

Charles Spurgeon on the Sweetness of Tasting God's Word

When you taste honey—and Winnie the Pooh will back me up on this—you naturally want more of it. When you taste God's Words, you naturally want more of them!

While it's true that Scripture is nourishing, the thought of nourishment alone won't bring us to the table. We need to actively cultivate our taste for God and His Word, and experience its sweetness for ourselves.

A. W. Tozer wrote in *The Pursuit of God*, "The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may enter into Him, that they may delight in His Presence, may taste and know the inner sweetness of the very God Himself in the core and center of their hearts."

That's exactly what we're told to do in Scripture: "Taste and see that the LORD is good. How happy is the person who takes refuge in him!" (Psalm 34:8, CSB).

In the introduction to his sermon on Psalm 119:103, Charles Spurgeon encourages his listeners to actively "taste" God's Word. May we too experience the sweetness of Scripture—today and every day! —Randy Alcorn



BY CHARLES SPURGEON

"How sweet are Your Words unto my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Psalm 119:103).

...Do you not think that two of the words in our text are very strange? If you had written them, would you not have said, "How sweet are Your Words unto my ears"? The Psalmist says, "How sweet are Your Words unto my palate!" for that is the word in the margin. ...Are words, then, things that we can taste and eat? No, not if they are the words of man—it would take many of our words to fill a hungry belly. ...man's words are air and airy, light and

frothy. They often deceive, they mock, they awaken hopes which are never realized. But God's Words are full of substance—they are spirit, they are life, they are to be fed upon by the spiritually hungry!

Marvel not that I say this to you! It was God's Word that made us—is it any wonder that His Word should sustain us? If His Word gives life, do you wonder that His Word should also give food for that life? Marvel not, for it is written—"Man shall not live by bread, alone, but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." God's Words are meat, drink, and food—and if bodies live not upon words—souls

and spirits feed upon the Words of God, and so are satisfied and full of delight! This is the language of an eater as well as of a hearer—of one who heard the words and then ate the words.

...I like this way of describing the reception of God's Word as a matter of eating, for a man cannot eat God's Word without living! He that takes it into himself must live thereby. There is a reality about the faith which eats. There is a something there most sure which contains the elements of salvation, for tasting is a spiritual sense which implies

nearness. You can hear at a great distance by means of the telephone, but, somehow, I do not think that anyone will invent an electrical taster. Nobody knows what may be done, but I fancy that I shall never be able to eat anything in New York. I think that we shall hardly ever reach such a triumph of science

as that! There will always have to be a measure of nearness if we are to taste anything and so it is with God's Word. If we hear it, it is music in the ears, but still it may seem to be at a distance from us. We may not get a grip and grasp of it—but if we taste it—that means that we really have it here within ourselves! Then has it come very near to us and we enter into fellowship with the God who gave it.

This idea of tasting God's Word contains the thought of receptiveness. A man may hear a thing and, as we say, it goes in one ear and out the other,

and so it often does, but that which a man gets into his mouth till he tastes it, and it is sweet to his palate, well, he has truly received that. If it is sweet to him, he will not do as they who have something lukewarm, which is objectionable, which they cast away out of their mouth. But when he finds it palatable, the sweetness will make him keep it where it is till he swallows it down into his inward parts.

...Tasting is also a personal matter. "Friends, Romans, countrymen," said Mark Anthony, in his oration over the body of Caesar, "lend me your ears!" And

they go to be lent and numbers of people hear for others. But tasting, surely, is a personal business—there is no possibility of my eating for you! If you choose to starve yourself by a long fast of 50 days, so you must. If I were to sit down and industriously attempt to eat your portion of food, and my own, too, it would not help you in the least! You must eat for yourselves and there is no knowing the value of God's Word till you eat it for yourself. You must personally believe it, personally trust to it, personally receive it into your innermost spirit, or else you cannot know anything about its power to bless and to sustain! I do pray, dear Friends, that we may, every one of us, tonight, understand what the Psalmist meant when he spoke of tasting God's Words and of finding them sweeter than honey to his mouth. ■

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There is no knowing the value of God's Word till you eat it for yourself.

Updates on Nanci Alcorn

The Alcorns deeply appreciate your continued prayers for Nanci's health. She had several tests done in early May. Read the latest updates at caringbridge.org/visit/nancialcorn.



Mincaye Is with Jesus

On April 28, Mincaye, the former warrior who in 1956 speared to death two of the five missionary martyrs in Ecuador, and who later came to faith, went to be with Jesus. Don't miss Randy's tribute at epm.org/mincaye.

