

# Fresh Oil



November 2017

Dear Fellow Servants,

I want to issue you a fresh challenge in your reading of Holy Scripture. I want you to approach your reading with a willingness and a commitment to embrace 2 very different aspects of the Bible. To present this scenario I direct you to the words of the angel to the apostle John when he was incarcerated for his faith on the Island of Patmos. They are recorded for us in Revelation 10:9-10:

***"So I went to the angel and said to him, 'Give me the little Book.' And he said to me, 'Take and eat it; and it will make Your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in Your mouth.' Then I took the little book out of the angel's Hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter."***

When we sit down to read our Bibles, do we consider these two very differing aspects of the sacred text? It is God's Word, His message to us which helps us, so it is understandable that it would be sweet to taste. David knew this and said so when he wrote Psalm 34:8:

***"Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good..."***

Over in Psalm 19:9-10 he elaborates on the sweetness of the Word of God:

***"The judgements of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."***

But the experience of the exiled John on Patmos contains more than we are often willing to accept when it comes to the reading of Scripture. We love the "sweet as honey" part but are not so keen on the "bitter stomach" portion. God's Word cuts and stings sometimes, telling us where we have strayed from our Saviour's ways. Loving our neighbour can be a sweet experience, but sometimes our love is unappreciated or unreturned and then it seems bitter. Let's love anyway!

So go ahead, eat this Book (the Bible), but let the Lord fulfill His Word in you by allowing him to give you both the mouth-watering AND the stomach-churning portions. A well-balanced diet makes for a well-balanced follower of Christ.

Your fellow servant,

*Pastor Brian*

*... I have been anointed with fresh oil*

PSALM 92:10

