



**Green Pond
United Methodist**

Study Guide

Faith in the 5 Senses

Sept. 10, 2023
“Taste & Know the
Lord is Good”

Opening Prayer:

O God of heaven and earth, as we begin this study, we ask that you help us navigate our sometimes complicated relationship with food. We sometimes barely pay attention to what we are eating and give little thought to where or how it was grown, harvested or butchered. And yet we know that You have created us to delight in a variety of flavors and our food is a gift from You. Help us to appreciate the food we eat this day, and as we consider the ways that the Psalmist describes your Word, help us to take our time to find true delight and nourishment in the scriptures. May they point us to your Living Word in Jesus. We pray this week, in turn, that we would create space for hospitality and joy as we seek to “season” our families, neighborhood and world with your goodness this week. In Jesus’ name, we pray, Amen.

Scripture:

Psalm 119:97-103 (NRSV)

Oh, how I love your law!

It is my meditation all day long.

**Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies,
for it is always with me.**

**I have more understanding than all my teachers,
for your decrees are my meditation.**

**I understand more than the aged,
for I keep your precepts.**

**I hold back my feet from every evil way,
in order to keep your word.**

**I do not turn away from your ordinances,
for you have taught me.**

**How sweet are your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!**

Psalm 34:8 (NRSV)

**O taste and see that the Lord is good;
happy are those who take refuge in him.**

Introduction:

Today we begin our study on “Faith in the Five Senses” with the sense of taste. The scriptures use the metaphor of taste in a variety of ways. We live in a culture that allows us to experience a whole range of tangy tastes and sweet bites. In this study, we will explore how deepening our perception of taste, may help us more deeply understand God’s goodness.

Questions:

1. What is your favorite food or drink? What would you say is the dominant flavor of your favorite: sweet, sour, salty, bitter or umami “savory”? Have your tastes changed since your childhood? In what ways?
2. Read 1 Samuel 21:10-15, which serves as the backdrop of Psalm 34:8. David’s has fled from Saul who intends to murder him and went to the King of Gath. However, news of David’s military success preceded him, and frightened the people of Gath, so David faked madness to get away and save his life. David was really hitting bottom, but the Lord heard him and delivered him. Are you able to delight in God during hard times? Can you think of an example in your own life when perhaps God broke through to deliver you?
3. Read Matthew 5:13. What is your understanding of what Jesus is saying here? The commentary in the Bible version VOICE explains, “Salt draws out the good flavors subtly hidden in the food and preserves what would otherwise spoil, as do those who claim to be children of God.” How do you think Christians can fail to bring good “seasoning” to the world? What is something you could do today to keep your “saltiness”? What could our church do to be more “salty”?
4. Read John 6:35. If time allows, read John 6:1-35 for context. Bread is a basic food in many cultures around the world. What do you find surprising in Jesus’ statement? What do you think Jesus is claiming here?
5. What helps you “dial in” to your sense of taste? Try eating something you love—perhaps a piece of chocolate or fruit. What happens if you close your eyes or turn down the sounds around you? As you eat it, nibbling slowly, do the flavors change in different parts of your mouth? How does the texture affect your enjoyment? What do you notice, that you had not noticed before? Now try an exercise illustrating Psalm 119:103. Read Proverbs 3:5-6, with a pen and paper. Write down everything you notice in 5 minutes, then after 10 minutes? If time allows, or at home later, continue journaling for 30 minutes. What do you discover? Share one insight from this exercise with your group.

Application:

As we consider the need for a variety of good food, we remember that many in our local community still struggle with hunger. Bring crackers this week for our ongoing collection for children in our “Backpack Pals” program with the local school district. Or organize a food collection with your small group Third Street Alliance in Easton.