

USAMPS Weekly Bible Study

04 JAN 2011

New Year's Resolutions?

Why New Year's resolutions? I desperately want more of God. Like car wheels, proper inflation is needed for us to travel smoothly down the road of life. Maintenance failure results in a flat tire. Let's not be flat. Join me and let's see what new things God can do in us and through us this year. Praise the Lord!!!

Illustration: Top ten New Year's resolutions

Today, I decided to read the entire Bible again this year. This time I am focusing on people encountering God.

What do they do when God speaks?

What action follows?

I hope to learn and apply life lessons in the process.

Genesis 4-

What jobs did Cain and Able have? Which job was more appreciated by God?

What does it mean when it says that God respected/accepted Able's offering and denied Cain's? (vs. 4-5)

So often when we pray it is simply a monologue. We are so busy telling God our problems that we never give him an opportunity to speak to us. He desires a dialogue where we speak and listen to each other. If we are not listening we cannot learn. If we say we want more of God than we need to read his words already contained within the Bible. Be intentional about Reading the Bible, Meditate (process/dig down deeper for the golden nuggets of life-changing truth), Pray (continue listening and apply what you have heard. If you are in God's presence/listening to him you will be compelled to change to become more like him. Have you been in God's presence lately? Have you changed? If you have been in his presence and have not changed you are not listening. Read, Meditate and Pray; sounds like a great way to start every day.

Listen now to the conversation between God and Cain. God begins with a teaching moment/a time of instruction. God says to Cain, "Why are you angry? **Who was Cain angry at? (vs. 5)** And why has your countenance fallen? <sup>7</sup> If you do well, will you not be accepted? **What was right/the standard? How had it been established? How long had it been established? Who had it been established by?** (God was giving Cain the standard for what right was and the means to succeed.) And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it." **What is sin? Can sin be avoided? Is so, how?** God was discussing courses of action with Cain (good and bad). **How often in life is there only a single course of action available? Very seldom. We always have opportunities to choose the right path.** <sup>8</sup>

Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. **What was Cain's response to the conversation with God?** (Premeditated murder.) <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where *is* Abel your brother?" (Though God knew what Cain had done he still offered an opportunity for him to turn back to the right path; to tell the truth by asking him a question.) He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" (Cain responds to the Creator with a lie and seals his fate by doing so.) <sup>10</sup> And He said, "What have you done? Listen! (God says stop talking and prepare to receive your punishment now.) The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. <sup>11</sup> So now you *are* cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. <sup>12</sup> When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth." **Did Cain's punishment fit the crime? What can we learn from this conversation with God?** (If God had established the eye for an eye principle Cain would have paid for his crimes with his life. Instead he lives on I believe God still gave Cain opportunities/a lifetime to experience repentance.)

Cain gets mad at God. God forgive me when I get angry because I don't get my way.

Time of Response:

Have you been listening? Are you currently for from God? Like a story I once heard, are you out of position with God? If it seems like God's back has been turned on you remember he has not moved but you have.