

Intro: What a perfect song for what we are going to be looking at today. Based on the Apostles Creed!
Formalized in 700's (1300-1400 years old) and the roots of it go back in some scholars minds to the 2nd or 3rd century
What you have in that song...and in the creed itself is an incredible statement of belief...used for 13 or 14 Centuries!

Acts 2:42-47 Page 772

As we continue our study of the 7 Marks Of A New Testament Church, you come across the third mark of a NT Church
Apostolic Teaching:

- Evangelistic Proclamation
- Christian Baptism
- Apostolic Teaching
- Genuine Relationships
- Christ Centered Gatherings
- Fervent Prayer
- Sacrificial Living

1. Notice the ATTITUDE of The Early Church Toward The Apostles Teaching.

Devoted: Lit = *steady persistence; to persist obstinately in; to adhere firmly to*
Used a number of times to talk about the way we should pray!

3 ways of thinking about that word

- Received the word: Parable of Sower: Mt 13; To open your heart and embrace, to take it in and hold onto
And the people were responding Acts 2 3000 men...Acts 4 5000 Acts 5 "Filled Jerusalem!
- Retained the word: It is one thing to hear it...and to be open to it...Quite another to RETAIN it!
Again, the Parable of the Sower tells us how we are to respond:
Mt 13:2ff *Hold on to it and don't let it be snatched away or choked out!*
1st...Doesn't hold on to it *Bounces off*
2nd and 3rd Took Root... *Produced no fruit!*
Luke is telling us....they heard it...received it...and ALLOWED IT TO TAKE ROOT!
2Tim 2:2 "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to
reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others." (deposit)
- Acted on it: They didn't just Hear it, Receive it, Retain it...PUT IT INTO PRACTICE!
Jesus said that: Mt 7:24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts
them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."
Heb 5:14 "Who by constant USE have trained themselves..."
Writing to those who are NOT yet where they SHOULD BE...telling how to get there!

Applic: Hear, Embrace, Implement!

2. Pay Attention To The CONTENT of The Apostles Teaching.

Now, there really isn't in the NT a book which compiles a comprehensive list of the things the Apostles taught!
There is something similar: The Didache: 1st or 2nd century "handbook" kind of a "how to do church" book
But, there is no place where everything is compiled...not like an appendix at the end of your bible!
What we do...is we look at what they actually taught...and we piece it together.

3 Parts of NT Apostolic Teaching

- Primary Use of OT!
This catches a LOT of us off guard...but, keep this in mind. The OT was the Scripture they had!
When you pause to examine what that means you discover something amazing...something most us don't know.
Early on, the teaching that the Apostles did...was almost entirely from the OT! WHY?
1. The NT has NOT yet been written! 1 Cor didn't show up until the earliest about 50ad...most 55...15-20 years later
The Gospels after that! (Mark @ 70ad; Matt and Luke 80-90; John 90-110am)
- 2. The people they were primarily talking to were Jewish...and if they were going to reach them, had to do so through OT!
They could TELL the story of Jesus...and they did...but the religion of the day/culture was Jewish...

Illus: The very first sermon of the church: Peter in Acts 2: His text was from Prophet Joel...and 2 from Psalms!
The second sermon Acts 3 Quoted Moses and Abraham (From Genesis)
Third sermon Acts 4 Psalms
Fourth sermon (Steven) Acts 7 Whole Pentateuch (story) AND Amos and Isaiah!
Now, they INCLUDED the Gospel story...but the Scripture they depended upon...was OT...All they hand..Used it!

- Inclusion of what they Personally knew and experienced in their walk with Jesus
Again, Go and look at the sermons...and it is So very clear!
2:29-36 *This Jesus, whom you crucified!*
3:12-16 *You handed him over, you disowned, you traded for a murderer, you killed him, God raised!*
4:10 *This Jesus whom you crucified and whom God raised!*
Acts 20:25 Paul farewell to Ephesian Elders "Words of Lord Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive!"
Interesting point...NO WHERE IN GOSPELS!
They were including in their teaching to the early church the things they PERSONALLY knew about Jesus!

- **Teaching Of Paul:** Paul included in his Apostolic teaching the things he got directly from Jesus!
Gal 1:11-21
He got it by “revelation” Lit = *to take off the cover, to reveal, to disclose what was hidden*
I didn’t “receive” it...and I wasn’t “taught” it...but Jesus gave it to me directly
(Just a caution here...unless you are Paul...you don’t get to say that!)
So then, Apostolic Teaching is made up of all three of those things

Applic: If we say...Oh, I just want to read the NT...then we are limiting ourselves to much less than Apostolic Teaching

3. Notice When And Where Apostolic Teaching Took Place.

4 locations we find it happening in the book of Acts

- **Christ Centered Gatherings:** When they came together in Corporate worship!
Vs 46: Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts
The EARLIEST “church” building...was the Jewish temple! Until they got ran out of town!
We do that...in fact...that is what we are doing right now!
- **House to House:**
Acts 20:20 Another Summary
Vs 20: I have taught you publically and from house to house!
That is what we do with our small groups!
- **1 to 1 Mentoring**
This is when one person takes another and “disciples” him or her!
Acts 18:24-27 Apollos: Enthusiastic but not Equipped
Priscilla and Aquilla pulled him aside, instructed him....Sent him on his way
That is what I am doing when I meet with my Spiritual Director
(Why do I talk about him so much? Bromance? Incredible spiritual impact on my life!)
- **Personal Study**
Paul in Gal 1
Particular Pastor I have seen on TV...Not my theological persuasion... Jack Hayford
But every single time I hear him... “he has been with Jesus” Acts 4:13 Peter and John

CONCL: Willow Creek

- Huge conference...literally 1000’s of Pastors from all over country
- Dozens of denominations
- Big Reveal...We have found THE SECRET to Spiritual Growth and maturity
- Paid the best research firm in the country...
- Interviewed tens of thousands of Christians
- Statistically compared the results...
- WE HAVE THE ANSWER>>>WE HAVE THE SECRET TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND MATURITY

People who read the bible...and study it....grow...those who don’t...DON’T!
I was there with about a dozen other Baptist pastors (People of the book)

3 Questions:

What is your ATTITUDE toward Word of God? Absolutely essential?

Your attitude and approach to the word of God will absolutely determine your spiritual growth and maturity

Do you have specific CONTENT? Are you building into your life the things you need to know?

How are you doing it?

- ~Corporate
- ~House to House...small group
- ~Discipler
- ~Personal study of God’s word

Consider adding one to what you are already doing!

APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.