

Sweeter Than Honey: A Lesson From Pooh

By Daryl Wingerd

In Psalm 119:103 the psalmist exclaims, “How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth.” Though we may not put it in such eloquent words, that is the testimony of every true Christian.

Nevertheless, even true Christians, those who recognize the importance, excellence, beauty, and authority of the Scriptures, sometimes lose their appetite for the study of God’s Word.



Pooh
From
Milne's
Winnie the
Pooh
(Dutton).

How does this happen? Perhaps they are busy with their job, or their children occupy a great deal of their time, or they moved away from a good church where friends encouraged them to read and study. Maybe they have fallen into a bad habit of sleeping too much, watching too much TV, reading too many other books, or spending too much time on the internet. Perhaps they can't explain how or why it happened. It just happened. The study of the Bible lost its appeal while other pursuits gained the priority in their time and attention. They may have reached the frustrating point where they regularly choose *not* to study the Bible even when they have plenty of time and nothing else to do.

Is this your story? Do you miss those former times of discovery and amazement as you enthusiastically turned page after page in the book of God-breathed words (cf. 2 Timothy 3:16)?

What can you do? How can you get your appetite back?

Believe it or not, Winnie the Pooh illustrates the answer for us. I recently watched a Pooh video with my young sons. In this episode, Pooh lost his appetite for honey. Pooh's friends (Tigger, Owl, Rabbit, Piglet, and Gopher) became suspicious that this bear, one who *looked like* Pooh and was *claiming to be* Pooh, might be an imposter because, as everyone knows, the *real* Pooh bear loves honey. Pooh even began to question his own identity.

Gopher eventually led Pooh and Tigger to a large tree with a Pooh-sized hole way up high. He assured Pooh and Tigger that Pooh's missing appetite was inside the hole. Tigger promptly pushed Pooh through the hole, causing him to fall into the middle of a giant pool of honey inside the tree. Then an amazing thing happened. As soon as Pooh found

himself in the pool of honey he instinctively began to eat . . . and eat, and eat, and eat.

Gopher was right. Pooh's appetite for honey was inside that tree, right in the middle of a big pool of honey—the very thing Pooh bears love best. Pooh was really Pooh, not an imposter. His rediscovered appetite for honey assured everyone of that fact, including Pooh himself.

Just as Pooh found his appetite for honey when he found himself in the middle of a pool of honey, we will likely find our appetite for Scripture when we find ourselves in the middle of Scripture. We will rediscover our love of God's Word when we begin once again to discipline ourselves to study God's Word.

The only alternative to intentionally recovering our appetite is both unprofitable and disturbing. If Pooh had moped around, wondering how he lost his appetite for honey and helplessly waiting for it to return, he may have never rediscovered it. Likewise, you may never rediscover your appetite for God's Word if you don't search for it with diligence.

Read your Bible! Study with the help of other solid biblical literature. Expose yourself to good Bible teaching in fellowship with other Christians as often as possible. And pray that God will grant you a renewed fervor. If you spend your time doing nothing more profitable than lamenting your spiritual deadness and coldness, you will only grow colder.

And here's the disturbing part: If Pooh were never again able to enjoy honey, neither he nor his friends would have any reason to believe he was truly a Pooh bear. Though his appetite waned for a time, *real* Pooh bears will always love honey. That's just the way Pooh bears are. Likewise, although their spiritual appetite may experience ups and downs, real Christians will always love the Word of God. If the pattern you establish and maintain is one of increasing spiritual coldness and deadness, and if you never experience a reversal of your affections, you may prove yourself *not* to be who you thought you were.

Jesus said this to some who professed to be His disciples:

“If you abide in My Word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free” (John 8:32).