

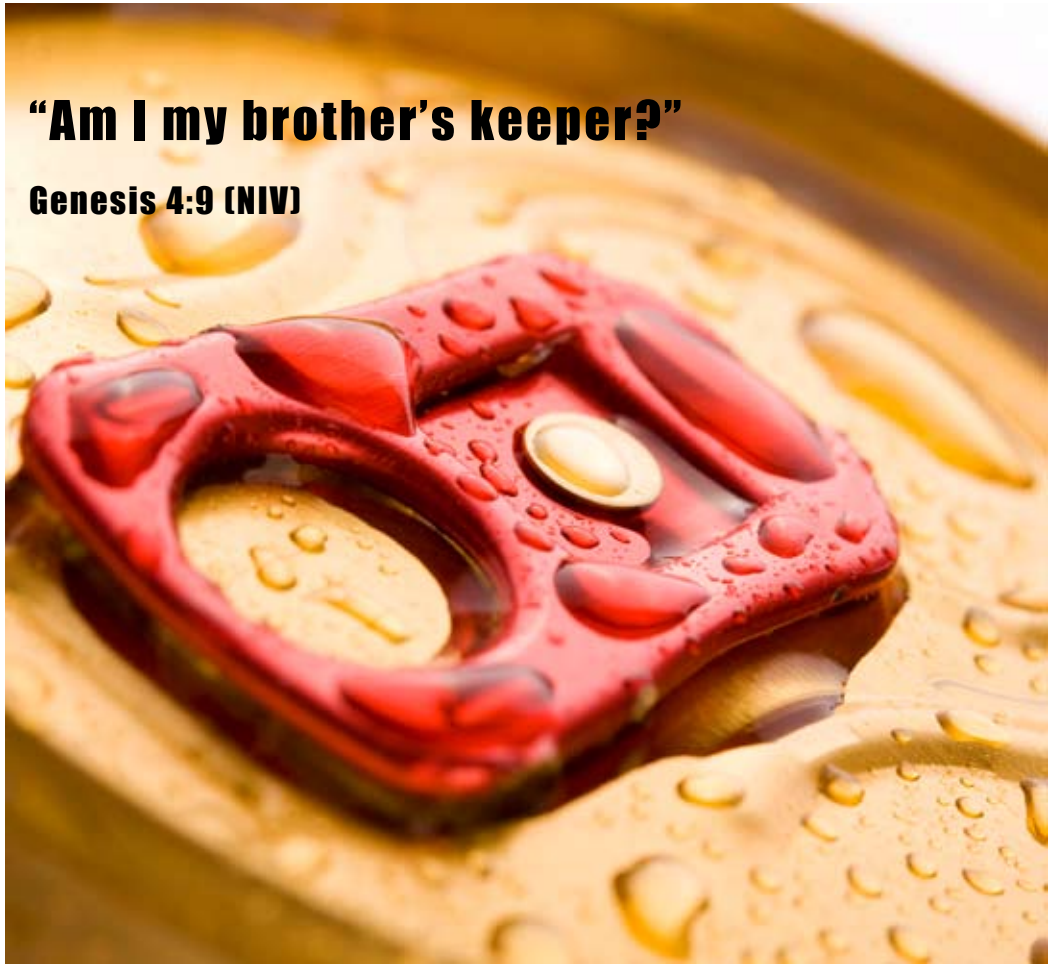
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Living
Your Values
Out Loud

www.iLiveValues.com

“Am I my brother’s keeper?”

Genesis 4:9 (NIV)



THE DANGER OF ALCOHOL USE

Youth at great risk as alcohol consumption climbs

While individuals, including some people of faith, care to debate the wisdom and morality of so-called “moderate” or social alcohol use among adults, no one can condone such practice among young people. For students, alcohol is the number one drug of choice. In fact, teens use alcohol more frequently than all other illicit drugs combined.

A U.S. Department of Health and Human Services survey revealed that more than a fourth of the underage persons actually drank in the prior month (10.8 million). In the 2006 study, 48.7 percent of high school age students (15-17) reported they had consumed alcohol. Among college freshmen and sophomores (18-20) the rate jumped to 72.2 percent. Alcohol use by a student’s parents and peers make it more likely that the student will consume alcoholic beverages.

Whether they’re taking their cues from the media or family or friends, many teenagers are tempted to consume alcohol. However, when family members and friends exhibit a personal lifestyle of abstinence and are consistently willing to be upfront about this risky behavior, teens are less likely to experiment and allow drinking to become routine.

Those engaging in alcohol use and abuse have their focus misplaced;

they are caught up in self-absorbed behavior that amounts to the pursuit of an idol in a bottle. As Christ-followers, we need to prayerfully work to insure that those near to us understand the danger alcohol use presents—physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Lifetime Alcohol Use


Over one-third of eighth-graders have used alcohol at least once, and that percentage nearly doubles through the high school years.



“Monitoring the Future” study, University of Michigan, 2008



“As Christians, we are asked to set ourselves apart from the world’s standards, to be different, to be mature and sober-minded. As adults, we have the responsibility and privilege of modeling our lives after Jesus’ life and of exercising, to the best of our human ability, Spirit-led judgment at all times. For parents, that responsibility and privilege begins at home. Our families, our friends, our coworkers, and even our casual acquaintances are watching to see how the claims of Christ shape our lifestyles. We must be careful about what our lifestyles are telling them.”


Richard Land

SUBSTANCE ABUSE: A CAUSE FOR CONCERN

Prescription Drugs

One-third of all teens do not understand that abusing prescription pain relievers can be “as dangerous—and addictive—as using street narcotics and other illicit drugs.” In fact, 40 percent of young people wrongly believe that prescription medicines are “much safer” than illegal drugs.

Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 2006

Alcohol

In 2007, 31 percent of the 3174 young drivers (15 to 20 years old) killed in motor vehicle crashes had consumed alcohol, and alcohol involvement was higher among male drivers (26%) than among female drivers (14%). Drivers are less likely to use restraints when they have been drinking. Of the young drivers who had been drinking and were killed in crashes, 75 percent were unrestrained.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2007

Marijuana

Marijuana use causes impaired thinking and problem solving, anxiety attacks, feelings of paranoia, impaired muscle coordination and judgment (including driving skills), increased susceptibility to infection, and cardiac problems.

Brown University, 2008

Tobacco

Secondhand smoke contains at least 250 chemicals known to be toxic, including more than 50 that can cause cancer. Exposure to it causes heart disease and lung cancer in nonsmoking adults and sudden infant death syndrome, acute respiratory infections, ear problems, and more frequent and severe asthma attacks in children.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

LEARN about substance abuse and how it impacts individuals and society. The National Institute on Drug Abuse offers information at www.nida.nih.gov.

PRAY for anyone you know who is ensnared by substance abuse, that God would bring them to an understanding of His will and the knowledge that He has the power to overcome the problem if they will yield to Him.

VOLUNTEER in a local ministry to those who abuse alcohol and drugs. Most ministries need those who can counsel and those who can offer support services.

SPEAK OUT against attempts to broaden public approval of substance use, such as legalizing marijuana and lowering the legal drinking age.

