

# Milk: It's What's for Dinner



**1 Peter 2:1–3**

**Bro. Ricky Cunningham**

Have you ever gone to the cabinet, got your bowl (the big one), put it on the counter, and then went to the pantry, opened the door, got out your favorite cereal (mine is Frosted Flakes), filled your bowl up with cereal, had your spoon ready, and then you went to the refrigerator, opened the door, and somebody had done the unthinkable? They put a carton of milk back in the refrigerator with no milk in the carton. That's not the way to start a day, agreed? You don't want to have to go to Walmart or go to the DG, but there's no way you can eat that bowl of cereal without milk. It's just not the way to start today, and if you're like me, it's not the way to end a day. It's 10:30 at night, you're studying, you got your bowl filled, you go to the refrigerator, and there's no milk. Now if you're a husband, this has happened to you, or maybe if you're a wife it's happened to you—your spouse is cooking and all of a sudden they get to that key place where they have to pour in the milk and realize they do not have enough milk, and they turn to you and you have to go to the store—or if it's one of those moments where you can't wait thirty minutes for you to go and get back, you go to the next door neighbors. Praise the Lord, my neighbor is my sister and my son! It doesn't matter if they're home or not, I can just go

into that house, open the refrigerator, and get the milk. When you see them later, instead of saying "I stole your milk," I can say something nice, like "I borrowed your milk, I'll get you some later." Now, if you don't know your neighbor, I do not recommend you do that. ☺

We've all been there, though. That's what was behind the "Got Milk?" commercials. Do you remember what the commercial was before that? It was "Milk – it does a body good." For years, the milk industry sold us on the positive aspect of drinking milk. I grew up with my parents telling me sitting at the breakfast and dinner table, "Drink your milk. You'll not grow up unless you drink your milk." But in 1993 in California, they began to understand that because of sodas and other things the American people were consuming less milk, so they hired Jon Steel from an advertising firm. When Jon realized that milk consumption was down and he was being hired to get us to drink more milk, he actually asked the team of people he was working with to go a week and not use milk. So he delayed the meeting for a week and they did not use any milk, and when they came to the meeting, they were totally frustrated. They had also hid a camera in the company breakroom that week. They had stocked the tables with cookies and desserts, anything you would want to drink milk with. The people would open the door to get milk out of the refrigerator but all of the cartons were empty, and they captured the reaction of what it's like to need milk—thus the "Got Milk?" commercials.

We're not talking about physical milk this morning; we're going to talk about spiritual milk. I debated what to title this sermon, whether it should be "Got Milk?" or "Milk – it does a body good." You know titling the sermon is the last thing I do because I want the title to capture the essence of the message. I'm not going to use either one of those titles though because they just don't fit completely. So I am going to borrow a commercial from the beef industry and tweak it just a little bit, Bro. Ricky style, to fit this passage—Milk: It's What's for Dinner. Hopefully, we are going to spiritually realize that milk, God's Word, it's what's for breakfast, what's for lunch, and it's what's for supper, and if you're one of those people who eats between meals, it's for your morning snack, your afternoon snack, or your

nighttime snack. God's milk, God's Word, pure spiritual milk: It's what's for dinner.

Before we start to read, let me remind us that when Peter wrote this he did not write in chapters and verses, he just wrote a letter. Years later, we came along and decided to add chapters and verses to make it easier for us to do find a particular passage of Scripture. I don't like the way this is broken up. Chapter 2 does not start a new thought at all. It's going to be obvious by the first word in the first verse that Peter is continuing his line of thought, so what we're going to say this morning is based on what we said last week. What was the message about last week? It was a command for us to what love one another, not because we have needs but because they have needs. Who are we loving? We're loving and our brothers and sisters in Christ. We're loving family. Why are we loving one another? Because we've purified our souls...we've been born again by the living and abiding Word of God. That's why it says:

### **Scripture**

***"So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good."***

On Thursday, when you got the Daily Bible Reading devotional and you were supposed to read 1<sup>st</sup> Peter chapter 2, verses 1 through 3, did you have the reaction I had? I got stuck, not in verse 1 and not in verse 2; I got stuck on verse 3. So, even though we normally start in the first verse and go through the last verse here at Hardin, this morning I'm going to preach this out of order. I'm going to preach verse 3 then go back to verse 1, then go to verse 2. Why? Because verse 3 starts with if, "...if *indeed* you have *tasted* that the Lord (Jesus) is good." In verse 1, Peter is going to tell us a negative thing we have to do that involves five things, and then, he's going to tell us a positive thing that involves God's Word. Here's what he knows: it only pertains to those of us who have tasted that the Lord is good.

You know, I surfed the internet late Saturday night and early Sunday morning just to see some of my friends and some of the people that I respect think about this passage, and I was amazed that many people in the Evangelical Church believe that this word, "if," should be translated by the word, 'since' or 'because.' Since is a word of certainty. Because is a word of certainty. In other words, we do these two things 'since' we have tasted the Lord is good. We do these two things 'because' we have tasted the Lord is good. But the tense Peter uses here is the subjunctive tense, and it's the mood of doubt. Yes, Peter is writing to elect exiles, but as he's writing this letter he knows there are those in the congregation, those are going to come under the reading of this letter, who have not tasted that the Lord is good. This may be why this verse alarmed me, because I'm a pastor of a church. We get to do this three times on Sunday morning, and it's possible that there are a few of us here in this service, or who are watching online this morning, who have not tasted that Jesus is good. If we have not tasted that Jesus is good we cannot put away these five things in our life, and we will not crave the pure milk of God's Word. Here's what's probably going to happen this morning if we really listen and really let the Holy Spirit convict us this morning—some of us may come to realize we've not tasted that the Lord is good. But if we know we've tasted that the Lord is good, we're going to be determined to put away these five things in our life and long for this one thing that Peter puts before us.

I don't know about you, but sometimes when I'm reading the New Testament, knowing that the writers the New Testament were Jewish, they will say something that will cause me to remember something in the Old Testament, even though they may not be quoting that verse. When Peter says, "...if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good," it reminds me of Psalm 34, verse 8. Do you all remember that verse? There's something powerful about music. There's something powerful about songs. You remember them. We can sing a song that I haven't heard in years here in this church, and the moment I start to hear it I remember almost every word of it. You're the same way, right? That's why most of us don't like new songs; we like old songs. They're just burnt into our spirit; they're burned into our soul. But that was a time when we didn't like those songs either. Songs are so important in teaching that there's a whole book in the

Old Testament, a song book a hundred and fifty of them. In Psalm 34:8, David says, "Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!" And then, because this is a song and because it's poetry, there's going to be a second sentence that's going to modify that first sentence to tell us more about it. It says, "Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!" So the person who tastes and sees that the LORD, Yahveh, is good, he's the blessed man, because what does he do? If you taste and see that the Lord is good, that the Lord is gracious, that the Lord is kind, you take refuge in Him, you put your confidence in Him, you put your trust in Him, and you are a blessed man. I think Peter may be alluding to that verse. He just knows that when you taste something and you experience something, it has an effect on you.

Have any of you ever eaten at a place and tasted something that was so good that you have driven back to that place? When they brought you the menu, you didn't even look at it! Because you had eaten that one thing, you didn't have an appetite for anything else on that menu, you just wanted that one thing. Sure! I don't want to sound snobby here when I say this, but I'm just going to say the truth. Last night, Memish got out the skillet and she put two steaks in it, and we had pan seared steaks. Mmm, mmm, mmm...good! She put a ribeye in the skillet—I don't eat ribeye's so you know what was beside the ribeye—filet mignon. Anybody in my family knows this to be true...I love filet mignon. I have to be honest with you; filet mignon has changed my taste palate. I'm not teasing when I say this, I say this truthfully—we raise beef but I do occasionally have to eat another kind of steak besides the filet, but I want you hear my heart—if I can't have a filet mignon when I sat down to beef, I would just as soon have a hamburger. For my taste palette, my appetite, a ribeye or a New York strip are in the same category as hamburger because I have tasted, I have experienced filet mignon.

Have you tasted Jesus, really tasted Jesus? Did it not change your appetite? Did it not change your life? I remember March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1974. I was just 13 years old, but sitting on the front row of Ledbetter Baptist Church after I repented of sin and put my faith and trust in Jesus, for the first time, I got a taste of Him...and it changed my life! Now, that doesn't mean

I haven't eaten some things I didn't have an appetite for, but it changed my appetite. Eating filet mignon has changed my appetite. Have you tasted Jesus, really? Have you experienced Jesus? Have you done what Jesus said in John's Gospel when He said unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you have no part with me? There is a total consuming, a consumption of Him as your Lord and your Savior. Your faith is not in anything but Him, and your life has been transformed. Sin, self—it's not in the same category. As a matter of fact, when you try to eat some of those things, it makes you sick with your stomach. You spiritually want to puke, you spiritually want to vomit, because you realize you've been lied to. Why? Because you have tasted Jesus, you've tasted His graciousness, you've tasted His kindness, you've lived His kind of life, so you don't want the other things on the menu. You only want Him.

So here's what it says, "...if indeed you have tasted," so this is for all of us who have indeed tasted, we are supposed to "put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander." Notice that three of these things—all malice, all deceit, and all slander—have "all" in front of the word. You don't avoid just one form of malice, you don't just avoid one form of deceit, you don't just avoid one form of slander; we avoid all forms. Why? Because we've tasted Jesus, and in our personal relationship with Him, we just have to put it away. We sit down at the table and we go...*Huh uh, can't go there, can't participate in that.* Why? Because I have eaten His flesh, I have drunk His blood. I have a spiritual appetite now and these things are of the flesh. I cannot feed them to myself anymore so I have to put them away, I have to strip them away. Malice—basically, it means to have ill will towards someone. Is anybody struggling with that this morning? There are just some people you have ill will toward. You wouldn't do it personally, but you wish harm to them. That's why you slander them. You don't want any of the people who like them to like them anymore because you've got a will for them. You want to take them down, you want to hurt them. I know that I don't know what they've done to you, but can I say this? I know what you did to God...and despite what you did Him I know what He's done to you. He's been gracious, He's been good, He's been kind, and He's our daddy. We have his DNA now if we've been

born again. So we have to strip that away—deceit, all of it...all of it. If you've not tasted the Lord is good, you're going to struggle with deceit.

Peter uses a strong word here. He was a fisherman, and this word, deceit, literally means to 'bait a hook.' It means to trick someone, to set a trap.

Can I just say this to all you people who fish? You're probably a liar. ☺ You get in that boat or on that bank, and for some reason you think it's okay to deceive little fish, but what you really wanted to see this big fish! So you drop that hook, you drop that lure...I mean how many of us go down to the bank or in the boat and just drop a steel hook with a point on it? A fish isn't going to bite that! They might run into it accidentally but they're not going to bite that, so what do we do? We put a worm on it. You take that worm and you cover every bit of that steel hook you can cover, because you want to deceive that fish. You don't want him to think he's biting a hook; you want him to think he's getting a worm. How can you deceive a brother or sister? How can you set them up like you've set them up? I mean because you've tasted Jesus, when you thought about doing it, didn't that make you just want to vomit? Didn't it make you want to say I'm not going to have anything to do with this? That's what Peter says will happen to those who have tasted that the Lord is good. Now, if we haven't tasted the Lord is good, we're going to be fine with that.

Hypocrisy—to put on a mask, to hide our true motivation and act like we sincerely love someone when we don't. Envy—means to see somebody else's life and envy it. We don't want them to have it because we don't have it. We compare ourselves to them and not want them to have what they have. Slander—means to talk down. It means to gossip, it means to spread rumors. It's amazing how we can do this in the spiritual family...*Do you know what? We really need to pray for so and so... Why? ...Oh, you haven't heard? ...No!... (whispers) I'm not going to tell you but let's pray for them.* You just slandered them! You've been in that conversation where you you're deceitful, you set it up, and then you back off and go...*Oh no, I'm not going to go there...* You just went there! Peter says if we have tasted Jesus and His graciousness and His goodness, we're going to push that stuff away. Please tell me that when we participate in this, it makes us sick at our soul because it doesn't agree with who we really are in Christ!

What has Peter just commanded us? He's commanded us to love one another, love one another not Phileo, Agapao. Love, because the love that's arising is not because we have a need but because they have a need. These five things kill love in the family—ill will, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, slander—it kills love in a family, and it kills love in a church! Peter is reminding us if we've tasted and experienced Jesus, brush it aside, take your menu and tear it apart and say no, not even going to be tempted with this stuff, amen? As you start getting victory over this, it proves you have tasted Jesus is good. If you say "this is just who I am," you have not tasted Jesus is good. That's why Peter puts this in the subjunctive mode, "if indeed you have tasted."

So once we do this negative thing, now he says, verse 2, "Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation." Have you ever been in that situation where you saw somebody doing something and what they were doing did not really reveal the age they were, so you looked at them and said, "Grow up"? Peter wants us to grow up, and he tells us the secret to growth. Now, I don't want to discourage anyone here, but "into salvation" is not in some of our most ancient manuscripts; "into salvation" has been added. But there's no doubt, according to the context, we've been born again by the living and abiding Word of God. We've been brought into relationship with God as a child, so when God wants us to grow up He wants us to grow up into maturity. He wants us grow up into adulthood. He wants us to grow up and be like the one we're supposed to be like, which is Jesus. You are not supposed to be the best version of you, you can be; you are supposed to be like Christ. I don't know if you had an older brother or an older sister, but you have one in the spiritual family and He set the standard. Dad loves you, but Dad knows He did it right so Dad expects us to live up to Him. Dad knows because we have His DNA we can be like Him. He tells us to be like a newborn, babe, long for it, crave milk.

Isn't it amazing how infants crave milk? They really do. That's what this word means—it means to crave. It means you can't do without it. You're going to everything in your means to get it. That's what babies do. They're just rude, amen? I mean, babies want milk so bad, they've kind of got this



schedule, about every two hours, not only in the daytime but in the nighttime too. Thank you moms, for what you do, getting up at 12:00, 2:00, and 4:00. We are really praying for you and thanking God for you while you're doing all of that. We just want you to know that, we really do as your husband and as the father of that child. I mean, those babies are letting you know, they're screaming sometimes to the top of their voice, and they don't care what you're doing! They want milk. Have you ever noticed how quickly a baby grows in six months? I will be shocked on March 26<sup>th</sup> when we do baby dedication because it will be just a few months previously when I had your little bitty baby up here on stage and now, wow! They have grown...and the only thing they eat (or drink I should say) is milk! That's why the milk industry used to say, "Milk: it does a body good."

Now, Peter is not talking about physical milk; he's drawn the analogy newborn baby who craves for milk. He's not saying we're still babies in Christ, but he wants us to have that same craving, that same desire for the pure spiritual milk. What is the pure spiritual milk? In the context here of the end of chapter 1, it's the Word of God. So what are you craving spiritually? The Word of God. On a scale of one to ten, what's your crave level? Do you want it for breakfast? Do you want it for lunch? Do you want it for supper? Or, are you one of these that can just think a verse a day and I'm good? It shows. It really shows! You have no spiritual appetite for God's Word. I'm not talking about reading on a theological level; I'm talking about reading on a devotional level where you're reading God's Word as a love letter from God to you, talking about His Son Jesus Christ. Do you desire this like an infant desires milk?

Now, please understand Peter's not doing what Paul and Apollos do. When he writes to the church at Corinth, Paul talks about milk, milk being only for baby Christians. In chapter 3:1–3, Paul says in First Corinthians, "But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?" Paul is talking about some

of us who are babies in Christ and we can't digest, can't handle the meaty things of God's Word. That's not what Peter is doing here. Peter isn't calling the church babies in Christ. Milk here, pure spiritual milk stands for the *whole* of God's teaching, the *whole* of the divine Revelation, all sixty-six books. They weren't all completed at this time, but he's talking about all of God's Word. Apollos, talking to a group of Hebrew people who are living in Rome at a time of persecution, says this, "About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil." So, don't come to this letter thinking Peter is writing to babies in Christ. No. He's writing to Christians and many of them are mature. Just like a baby craves milk, if you've tasted Jesus, Peter wants you to crave pure spiritual milk. I sometimes crave filet mignon. If you've tasted Jesus, you crave His Word. You crave it, can't live without it, got to have it! Why? So we'll grow, so we'll grow up. What kind of milk is it going to take for us to grow up? Pure spiritual milk, not the two percent kind, not the skim kind, but whole milk, all of God's Word so that will grow up, grow up into who were supposed to be. Wow!

When I was a kid, I wanted to play basketball at the University of Kentucky Wildcats. I had this little piece of tape on the door frame, and from time to time, I would measure myself. Do you have any way of measuring yourself? Are you growing up? Do any of you remember what happened about ten or twelve years after the "Got Milk?" commercials were released? They used the same people in the "Got Milk?" commercials, except now they were drinking milk, and when they drank the milk and pulled the glass down, there would be a white mustache. You could tell the people were drinking milk by their mustache. Simple question—got milk? Let's say it this way—got Jesus? Do you have the Jesus mustache that you don't even know is there, but others around you see is there, and know you have tasted Jesus and that He is gracious and kind?