

"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

Genesis 4:9

(Not original with me)

INTRODUCTION

1. Perhaps one of the more thought-provoking questions in the Bible is that one asked by Cain:
 - a. Cain had killed his brother because God had accepted Abel's offering, but not his own - Gen 4:3-8
 - b. When the Lord inquired concerning Abel, Cain's response was:

"Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen 4:9)

2. This is a question we would do well to ask ourselves today...
 - a. Are we our brother's keeper?
 - b. Do we have a responsibility to watch out for and care for one another?

I. OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO ONE ANOTHER

A. WE ARE TO "LOVE ONE ANOTHER"...

1. As commanded by Jesus - Jn 13:34-35; 15:12,17
 2. As taught by Paul - Ro 13:8; 1Th 4:9
 3. As instructed by Peter - 1Pe 1:22
 4. As stressed by John - 1Jn 3:11 (note v.12), 23; 4:7,11-12;
2Jn 5
- But how are we to express such love?

B. HOW WE SHOW OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER...

1. We are to "receive one another" - Ro 15:7
2. We are to "edify another" - Ro 14:19
3. We are to "serve one another" - Ga 5:13
4. We are to "bear one another's burdens" - Ga 6:1-2
5. We are to be "forgiving one another" - Ep 4:32
6. We are to be "submitting to one another" - Ep 5:21
7. We are to "exhort one another" - He 3:12-13
8. We are to "consider one another" - He 10:24-25
9. We are to be "hospitable to one another" - 1Pe 4:8-10

--But how well are we doing?

II. EVALUATING OUR ROLE AS OUR BROTHER'S KEEPER

A. WHEN ONE BECOMES A BROTHER...

1. Do we **receive** them into the family of God, or ignore them?
- Ro 15:7
 - a. Are they properly assimilated in the family life of the congregation?
 - b. Do they remain on the fringe?
-- If we do not even know their names, we can be sure that we are failing as our brother's keeper!
2. Do we **edify** them, or put stumbling blocks in their way?
- Ro 14:19
 - a. As individuals, are we "body-builders", encouraging the members of the body?
 - b. Or are we like a cancer, weakening the members of the body

of Christ?

- 1) By our own example
- 2) By our words, attitudes, etc.

-- It was said of Philemon that he refreshed the hearts of the brethren; do people say the same of us?

3. Do we **submit** to them, or arrogantly rule over them? - [Ep 5:21](#)
4. Do we **serve** them in love, or expect them to serve us?
- [Ga 5:13](#)
5. Do we demonstrate **hospitality** to them? - [1Pe 4:8-10](#)
 - a. By visiting them in their need?
 - b. By inviting them into your home (or accepting invitations to their home)?

B. WHEN A BROTHER IS OVERTAKEN IN A FAULT...

1. Do we even **consider** them? - [He 10:24-25](#)
 - a. Are we even aware of who they are?
 - b. Are we ignorant of their problems? If so, why?
 - 1) Maybe it is because we don't assemble enough ourselves
 - 2) We may "wonder about them", but that is not sufficient!
 - c. Do they drift away, with no one making an effort to reach them?
2. Do we **exhort** them, lest they become hardened by sin? - [He 3:12-14](#)
 - a. Or are we afraid to confront them, for fear of running them away?
 - 1) If we truly love them and approach them with humility, they are not likely to run away
 - 2) If they do, they are running away from God, not you!
 - b. Remember, such exhortation is to be daily! Perhaps we wait too long...
3. Are we willing **bear their burdens**? - [Ga 6:1-2](#)
 - a. So as to help them overcome and become stronger
 - b. Or do we rather not be bothered?
4. Are we quick to **forgive** them when they repent? - [Ep 4:32](#)
 - a. Fear of not being forgiven and accepted back into the family may keep some from repenting and returning to the fold
 - b. Do we communicate a willingness to accept with open arms and offer complete forgiveness?

CONCLUSION

1. How we answer such questions may reveal how well or poorly we are...
 - a. Fulfilling our responsibility to be our brother's keeper
 - b. Living up to the one responsibility we have that includes all others: **to love one another as Christ loved us** - [Jn 13:34-35](#)
2. If we have failed to be our brother's keeper, we need to...
 - a. **Repent** of our lack of concern, our inactivity, or whatever has hindered us
 - b. **Confess** our shortcomings in this area to God
 - c. **Resolve** to apply with zeal these "one another" passages!

-- Are you your brother's keeper?