries (for now).**

 4.**Stick with the process.**After the sixth or seventh reading you'll hit a wall that is similar to what runners face in marathons, especially in the longer books. The text will become dry and lose its flavor.

5. **Don’t Make it Either/Or.**Do you have a Bible reading plan you’re already using? Consider sticking with it and adding this method as an additional reading. Rather than choosing between two reading plans, consider how you might free up more time in your daily routine to engage with Scripture.

6.**Pray.**Ask God to open your heart to his Word. Trust the Holy Spirit to illuminate the text and provide guidance and understanding.

**7. Begin today.**Don't put it off another day. Don't say you'll start tomorrow, or next week, or after the New Year's. You won't. Start with the only time that you are guaranteed — today. Use some of the time you'd normally spend  reading blogs to begin this program.

We can **never downplay the importance of Scripture in our lives.**We are to be a learning and studying church.   The HS had just been poured out and **where the Spirit is manifesting His presence in a powerful way, there will be at the core the apostles’ teachings.** “All Scripture is inspired by God”, “men moved by the Spirit”wrote it, and the **Holy Spirit** also is **committed to glorifying Christ,** so the **Holy Spirit always draws our attention to Scriptures to reveal to us the glory of Christ.**

**If you are Spirit-filled, you will be drawn to the Bible.** Sometimes we need to **pray,** Lord draw me more to the Scriptures, help my weakness and dull spirit.

**The church is a fellowship where the Bible is loved, read, studied and obeyed.** We are to be **BEREANS** who searched the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11). This is A **LAMP** TO OUR FEET and a **LIGHT** FOR OUR PATH (Ps. 119:105).   **We cannot get enough truth.   We can get too much of many good things**, too much **food** especially desserts,too much **rain** makes a flood, too much **sunshine** makes a desert, **but we cannot have too much of the Word.**