

GOODNEWS LETTER

Number 301 January 6, 2010

A PRESCRIBED ROUTINE

If you're not too busy for the next 12 months, let me invite you to join in on Trinity's regular course of action of **READING GOD'S WORD**, the Bible, through each year.

I've forgotten how long its been but, over the last decade - say, 7-10 years, a few at **Trinity Missionary Baptist** have made Bible reading a standard procedure. We expect the number to grow this year. So, if you're ready, let's get started, then!

THE APPROACH - Incentives help! So, break the routine up!

Start with the Minor Prophets or, a small section. Proverbs is good place to begin. At the end of each section of information, you'll discover that there's always a reward of sorts; a bit of pay back. Its like the job is done and God was honored. While, our spirit is lifted up through His word, we are strongly aware that He does the touching and the lifting.

INVOLVE YOURSELF - Don't Be Passive!

I'm a personal kind of guy. I mean, I believe God loves ME in every way. He adjusts the weather and makes the stock market go up down just because of me. I see His blessing in both, the physical and spiritual areas.

And, so it is after reading His history. I can't help it! I must get involved with the Israelites. There I am, walking in their midst as we go through the **challenged-filled** wilderness. When I read of their trials and victories, it's like rubbing elbows with them. I'm helping Moses pitch the Tabernacle or, standing right next to Azariah, Mishael and Hananiah (3 Hebrews, Dan. 1:11). And, I don't feel any heat, either!

Reading God's word in this personal way helps me because, I'm more of a scanner than a natural reader. I'm a Headline man. I don't read novels and, non-Biblical details bother me.

Yet, after completing a section of God's word, I'm ready for Solomon to assign me a job constructing his Temple. I'll lay the "**pillars of bronze**" for the porch or, twist some "**threads of chainwork**" for the capitals (I Kgs. 6-8), anything!

PAY BACK IS GREAT BUT KEEP GOING - From Minor to Major After the Minor Prophets are read, we have 12 books of God's word is in our heart-bank account.

Yes! Hoshea & Joel are small in content and it doesn't take much time but, right after Zechariah, a great feeling overwhelms our hearts. *We're on our way!*

After twelve of God's transcribed letters are read and transferred to my heart, the routine is set. Together with God, we're on a journey, looking for the city with Abraham.

Reading His Word becomes a spiritual time-line of His work, for me. And, I am amazed, at every stop and start of it.! That which I don't naturally have a hankering to do (read), now tugs on my heart. In a hurry, I get back with God and His way of life. Why, I even start looking forward to Ezekiel, Jeremiah and that massive book, Leviticus.

And, with twelve books read, there's only 27 more Old Testament books to go. The Old Testament no longer a threat and takes on a new look. The slingshot has fired and Goliath is on the ground. All enemies are subdued; even, the Philistines. All I see is the river **Jordan** and the **Promise-Land** up ahead. Reading God's word will do that to a heart!

READ EVERY WORD - Pronounce everyone's name as if it's you!

Don't skip portions because of unfamiliarity. I use a New American Standard Version for my yearly reading. It's smoother! While, we are reading for content and clarity, Scripture doesn't have to be written in William Shakespeare wordage to be grasped.

Sometimes, God's word has difficult parts. The begets are trying; but, if your name was on the list of generations, wouldn't you seek it out? You betcha would! **"LOOK!"** You'd shout. **"There's me. That's my name!"**

Well, anyone numbered in the genealogical registration is as important as we are; whether, the head of the twelve tribes or a son of one of the Heads. Use a phonetic Bible. It will help when reading names like **Shelumiel (She-lu'mi-el)** or, **Zurishaddai (Zu-ri-shad'-dai)**.

When you come to my name, no diacritical markings are needed. Jim is Jim. So, take a look at who's there and have a Scriptural reunion with each reading. Often, some names become so familiar that I feel like they are my friends.

I tap them on the shoulder as they come around. "Hi, David, Eli and Boaz." I don't think it will be any different in the coming kingdom, either. "Hi, John, Lavon, David and Steve." That's good stuff!

One person that causes me to stop and say "hi" to, is Gehazi (*Ge-ha'zi*, 2Kgs. 5). He was Elisha's servant at the time Naaman was healed.

Unfortunately, my friend was a bit too greedy and, worse, he tried to hide it. Gehazi and his descendants were stricken with leprosy, forever. Bad move but a reading friend, nonetheless.

ALL THE TIME YOU NEED IS AN HOUR, THREE TIMES A WEEK

Keep a record 'cause, if you're like me, you'll forget where you are. Your mind might think you are still in Egypt but the record sheet shows that you crossed the Red Sea, way back there. In fact, you've been in the promise land for some time, now. So, check the reading record.

What ever you do, don't chase rabbits! Remember, its reading time. So, just read! It's tempting to go off on all those great types and numerical symbols. It's especially difficult to stay put when Daniel is read. But, don't budge! Write a note on the thought for a later study time. Just read the book. It'll do you good.

Email me on your progress, brothers and sisters. I'll attempt to say something in the GoodNews Letter, as well.

God bless all!