

Taste and see – 22/05/2016

***“O taste and see that the Lord is good;
How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!
⁹ O fear the Lord, you His saints;
For to those who fear Him there is no want.” (Psalm 34:8-9)***

Beloved in the Lord,

We often miss out on good things in life simply because we have some prejudice or pre-conditioned idea about things that cause us to not try them. I have in my hand an Avocado. For many years I did not eat Avocados. I had in mind that they were not very nice, and also that they were not really food for men. They were something only ladies ate. I had tasted one once or twice and hadn't really liked it. Probably because I approached it with a negative mind set I didn't like it.

A few years ago I read about the many health benefits of eating Avocados. I decided to give them another go. This time I thought they were ok, because I had a more positive mind set. Now I really love Avocados, and recently felt lost because there was a shortage of supply for a while.

The taste of Avocado hadn't changed, what had changed was my mind set. I had gotten rid of my pre conceived prejudices, and had learned that they were actually good for my health. Knowing that, I now like the taste.

Faith is a lot like an Avocado. Many people have a negative mind set toward Christianity and so they don't come to Church, and they don't live in faith. Most of the negative mind set is not based on fact but on some pre conceived ideas about God and the Church. Some may have even tried Church once or twice and given it up because they didn't really like it.

David writes: ***“ O taste and see that the Lord is good.”*** It is not enough to stick your finger in and have a little sample and then form a concrete view. You need to really taste and see. You need to come to God laying aside all pre conceived ideas. That is not so easy to do, especially if they have been in your mind for a long time. However, with God's help all things are possible.

A person who really comes to God in faith through Jesus Christ, who really tastes His Word, quickly finds that The Lord is Good. God is good. He is love. God is Truth. All of His ways are good and right – always. His thoughts towards His children are always good. That is why David writes: ***“O taste and see that the Lord is good.”***

In order to really taste and see, you need to surrender fully to God. To pray now and then, to read the Bible now and then, to come to Church occasionally doesn't cut it. That is just sampling and not really tasting. There is a vast difference between a dip and a full blown meal.

May 22, 2016

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David had fully immersed himself in God. He had really tasted God's ways and he wrote that He was never disappointed by God. We see this in the preceding verses of the Psalm:

"I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

² My soul will make its boast in the Lord; The humble will hear it and rejoice.

³ O magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together.

⁴ I sought the Lord, and He answered me, And delivered me from all my fears.

⁵ They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces will never be ashamed.

⁶ This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him And saved him out of all his troubles.

⁷ The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, And rescues them.

⁸ O taste and see that the Lord is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

⁹ O fear the Lord, you His saints; For How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

¹⁰ The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; But they who seek the Lord shall not be in want of any good thing." (Ps.34:1-10)

These words are true. The one who relies upon and trusts in the Lord – lacks nothing.

A quick bit of research uncovered at least 12 health benefits of eating Avocados. But as my aim today is not to promote Avocados, I won't go into those. A careful study of Psalm 34 uncovered at least 17 reasons of why we should trust God – 17 health benefits of faith in God. These I will briefly reveal to you, because I want you to see that the Lord is good.

Here we go: All of these come from Psalm 34.

- 1. I sought the Lord, and He answered me.*** Jesus taught the same in His sermon on the mount when He said: "Ask and it shall be given unto you; Seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you."
- 2. He delivered me from all my fears.*** All throughout Scripture we see this truth, that God delivers His people from all fears.
- 3. They looked to Him and were radiant.*** The one who trusts in God – shines. When Moses came out of God's presence, his face shone. When we are in God's presence we radiate His love and glory.
- 4. Their faces will never be ashamed.*** God exalts the one who humbles himself. At the end of time all who are His will be exalted to a very high position reigning with Christ.
- 5. And saved him out of all his troubles.*** David experienced many troubles, but the Lord saved him every time he looked to Him. Paul also reaffirmed this in his letters.
- 6. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him and rescues them.*** This is so beautifully spelt out in Psalm 91, where we read that angels are God's messengers who protect us. The Angel of the Lord is also a reference to The Lord Jesus Christ. He has rescued us from sin and death with His own precious and Holy blood.
- 7. How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!*** Read Psalm 1 and you will find that the one who trusts in God is alike a tree planted by the waters that bears fruit in its season and whose leaves do not wither. He prospers in all he does.

8. ***For to those who fear Him there is no want.*** Paul writing to the Philippians promised that God would supply all our needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus the Lord.
9. ***But they who seek the Lord shall not be in want of any good thing.*** Jesus taught that a father would not give his son a stone when he asks for bread. He then said, if our earthly fathers know how to give good things to their children, how much more would the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who love Him.
10. ***And His ears are open to their cry.*** We read this truth over and over in the Scriptures. We too, no doubt have experienced this truth also. When we cry out to God, He hears our cry. We read in the Gospels how Jesus had compassion on those who cried out to Him.
11. ***And delivers them out of all their troubles.*** Jesus invites us to lay all of our troubles and burdens upon Him. He promises to take the burden from us.
12. ***The Lord is near.*** Jesus said that He is with us always to the close of the age. The Bible also tells us that God draws near to those who draw near to Him. What a comfort and blessing to know that the Lord is near.
13. ***The Lord is near to the broken-hearted And saves those who are crushed in spirit.*** He is the only one who can really help us at those times and grant us true hope and peace. **Jesus said: Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.(Jn.14:27)**
14. ***Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all.*** Paul had many afflictions and yet he wrote that the present sufferings are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed when Jesus comes. The Lord gives us peace and hope and delivers us from all afflictions.
15. ***He keeps all his bones.*** When we live in faith then it has benefits for our physical body. A healthy spirit leads also to a healthy body. Certainly the opposite is true. One of the biggest killers in modern times is stress.
16. ***The Lord redeems the soul of His servants.*** You see faith in God has eternal benefits, not only for this life but forever. When we are in Christ, He redeems our soul and our soul will live eternally in the Father's house.
17. ***And none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned.*** To that I say Amen!

So are you convinced? Do you see that the Lord is good? Taste and see for yourself. These are not my words, but God's.

And for your general well being eat Avocados as well!

Amen.

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.***