

# THE FIRST 15

Friday, September 6, 2024

Today is Friday, September 6 and we are studying what the Bible says about doing good in the world.

## OPENING PRAYER

*As I approach these first fifteen minutes of the day devoted to the Lord, I pause and become still. I take slow, deep breaths and focus my entire being on the presence of God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I eliminate surrounding distractions, quiet the noise of my mind, and listen for the voice of the Spirit speaking to my soul. Blessed Lord, I worship and praise You in the quiet stillness of the morning. Help me hear the message You have for me today. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

***Let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.***  
**Hebrews 10:22-25**

## REFLECTION

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement in the 18th century, believed that doing good and not doing harm is the way Christian believers should live. These were the basic General Rules of the Methodist Societies, do no harm and do all the good you can do. Wesley is attributed the following quote, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

In similar fashion the author of the book of Hebrews encourages believers to *provoke* one another to love and good deeds. The original Greek is a strong word that is sometimes translated as "spur one another on," motivate, stir up or stimulate. It is an action a rider would make to move his horse from a walk to a gallop. We are to "spur one another on" to good deeds. Let's go!

These words from the book of Hebrews gives me assurance that I have been forgiven by Jesus Christ and through his blood I am washed clean from sin. His promise is faithful and I have the promise of full salvation. I move into the future with the sole aim of living a life of love and good deeds. I am to live a life of love. Loving God and loving others well. I meet frequently with other Christian believers for encouragement and motivation to make progress in holiness and live a Godly life. I live a life that is rich in good deeds that glorify God and witness to His amazing love. As John Wesley encourages, I want to do all the good I can in this lifetime.

The author of Hebrews begins, "Let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." As I consider these words, I consider the state of my heart. Do I possess full assurance of my faith? I consider the state of my conscience. Is my conscience sprinkled clean from evil? I consider the state of my body. Am I washed with pure water?

I am cleansed and prepared as a holy and living sacrifice as a pure temple for the Holy Spirit to dwell. I cannot do this cleansing myself, no matter how hard I try. I am totally reliant on the sanctifying grace and power of the Holy Spirit at work in me. Have I gotten in the habit of neglecting to meet together with other Christians? Have I stopped attending worship? Am I involved in a small group or Bible study? Do I gather regularly with other believers? Am I content to miss church for other activities or merely to stay home? Am I motivated to love others and do good deeds? Am I motivating others to do so as well?

**Ask:** How does my relationship with Jesus Christ and the fellowship I share with other believers "spur me on" to love and good deeds?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Holy God, my Father in heaven, thank You for the assurance of Your forgiveness, redemption and salvation through the blood of Your Son, my Savior, Jesus Christ. Thank You for Your faithfulness and steadfast love. Motivate me to live a life full of love and good deeds. Encourage me to faithfully meet together with other Christian believers and not fall into the habit of neglecting Christian fellowship. Wash me with pure water, cleanse me and I will be clean. Show me the next steps in my spiritual journey and help me grow into maturity in the Christian life. Amen.*