

# The Milk of the Word

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Preacher: Alex Cowie

[ 0 : 00 ] Now before we turn to scripture, let us just bow and pray. O Lord, may it be true of us that we thirst for you.

That we have that longing in our souls to know what it is to be satisfied by your goodness and grace.

By your abiding presence. We are blessed indeed, O Lord, given that we have such an heritage. To have your word in our own ten. To have the gospel ministry. To have had people who watched over us as parents, as teachers, as Sunday school teachers.

We cast our minds back and we give you thanks upon every remembrance of your great goodness to us. But we pray tonight, O Lord, that you will help us to make the best use of what you've given us.

[ 1 : 12 ] And help us to help others too. That we may, like Moses of old when he spoke to his father-in-law. Come with us and we will do you good.

For God has spoken good concerning Israel. And we know that although he hesitated for a time. He made his commitment. And was there among your people.

All the days of his life. And we pray, O Lord, that we ourselves may have the privilege of seeing others come with us on the heavenly way.

This reminds us too, O Lord, of those who have gone in our name. To take good news to others. To help others by various means in Christian service.

And specifically to share the gospel. We bring before you all those that have gone in our name. To distant places.

[ 2 : 17 ] And we ask, O Lord, that their work may be crowned with your blessing. Whether it is in Christian education. Or in theological education.

Or church planting. Or some other work to improve the lot of people. In South Africa and South America.

And in India. And in other places too. O Lord, may your kingdom come. And may your will be done. And we pray for those involved too.

In the alleviation of suffering. There are so many, O Lord. Who are struggling in the sea of life. In the storms. And disease has made inroads into their frail bodies. And we pray that you will bless every effort made by your people.

[ 3 : 15 ] And by others too. To raise step. To help. We think about Lachie's own work. And those who are supported. We pray that in days to come.

It may be seen. That your hand of blessing. Has developed the work on. We pray too tonight, O Lord. For friends involved. For friends involved. In reaching the Jewish people.

Whether it is in the land of Israel. Or in our own city. Or in other cities. In the UK and beyond. O Lord, encourage them in this difficult field.

And remember too, we pray. Those who are working in this city. In cross-cultural mission. Particularly among the Asian population.

Grant them good success. We know there are others. But we remember Duncan and Christine. And Colin and Penny. And Charis and Sarah.

[ 4 : 15 ] And we just commend their work to you, Lord. That you would be with them. And help them. And allow them to see. That the hand of the Lord is with them.

We bring ourselves before you now. Asking that you would deal with us in a wonderful way. That you would bring us on in your ways.

And that we may know it. And be glad. O Lord, look upon us then. And do us good for the sake of Christ. Who alone is worthy.

Amen. Amen. Well now let's turn back to 1 Peter. And we're going to look at chapter 2 at the beginning.

Particularly verses 2 and 3. 1 Peter 2 verses 2 and 3. And to think about this under the heading. The Christian and the Word of God.

[ 5 : 20 ] We may just read at verse 1 of chapter 2. Therefore he says. Laying aside all malice. All deceit. Hypocrisy. Envy. And all evil speaking.

As newborn babes. Desire the pure milk of the word. That you may grow thereby. If indeed or since. You have tasted.

That the Lord. Is gracious. The Christian. And the word of God. Now clearly. The context here. Has to do with the influence. Of the word of God. Upon our lives. Upon our moral character. That the word of God.

Would so work. That we would be rid. Of all the things. That spoil. A Christian profession. And of course. This is the season.

[ 6 : 16 ] Being. Almost the end of April. This is the season. When books on gardening. Abound. And television programs. On gardening.

Abound. And. Gardeners will tell you. Ideas of the experts. Will tell you too. That one of the best ways. To keep the weeds. Out of your garden.

Is to fill it with flowers. And plants. It's really to get. Get plants particularly. That spread on the ground. Because. The more. Of the ground space.

That's covered. The less problem. You're going to have. With weeds. And sins. Are moral weeds. They're the moral weeds. Of the soul.

And. So. When we. Think about. The need. As. As Peter says here. To lay aside. To put off. To put out. Malice.

[ 7 : 11 ] And deceit. And hypocrisy. And envy. And evil speaking. It makes sense then. That our hearts. Are. Are crammed. As it were.

With the word. Of God. So that. Sin. Has. Less. Chance. So to speak. To operate. In our lives. Sin disrupts. The heavenly. Life. Of the Christian. Believer. And it. It spoils. The heart. And it spoils. The witness.

And so he's saying here. Fill your hearts. With the word of God. And. Clearly. What is in view. As we've said is. Fill your hearts.

With the word of God. In order. That you'll be kept. From sin. And sinning. Against God. We often sing it. Don't we. In Psalm 119.

[ 8 : 07 ] In the second part. Your word. I have hidden. In my heart. What for. For this purpose. In order. That I may not sin. Against you.

John says. And we were studying it. Some months ago. Little children. These things. I write unto you. 1 John 2. 1. These things. I write unto you. In order.

That you. Sin not. Or you may not sin. It's not that he was teaching. Sinless perfection. We know that. But he's saying. We are to aim.

Not to sin. And the best way. To do that. Is to be governed. And. Directed. By the word of God. To have it. In our hearts. In order that it.

Influences us. More. And more. And so it's good for us. To. To go back over. Something like this. And as it were. To ponder.

[ 9 : 03 ] The use. We make. Of the word of God. Now I can tell you. For free. This doesn't just belong to you. It's not me. Preaching at you. We're all involved in this.

I'm as much. And any minister. Worth the name. Is under the same word. You'll not know it. And some traditions. Don't like it.

That. Some ministers. Won't sit in the pulpit. At communion time. Like me. I'm not being awkward. I do it on principle. I do it.

Because I want people. To know. That I'm under the same word. As them. That's why I sit down there. We're all under the same word.

And we all need the same. Teaching from the word. We need to think again. And again. About the Christian believer. And the word of God. We need to ponder.

[ 10 : 05 ] The use we make. Of the word of God. And this is because. Growth in the things of Christ. Depends largely. On our attitude to scripture.

And our use of scripture. For example. James says. In his little letter. Receive with meekness.

The engrafted. Or the implanted word. Which is able to save your souls. Receive it with meekness. Receive it with meekness. And you see what James is doing there. He's saying we've got to be meek.

We've got to be humble. In our attitude to the word. It's not just any old word. It's not even just a very good word.

It is infinitely more. It is the word of God. Which as we read. In chapter one. Lives and abides forever. It's that word.

[11:02] It's so important. And it's easy in all the busyness of life. To neglect profiting from the word. And therefore you see.

We have to look at where we are. In regard to our attitude to this word. Are we desiring. Are we craving. The pure milk of the word.

If we're honest about it. Our appetite for the word. Is a wee bit like the tide. It ebbs and flows. It's a wee bit like. The situation in the garden.

There's some growth. And often there's decay. We weaken. We weaken. In our appetites. And in our attitudes.

To the word. And so it follows. That it's good. To examine. Where we are. In regard to our attitude. To the word. And our appetite. For the word.

[11:59] What practical use. Do we make. Of the word. And the first thing. Therefore. We want to think about. In regard to the Christian.

And the word of God. Is we are to crave. The word. He says. As newborn babes. Desire. The pure milk of the word.

It really is. Crave. Be eager for. And it's a wonderful. Illustration. He uses. As newborn babies. Eagerly desire.

Crave for the milk of the word. Babies have an instinct. For milk. For. For. For mother's milk. In the first place. They have a craving. It's an instinct.

I was traveling. I was traveling. Last week. A road. I hadn't been on. Really. Going. The back road. Towards Stirling.

[12:55] And it's through. Wonderful farmland. And I was amazed. At the. Huge numbers. Of sheep. And lambs. In the fields. And. It reminded me. Of this very subject.

Even. At this. Time of year. The lambs. Send us. The same message. They crave. Mother's milk. They're desperate.

For it. It's their instinct. Because they'll grow. By it. And Peter. Says here. That we are. To have this. Approach.

To. To the word. Of God. We. Need. That word. And you see. It's interesting.

The way. Peter. Puts this. Because. Often. We. We make. A mistake. In our attitude. To the word. And our appetite. For it. We tend.

[13:49] To go back. To the way. We were. At the beginning. When we came. Into the faith. First. Or maybe. A period. In our lives. Where we were. Really eager. To. To read. The word.

To think. About it. And to study. And so on. And that's gone. It's history. But Peter. Says. Crave. The pure milk. Of the word. It's something. That's ongoing. It's. He's not saying. Just as little lambs. Or little babies. Crave the milk.

From mother. Then you're to do that. But once you grow up. You'll not need it anymore. No. He's not saying that. That's not the way. The illustration. Is loaded. He's saying. Just as.

As. As little babies. Need mother's milk. To grow. So the believer. Always needs. The pure milk. Of the word. And I say that.

[14:44] Because. Sometimes. In scripture. The word of God. Is. Is. Is. Contrasted. In its. In the basics.

And in the strong stuff. And you get. Milk. Belonging to babes. And meat. Belonging to the mature. Now. That's a fair. Difference.

To notice. But the point. That Peter's making here. Has nothing to do with. With weak teaching. Basic teaching. And strong teaching. It is one's attitude.

To the word. And our attitude. Should be the same. Now. As it was. At the beginning. If we're believers. Or if we're not there yet. When we had.

A movement. In our hearts. An excitement. About. The saviour. And about the word. And this is the way. I'm going to get to know him. We're to get back to there.

[15:38] We're to remember. This is the way. It should always be. So Peter's not suggesting. That. Okay. You get the simple. Basic doctrine.

The milk. In that sense. And then that'll do. No, no. No. We are not. Looking at the contrast. Between the basics. And the strong stuff.

We're looking at the whole approach. To the word. There is an alwaysness about it. We ought always. To be craving.

The pure milk. Of the word of God. It's something. Important. To us. And so the point he's making. Is that. That. As it is normal. In that setting. For the infant. To. To need the milk. It is normal.

[16:31] For the Lord's people. To need. The word. Of God. It is soul. Food. And we need it. It. He calls it.

The pure milk. Of the word. I think the NIV has. Pure spiritual milk. Which is a good translation. As well. It's. It's a real McCoy. It's a real stuff. I think the AV has sincere milk.

Hasn't it? In other words. It's. It's the word of God. That nourishes us. And we need that nourishment. Not at the beginning simply.

But we need that all the time. And he's stressing here. The word of God. It's. The whole word of God.

It's not just. Select passages. You know. As well as I do. That there's a great temptation. To. Either just. Content ourselves. With a.

[17:30] With a little book. That gives you a wee bit. Of. Reading. And a. And a wee passage. To think about. Or it may be the calendar. I always like reading.

The verse. From. The church. The rest calendar. The. Have it in the kitchen. And. Read it every day. And. It's always an encouragement. And often that.

Torch. Thresh. Text. For the day. Is one that I. Particularly. Needed. From the Lord. But you see. You can't live like that. That's okay. It has its place.

But we're not to live like that. It's not just snap texts. Or. Or. Little. Nibbles. At the word. But we're to be students.

Of the word. We're to. See that that word. Is. Is pure. It is. Adulterated. Without any. Imperfection.

[18:28] Because. That word. Is not only pure. But it is purifying. It has that purifying influence. In the heart. Of the believer. It's interesting.

That Jesus. As he anticipated. His cross work. In the. In the prayer. The high priestly prayer. We call it. He said to his father. Father. Father.

Sanctify them. Thinking about his people. Sanctify them. By your truth. Your word. Is truth. It's a purifying word.

It improves. Upon us. His word. Is truth. And I think. The more. We are. Impressed. With a vital. Place. Of the word. Of God. In the life. Of the Christian. The better. Able. We will be. To identify. With the. With the prophet.

[19:23] Of old. With David. My soul. Breaks. For the longing. It has. For your judgments. At all times.

We are. To go on. Deciding. The pure. Spiritual. Milk. Of the word. And not. Content.

Ourselves. With occasional. Dips into it. With nibbles. It is something. We are. To go on. Craving for. And if we're not.

Craving for the word. Then. We are. In a measure. Spiritually. And well. We're not. As we should be. You see.

He's already. Told us. In chapter one. There. Towards the end. Of it. You were born again. Verse 23. By an incorruptible. Sowing.

[20:18] Or an incorruptible. Seed. Through the word. Of God. Which lives. And abides. Forever. God's own word. Brought us. Into newness. Of life. If we're in Christ.

And if we're not. We're to see the place. Of the word. In bringing us. Into life. Yes. Of course. Theologically. The spirit. Makes that word. A means of grace.

To us. The spirit. The spirit. The word of God. Is living. And powerful. And it is that word. That nourishes us. And we're to crave it.

Now we've been saying. A little. About what our second point is. Our second point is. We grow. By the word. And I want to focus on that. Now. For a wee while.

We're to crave the word. We grow. By the word. And here again. Of course. The illustration. Is a powerful one.

[ 21 : 19 ] In some ways. Although the reference. Is to newborn babies. And how they grow. On mother's milk. To my mind. And to those of you. Who know. The crofting scene.

Or the farming scene. You'll know this. Every bit. As well as I do. But. But. You can watch lambs grow. On mother's milk. A week.

Makes a whacking difference. If they're getting the right stuff. A fortnight. Makes another big difference. And it goes on and on. And you're just amazed. At the way they grow.

Take. Something. Sideways movement. Here. On this whole business. Of mother's milk. You sometimes get these. Excellent programs. On channel four.

On. On. On the natural world. A seal pip. Grows on its mother's milk. Incredibly. Incredibly.

[ 22 : 19 ] And you see. What he's saying here is. That you may grow. Thereby. This is a powerful image. And you don't need.

A lot of imagination. Especially. Just even. In the. In the animal kingdom. As we've been saying. The baby feeds. A human baby.

It's true. It's true. In the animal kingdom too. They feed on the. Feed on the high quality milk. And they grow rapidly. There is development.

Because of the intake. Of good milk. And Jesus. Said. Himself. A match about. Profiting from the word.

And Peter. Peter here. In that line. Of Jesus. Says. In effect. The Christian. Spiritual growth. Depends. Upon the proper.

[ 23 : 13 ] Intake. Of the word. Of God. Notice what I say. The proper intake. Of the word. The stuff is there. We need.

To receive it. In order. To benefit. From it. Now of course. Human nature. Being what it is. We have to say.

There are many hindrances. In us. And around us. That prevent us. Really deriving benefit. From the pure. Spiritual milk.

Of the word. Often. Our hearts. Are not prepared. We don't prepare. Sufficiently. When we go to our Bible. We don't prepare.

Sufficiently. When we sit. Under the word. We need to pray. For a right attitude. To the word. A right attitude. To the reading. Of the word. It's.

[ 24 : 10 ] It's. I don't know. If you ever thought. About this. But. The whole. Tradition. The biblical. Tradition. The reformation. Tradition.

That we stand in. Is that the whole. Service. Is worship. The whole of it. The reading. Of the word. Is worship.

That is to say. It ought to. Generate. In us. Worship. If we're thinking. About what we've got. It's not just. Oh he's going to read. A bit of the Bible. That's an awful. Long reading.

Or it was a bit short. No. Rather. We prepare. Ourselves. To benefit. From the. The public. Reading. Of the word. Of the eternal.

God. Whatever. Creatures. May or may not. Be out there. In the worlds. That are out there. This little world.

[ 25 : 07 ] Planet earth. Is most privileged. In all the universe. For it was here. That the savior came.

To effect. On the cross. The redemption. That was planned. From eternity. It was little. Old planet earth.

That the word. Of God. Came in scripture. And the word. Of God. Came in flesh. And so. When we read.

The word. We're. We're doing. Something. Which ought. To make us. Worship. If we are prepared. For it. That's why.

There is a good. Solid argument. For. Scripture. Being. In prayer. In public prayers. It's not just. To show. The people.

[ 26 : 03 ] Who the minister. Knows the scriptures. It's. That it is. What will help us. To worship. As we pray. And indeed.

The sermon. Is not only. About. Feeding the flock. Or. Or bringing. Salvation. Light. To those. Who are not. In the flock. By faith.

It's about. Worship. It's. It's about. Seeing. The. The majesty. And the glory. Of Christ. In the scriptures. It's seeing.

The heavenly. Doctrine. That we're looking at. Everywhere. In the scriptures. Therefore. We must. Pray. Always.

For a right attitude. To the reading. Of the word. To prayer. That contains. The word. To the exposition. Of the word. And like. We were saying.

[ 26 : 58 ] Earlier today. We need to pray. That the spirit. Of God. The real author. The principal author. Of the bible. Would. Take that word. And use it.

In our hearts. That's why. We said. At the beginning. James says. Receive. With meekness. The implanted word.

You see. If you think. About it. The savior. The savior. Himself. Gave that. Parable. Of the sower. And it boils.

Down to. The sower. Is the person. Who takes. The word. Of God. And casts it. Forth. Upon the peoples. All sorts. Of people. And it's.

Clear. In the savior's. Teaching. It matters. How. That word. Is received. Those whose hearts. Were like. The wayside.

[ 27 : 55 ] Hear it. Well. The seed. Fell. And before. It. Got settled. In the heart. The enemy. Took it away. The birds of the air. Came. And snatched it away.

The rocky ground. Has its story. The thorny ground. Has its story. And the prepared. Ground. Has its story.

So. Preparation. Matters. Personal. Responsibility. Here. In preparing. Our hearts. To benefit. From the word. There's an interesting.

Passage. In. Ezekiel. The chapter. Escapes me. Just now. But. The prophet. Rebukes. The people. Or the lord. Through the prophet. Rebukes.

The people. Because they liked. Ezekiel's preaching. It was like. A symphony. It was like. A lovely. Symphony. A musical. Composition.

[ 28 : 52 ] And it was like. That. It was like. Sweet music. To them. But they never. Grew by it. Because they. Didn't. Want to. It to come in. They just.

Had. A superficial. Appreciation. Of it. It never. Really. Was meant. To be applied. In order. That they could. Profit.

And grow. By that word. It was like. Just like. Sweet music. And that. Reminds us. That above all. The word of God. As we prepare. To receive it. Is to. Be. Meditated. Upon. Some folks. Say. The thinkers. In the Christian context.

Say that. Meditation. I mean. Christian meditation. Is a lost art. I remember. Some. Time ago.

[ 29 : 49 ] A long time ago. Now. Gurnam Singh. Who. Came. To Scotland. For a. For a wife. Julia. Mackenzie. Some of you. Will remember. Worked.

She was first. To work. Among the Asians. In woodlands. In Glasgow. Here. And. I remember. Gurnam Singh. His. His background.

Although his people. Were. Restaurateurs. His. His. His. Father. Was. Very. Involved. In the Sikh. Religion. And he would spend.

Literally. Spent. Hours. Meditating. Not in Christian. Meditation. But. In. The Sikh. Religion. Emptying.

The mind. To receive. The forces. No guesses. What the forces. Were. But. That kind of meditation. But the point I'm making here is.

[ 30 : 41 ] He could spend hours in it. And I think that one of the great problems. We have in the busyness of life. I say we. Is that we.

Don't. Meditate. On the word. Enough. We. We. We have to sort of. Really. Rack our brain. What. What was the minister. What was he speaking about.

On Thursday. Or. What was he. Preaching on last. Sunday. Or. Something like that. Sometimes. Maybe the minister himself. Has to do that. But. The point I'm making is.

We're not meditating. Even on a bit of it. Enough. And to. To. To. Crave. The milk of the word. The pure spiritual milk. In order to grow by it. Means that we have to prepare ourselves. And resolve to meditate. Upon that word.

[ 31 : 37 ] I think. With the exception of maybe one or two here. The rest of us. The first psalm. We learned. Was the first psalm.

That man. That man. Has perfect blessedness. Who walketh not astray. In counsel of ungodly men. Nor stands in sinners way. Nor sitteth in the scorn's chair.



We'll always be discovering more. And more. But you see on this side. Here in this world. We are encouraged. To go to the word.

And to wait for him to speak to us. And enlighten us. About himself. And about his will. For us. When the Bible tells us.

That we're to pass the time. Of our sojourning here. In fear. It doesn't mean. What we were thinking about. This morning. In a slavish dread. It means.

With that fear. That is born of love. We reverence him. We care. That we offend him. By our sin. We're going to be careful. Therefore.

[ 38 : 19 ] Not to offend him. Not to needlessly sin. And David himself. The psalmist. Discovered by his own.

Mistakes. What it was. To cling all the more. To the Lord. And to find his words. Sweet to his taste. He says sweeter. Than honey from the honeycomb. And so we need to go on. Experiencing him. In the word. Since indeed.

He says. You have tasted. That the Lord is gracious. Go on. Go on craving for him. In the word. Go on. Seeking to meet with him. In the word. God. It is. I think. William Cooper's words. That express.

[ 39 : 20 ] This sense of. Needing to. To get back in there. And to discover him afresh. Where is the blessedness. He said. In a fit of depression. You remember. Where is the blessedness.

I knew. When first. I saw the Lord. Where is that. So refreshing view. Of Jesus. In the word. In the word. And he was tormented.

Because he had lost. That edge. Of craving the Lord. In the word. Of meeting with him. In the word. And though that we might.

Therefore be more affected. By our need. To go on. Experiencing him. In the word. In the word. Bible. Bible. Background.

Is very helpful. Information. On. Various passages. In scripture. Such as we get.

[ 40 : 17 ] From. Books on the Bible. Most helpful. But these things. Don't bring us. Into touch. With the living. Savior. In the word. In the way.

That we will grow. And. As someone. Who is. Paid to be. A student. Of the word. As well as. A pastor.

Of the people. One knows that. And one. Keeps it. Ever before. One's mind. That. We have to be. Affected. By the word. It's not enough.

To know. What this passage. Means. And that passage. Means. What so and so has said. And so and so. And so and so. And so. What the background. To it all is. No. We need to come into contact.

With the Savior. In the word. It's just recently. I was. Speaking about. A sermon. I once preached. At home.

[ 41 : 12 ] In Sutherland. In Boner. And. John Murray. Our own. John Murray's. Brother. Was always a very. He was a retired minister. And he was a very careful.

Listener. To sermons. I can tell you. Always very gracious. And. I was going to say. Like a good Lewis man. He was a very keen listener. Well that's true. He was. Very keen.

Very sharp. And I remember once. Preaching on the. On the. On the feeding of the 5,000. And. So I'd never been in Israel. At the time.

Never been there. I never expected to be there. I had done quite a lot. Of background on it. And I was very clear. In my mind. About the situation.

Where Jesus fed the 5,000. As clear as the pictures. That I had. I had gotten a hold of. And. And so I was describing it. In the sermon.

[ 42 : 05 ] And. At the end. Roddy Murray. Roddy was his name. Said to me. How. He said. I'd been there. I've been there. And he said. I was amazed.

He said. That you had it so clear. And so exact. But you see my friends. Clarity and exactness. On these details.

Although they flesh out the picture. It's not like coming into contact. With the Lord. In the word. And one would fail in one's duty.

If we don't get to that stage. Where. We've brought you along to him. Of whom the prophets. Spoke. Even Jesus.

We want to be. Affected. By the Jesus things. That we might know him. As Paul says. And the power. Of his resurrection. In our lives.

[ 43 : 04 ] And therefore. We must say. Lord. You are good. And you do good. Teach me your statutes. When I was. Young.

And. Somewhat rebellious. I still. Went along. To a Bible class. Often wonder. How on earth I did. But I did anyway. And I'm thankful for it.

But the lady. Who. Taught us. At that. She was. The primary. Infant. Sunday school teacher. And she was also very.

Involved in the youth work. In the village. At home. And when she came. To do a wee epilogue. At the end of the Friday night session. The. The. The Bible club. It was called.

The Bible bit. Was very short. But she always. Asked the Lord. To bless us. And. And she. Got us to learn.

[ 43 : 58 ] This little. Prayer. Open. It was a wee song. Open. Open. Thou mine eyes. That I may behold. Wondrous things.

Out of thy law. And that stayed with me. And I often say it to the Lord. Lord. Open. Open. Thou mine eyes. That I may behold.

Wondrous things. Out of thy law. As newborn babes. Therefore. Desire the pure.

Milk of the word. That you may. Grow. Thereby. Since. Indeed. You have tasted. That the Lord. Is gracious. Amen.