

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mrs. Calvert, Ms. Dannels, Mrs. Douglas, Mr. Dowling (test results), Mr. Hadley, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Owens, Ms. Sowder, Ms. Ward, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

Oak Grove Church of Christ Bulletin
2922 NW 76th Terrace, Jennings, FL 32053

June 27, 2021

“Am I My Brother's Keeper?”

By Derek Long

After Cain killed his brother Abel (Genesis 4:8), God confronts Cain to ask him, “Where is your brother?” (Genesis 4:9, NKJV). Cain replies, “I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?” (Genesis 4:9, NKJV). Cain is seeking to avoid responsibility for watching after his brother, Abel. How do we view our responsibilities toward those who are our brethren?

Cain certainly had failed to treat his brother in the proper manner. Cain was wrong to be angry about God rejecting his sacrifice and was wrong to act out in anger and hatred toward his brother Abel who had done the right thing. 1 John 3:11-5 references Cain killing his brother Abel. It reminds us Cain killed Abel because Cain had done what was evil but Abel had done what was righteous. Verse 15 says, “Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him” (NKJV). It may be easy to look at Cain's actions and think I have never killed anyone but we might ask the question is my heart filled with hatred toward my brother. If my heart is filled with hatred, then I have the same attitude as the person who murders another (Matthew 5:21-22).

Cain killed Abel and therefore knew what had happened to Abel. Yet Cain denies knowing where Abel was. It is easy to

say we do not know what is going on in the lives of others when we really do know what is going on. Cain is trying to cover up his sins just as his parents, Adam and Eve, had done in the previous chapter.

The question, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” (Genesis 4:9, NKJV), is asked to seek to deny having a responsibility toward Abel. There are times when Christians seek to deny having responsibilities towards others much like Cain is doing here. The Bible teaches personal responsibility (2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:12; Galatians 6:5) but it also teaches we have a responsibility toward others (Galatians 6:2) and will be held accountable for fulfilling those responsibilities.

Christians sometimes deny their responsibility for helping a brother in sin by denying they knew what was going on. There may be times when we truly do not know what is happening in the private life of another Christian (1 Timothy 5:24-25). At other times, we may be aware but like Cain do not want to acknowledge we have a responsibility toward this other person. Proverbs 24:11-12 instructs us to, “Deliver those who are drawn toward death, and hold back those stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, ‘Surely we did not know this,’ does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?” (NKJV). God knows what we know and what we do not know. God will hold us accountable if we knew someone was in need of correction and we failed to do anything about it. Ezekiel 3:16-21 provides a sobering warning when it says, “Now it came to pass at the end of seven days that the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a

word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me: When I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. Nevertheless if you warn the righteous man that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also you will have delivered your soul” (NKJV). Are we warning those we see who are in sin about the danger their soul is in? Are we seeking to restore those overtaken in a trespass (Galatians 6:1)? Are we fulfilling our responsibility toward others who are our brethren?

Christians sometimes seek to avoid responsibility for helping those in need. The Bible warns us against having the ability to help someone in need and yet failing to help them. Proverbs 3:27-28 says, “Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do so. Do not say to your neighbor, ‘Go, and come back, and tomorrow I will give it,’ when you have it with you” (NKJV). 1 John 3:17-18 makes a similar point in the New Testament. It is easy to seek to excuse ourselves from doing good to others by asking a question like the lawyer asked Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:25-37, NKJV).