

# 1 Peter 2:3 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE  
To go directly to that verse

[1 Peter 2:1](#)  
[1 Peter 2:2](#)  
[1 Peter 2:3](#)  
[1 Peter 2:4](#)  
[1 Peter 2:5](#)  
[1 Peter 2:6](#)  
[1 Peter 2:7](#)  
[1 Peter 2:8](#)  
[1 Peter 2:9](#)  
[1 Peter 2:10](#)  
[1 Peter 2:11](#)  
[1 Peter 2:12](#)  
[1 Peter 2:13](#)  
[1 Peter 2:14](#)  
[1 Peter 2:15](#)  
[1 Peter 2:16](#)  
[1 Peter 2:17](#)  
[1 Peter 2:18](#)  
[1 Peter 2:19](#)  
[1 Peter 2:20](#)  
[1 Peter 2:21](#)  
[1 Peter 2:22](#)  
[1 Peter 2:23](#)  
[1 Peter 2:24](#)  
[1 Peter 2:25](#)

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1 Peter: Trials, Holy Living & The Lord's Coming  
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1 Peter 2:3 if you have tasted (2PAMI) the kindness of the Lord. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [ei egeusasthe \(2PAMI\) hoti chrestos o kurios.](#)

**Amplified:** Since you have [already] tasted the goodness and kindness of the Lord. [Amplified Bible - Lockman](#)

**KJV:** If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

**Wuest:** in view of the fact that you tasted that the Lord is kind, loving, and benevolent

**Young's Literal:** if so be ye did taste that the Lord is gracious,

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IF YOU HAVE TASTED THE KINDNESS OF GOD: ei egeusasthe (2PAMI) hoti chrestos o kurios

- Ps 9:10; 24:8; 63:5; Song 2:3; Zech 9:17; Heb 6:5,6
- [1 Peter 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [1 Peter 2:1-3 Getting Into The Word](#) - Steven Cole
- [1 Peter 2:1-3 Hungering for God's Word](#) - John MacArthur
- [1 Peter 2:1-3 Desiring the Word](#) - John MacArthur
- [1 Peter 2:1-3 Cultivating a Hunger for God's Word](#) - John MacArthur

## AN INCENTIVE FOR LAYING ASIDE ALL HINDRANCES & ACTIVELY APPROPRIATING PROPER NOURISHMENT

**If you have tasted** - "Since you have tasted", Wuest = "in view of the fact that you tasted" NET = "If you have experienced."; NLT = "Now that you have tasted." CSB = "Since you have tasted."

Peter's point is that in view of the fact that his readers had **tasted the kindness** of the Lord in causing them to be born again, they should now be motivated to rid themselves of the hindrances that ruin our spiritual appetite, so that they might long for proper nourishment found only in the Word and only in which one can attain genuine spiritual growth and maturity.

**If** (ei) is a **First Class Conditional clause** ([see note below](#)) which signifies that the statement that follows is assumed true. It indicates a fulfilled condition and could be translated "**Since** you have tasted..." They as newborn babes had tasted the Word of God, and had found in it that the Lord was gracious. As Wesley puts it the readers as born again believers had "Sweetly and experimentally known" the Lord's kindness.

**Steven Cole** observes that "For Peter, Christ is the Lord (as 1 Pe 2:4-note makes clear). Since this is a quote from Psalm 34:8 (from Septuagint (LXX - [see Spurgeon's note on verse 8](#)), it shows that Peter believed Christ to be God ("Yahweh" for the psalmist). Psalm 34 must have been Peter's favorite--he quotes from it again in 1 Peter 3:10; 3:11; 3:12 (see notes). Also, the theme of Psalm 34 is roughly the same as that of 1 Peter: "If in distress you seek the Lord, He will deliver you from all your troubles, for 'though the afflictions of the righteous are many, the Lord will rescue them out of them all'" (J. N. D. Kelly, A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude [Baker], p. 87). ([1 Peter 2:1-3 Getting Into The Word](#))

The **Septuagint** (Greek) of Ps 34:8 reads "geusasthe (from geuomai) kai idete **hoti chrestos o kurios** makarios aner os elpizei ep auton." 1Pe 2:3 reads "geusasthe (from geuomai) **hoti chrestos o kurios**."

**Spurgeon** commenting on **1 Peter 2:3** agrees writing that...

I THINK there can be very little doubt that Peter is here quoting from Psalm 34:8: **O taste and see that the Lord is good**. As I read you the chapter just now, I could not help observing the constant traces of Old Testament language. It endears Peter to us when we see how he prizes the ancient Word of the Lord; and, at the same time, it puts honor upon the Old Testament itself, when we see the Holy Spirit in the New thus quoting from the Old.

It is noteworthy that in Psalm 34:8 the Lord God is spoken of. The passage actually runs — "O taste and see that Jehovah is good"; and Peter does not hesitate for a moment to apply the passage to the Lord Jesus. The word "Lord" is here used in its utmost fullness of meaning, as the equivalent for Jehovah, and it is applied to our Savior Jesus Christ. That Peter is here speaking of Jesus we are sure from the context: "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious." The chosen foundation-stone is, beyond question, the Lord Jesus; and Peter uses words concerning him which were written by inspiration concerning Jehovah himself. Evidently, to Peter the Lord Jesus was Lord and God...

But now let us think of A SPECIAL SENSE which is exercised in tasting that the Lord is gracious. Faith is the soul's eye by which it sees the Lord. Faith is the soul's ear by which we hear what God the Lord will speak. Faith is the spiritual hand which touches and grasps the things not seen as yet. Faith is the spiritual nostril which perceives the precious perfume of our Lord's garments, which smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia. Faith also is the soul's taste by which we perceive the sweetness of our Lord, and enjoy it for ourselves. Taste is an inward sense, a private, powerful, personal appreciation. To taste is to know a thing in the essence, outcome, and enjoyment of it. To taste is to exercise discernment, to make discovery, and to gain assured knowledge of a thing. Apply this to the fact that the Lord is gracious, and what a weighty matter it is to taste thereof!...

**If you have tasted it, long for more of it.** Do not hanker after the dilutions and concoctions of "modern

thought," which you will find vended in many a pulpit. Beware of dangerous foods, compounded of speculations and heresies.

If you have ever tasted **the true milk of the word**, you will not desire any other; for there is none like it. When the other foods come into the market, say to yourself, "The best is good enough for me, and Christ Jesus is the best of the best. The Lord is so gracious that none can compare with him for a moment, and therefore I shall not leave him."

Let others fly to poisoned cups of error, or intoxicating draughts of superstition, we will keep to that which is so grateful to our taste, so nourishing to our souls.

**Next, expect to grow, and pray that you may do so.** You, dear friends, have tasted that the Lord is gracious; and now you desire to be nourished up in sound doctrine, that your whole nature may be developed.

How do Christians grow? If they grow aright, they grow all over.

Some grow in knowledge, but they do not grow in virtue: this is as if a child's head should get bigger and bigger, and the rest of his body should remain as it was: he will become a hideous creature, or will die of water on the brain.

Some say they will make their hearts grow, and never mind their heads. This also will not do. If your heads remain pimples while your hands and feet increase, you will be deformed.

We must grow up into Christ in all things. How? Why, by drinking in **the unadulterated milk of the Word**. To feed thereon makes us grow (1Pe 2:2b).

Why are some stunted? Because they do not take enough spiritual food, or else because it is not the true word of God which they hear. It is sad that there should be so much evil teaching: it is the pest of our age. One of the most active agencies in London for the spread of certain diseases is milk; and though persons take in their milk carelessly, and think it is an innocent fluid, there may often be death in the can, and the pint of milk may be a pint of poison.

The gospel is the most sustaining food for the soul; but if it is adulterated, it may convey spiritual disease and death into the soul. More mischief can be done by the pulpit than by all other agencies put together.

Brethren, pray for ministers; for if they preach the gospel and water, so that the gospel loses its power; or if they preach gospel and poison, so that it ceases to be pure truth, then the people cannot grow, nor even live.

Brethren, let us pray for more faith, more hope, more love, more zeal, and so let us grow. "Desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow."

Next, "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious," abhor the garlic flavor of the world's vices. I mean those alluded to in the first verse — "malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, and all evil speaking." If the Lord is gracious to you, be gracious to others.

If you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, do not carry about with you the bitterness of malice, or the sourness of envy. Have no savor of cunning about you, nor the least taint of hypocrisy, nor the foul tang of evil speaking. Is not even a smack of evil too much?

A man that has tasted that the Lord is gracious ought to have a sweet mind, and a sweet mouth; he should judge charitably, and speak kindly of others. If you do not do so, I advise you to taste again and again that the Lord is gracious, till the powerful savor of grace shall abide in the mouth, and cast out all the noisome savors of hate.

I want you also, dear friends, if you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, to lose taste for all earthly trifles. Some amusements we are supposed to condemn; but we have not condemned them indiscriminately. We have nothing to say about their suitability for those who can be satisfied with them. Many diversions may be suited to those whose natures can be gratified with them. As to the children of God, we judge for them by quite another rule. Let the ox have its grass and the horse its hay; but souls must feed on spiritual meat. A farmer takes me over his farm. I see that he keeps swine, and I see the men bring out for them barley-meal and wash. The farmer asks me what I think of it. I think it is capital stuff for those for whom it is prepared. I do not condemn the swine for enjoying it, nor the farmer for providing it for them. But if he asks me whether I will have some of the wash, I am quick at answering, "No, farmer, not I." "Why not?" "Well, I have other tastes. In your own house I have eaten bread and beef, and other foods are not what I hunger for." That is all I say.

Those who want vain amusements may judge themselves by their likings; but if so be that we have tasted that

the Lord is gracious, our tastes are henceforth spoiled for the world's impure delights. To dispute about taste is acknowledged to be unwise; and when sin and holiness become matters of taste with men, we shall soon see what manner of men they are.

The taste of the world will never be our taste. I hope it never will; for if it were, we should have grave cause to fear that we were of the world. If we were of the world, the world would love its own, and we should love the world's own as much as the world loves it. May you lose all taste for the apples of Sodom and the grapes of Gomorrah!

Lastly, if you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, taste again. For what does the next verse say? "To whom coming, as unto a living stone." You have come to Jesus; keep on coming to Jesus. You tell me that you trust Christ; trust him again, my brother.

"He is all my hope." Hope in him yet more.

"He is my joy." Rejoice in him still more.

"He is my love." Love him with all your souls.

If you have tasted and enjoyed, then feast and enjoy. "Eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." There is no stint at my Lord's table, and you need not restrain yourself from fear of surfeit or sickness. You can never partake too freely of the grace of Christ Jesus your Lord. No man was ever made ill by feeding too freely upon heavenly things. No, the dainties of heaven create an expansion of soul, and as we receive we gain capacity to receive yet more of holy gifts. We feast on when once we have tasted that the Lord is gracious. The Lord feed you to the full, for Jesus' sake! Amen. ([1 Peter 2:3 The Test of Taste - Pdf](#))

**Albert Barnes** explains that by using "if" - The apostle did not mean to express any doubt on the subject, but to state that, since they had had an experimental acquaintance with the grace of God, they should desire to increase more and more in the knowledge and love of him. (Barnes' Notes on the Bible)

## What is A Conditional" Clause?

- For more detail see Conditional Clauses in Greek

**Conditional clause** = These dependent clauses can be identified in most English translations by beginning with the conjunction "IF".

A conditional clause is a supposition (a fact that is supposed) which may or may not be true, depending on the fulfillment of certain specified conditions.

A conditional clause in Greek is formed by combining a preposition with a certain verb mood (**indicative mood** = fact; **subjunctive** = has some degree of uncertainty; **optative** = reflects even more uncertainty).

Conditional clauses can be grouped into two general categories:

(1). The first and second class conditional statements are used with the **indicative mood** and view the situation from a standpoint of reality, assuming the premise is either true (First Class Condition) or untrue (Second Class Condition). The speaker is simply making a declarative statement based on the assumption that what he is saying is either true or false.

(2). The third and fourth class conditional statements use the **subjunctive** and **optative moods** respectively and reflect uncertainty or doubt.

### Summary of the Four Class Conditions of "IF" in Greek:

**1. First class** = (If) what follows is accepted as TRUE. Could be translated "since" or "because". True statement or fulfilled condition.

- **Ei + any tense of indicative mood**

1Peter 2:1-note, Col 1:23-note, Col 3:1-note Eph 3:2-note; Eph 4:21-note, etc

**Caveat** - not every first class condition can accurately be translated with "since" -- see [addendum](#) below.

2. **Second class** = (If) what follows is NOT TRUE. Statement contrary to fact or an unfulfilled condition.

- **Ei + past tenses of indicative mood**

Jn 15:19

3. **Third class** = (If)... and it may be true or may not be true. Supposition where the reality of the issue is uncertain.

- **Ean + subjunctive mood implying uncertainty**

Mt 4:9

4. **Fourth class** = (If) = IF... it might be true, but it is very doubtful. Same expression as 3rd class but even > doubt of fulfillment.

- **Ei + optative mood**

1Peter 3:14-note

[CLICK HERE FOR AN EXCELLENT CHART SUMMARY](#) OF THE FOUR CONDITIONAL CLAUSES ([See more explanatory notes](#)).

## FIRST CLASS CONDITION AND USE OF "SINCE"

Here are some supplementary notes on whether one should use "**since**" in translating the "**if**" in a first class condition.

Let's look at a couple of examples and as a good inductive student you decide if "since" would be appropriate.

Here is 1 Peter 2:3 when in NASB reads "if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord." Look at the context? The question is had they tasted the kindness? Or was it "iffy" so to speak. Look at 1 Peter 1:22-23 - "Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, 23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God." So clearly **in context** his readers had "**tasted**" the kindness of the Lord. Now if you go back to the passage in 1 Peter 2:3 it seems we can accurately "paraphrase" it "**Since** you tasted the kindness..." And here is the translation by the HCSB - 1 Peter 2:3 **since** you have tasted that the Lord is good. (1Pe 2:3 CSB)

Here is John MacArthur's comment on the "if" in 1Peter 2:3 = "Verse 3, he says, "Long for the pure spiritual milk of the Word **if** you've tasted the kindness of the Lord." What does he mean by that? You know what he means. It's a **first-class conditional in the Greek**, it means **since** or **because**." (Sermon entitled "Desiring the Word" in 1988).

Look at Luke 4:3 "And the devil said to Him, **if** You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." In Greek the "if" introduces a first class conditional declaration by the devil to Jesus.

"IF" could be translated with "since" in this sentence and it would be accurate.

John MacArthur's comment on this passage "Verse 3, "The devil said to Him," all the way through the devil speaks, by the way, with a measure of truth. Deception only works if it somehow has partial truth in it. And so when the devil speaks, he starts from a point of truth. That's the subtlety of his deception. So the devil said to Him, "**If** ... or probably better translated ... **since**," this is a first class conditional with a particle which is ei in the Greek, and a first class conditional does not presume doubt, it does not presume doubt. So he's really saying ... "**Since** ... since You are the Son of God." This is true and this is the measure of truth with which Satan launches the deception." (The Temptation of the Messiah Part 1, 2000).

Some other examples where "since" makes "sense"...

"But **if (since)** ye be led of the Spirit, you are not under the law", Galatians 5:18.

Romans 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

Paul makes a dogmatic statement that is to be applied to every Christian so clearly in this context it

would be fair and accurate to translate ".If (First Class Conditional) with "since God is for us." Why? Because there is no doubt that God is for us (believers).

1 Cor 15:2 - "by which also you are saved, **if** you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain."

Here is Bob Utley's note on "if" - This is a **FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL** sentence, which implies that they would "hold fast" to the truth of the gospel, which he preached to them, but it adds a note of contingency by a second "ei" (unless). This seems to parallel Jesus' Parable of the Soils (cf. Matt. 13) and John's discussion in 1 John 2:19 of those who were in the fellowship, but left. There were those factions in Corinth who by their actions, attitudes, and theology showed they were never believers! They rejected Paul's gospel and Apostolic authority and merged the gospel into Roman culture, whereby the culture became dominant! Cultural Christianity is always weak and sometimes not Christian! However, please note that contextually Paul is asserting his confidence that the Corinthian believers are true believers. (1) AORIST tense, v. 1, "received" (2) PERFECT tense, v. 1, "in which also you stand" (3) **FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL** sentence, v. 2, "since you hold fast"

Galatians 4:7 - "Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and **if** a son, then an heir through God"

Bob Utley writes - This is a FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE, "**since** you are sons" (TEV, NIV). The Spirit removes our slavery and bondage and establishes our sonship (cf. Rom. 8:12-17). This assures our inheritance (cf. 1 Pet. 1:4-5). Here is the **NIV** which renders the "if" with "since" = "NIV Galatians 4:7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir." (As does the NLT paraphrase)

Now I am not a Greek expert but clearly some passages with a first class conditional can be translated with "**Since**" -- should every first class condition be translated with "since"? That's another question. I think what can help make that decision is examination of the context, so see if "since" makes sense or is non-sense. See the notes below from Mounce and Wallace...

**Here is the note from Greek Expert William Mounce says...source = Basics of Biblical Greek: Grammar**

**First class conditional sentences.** Also called "conditions of fact." These sentences are saying that if something is true, and let's assume for the sake of the argument that it is true, then such and such will occur.

The apodosis is introduced with  $\epsilon$  and the verb is in the **indicative**.

■ Most of the time you will translate  $\epsilon$  as "**if**." The protasis is assumed true for the sake of the argument, but you are not sure whether the protasis is in fact accurate. **Sometimes it clearly is not.**

$\epsilon$  δεξιὰ σου χε ρ σκανδαλίζει σε, κκοψον α πήν (Matt 5:30).

If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off.

**(MY COMMENT - CLEARLY IN THIS CONTEXT "SINCE" WOULD NOT BE AN ACCURATE WAY TO TRANSLATE THE "IF IN THIS PASSAGE).**

$\epsilon$  ὁ νάστασις νεκρ ν ο κ σπιν, ο ὁ Χριστ ς γήγερται (1 Cor 15:13).

But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.

■ **Sometimes the apodosis is true**, and you may want to translate  $\epsilon$  as "**since**."

$\epsilon$  γ ρ πιστεύομεν τι ησο ς πέθανεν κα νέστη, ο τως κα θε ς το ς κοιμηθέντας δι το ησο ξει σ ν α τ (1 Thess 4:14).

For **since** we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God, through Jesus, will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.

This may be over-translating a bit, saying more than what the sentence actually means, but there are times when using "if" adds an element of uncertainty that is not appropriate to the verse.

**ADDENDUM TO MOUNCE'S BOOK NOTE ABOVE** - This is a copy of Mounce's article entitled [Is it "if" or "since"?](#) -

First class conditional sentences are formed with a protasis (the "if" clause) with  $\epsilon$  and the indicative (any tense). Their basic meaning is to say that if such-and-such is true (and we will accept the truth of the protasis for the sake of the argument), then such-and-such will occur.

Of course, that does not mean the protasis actually is true. It could be a lie, or it could just not be true. In fact, the second class conditional sentence (“condition contrary to fact” it is also called) is identical in form to the first (except that the verb in the protasis is past time) and the protasis is clearly false. “If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me” (Jn 5:46). They clearly do not believe Moses.

I have often heard it argued that you should translate the  $\epsilon$  of the protasis as “since” and not “if” since the protasis is assumed to be true. There certainly are verses in which the use of “if” adds an apparent element of question that is not appropriate for what is being said. Satan says, “If you are the Son of God [ $\epsilon \upsilon \varsigma \epsilon \tau \omicron \theta \epsilon \omicron$ ], tell this stone to become bread” (Luke 4:3). There was no question in Satan’s mind who Jesus was.

Wallace argues strongly against this practice, saying that it over-translates  $\epsilon$ , saying more than  $\epsilon$  actually says (pp. 692f.). Greek has a word for “since,” you don’t know if the speaker “would actually affirm the truth of the protasis,” and sometimes this construction is used with a rhetorical force that is removed by “since.”

I came across a great example of this latter argument. When you look at 1 Cor 15:12 out of context, it seems a candidate for “since.” “Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?” There is no question that “Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead,” so why not translate “since Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead”?

But look at the next two verses. “But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised” (1 Cor 15:13). “And if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is groundless, and your faith is to no purpose” (1 Cor 15:14).

Here is a rhetorically powerful triad of confessions that Paul is calling the Corinthians to affirm (even though the second is in reverse).

Is Christ proclaimed as raised from the dead?

Is there a resurrection?

Has Christ been raised?

The use of “if” in this triad calls for an affirmation of faith on the part of the reader, an affirmation that they believe Christ has been raised from the dead, that there is a resurrection, and that Christ has been raised.

“Since” would destroy the rhetorical strength of Paul’s statements.

## Daniel Wallace (Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics) has this note...

### Semantic Categories of Conditional Sentences

#### 1. First Class Condition (Assumed True for Argument’s Sake)

a. Definition The first class condition indicates the assumption of truth for the sake of argument. The normal idea, then, is if—and let us assume that this is true for the sake of argument—then... . This class uses the particle  $\epsilon$  with the **indicative** (in any tense) in the protasis. In the apodosis, any mood and any tense can occur. **This is a frequent conditional clause, occurring about 300 times in the NT.**

#### b. Amplification

##### 1) Not “Since”

There are two views of the first class condition that need to be avoided. First is the error of saying too much about its meaning. The first class condition is popularly taken to mean the condition of reality or the condition of truth. Many have heard this from the pulpit: “In the Greek this condition means since.”

This is saying too much about the first class condition. For one thing, this view assumes a direct correspondence between language and reality, to the effect that the indicative mood is the mood of fact. For another, this view is demonstrably false for conditional statements: (a) In apparently only 37% of the instances is there a correspondence to reality (to the effect that the condition could be translated since). (b) Further, there are 36 instances of the first class condition in the NT that cannot possibly be translated since.

This can be seen especially with two opposed conditional statements. Note the following illustrations.

Mt 12:27–28 ε γ ν Βεελζεβο λ κβάλλω τ δαιμόνια, ο υ ο μ ν ν τίνι κβάλλουσιν; ... (28) ε δ ν πνεύματι θεο γ κβάλλω τ δαιμόνια, ρα φθασεν φ' μ ς βασιλεία το θεο .

If I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? ... (28) But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Obviously it is illogical to translate both sentences as since I cast out, because the arguments are opposed to each other. And it would be inconsistent to translate the first participle if and the second since.

1 Cor 15:13 ε δ νάστασις νεκρ ν ο κ σπιν, ο δ Χριστ ς γήγερται

But if there is no resurrection, then Christ has not been raised.

It is self-evident that the apostle Paul could not mean by the first class condition "since there is no resurrection"!

Cf. also Mt 5:29–30; 17:4; Mt 26:39 with Mt 26:42; John 10:37; 18:23; 1 Cor 9:17; 1Cor 15:14.

**MY CONCLUSION** - Clearly two Greek authorities disagree about use of "since." one saying yes you can but make sure it makes sense and Wallace saying no you should not translate "if" (1CC) with "since." But for example look at Col 3:1 - "Therefore **if** (FIRST CLASS CONDITION) you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God." So here's the question - have you been raised up with Christ in this context? Clearly the answer is yes since unbelievers could not obey the command to "keep seeking the things above..." And so it is not surprising that the dynamic paraphrase NIV has "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. (Col 3:1NIV) Take another example - John 10:37 " **if** (FIRST CLASS CONDITION) I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me." To translate that as since would be "non-sense" because did do the works of His Father. And so it is not surprising that none of the Bible versions translate this "if" as "since."

In sum it seems that context is king and if we cannot be 100% sure, we should stick with the literal Greek word and translate it with "if" and not with "since."

**Spurgeon** comments on "if" writing...

**If** —then, this is not a matter to be taken for granted concerning every one of the human race.

**If** —then there is a possibility and a probability that some may not have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

**If** —then this is not a general but a special mercy; and it is needful to enquire whether we know the grace of God by inward experience. There is no spiritual favour which may not be a matter for heart-searching.

But while this should be a matter of earnest and prayerful inquiry, no one ought to be content whilst there is any such thing as an **if** about his having tasted that the Lord is gracious.

A jealous and holy distrust of self may give rise to the question even in the believer's heart, but the continuance of such a doubt would be an evil indeed. We must not rest without a desperate struggle to clasp the Saviour in the arms of faith, and say,

"I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him."

Do not rest, O believer, till thou hast a full assurance of thine interest in Jesus. Let nothing satisfy thee till, by the infallible witness of the Holy Spirit bearing witness with thy spirit, thou art certified that thou art a child of God.

Oh, trifle not here; let no "perhaps" and "peradventure" and "if" and "maybe" satisfy thy soul. Build on eternal verities, and verily build upon them. Get the sure mercies of David, and surely get them. Let thine anchor be cast into that which is within the veil, and see to it that thy soul be linked to the anchor by a cable that will not break. Advance beyond these dreary "ifs;" abide no more in the wilderness of doubts and fears; cross the Jordan of distrust, and enter the Canaan of peace, where the Canaanite still lingers, but where the land ceaseth not to flow with milk and honey. (Spurgeon, C. H. Morning and evening : Daily readings May 21 AM)

**Martin Luther** said...

Whosoever has not tasted the word to him it is not sweet it has not reached the heart; but to them who have



experienced it, who with the heart believe, 'Christ has been sent for me and is become my own: my miseries are His, and His life mine,' it tastes sweet

### Johann Bengel...

Tasting excites appetite (**Ed**: Beloved this also unfortunately true of the "forbidden fruit" of sin! So beware! Eat healthy "soul food"!). Compare Malachi 3:10 ([The Critical English Testament](#))

Peter continues the milk metaphor and likened their present knowledge of salvation to **tasting**. The readers had tasted and experienced God's grace in their new birth, and had found that indeed the Lord is good.

In this verse in which he gives the readers another reminder of the grace they had already experience, Peter quotes from Psalm 34:8 which in the Greek translation (Septuagint (LXX) uses very similar language...

O **taste** (Lxx = **geuomai** - aorist imperative = do it now!)

And see that the LORD is **good** (Lxx = **chrestos**)

How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him! (Psalm 34:8)

**Robert Leighton** - Our natural desire for food arises principally from its necessity for the nourishment of our bodies. In addition to this there is a sweetness and pleasantness as we eat it that serves to sharpen our desire, and nature has given it to us for this purpose. Thus God's children, in their spiritual life, naturally desire the means of their nourishment and growth, as in this life we are always in a growing state. In addition, there is a spiritual delight and sweetness in the Word, for it reveals God, and this adds to their desire and stirs up their appetite for it. By the Word we grow, and in the Word we taste the graciousness of God. David, in the psalm that he dedicates wholly to this subject, gives both of these as reasons for his appetite. "Oh, how I love your law!" (Psalm 119:97). He declares that by it he was made "wiser than my enemies... I have more insight than all my teachers" (Psalm 119:98-99). He has been taught to keep his feet "from every evil path" (Psalm 119:101). He is taught by the Author of the Word, the Lord himself, to grow wiser and holier in divine ways. And then, in verse 103, he adds another reason: "How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Ibid)

**O taste and see that the LORD is good.**

**How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!**

Ps 34:8

**Spurgeon** ([Notes on Ps 34:8](#)) has the following meditation...

**O taste and see.** Make a trial, an inward, experimental trial of the goodness of God. You cannot see except by tasting for yourself; but if you taste you shall see, for this, like Jonathan's honey, enlightens the eyes. That the Lord is good. You can only know this really and personally by experience. There is the banquet with its oxen and fatlings; its fat things full of marrow, and wine on the lees well refined; but their sweetness will be all unknown to you except you make the blessings of grace your own, by a living, inward, vital participation in them.

**Blessed is the man that trusts** ("takes refuge") **in Him** (Ps 34:8KJV). Faith is the soul's taste; they who test the Lord by their confidence always find Him good, and they become themselves blessed. The second clause of the verse, is the argument in support of the exhortation contained in the first sentence.

Ps 34:8. Experience the only true test of religious truth.

**Taste and see.** There are some things, especially in the depths of the religious life, which can only be understood by being experienced, and which even then are incapable of being adequately embodied in words. O taste and see that the Lord is good. The enjoyment must come before the illumination; or rather the enjoyment is the illumination. There are things that must be loved before we can know them to be worthy of our love; things to be believed before we can understand them to be worthy of belief. And even after this -- after we are conscious of a distinct apprehension of some spiritual truth, we can only, perhaps, answer, if required to explain it, in the words of the philosopher to who the question was put, "What is God?" "I know, if I am not asked." - **Thomas Binney's "Sermons," 1869.**

Be unwilling that all the good gifts of God should be swallowed without taste, or maliciously forgotten, but use your palate, know them, and consider them. - **D. H. Mollerus.**

**Our senses help our understandings; we cannot by the most rational discourse perceive what the sweetness of honey is; taste it and you shall perceive it.** "His fruit was sweet to my taste." Dwell in the light of the Lord, and let thy soul be always ravished with His love. Get out the marrow and the fatness that thy portion yields thee. Let fools learn by beholding thy face how dim their blazes are to the brightness of thy day.

**Richard Alleine** (See "Desire" on page 20 of [Heaven Opened or a Brief and Plain Discovery of The Riches of God's Covenant of Grace](#)) (1665)

**Tasted** (1089) (**geuomai**; Latin - gusto) literally means to taste with the mouth, to try or test the flavor of (Mt 27:34).

Figuratively **geuomai** (as used in secular Greek) meaning to "come to know" or to experience something. (Mt 16:28, Mk 9:1, Lk 9:27, Jn 8:52, He 2:9, 1Pe 2:3).

**BDAG** - (1) to partake of something by mouth = to taste, partake of (2) to experience something cognitively or emotionally = to come to know.

**Geuomai** - 15x in 15v in **NAS** - eat(1), eaten(1), taste(8), tasted(4), tasting(1).

Matthew 16:28 "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

Matthew 27:34 they gave Him wine to drink mixed with gall; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink.

Mark 9:1 And Jesus was saying to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power."

Luke 9:27 "But I say to you truthfully, there are some of those standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God."

Luke 14:24 'For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.'

John 2:9 When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom,

John 8:52 The Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets also; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste of death.'

Acts 10:10 But he became hungry and was desiring to eat; but while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance;

Acts 20:11 When he had gone back up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak, and then left.

Acts 23:14 They came to the chief priests and the elders and said, "We have bound ourselves under a solemn oath to **taste** nothing until we have killed Paul.

Colossians 2:21 "Do not handle, do not **taste**, do not touch!"

Hebrews 2:9 But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might **taste** death for everyone.

Hebrews 6:4 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have **tasted** of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit,

Hebrews 6:5 and have **tasted** the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

1 Peter 2:3 if you have **tasted** the kindness of the Lord.

**Geuomai** - 12 x in the non-apocryphal Septuagint - Most refer to literal tasting. Ge 25:30; 1Sa 14:24, 29, 43; 2Sa 3:35; 2Sa 19:35; Job 12:11; Job 20:18; Job 34:3; Ps 34:8; Pr 31:18 ("senses" - Lxx "tastes"); Jonah 3:7

Job 12:11 (cp Job 34:3) "Does not the ear test words, as the palate **tastes** its food?"

The **aoist tense** of **geuomai** suggests that an initial act of tasting is referred to. Since this taste has proved satisfactory, the believers are urged to long for additional spiritual food (cp Mt 4:4, Lk 4:4, Dt 8:2, 3 Isa 8:20NLT, Dt 32:47, Job 23:12, Ps 19:10, Ps 119:11, Ps 119:103, Ps 119:127).

The writer of Hebrews uses **geuomai** in his description of our Great High Priest...

"we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might **taste** (**geuomai**) death for everyone." (see note Hebrews 2:9)

**ILLUSTRATION** - A powerful illustration of someone "tasting" the Word of God: A beautiful and touching story is told of a young French girl who had been born blind. After she learned to read by touch, a friend gave her a Braille copy of Mark's gospel. She read it so much that her fingers became calloused and insensitive. In an effort to regain her feeling, she cut the skin from the ends of her fingers. Tragically, however, her calluses were replaced by permanent and even more insensitive scars. She sobbingly gave the book a goodbye kiss, saying, "FAREWELL, FAREWELL, SWEET WORD OF MY HEAVENLY FATHER." In doing so, she discovered that her lips were even more sensitive than her fingers had been, and she spent the rest of her life reading her great treasure with her lips. Would that every Christian had such an appetite for the Word of God! (As told by Dr John MacArthur)

**Similar phrase "Kindness of God"** - 2Sa 9:3, Ro 2:4, Titus 3:4-note

**Kindness** (5543) (**chrestos** from **chraomai** = to use or from **chresteuomai** = to act kindly) has the basic meaning being well adapted to fulfill a purpose, i.e. useful, suitable, excellent, serviceable. It means goodness with a nuance of 'serviceableness.' (as in Luke 5:39 where the old wine is fine or superior for use). **Chrestos** refers to morals in 1Cor 15:33 as those which are useful or benevolent.

In several NT verses (Lk 6:35, Ro 2:4-note; Eph 4:32-note 1Pe 2:3) the main idea of **chrestos** is **kind** which conveys the sense of possessing attributes such as loving affection, sympathy, friendliness, patience, pleasantness, gentleness, and goodness. **Kindness** is a quality shown in the way a person speaks and acts. It is more **volitional** than **emotional**.

**Vine** writes that **chrestos**...

primarily signifies "fit for use, able to be used" (akin to **chraomai**, "to use"), hence, "good, virtuous, mild, pleasant" (in contrast to what is hard, harsh, sharp, bitter). ([Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words](#))

**Chrestos** is used 7 times in the NT...

**Matthew 11:30** "For My yoke is **easy**, and My load is light."

**Comment:** Here **chrestos** refers to that which causes no discomfort. It is that which is **well-fitting**. In Palestine ox-yokes were made of wood; the ox was brought, and the measurements were taken. The yoke was then roughed out, and the ox was brought back to have the yoke tried on. The yoke was carefully adjusted, so that it would fit well, and not gall the neck of the patient beast. The yoke was tailor-made to fit the ox. **Ponder** that thought for a moment! Christ's yoke is wholesome, serviceable, kindly. "*Christ's yoke is like feathers to a bird; not loads, but helps to motion*" -- Jeremy Taylor)

**Luke 5:39** "And no one, after drinking old wine wishes for new; for he says, 'The old is **good** enough.'"

**Comment:** Here **chrestos** refers to that which meets a relatively high standard of value)

**Luke 6:35** "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is **kind** to ungrateful and evil men.

**Romans 2:4** (note) Or do you think lightly of the riches of His **kindness** and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the **kindness** of God leads you to repentance?

**Comment:** Here **chrestos** refers to the beneficent nature of God, His desire to perform acts of kindness and charity. This meaning also applies to His children in Ephesians 4:32 who perform acts of charity because of His life in them and flowing through them).

**1 Corinthians 15:33** **Do not be deceived** (stop being deceived): "Bad company corrupts **good** morals."

**Comment:** Here **chrestos** refers to that which morally good and thus which is reputable)

**Ephesians 4:32** (note) And be **kind** to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

**Comment:** In experiencing the kindness of the Lord, men are to be like him in showing kindness towards others)

**1 Peter 2:3** (note) if you have tasted the **kindness** of the Lord.

**Comment:** Plato used **chrestos** for food. There also may be a play on words between "kindness" (**chrestos**) and "Christ" (**Christos**), two words which were probably pronounced the same at that time. The believers have therefore tasted **chrestos**, that is, Christ Himself, the Living Word.)

**Vincent** says **chrestos** is...

Actively benignant, "as distinguished from other adjectives which describe goodness on the side of its sterling worth and its gentleness" (Salmond). (Commenting on the use of *chrestos* to describe Jesus' yoke in Mt 11:30 Vincent writes) In Luke 5:39, **chrestos** is used of old wine, where the true reading, instead of better, is good (*chrestos*), mellowed with age.

Plato ("Republic," 424) applies the word to education. "*Good nurture and education, implant good (agathos) constitutions; and these **good** (chrestos) constitutions improve more and more,*" thus evidently using *chrestos* and *agathos* as synonymous. The three meanings combine in the word, though it is impossible to find an English word which combines them all. Christ's yoke is wholesome, serviceable, kindly.

The Christians of Asia Minor should long for the gospel like a baby longs for milk because they have already tasted how good the Lord is. How could anyone who has taken even a sip from the kindness of the Lord resist drinking more?

**William MacDonald** explains...

What a tremendous impetus for thirsting for the pure spiritual milk! The if does not express any doubt; we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good. His sacrifice for us was an act of unspeakable goodness and kindness (Titus 3:4-note). What we have already tasted of His kindness should whet our appetites to feed more and more on Him. The sweet taste of nearness to Him should make us dread the thought of ever wandering away from Him." ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

Or as **Bengel** puts it "The first "tastes" of God's goodness are afterwards followed by fuller and happier experiences. A taste whets the appetite.

**Martin Luther** wrote that "Whosoever has not tasted the word to him it is not sweet it has not reached the heart; but to them who have experienced it, who with the heart believe, 'Christ has been sent for me and is become my own: my miseries are His, and His life mine,' it tastes sweet

**William Barclay** makes the following application stating that "Here is something of the greatest significance. The fact that God is gracious is not an excuse for us to do as we like, depending on him to overlook it; it lays on us an obligation to toil towards deserving his graciousness and love. The kindness of God is not an excuse for laziness in the Christian life; it is the greatest of all incentives to effort. ([Daily Study Bible](#))

So since we have tasted of **the riches of His kindness** (Ro 2:4-note), our appetites are now **enabled** (new heart, new spirit within, Ezek 36:26, 27-note) to desire **the pure milk of the Word** But if we stop tasting the Word, we stop growing, and we stop enjoying the continual kindnesses that we find in the Lord.

**Lord** ([2962](#))(**kurios**) is the master or owner, in the present context describing Jesus as our Master which is not just a "title" but in a designation which calls for a response. If Jesus is truly my Master I should willingly, reverently bow before Him.. If Christ is my **Lord**, I am called to live under His rule, consciously, continually (enabled by His Spirit) submitting my will to Him as would any ancient loyal, loving bondservants. I should be seeking first His Kingdom and His righteousness (Mt 6:33-note). This begs a simple question "Is Jesus Christ my Lord?". "Do I arise each day, acknowledging this is the day the Lord has made and that it is His gift to me to use in a way that please Him?" (Ps 118:24-note) "Do I surrender my will to His will as I begin my new day?" (This is a great discipline to practice [under grace, not law - cp Ro 6:14] See Ro 12:1-note, Ro 12:2-note) Beloved, don't misunderstand. None of us have "arrived" in this area of completely yielding to **Jesus as Lord** of our lives. And it is precisely for that reason that Peter commands us to continually "**grow** (present imperative) in the grace (unmerited favor, supernatural power for supernatural spiritual growth) and knowledge (not so much *intellectual* but *transformational* - when God takes the measure of a man, He does not put the tape measure around our head but our heart!) of our **Lord** and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen." (2Pe 3:18-note) So do not become discouraged when you perceive your growth is slow or even stunted! Keep on pressing (continually = present tense) "on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Php 3:14-note) remembering that God has already promised that he "**good work**" He began in us He "**will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.**" (Php 1:6)

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**Steven Cole** concludes his sermon [Getting Into The Word](#) on 1 Peter 2:1-3 with these words...

The image of milk and of tasting the Lord's kindness brings up the fact that the Word is not just to fill your head with knowledge. It is to fill your life with delight as you get to know the Divine author and enjoy Him in all His perfections. Taste points both to personal experience and enjoyment. I can't taste for you, nor you for me. We can only taste for ourselves. To taste something, we've got to experience it up close. You can see and hear and smell at a distance, but you can only taste something by touching it to your tongue. You can only taste

God's Word by drawing near to God and personally appropriating the riches of knowing Him. Once you like the taste of something, you don't just eat it to live; you live to eat it. You want it as often as you can get it. God's Word is that way for all who have tasted His kindness.

**Conclusion** - J. I. Packer ([A Quest for Godliness, pp. 47-48, 97-98](#)) tells of a Puritan preacher in the 1620's named John Rogers who bore down on his 500 hearers for neglecting the Bible.

First he personated God to the people, telling them, "I have trusted you so long with my Bible ... it lies in such and such houses all covered with dust and cobwebs; you care not to listen to it. Do you use my Bible so? Well, you shall have my Bible no longer."

And he took the Bible from the pulpit and seemed as if he were going to carry it away from them. But then he spun around and personated the people to God. He fell on his knees and pleaded earnestly, "*Lord, whatever you do to us, take not your Bible from us. Kill our children, burn our houses, destroy our goods, only spare us your Bible! Don't take away your Bible!*"

Then he personated God again to the people: "*Say you so? Well I will try you a while longer; and here is my Bible for you. I will see how you will use it, whether you will love it more, observe it more, practice it more, and live more according to it.*"

At this point, according to **Thomas Goodwin**, who was there and who later became a powerful preacher in his own right, the entire congregation dissolved in tears. Goodwin himself, when he got outside, hung on the neck of his horse weeping for a quarter of an hour before he had the strength to mount, so powerful an impression was upon him.

**If you don't have a craving for God's Word, there could be several reasons.**

**Maybe you've never tasted the Lord's kindness in salvation.** You need to believe that He died for your sins and that He offers His salvation to you as a free gift. Take it! And start feeding on the Bible.

**You may not have a craving for God's Word because of sin in your life.** Someone has said that God's Word will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from God's Word. Confess and forsake it! And get back into the Bible.

**You may have ruined your appetite by feeding on the junk food of this world.** "Hunger makes a good cook," as the saying goes. If you don't sense your great need for God and His Word, it may be because you've filled up on junk like television. Shut it off! Or, maybe you've been filling up on the junk food being sold at Christian book stores under the label of Christian, but which waters down the pure Word of God with modern man's wisdom. Such junk food makes you feel full, but it doesn't nourish the soul. Don't waste your time reading it! There are some excellent Christian books that will help you to understand and apply God's truth. They're well worth reading.

But above all else, read your Bible! Hunger for God's truth. Drink it in like a nursing infant. You've got to have it above all else if you want to grow in your salvation.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** (1) How can a person know if a preacher is giving out pure or watered down milk? (2) Must every Christian become a student of the Word in order to grow? What if a person just isn't a reader? (3) How can these relational sins (1Peter 2:1-note) hinder desire for God's Word? (4) Should we read the Word only when we're motivated or even when we don't feel like it? Why? ([1 Peter 2:1-3 Getting Into The Word](#)) (Bolding added)