

Don't Forget to Do Good
Kowloon International Baptist Church
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Hebrews 13:16
Kowloon Tong
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The writer of the biblical book we call *Hebrews* wanted his readers to remember to allow their new faith to give life to the way they related to people. *Do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased (Hebrews 13:16)*. True worship should move from our lips to our lives.

What does a good person look like? An early follower of Jesus Christ was a man named Barnabas. Luke described him as *a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith (Acts 11:24)* when he went to Antioch to check on the young church. We see his goodness because when *he saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts (Acts 11:23)*. A good person will reveal his/her goodness through words and deeds.

Let's consider the impact of a good person's words. Jesus said *good people have good things in their hearts, and so they say good things. But evil people have evil in their hearts, so they say evil things (Matthew 12:35, New Century Version)*. Later James wrote, *if you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are just fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless (James 1:26, New Living Translation)*.

Behind our words are our thoughts. Motivational speaker Zig Ziglar said, "We all need a daily check up from the neck up to avoid stinkin' thinkin' which ultimately leads to hardening of the attitudes." Our thoughts and attitudes color our words. The unnamed writer of *Hebrews* wrote, *let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that confess his name (Hebrews 13:15)*. These words are often related to worship. However, the fruit of our lips reveals the Lord of our hearts.

Changes in our thoughts and words begin as we refocus our lives around Jesus Christ. Reading the Bible can help us gain insights into God's

perspective. The Bible encourages us to purify our thoughts. *Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things* *Philippians 4:8*

Getting our thoughts right is important for they feed everything else. Lao Tzu: Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habits. Watch your habits; they become character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.

Deeds follow words. *Don't forget to do good and to share with others (Hebrews 13:16)*. Doing good and sharing with others occurs as we extend hospitality and love to those in need whether they are hungry or thirsty, strangers or naked or sick or imprisoned or mistreated (*Matthew 25:31-46; Galatians 6:10; 1 John 3:16-18*).

Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. *1 John 3:18*

Most people want to do good but many are held up by their excuses. The answer to "what could I do" may be "something." Each of us can be a part of the Christ-difference in our world. Real faith should take us out of the places where we gather to worship and into the world of needs. *Doing good* grows out of our commitment to be God's person no matter what. We don't retreat from the Lordship of Jesus Christ because we have had a hard life or made mistakes or because we fear we can't do something. We offer all we are to God and share what we are and have with others.

Perhaps the secret of greatness is found in the last words of General William Booth (founder of the Salvation Army). When asked what the secret of his accomplishments was, he said, "If there has been any secret, it has been that God has had all there was of me."

Does God have all there is of you?

The Bible translation used today is the New International Version unless otherwise stated.