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Doing Good

by Enid Nicholls

In these times of people needing help and others being prepared to receive help it seems most relevant. Psalm 37:1-5.

I was recently in contact with an old school friend and her husband, helpers and fundraisers for their local children's hospice. During a conversation they both said that they would not like to be called “do-gooders”. I wondered why this phrase should have a negative connotation? Why can't “do-gooders” mean just what it says? When I read Psalm 37 this thought came to me. The Lord Himself is giving definite if brief directions.

1. Trust Him
2. Do good

Many of us would assert that we trust the Lord, but might struggle to say honestly how much good we do.

Trusting God is a state of heart and mind.

Doing good is a state of hands and feet!

A willingness to help others, together they can demonstrate the credibility of Christianity.

What kind of good we can do depends on what sort of a person we are, our ability to be helpful to the needs around us and whether we are natural do-gooders or have to make quite an effort to offer help. BUT we are ALL accountable to God for how we obey His direction. We need to give of our time and energy and so make room in our lives for these activities. We all have the same amount of time - but how we spend it is our own very important decision.

Suggestions For Sunday 5th July

by Revd John Elliott

Passages from Scripture

Isaiah 40:3-5

Malachi 3:1-5

Matthew 11:1-19

or Matthew 11:1-30

Teachings of the New Church

In the Word there are many who represent the Lord in respect of God's truth or the Word; but the chief among them are Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and John the Baptist. ... the fact that John the Baptist does so is clear from his being the Elijah who is to come. Anyone who does not know that John the Baptist represented the Lord in respect of the Word cannot know what it is that all the things said about him in the New Testament imply and mean. Therefore to lay bare this arcanum and at the same time the truth that Elijah as well as Moses, who were seen when the Lord was transfigured, meant the Word, let some of the things recorded regarding John the Baptist be introduced here, such as these words in Matthew, [ie in Matt.11:7-15]

[For the above, and much more regarding John the Baptist, see paragraph 9372 in Volume 11 of **Arcana Caelestia** pub 1997 tr John Elliott](#)

One person can carry on his or her outward life just like another, and all are able to become rich, to feast, live and dress splendidly in keeping with their status and responsibilities; and enjoy pleasurable and delightful things, and join in worldly business for the sake of performing duties and doing deals, and also to keep the mind active and the body refreshed. So from this it is plain that as long as people in their inner selves acknowledge God and wish their neighbour well, it not so difficult, as many believe, to set out on the road to heaven. The only difficulty is resisting love of themselves and the world, and not letting this become dominant, for that is the source

of all evils. That it is not so difficult as people believe may be understood from the Lord's words: 'Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light' (Matt.11:29-30). The Lord's yoke is easy and burden light because the more that people resist the evils that come pouring onto them from self-love and love of the world, the more they are led by the Lord, and not themselves; and then the Lord creates resistance to these evils in people, and banishes the evils.

Paragraph 359 of [Heaven and Hell](#) pub 2010 tr K C Ryder
See also paragraph 533

Hymns

386 The prophets spoke in days of old tune Newington CM

176 I heard the voice of Jesus say, tune Kingsfold or Vox Dilecti DCM

Prayer

O God our Father, help us in everything to follow the example of your servant John the Baptist.

Help us seriously to repent.

Show us the ugliness and the evil of our lives:

Show us the harm we have done, and the heartbreak we have caused:

Show us how we have shamed ourselves, disappointed those who love us,
and grieved you.

Make us truly sorry for all our sins and our mistakes, and help us to show
our sorrow by living better in the days to come.

Help us like John constantly to speak the truth.

Keep us from twisting the truth to conceal our faults:

Keep us from evading the truth we do not wish to see:

Keep us from silencing the truth, because we are more afraid to offend men
than we are to disobey you.

Save us from speaking or acting a lie, and save us from false words
and cowardly silence.

[William Barclay](#)

Brief Prayers

O Lord Jesus, acknowledge what is thine in us, and take away from us all that is not thine; for thy honour and glory. [St Bernadine](#)

O Lord, never suffer us to think we can stand by ourselves, and not need thee. [John Donne](#)

Pray for me, as I will for thee, that we may merrily meet in heaven. [St Thomas More](#)