

Taste and See! - Part 1

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Date: 24 June 2018

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[0 : 00] Well, if we could, this evening, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, we could turn back to that portion of Scripture that we read in the book of Psalms and Psalm 34.

Psalm 34, and if we read again at verse 8. Psalm 34, at verse 8, where David says, O taste and see that the Lord is good.

Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. Taste and see that the Lord is good. Amen. When I say the word marmite, you will either smile with joy because you think marmite tastes lovely, or you'll screw up your face at the thought of smelling that stuff.

And it's through what they say about marmite, you either love it or you hate it. Now, I'm not going to ask you your opinion of marmite, but I would be in the hated camp. But I'm sure that there would be some people, maybe there's some people in here, who are in the hated camp, but they've never actually tried marmite for themselves.

Because just the thought of marmite and what marmite is, it would be enough to put them off. But you know, I have tasted marmite, and well, it's not very nice. But as the saying goes, don't knock it until you've tried it.

[1 : 37] Don't knock it until you've tried it. In other words, you can't criticize something or reject something without having experienced it first. You have to give it a chance.

You have to try it. You have to experience it. And you know, for some people, they see Christianity or being a Christian a bit like marmite. They either love it or they hate it.

But those who hate Christianity, or they don't like the thought of being a Christian, they say that without ever having experienced it. They dismiss Christianity straight away and claim that it's not for them.

It's not what they want. It's not what they need in their life, maybe just now at this present moment. And sadly, they knock it without having tried it.

But you know, what David reminds us here in Psalm 34 is that the only way you're going to know the goodness, the faithfulness, the forgiveness, and even the blessing of God, the only way you're going to know what it's like to be a Christian is to be a Christian.

[2 : 42] The only way you're going to know what it's like to be a Christian is to confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior and commit your life to Him. Because you can't knock it until you've tried it.

You can't reject Christianity and being a Christian without understanding what it's all about. You can't reject Jesus Christ without first coming to know who He is and what He's like and what He's able to do in your life.

And that's why David urges us here in verse 8. He says, Oh, taste and see that God is good. Who trusts in Him is blessed. David is urging us, especially if you're not a Christian.

David is urging you to come and taste and see how good the Lord is. Because the only way you're ever going to know the goodness, the faithfulness, the forgiveness, and the blessing of God, the only way you're ever going to know what it's like to be a Christian is to be a Christian.

The only way you're going to know what it's like to be a Christian is to confess Jesus as your Lord and Savior and commit your life to Him. And that's what David is testifying here in Psalm 34.

[3 : 54] Because Psalm 34 is the testimony of David. And I know that most of us here, we like to hear testimonies. We like to hear about how people came to know the Lord and how the Lord worked in their life.

Well, Psalm 34 is David's testimony. But in this Psalm, David, he isn't testifying about how he became a Christian. No, David is testifying about how the Lord has worked in his life as a Christian. And David does all this so that we will see how good and how faithful the Lord is so that we will praise and magnify the Lord together.

And you know, that's how David begins this Psalm. He testifies about the Lord. He says in verse 1, And in these opening words, you can see and you can even feel that David wants everyone everywhere to see how good and how faithful the Lord is.

He wants us all to come and exhort the Lord together. In verses 1 to 3, David wants us to magnify and praise the Lord.

[5 : 23] But then in verses 4 to 12, David explains why we should praise and magnify the Lord. And I'd like us to consider these verses this evening, verses 4 to 12.

But then on Wednesday evening, we will consider the rest of the Psalm. Verses 13 to 22. And of course, well, you're all invited to come to hear part 2 on Wednesday evening.

But this evening, I'd like us to consider verses 4 to 12. And I'd like us to consider these verses under three headings. David troubling, David testing, and David teaching.

David troubling, David testing, and David teaching. So we look first of all at David troubling. David troubling. Look at verse 4. David, this is his testimony.

I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

[6 : 29] The angel of the Lord encamps round those who fear him, and delivers them. And so by exhorting us to praise and magnify the Lord in the opening three verses, David now explains why.

David explains why he wants us to praise and magnify the Lord. David explains why he wants everyone everywhere to see how good and how faithful the Lord is.

And David, as David said in verse 6, that it's because the Lord delivers us from trouble. This poor man cried. The Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

Now, the specific trouble that David is referring to is what's written in the title. The title of the psalm. Because the title says, A Psalm of David.

And then after that, we're told that the title is all about, or the psalm was written when David changed his behavior before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.

[7 : 33] And that occasion in David's life, it's recorded for us in 1 Samuel 21. And it's a time in David's life when David was on the run from King Saul.

And as you know, King Saul, he was jealous of David, because Saul knew that David was the man after God's own heart. Saul knew that one day David would succeed him to the throne in Israel.

And for that reason, it was out of jealousy and hatred for David that Saul was constantly trying to kill David, and David was always on the run. And in 1 Samuel 21, David flees to Gath.

Gath was the place where Goliath was from. But by that time, David had killed Goliath. And David, he's now hiding in Philistine territory.

He's in enemy territory. And David, he ends up in the palace of this king called Achish. He was from the dynasty of Abimelech, which is why Abimelech is mentioned in the title here.

[8 : 39] But David ends up in the palace of King Achish. And David hopes that he will go unrecognized. But what David very quickly realizes is that he has been recognized.

He's been recognized by the servants of the king. And the servants of the king, they say to King Achish, is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another of him in dances? Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And as soon as David knew that the servants of the king recognized him, David was terrified.

He was afraid of what the king would do to him. Because everyone knew that David was going to be the next king in Israel. Everyone knew that he had killed the great Goliath of Gath.

And so if King Achish, if he knew that David was in his palace, he would have killed him immediately. But you know what happens next in the narrative is almost unimaginable.

[9 : 40] Because when David discovers that his identity is known, David pretends to be a madman. David pretends to be completely insane.

And he acts like an animal, so that King Achish won't even look at him and recognize him. And we're told in the passage of 1 Samuel 21, it says, And then we're told, King Achish sent David away.

And you know, we've all heard of the phrase, a moment of madness. But that's what it was for David. It was a moment of madness. Because what David realized was that if the king knew who he was, the king would kill him.

So David, he pretends to be a madman. He has through running down his beard, and he acts like an animal, scratching at the door. And in one sense, it seems very extreme.

But for David, it was a matter of life and death. And in that moment of madness, the Lord delivers David from death. It's quite an interesting passage to look at.

[11 : 15] But you know, this is what David is testifying here, in verse 4, how the Lord delivered him. He says, I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and he delivered me from all my fears.

David, he had his back against the wall. He didn't know what to do. He didn't have the strength to run. He didn't have the armor to kill the servants. He didn't have the ability to fight.

All David could do, was seek the help of the Lord. He was absolutely helpless. And all he could do, was seek the help of the Lord. And that's what he did. I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears.

And you know, when David says, he sought the Lord, it means that he sought the Lord diligently. He sought the Lord earnestly.

He sought the Lord with all his heart. And the Lord delivered him from all his fears. And his fear, maybe it's a fear that many of us have.

[12 : 16] The fear of dying. And the fear of death. But yet, David says, the Lord delivered him. And you know, my friend, you might wonder, why you're not a Christian tonight.

You might think, well, I've been asking the Lord for many years, to save me from my sin, and deliver me from the power of death. But you know, David reminds us here, that if you really want to be a Christian, if you really want to be delivered, if you really want to be saved, then you need to seek the Lord diligently, earnestly, sincerely, seriously, wholeheartedly.

It can't be half-hearted seeking. It can't be casual commitment. Because the Lord knows our heart. Our lives are an open book before him.

He knows when we're genuine or not. Therefore, if you want to be saved, you have to seek the Lord with all your heart. And this is what David says.

I sought the Lord. He answered me, and delivers me from all my fears. Then he says, those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

[13 : 44] David describes himself as a poor man. He was a madman. He had nothing left to cling to. He had no strength of his own. All he could do was cast himself upon the mercy of the Lord, and plead for safety and security.

All David could do was cry out to the Lord for help. And when he did, the Lord heard him, and the Lord saved him. The Lord was faithful to his promise.

And you know, I remember being told the story about a painter and decorator. Maybe I've told you this story before. This painter and decorator, he was an alcoholic for many years. And as you can imagine, his addiction, it was affecting everyone in his family.

He was still managing to work, and he was still managing to hold down a job, but his alcoholism was becoming progressively worse. But one Sunday evening, this painter and decorator, this man, he went to church, out of habit, like many of you, out of habit.

And during the service, the congregation, they sang Psalm 34, just like we were singing. And as the congregation sang these words, the Lord sent out his word into that man's heart.

[15 : 01] And the words which affected that man, and spoke to him so clearly, were the words of verse 6. This poor man cried. God heard and saved him from all his distresses.

And those words, they were like a balm to his soul, because they healed him. They enabled him to turn away from his alcoholism, and turn to the Lord for help. And these words of Psalm 34, they were so significant to this painter, that he would often write them on the wall of a house, before he would, if he was working in someone's house, he would write these words.

This poor man cried. God heard and saved him from all his distresses. He would write them with pencil, and then he'd put wallpaper over it. And as the years went by, this man, he became an elder in the local congregation.

And it's said that when he was in a particular house, stripping wallpaper off a wall that he had been working on 20 years earlier, he saw the words that the Lord brought healing with.

This poor man cried. God heard and saved him from all his distresses. And in reading those words, it caused him to do, as the psalmist was encouraging us to do here, to praise and magnify the Lord.

[16 : 23] Because you know what that elder discovered, and what everyone discovers, when they cry out to the Lord for help, what they discover is, what we're told in verse 7, the angel of the Lord encamps round those who fear him, and delivers them.

My friend, when you earnestly seek the Lord with all your heart, you will know the peace, the protection, and the presence of the Lord.

And you'll know it all the days of your life. And so the first thing we see here is David troubling.

David troubling. He's delivered from trouble.

But secondly, we see David tasting. David tasting. He says in verse 8, Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.

Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. Oh, fear the Lord, you his saints. For those who fear him have no lack. The young lions suffer want and hunger.

[17 : 25] But those who seek the Lord lack no good thing. You know, what we see in these verses is that David emphasizes to those reading and those singing, which is us, those singing this psalm, he's emphasizing to us that we need to know the Lord's deliverance and salvation for ourselves.

Because it's one thing for David to describe his experience. And it's one thing for him to say what happened to him and what the Lord did for him in his life. But David wants this experience of deliverance and salvation.

David wants this experience of peace and protection and the presence of the Lord. David wants everyone to know this for themselves. My friend, David wants you to know this deliverance and this salvation.

He wants you to know this peace and this protection and the presence of the Lord. He wants you to know it for yourself. And you know, you can sense the urgency that David has.

You can sense the desire and the passion that David has. Because he says, Oh, taste and see that God is good. Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

[18 : 41] Oh, fear the Lord. For those who fear him lack nothing. There's this passion in David's presentation of this psalm that he wants every reader and every singer of this psalm to know and experience the salvation of the Lord.

But David knows that you will never understand what he's talking about unless you seek the Lord with all your heart.

David knows that you will never understand what he's talking about unless you taste and see for yourself. And you know, it's so true. Because it wouldn't matter if I were to describe to you the sweetness of salvation and the wonder of deliverance from sin.

It wouldn't matter if I were to try and explain the joy that's experienced and the peace that's felt and the presence of the Lord that you come to know when you commit your life to Jesus Christ.

And it wouldn't matter because I could never describe it to you fully. Words would fail me. I don't have the right vocabulary to describe what the Lord is able to do in your life when you seek him with all your heart.

[19 : 55] That's why David says, Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good who trusts in him is blessed. Taste and see for yourself, he says.

Another well-known phrase that we often use is some things are better felt than told. Some things are better felt than told.

meaning that sometimes words fail us and we can't describe what we see or what we hear or what we feel. Words often fail us which is why some things are better felt than told.

And David says that's what it's like when it comes to knowing Jesus. Coming to know Jesus as your Lord and Saviour. No words can ever describe the joy and the peace and the love and the forgiveness and the warmth and the closeness and the care and the compassion of Jesus.

Words can't describe these things. You just have to experience it for yourself. And how do you do that? You commit your life to Jesus Christ.

[21 : 06] That's why David says, Oh, taste and see that God is good who trusts in him is blessed. And what David is reminding us is that the only way to taste and see that God is good is by trusting him.

The only way to know the blessing of King Jesus is by taking refuge in him. And you know, I love that word blessed. Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

The word blessed, we've seen it many times in the Psalms before. It literally means to kneel. In the sense of kneeling before a king. And you know, it's describing the person who commits their life to

Jesus Christ.

Where King Jesus, he's standing up from his throne and you, the sinner, you're kneeling in his presence. And you're kneeling before him with your head bowed and your hand outstretched and your heart it's in full submission to King Jesus.

And you're confessing him as Lord and Saviour over your life. And when you do that, you receive from the gracious hand of King Jesus something that you don't deserve.

[22 : 22] You're unworthy to receive it. And yet, King Jesus is graciously and freely giving to you what you don't deserve. He's blessing you.

Giving you eternal life. because blessing it only comes from the gracious and merciful hand of King Jesus. And my friend, when you trust in King Jesus with all your heart, when you take refuge in him, the Bible says to you, you're blessed.

You're blessed with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ. when you trust in Jesus Christ, you graciously receive all the blessings of the King.

You receive an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away and it's reserved in heaven for you.

You receive all the blessings, the blessings of his love, his forgiveness, his grace, his mercy, his peace, his protection, his presence, his promises.

[23 : 32] You're blessed with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ. Do you know what that means? When you're a Christian, you lack nothing.

You lack nothing. And this is what David affirms to us in verses 9 and 10. He says, O fear the Lord, you his saints, for those who fear him have no lack.

The young lions suffer want and hunger, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing. And you know, it's such an interesting illustration that David uses in verse 10.

Because the lion, it's the king of the animal kingdom. The lion is strong and powerful. But there's one thing about a young lion.

A young lion that's growing, it's always hungry. It's never satisfied. Always looking for its next meal. And that's what many people are like without the Lord.

[24 : 35] They're like a hungry young lion. Always hungry for more. Maybe it's more money, more success at work, more for the house, more security, more education, more entertainment, more and more and more.

Always hungry but never satisfied. Never content. But my friend, what David holds out to you is the promise of God's word that those who truly, wholeheartedly, sincerely seek the Lord, they will lack nothing.

They will lack nothing. That doesn't mean that you'll have everything in life. But it does mean that you will be satisfied with Jesus. Because when you have Jesus, you don't need to look for anyone else.

He becomes the lover of your soul. And you know, that's the confession of the Christian. Because those who can truly say the Lord is my shepherd, they can also confess, I shall not be in want.

That when the Lord is your shepherd, you lack nothing because in the good shepherd Jesus Christ, you have every spiritual blessing in heavenly places. And you know, my friend, what David is reminding you here is that it doesn't matter how often the wonder and glory of salvation is presented to you and described to you and pleaded before you, you still have to come.

[26 : 13] You still have to taste. You still have to see for yourself. that's what David is reminding you. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Come, taste and see that the Lord is good. And you know, David goes on to emphasize this in verses 11 and 12. So we've seen David troubling, David tasting, and lastly we see David teaching.

David teaching. He says in verse 11, come, O children, listen to me. I will teach you to fear the fear of the Lord. What man is there who desires life and loves many days that he may see good?

You know, in these verses, David speaks from his own experience. And he speaks to us like a father speaks to his own son. David wants to give us sound advice.

A father would never give to his son foolish advice. He would always give him the best advice.

Advice that will stand the test of time.

[27 : 27] And so for David, this is advice worth listening to. It's advice worth obeying. That's why David says, come, O children, and listen to me. But you know, David, he doesn't really give us an option.

He doesn't say, come and listen if you like. He doesn't say, come and listen when you're ready. He doesn't say, come and listen when you have more time in your life. He doesn't say, come and listen when you feel it's right for you.

No, David is saying to us, like a father to his son, come and listen now. Come and listen now because these words, it's an imperative.

This is a command. This is necessary, he says, for your eternal well-being. Come and listen to me now. And you know, my friend, these words, they might have been written by King David, but they are the living words of Jesus.

And they come with the divine authority of King Jesus who says to us, come, oh children, listen to me.

[28 : 37] I will teach you the fear of the Lord. David knows and Jesus knows that we need to be taught the fear of the Lord because the fear of the Lord, it's the beginning of wisdom.

Respect and reverence and submission and our confession that Jesus Christ is Lord, that's the beginning of eternal wisdom. That's what it means to fear the Lord.

you know, my own converted friend, this is good advice for you. This is sound advice.

You will not get better advice given to you in your life than this advice. And you've been told here you need to come. You need to listen to this advice.

You need to take this advice on board. You need to take it to heart. You need to listen to the teaching. You need to respond to what's being said to you. Because it's no use walking out that door again and shaking my hand at the door with all the pleasantries without taking on board what Jesus is saying to you.

[29 : 48] You need to listen to what he's saying to you. Because failure to listen, it will have eternal consequences for you. Failure to come and taste and see will leave you without Christ and without hope and without salvation.

Failure to come and taste and see will leave you lost. It will leave you lost. But you know David he has one question for you.

One question. And this is where we'll conclude this evening. David's question in verse 12. what man is there who desires life and loves many days that he may see good?

And what David is asking is who doesn't enjoy life? Who doesn't want to live a long time? Who doesn't want to see good things in their life?

And the truth is we all do. We all want to see good things. We all want to enjoy life and live long lives and experience the good things of life. But David teaches us that we must do that with the right perspective.

[31 : 04] You need to live your life with an eternal perspective. Because what's of the utmost importance and what's of eternal value is your relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

And you know David's question here what man is there who desires life and loves many days that he may see good. David's question is very similar to the question Jesus asked.

What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

You know my friend what David is teaching you here tonight is that your soul is precious. Your soul is precious and you need to see that your soul is precious.

Because there's nothing more precious in this life than your own soul. And you know I long for the day that you'll see how precious your soul is. Because I know it's precious.

[32 : 17] God's word tells me it's precious. That's why we're here again. That's why we're talking about the same thing we were talking about last week and the week before and for many years since all the way back to your childhood.

My friend for most of your life people have been talking and pleading and challenging and urging and encouraging and exhorting you to see the preciousness of your own soul and you can't see it yourself.

Or if you can see it you're doing nothing about it. And tonight again you're being asked what shall it profit a man if he were to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

And you know it's a rhetorical question. Because no one in this world will ever gain the whole world. Even if it was possible to gain the whole world you would never experience the satisfaction you're looking for until you tasted and saw that the Lord is good.

But my unconverted friend it might not be possible to gain the whole world but it is possible to lose your soul. it is possible to be close to the kingdom and be lost.

[33 : 48] It is possible to have heard about Jesus all your life but never come and taste the sweetness of trusting in Jesus.

It is possible to be close to the gates of heaven and yet still be cast into the lake of fire. It is possible but David as he testifies tonight about the goodness and the faithfulness of the Lord his message for you is come taste and see that the Lord is good.

Come yourself. Come taste and see that the Lord is good. God is God willing on Wednesday evening we'll consider the rest of the psalm.

And you're more than welcome to come. You're invited to come because that's what this psalm is inviting you to do. To come taste and see that the Lord is good.

So you come and you see how sweet it is to trust in Jesus. May the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us pray.

[35 : 27] Oh Lord our gracious God that without thee we can do nothing. but with thee all things are possible. Help us Lord to throw ourselves at thy mercy and to come before King Jesus with bended knee and contrite heart and confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Oh help us to taste and see that he is good. To trust in him and know the blessing of eternal life every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ.

Lord that none of us or that none of us would be separate from one another at the last day but that we might all be found on the shores of eternity found in the Lord's house singing and praising and magnifying the Lord together.

Oh keep us we pray thee bless thy word to our souls we ask thee and that if anything has been done amiss that thou wouldst cleanse us from it. Take away our iniquity we pray and go before us for Jesus' sake.

Amen. Amen. Sorry. We're singing the words of Psalm 34.

[36 : 52] Psalm 34 singing from verse 8 down to the verse marked 13. Page 247 Psalm 34 at verse 8 O taste and see that God is good who trusts in him is blessed fear God his saints none that in fear shall be with want oppressed the lions young may hungry be and they may lack their food but they that truly seek the Lord shall not lack any good down to the verse marked 13 of Psalm 34 to God's praise.

O taste the Other stage should accept the Lord excuse God Ezra thejung Lord god Gmail Angeles emit ar Soongere Brit o tus I'll be with one to rest.

The lions can me angrily, and they may have their food, but they that truly seek the Lord shall not lack any good.

O children, hither to ye come and unto me care, I shall you teach to understand how ye the Lord should hear.

What man is it that thy desire to see good would live on?

[39 : 38] Thy lips we pray from speaking thy hand from the words thy tongue.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.