Am I My Brother’s Keeper?

Introduction

“God is forever on a quest. His quest is to conform us to the image of Jesus Christ. In Ephesians 2:10 we are called his workmanship. And in Philippians 1:6 we are told that he who began a good work in us will continue to perfect it until our Lord returns. He hammers, files, chisels and shapes us, all the while striving to produce in us qualities like diligence, faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, kindness and Christian love. In a word, he is building our character.”
Chuck Swindoll, The Quest for Character.

How did God develop these qualities in Abraham’s life?
He used the circumstances of his life to mold him and shape him – just like he does with us.

I. The Quality of Loyalty
Genesis 14:1-14

This is the first recorded war in history.
• Elam is modern Iran.
• Shinar (Babylon) is modern Iraq.
• The other two kings were Hittites and Hurrians within modern Turkey.
The Southern kings were defeated and Lot, Abraham’s nephew, and all of his possessions were carried off.
What would Abraham do?

• He could have chosen to do nothing.
• He could have thought this is God’s justice.
• He could have thought if I go after him, I might get killed.
• But Abraham didn’t do those things. He acted decisively, calling out his men; he went in an effort to rescue Lot.

Am I my brother’s keeper?
Abraham would say yes.

God is very concerned about our response to people in need and particularly to fellow believers.

• Obadiah 10-12 – God judged Edom because they stood by when Jerusalem was plundered.
• Matthew 25:31-46 – God will judge all people based on how they treated God’s people. “The king will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”

How do we respond to people in need – and in particular to believers?
Do we bury our head in the sand or do we get involved to help?

II. The Quality of Justice.
Verses 15-16

A just person is one who does what is right and fair.
For Abraham, this sense of justice showed itself in two areas.
• He had a concern for the misfortune of others and he didn’t stand idly by.
• He did not press his advantage in victory.
Reading from No Greater Power by Richard Halvorson, former Chaplain of the U. S. Senate.

Are we concerned about the misfortune of others? Do we hate injustice enough to fight against it?

III. The Quality of Humility.
Verses 17-24

Melchizedek
- His name means “king of righteousness”.
- He is also the “king of Salem (peace)”. 
- He is a Canaanite priest who worships the one true God – God Most High. 
- He is a type of Christ. Hebrews 7:1-28
- He recognizes that it is God who gave Abraham the victory and so he blesses Abraham and he blesses God.

After returning from the battle in victory, Abraham is met by two kings in the Valley of Shaveh.
- The king of Sodom comes with an offer.
- The king of Salem comes with a blessing.

Abraham shows his humility in giving a tithe to Melchizedek, and in so doing, he offers a tithe to God. In verse 22, Abraham identifies God Most High as Yahweh, the Lord, a name unknown to Melchizedek. In contrast, to the king of Sodom, Abraham replies, “I will accept nothing belonging to you.”
Abraham gave all the glory to God.

**Conclusion**

Loyalty – Justice – Humility
How does God develop these qualities in us?
It is by his Word and his Spirit and he uses the circumstances of our life to refine us and teach us.
What is God teaching you?
How will you get involved in helping others?