

Text: 1 Pt 2.3

Last week we talked about the command to crave

“milk of the word” NAU, KJV

“spiritual milk” ESV, NET, ASV, NIV

“the pure mental milk of the word” (Darby)

“the rational milk without guile” (Douay-Rheims)

“that reasonable mylke which is with out corrupcion” (Tyndale)

We learned that we can’t develop this craving in an atmosphere of **malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, or slander**, so we must rid ourselves of these even as we develop the craving for “spiritual milk” or the “milk of the word.”

The things we must rid ourselves of are attitudes (primarily). They are the cloaks we wrap around our hearts to keep the light out.

Remember, in defining the “milk of the word,” I included **the spiritual things: sermons, hymns, worship services**, along with the actual Word itself.

If you have a cynical attitude, you will find yourself questioning authority, truth, and all these spiritual inputs.

For example, I’ve found myself resisting something a preacher said in a sermon. His message is from the word of God, he isn’t contradicting the word... on the contrary, he is simply preaching and applying the word.

What does my resisting heart do? Well, it might

assign an evil motive to the speaker: “who is he to talk?”

deceive me: “that’s really not me” which leads to a cloak of hypocrisy

or even speak evil of the preacher

We can do all of that with the very word of God itself.

Well, that’s last week’s message.

But I didn’t give the full picture last week. I left off a vital part of the sentence, verse 3.

Read 1 Pt 2.1-3

Remember, I also told you that this is in an unusual word order for English, and we could read it backwards and still make sense.

Read 1 Pt 2. 3, 2, 1

Verse 3 is the first idea of the sentence – it’s a conditional statement. Peter states it *last* for emphasis.

I. Understanding the conditional statement

A. The first-class condition and its assumption of the fact

Another grammar lesson!

1. The first-class condition assumes one of two concepts
 - a. That the “if” statement is a fact, or...
 - b. Assumes that the “if” statement is a fact for the sake of argument (it may or may not be a fact)
2. Beginning Greek students are taught to translate 1st class conditions with “since”

“[Since] you have tasted the kindness of the Lord”

3. This approach helps a student, but it sometimes misses the point

B. The condition of this conditional statement: “you have tasted the kindness of the Lord”

1. Tasting:
 - a. “‘partake of someth. by mouth’, liquid or solid”
 - b. “By extension, in imagery of experiencing or coming to know someth. esp. death)”¹
2. The kindness of the Lord (KJV = “the Lord is gracious”)
 - a. KJV a bit more accurate here, ESV “the Lord is good”
 - b. The idea is that someone has tried the Lord out and found that he is good
 - c. Every Christian has done this:
 - 1) They saw they could not save themselves
 - 2) They saw the Lord did all to save them

¹ Frederick William Danker and Kathryn Krug, *The Concise Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 2009).

3) They called on his name and he heard them

Our testimony: “the Lord **IS** good”

C. Putting this in a conditional statement makes it sound like it is uncertain

if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord

1. Have you?

2. Are you sure?

As a conditional statement, this is a little unsettling... but there is more

II. Identifying the uncertainty

A. The mistake of the 1st year Greek student: “don’t use ‘since’”

1. As noted, we could translate with since (a little crutch for 1st yr Gk students)

“[Since] you have tasted the kindness of the Lord”

2. The problem is that it takes the “punch” out of the verse

B. A comparison passage

^{1Th 4.14} For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

Wallace: “Many modern translations render the particle *since*. Although it is certainly true that Paul embraced this as true, to translate it as *since* keeps the audience at an arm’s length. The sentence becomes **a lecture rather than a dialogue**. By translating it *if*, the audience is drawn into the argument of the apodosis. Their response would be something like, ‘If we believe that Jesus died and rose again? Of course we believe that! You mean that this indicates that the dead in Christ will not miss out on the rapture?’ In such instances it is not the [“if”] that is in doubt, but the [“then”]. ... Not infrequently in the NT, the speaker draws his audience to just such a connection, basing his argument on what both speaker and audience already embrace as true. These instances are not without exegetical significance.”²

² Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 694.

- C. If we translate our verse with “since” we are just lecturing
1. Since you have tasted the kindness of the Lord
 2. Then crave the sincere milk of the word
 3. Putting off malice etc.
- D. However, don’t miss Wallace’s point: it is the “then” statement that is uncertain
1. “If you have tasted the kindness of the Lord” [unexpressed, “of course we have”]
 2. THEN “crave the sincere milk of the word”

Here is the uncertainty — will you do this? Will you crave “soul food?”

III. Repenting our self-sufficiency

- A. Our problem when it comes to the word of God is self-sufficiency
1. The very first temptation in the garden appealed to human self-sufficiency
 - a. You can see the fruit is good
 - b. You know it will give you knowledge (knowledge is good, right)
 - c. You should take advantage of this (God is holding out on you)
 2. In many ways, every temptation is a temptation to operate independently of God, to be self-sufficient
- B. The fact is, we desperately need our God: we need to depend on him
1. We need to CRAVE the word
 2. If our attitudes prevent that, get rid of the attitudes
 3. Crave the Word ... because ... ***we have tasted the goodness of the Lord!!***

Conclusion:

What we need to do, then, is cultivate a taste for the sincere milk of the word.

- Purge the inner man of the destructive spirit
- Fill the inner man with the life giving word