

NOT SWEET ENOUGH

By now, everybody who reads these messages on a regular basis knows my preference for large double-doubles at Tims. Two creams and two sugars is just the perfect amount of sweetness in my coffee. My preferred Tim Hortons was closed for a while last year due to renovations. When they reopened, I noticed that my double-doubles were not tasting as sweet as I was accustomed to. I was not the only customer who noticed this. My coffee sidekick, who I also call my daughter, noticed the very same thing. I brought it to the attention of the manager, and they acknowledged they had to do some adjusting with their new machines. Eventually they got it right and I did not have any further problems with the right amount of sweetness in my coffee.

This past week my coffee sidekick was home from university for reading week and the two of us spent time each day at Tim Hortons doing work together. On one particular day we noticed that our coffees were not tasting as sweet as we were used to. I went up to the counter and got a stir stick thinking maybe the employee had failed to stir it. I stirred the coffee and took a taste but noticed no difference. I went up to the counter again and grabbed a few sugars and began experimenting until I got it to my preferred sweetness. My sidekick and I were not the only ones who noticed their coffees were not as sweet as usual. Over the next two hours, we noticed many people coming back in to the store after getting their coffees at the drive through window complaining that it was not sweet enough.

On Monday morning I drove my sidekick back to university and decided to bring my books along and work there for a while. I went to a coffee spot at the university that my sidekick told me made some great specialty coffees. I am not a specialty coffee guy, but I was intrigued to see how good their brewed coffee was. I ordered a large double-double and had to pay a dollar more than I normally do at Tim Hortons. That left a bitter taste in this cheap person's heart. I sat down at a table, took my first sip and immediately noticed that it was not sweet to my taste. A few more packages of sugar were needed.

After I got it to my liking, I decided to open my Bible and research references in it that had to do with “**Sweet or Sweetness.**” After spending a few minutes scanning various references, I was reminded how Scripture that God's instructions are sweet to us. David, for one, described God's teachings as being sweet:

Reverence for the Lord is pure, lasting forever. The laws of the Lord are true; each one is fair. They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb (Psalm 19: 9-10).

David did not write Psalm 19, but the person who did also found God's words and instructions to be sweet tasting:

How sweet your words taste to me; they are sweeter than honey (Psalm 119: 103).

Many people view God's instructions and commandments as being bitter rather than sweet thinking they are meant to prevent us from having fun and pleasure in life. However, David and this other psalmist saw them in terms of being guides that sweeten our lives by guiding our paths, reviving our souls, bringing joy to our lives, and giving important insights. David and the writer of Psalm 119 found God's words and instructions to be the perfect sweetness in their day to day lives.

As I shared earlier in regard to my coffee experiences of late, when it does not have the right amount of sweetness, I need to do some additional stirring or add a bit more sugar. With this reminder in mind, a question we should ponder is **how sweet are we finding God's words and instructions at this point in our lives?** Are we bitter at this moment when it comes to tasting God's words and instructions to us? Do we find some of His teachings sweet but others not so much? If we are not experiencing what David and the writer of Psalm 119 did when it comes to God's words, perhaps this is the time we need to begin stirring parts of our spiritual walk with the Lord so we may find the perfect sweetness when it comes to His words and instructions.

I know that when I take a sip from a large double-double that has the perfect sweetness a smile comes across my face. My sidekick finds the same when her coffee has the perfect sweetness. When we allow God to add the perfect sweetness to our lives when it comes to His Word, we too will experience that same smile and enjoyment on our faces.

Keep safe and God bless,

Pastor Dean