

Tasty Goodness

*If you want to view paradise
Simply look around and view it
Anything you want to, do it
Wanta change the world?
There's nothing to it*

You may recognize those as the lyrics to the song *Pure Imagination* from “Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory.” Willy Wonka sings this song as the children explore an enormous room filled with wondrous trees and bushes and flowers where, he says, “Almost everything you'll see is eatable, edible. I mean, you can eat almost everything.” The children rush forward, eager to taste all they can.

God offers us an even more wondrous taste so that if we truly want to experience paradise, all we need to do is “taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psalm 34:8). This week, we will explore what it means to crave God’s goodness, to take in spiritual nourishment and grow as we deepen our relationship with Jesus.

Monday – Good Riddance

“While we are looking at God, we do not see ourselves -- blessed riddance. The man who has struggled to purify himself and has had nothing but repeated failures will experience real relief when he stops tinkering with his soul and looks away to the perfect One.” A.W. Tozer, 20th c. American pastor and writer

1. Please read 1 Peter 2:1-3. How does verse 1 apply to you? What steps can you take to carry this out?
2. What types of things in your own life have been on the lists in Galatians 5:19-21 and Colossians 3:5-8?
3. What assurance do you find in Colossians 3:1-4 and 12-17 regarding the ability to cast off sin?

Making it Personal: Pray that God will cause the word of Christ to dwell in you richly so that you will grow in wisdom and righteousness.

Tuesday – Spiritual Cravings

“Vainer his voice in whom no longer dwells hunger that craves immortal Bread and Wine.” Joyce Kilmer, 19th-20th c. American poet

1. Please read 1 Peter 2:2. What do you think it means to crave spiritual milk? How might it help you grow up in your salvation?
2. According to Hebrews 5:11-6:3, how can you recognize spiritual maturity? When have you seen this in your own life?

Making it Personal: Do you crave spiritual things: a close relationship with God, opportunities to study his word, serving others as Jesus calls us to, etc.? Pray that God will grow these and other spiritual desires in you.

Wednesday – Craving the King

“Preach Christ, the Food of hungry human hearts.” Robert Hammond Adams, 20th c. American pastor

1. Please read Matthew 6:19-24. What is merely temporary in your own life? What has Jesus offered you that is secure and of lasting value? How have you experienced this?
2. Now look at Matthew 6:25-31. What is it you worry about? Why do you focus on these things?
3. What answer do you find in Matthew 6:32-34 for the things you worry about or crave?

Digging Deeper (optional): Read Psalm 55:1-23 and note the things that troubled the psalmist. How did he rely on God at various points in the psalm?

Thursday – Tasting the Goodness, part one

“I will not believe that thou hast tasted of the honey of the gospel if thou can eat it all to thyself.” Charles Spurgeon, 19th c. British pastor

1. Please read 1 Peter 2:3. What do you think it means to taste God’s goodness?
2. How can you apply the wisdom found in Psalm 34:1-9 to your own life?
3. What advice and promise are found in Proverbs 3:5-6? When have you experienced this?

Making it Personal: Pray that God will give you a taste for his goodness, so that you will seek him always.

Friday – Tasting the Goodness, part two

“The joy of the Lord will arm us against the assaults of our spiritual enemies and put our mouths out of taste for those pleasures with which the tempter baits his hooks.” Matthew Henry, 17th-18th c. British pastor

1. Please read Mark 10:17-22. When have you felt like this man who came to Jesus, thinking you were doing so well and then realizing you had much farther to go – perhaps farther than you were willing?
2. Why do you think Jesus’ followers reacted as they did in Mark 10:22-26? What assurance did Jesus give them in verse 27?

Text Insight: In Jewish society at that time, wealth was thought to be proof of God’s blessing and approval.

3. Now look at Mark 10:28-34. Why might Peter have made his statement in verse 28? What do you think the disciples would have thought on hearing Jesus’ response in verses 29-34?

Making it Personal: Are you more like Peter or the wealthy man in your attitude toward God? How?

For the Weekend: Re-read 1 Peter 2:1-3. Spend some time in prayer for God’s guidance in growing in him.