

The Bishop's Message
January 2009

THE RESOLUTION SOLUTION

This time of year resolutions abound. It's a traditional custom to make them as a new beginning for the New Year. But very often they are quickly broken and perhaps forgotten. In any case, they are all too quickly gone, and nary a word is heard of them after a month or so.

The phenomenon of making resolutions year after year and then breaking them so quickly after having made them should not surprise us. We sincerely desire to be better persons, but we do not seem to possess what it takes to improve our lot.

It is cause for rejoicing that God has made us in such a way empowering us to recognize areas where improvement is desirable and then commit ourselves to it. The problem arises with our apparent inability to adhere to the earlier resolve we possessed because we thought it was important.

The issue here may be that in our New Year's resolutions we strive to better ourselves when as Christians we should understand by instruction and experience that "we...cannot do any thing that is good without (God)" '28 BCP p. 200. What we may be doing is trying to gain control and establish ourselves as lord over our personal lives. If, indeed, that's what we are attempting to do, then we have fallen into the same trap as Adam and Eve. They were tempted to eat of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil precisely so they could be god of their lives.

If we have difficulty being faithful to appropriate New Year's resolutions, let us not shrink back from making them out of a fear or frustration of not being able to keep them. Rather, let us first pray about what kind of New Year's resolutions God would have us make. When we understand that He wills us to take a certain course of action, we can proceed with confidence as His servants utilizing the power of His grace.

We know that God strengthens us to do His will. In addition, as we experience difficulty in being faithful to the direction He has set for us, we can ask in prayer and worship for the continuing power of the Holy Spirit so we might have new resolve in pursuing those goals He would have us achieve.

May each of us experience God's loving presence and His richest blessings throughout 2009 aided by the resolutions we make and keep as the New Year begins.