

## Am I My Brother's Keeper?

Genesis 4:1-12

Our text reveals a lot of "firsts" – the first family; the first religious conflict; the first murder. God reasoned with Cain, after rejecting his first attempt to make an offering. God offered Cain an opportunity to make things right. God also warned him that if he refused, he would be opening the door to sin, which was crouching, like a lion that was ready to pounce on him. In Cain's rejection of God's way, he deceived and murdered his brother. He also argued and lied to God. He made the sarcastic question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Not only was this irreverent, but it also reveals a contrasting truth. I John 3:10-18 uses Cain as an antithesis – a contrasting example – to the concept of loving our brethren. There are many ways to love the brethren and lay down our lives for them. In this lesson, we want to focus on four words that help us know how to minister the Scriptures to one another. The Strong's numbering system is used to help you look up these words in a concordance or Bible Dictionary. **Please note that the Scripture used here is not addressing the specially called and gifted (i.e. pastor-teachers, evangelists, missionaries, etc. – see Ephesians 4:11-13). These passages are calling all of the believers to minister to each other.**

Teach (Strong # 1320, 1321) – "to give instruction." See Colossians 3:16 (worship and praise); Hebrews 5:12-14 (mature believers should be able to teach others).

Exhort (Strong # 3870, 3874) – "to call a person to come to your side and join you." The word has the connotation of calling / urging others to not quit; not go back or turn aside. It is a call to go forward on the right path. Note: In order to exhort, you must first be a follower of Christ yourself. You must be an example (see Acts 14:19-22; I Corinthians 11:1; I Thessalonians 1:5-10). This Greek word is also translated "beseech," "implore," "urge," "intreat," and "comfort." See II Corinthians 1:3-4; 2:7-8; I Thessalonians 4:18; 5:11; Hebrews 3:12-13; 10:19-25.

Admonish (Strong # 3559, 3560) – "to put in mind." It is a type of teaching / training that involves words used to warn and correct. In the KJV it is often translated "warn." This word calls us to task, that we are our brother's keeper (Genesis 4:9) and that we should intervene with each other; counsel each other. See Romans 15:14; I Thessalonians 5:14; II Thessalonians 3:14-15. This word also opens up the door to find much use for the Old Testament Scriptures (I Corinthians 10:1-11; Colossians 3:16).

Edify (Strong # 3618, 3619) – "to build a house." The term is used as a word-picture to show us that we should build up or strengthen people spiritually. See Romans 14:17-19; 15:1-2; I Corinthians 8:1; 10:23; 14:12, 26; I Thessalonians 5:11.

Note: Here are a few recommended books to help you be your brother's keeper: Anxiety Attacked by John MacArthur; The Pursuit of Holiness and The Practice of Godliness by Jerry Bridges.