

St. Andrew's (JKP) Monthly Newsletter  
*January, 2011*

Edification: *"This will be my resolution - every day is New Year's Day".* If you're familiar with contemporary Christian music you may recognize that line from Christian indie-artist Carolyn Arends' song "New Year's Day". The premise of her song is that we tend to make many resolutions on New Year's Day only to see them go the way of the woolly-mammoth around Jan. 31, if not sooner. That being the case why not instead resolve that every day is New Year's Day? Thus each new day would see our resolutions still fresh and intact, unbroken. We wouldn't be struggling to keep our resolutions we'd simply be keeping New Year's Day every day (minus the sausage & kraut...*please*). Sounds simple and very appealing doesn't it? There's just one problem - there is no such thing as neutrality, not even in the keeping of time. Time will not stand still. It will not remain in neutral for us so that we can somehow capture a moment and extend it ad infinitum. No, unlike the woolly-mammoth we must keep moving forward. To not do so is to fall prey to something far worse than broken New Year's resolutions. To refuse to move forward is to fall prey to the tyranny of the Status Quo. And at the end of the day, or Year as the case may be isn't the true death of our resolutions our own unswerving commitment to the Status Quo? We say we want change no matter the cost! But do we? Or are our resolutions doomed to extinction because deep down we prefer the familiar, the known - even if the familiar and the known are actually "weights" and "sins which so easily ensnare us" (Hebs. 12)?

*"If there be any truer measure of a man than by what he does, it must be by what he gives."* —  
ROBERT SOUTH (1634-1716), ENGLISH CLERGYMAN

Encourage: The book of Haggai is essentially the LORD God confronting His people through the prophet for their complacency. While they have "*paneled houses*" God's house, the temple "*lies in ruin*". Though the people are aware of this they thought "*the time has not come, the time that the LORD's house should be built*". God points out to them that the want they suffer, the defection of their children, the lack of contentment they feel is all due to this very thing; His temple lies in ruin, due to their slavery to the status quo. "We'll get around to it, just not yet". So by the prophet He confronts them and warns them and shakes the status quo out of them. He then re-commissions them, not to resolutions but to this; "*Yet now **be strong**, Zerubbabel, ' says the LORD; 'and **be strong**, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and **be strong**, all you people of the land, ' says the LORD, **and work**; for I [am] with you, ' says the LORD of hosts."* It was time to be strong and work. The ruins must be repaired. The temple must be rebuilt, and based upon His "*covenanted word*" His Spirit remained among them so they need not fear. It will be accomplished.

Here's the rub to us; we *are* His temple. The believer *is* the temple of the Holy Spirit. And if our spiritual house has fallen into disrepair and into ruins the same call comes to us i.e. be strong and work! It takes work to rebuild that which has fallen into ruin, yet God would not have us lose heart nor live in regret over the past. His covenanted word is also to us; "*The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former, ' says the LORD of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, says the LORD of hosts*". So no status quo for 2011. The time is now. Be strong and work!