

“What do you mean you haven’t tasted it?”

I love watching Westerns. One of my favourites is a film called “*Open Range*” starring Robert Duvall and Kevin Costner. The film slowly builds to the climactic shoot out which takes place in the town centre. Duvall and Costner coolly make their way down the mud baked main street, lined either side by matchstick wooden shops and saloon bars, curtains twitching and people scurrying inside like frightened rabbits. They are on their way to face the merciless Baxter gang! Outnumbered. Outflanked. They know this might be their last stand!

There is a bizarre moment on their way to the gunfight. Duvall and Costner pass a “sweetie shop” on the main street and Duvall decides that he wants to buy some “candy” before facing Baxter. “*Give me your most expensive candy*” Duvall asks the nervous shopkeeper. “*I’ve got just the thing*” says the shopkeeper, “*bittersweet chocolate from Switzerland. It just melts in your mouth!*” “*Is it good?*”, asks Duvall. “*Don’t know*” replies the shopkeeper, “*I’ve never tasted it. It’s too expensive.*” “*Then how do you know it melts in your mouth?*” snaps Duvall.

Duvall buys two bars. He gives one bar to Costner and takes a bite of the other bar for himself. “*Mmmh, that is good!*” he purrs. And then in a touching moment, he turns to the shopkeeper and offers him some chocolate, “*here, taste this!*” says Duvall “*it’s been sitting right here in front of your nose all this time and you’ve never tasted it!*”

In **Psalm 34**, King David is looking back on his life and is reflecting on God’s faithfulness to him: how God has delivered him from his enemies, protected and provided for him. David goes on to invite readers to “***taste and see that the Lord is good!***” (**Psalm 34v8**). David’s experience of God has been real and full in terms of joy and satisfaction. This is no mere intellectual appreciation of God. This is a loving relationship that David enjoys with the Almighty. David’s desire is for others to experience this same relationship with God for themselves - “***taste***”, experience and know God for yourself and “***see that the Lord is good***”, discover the goodness of God!

Have you tasted the goodness God? Have you experienced the goodness of God for yourself? God has revealed Himself to us in His son Jesus Christ and He wants us to know Him, through faith in Jesus. Maybe, like the shopkeeper and his bittersweet chocolate, God has been right there under your nose all your life but for one reason or another you have never “tasted.” The apostle Paul could write about His experience of coming to faith in Jesus Christ “*I count everything as loss for the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.*”

Why don’t you take a taste? Just a nibble. Start by reading the bible, one of the gospels perhaps (a record of the life of Jesus) and try to understand something of the goodness of God seen in Jesus Christ.

Having tasted it for himself, Duvall gave the shopkeeper his first taste of the Swiss chocolate. David’s desire was for others to taste the goodness of the Lord in their lives just as he had. If you have tasted the goodness of the Lord in your life, have you invited others to “taste and see that the Lord is good?” Like bittersweet Swiss chocolate, the Christian faith was meant to be shared!

Additional Reading: Psalm 34