

WHAT A VOW SIGNIFIES

It is not remarkable that the Adversary and the deceitfulness of our own flesh should conspire to hinder every work of grace, and of course present arguments, and if possible Scripture proofs. Let us not be deceived thereby, but take our stand firmly for truth and righteousness, and for everything which would protect the brethren and honor the Lord's cause. We state and answer the objections to the Vow as follows: –

(1) To take a vow is to swear, and we are cautioned, "Swear not at all."

This is a mistake; a vow is not an oath, but a *solemn affirmation*. It is suggested to be made not to man but to God. It is in full accord with the Scripture, which says, "Pay thy vows unto the Lord." How could one pay his vows if he never made any, or if it were wrong to make such vows?

(2) To make such a vow is to put one's self under the Law; and the Apostle says, "If ye be under the Law Christ shall profit you nothing."

This is also an error. Christians are under God's [R4211 : page 219] law in the sense that they have agreed to do his will in all things to the extent of their ability. "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who are walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit." The vow proposed is merely to assist in this walk, and is in full accord with St. Paul's exhortation, "Make straight paths for your feet lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." We have pointed out that the world's path will be very crooked indeed during the next few years, and hence the greater need of such a vow to help those in the narrow way. The Apostle reproved those who sought to *justify themselves* by keeping the Law,

ignoring Christ. This vow acknowledging Christ and our justification through faith in the blood of Christ, is to assist us in following in his steps.

(3) The vow I took in consecration includes all that this proposed vow sets forth.

This is true in a certain sense; and to that extent it surely is not objectionable. Our vow of consecration really meant the doing of anything that would honor our Lord or assist the brethren – even to the extent of laying down life itself. It equally meant the avoidance of anything which would injure the Lord's cause or possibly stumble the brethren. Hence our consecration vow indirectly covers all that the proposed vow includes and excludes, and those who see it thus need not hesitate to take the proposed vow.

The Word of God forbids adultery, fornication, lasciviousness or uncleanness in thought, word and act, and all this we clearly understood when we made our consecration vow. But the Scriptures nowhere forbid a pure, "holy kiss," nor stipulate other items of the proposed vow; hence we had not these in mind when we made the consecration. But as that vow included our all, even unto death, it really included the new vow, which is really another item of our *self-sacrifice*, made in the interest of the general cause, and likely to prove beneficial to ourselves also.

Our space permits the publication of only a few of the many encouraging letters received on this subject from both brothers and sisters. We continue our list of those who have notified us that they have made the vow published in our issue of June 15th – the sisters, of course, altering the vow to apply it to the opposite sex.

**MANY MORE ADVISE THAT THEY HAVE
TAKEN THE VOW**

L. S. Ward, Vincent C. Rice, A. N. Marchant, B. F. Coley, G. W. LaFerry, Brother and Sister Spietz, John Kumpf, J. E. Miller, Mrs. Emilie Bruce Abbe, Brother and Sister Wiltison, E. Z. Johnson, Benj. Fisk, Alice L. Darlington, E. J. Coward, Paul E. Thomson, Edmund Bodeutsch, Geo. W. Faulk, J. W. Hosfield, Chas. Strand, G. M. Brown, T. E. Fogan, W. H. Moore, Geo. W. Whiteus, C. P. Powley, A. Johnson, Anson G. Wilbor, Walter J. Thorn, F. L. Hall, O. R. Amick, G. G. DeFrese, Jas. O. Conner, Jas. Shermer, C. C. Coleman, H. S. Cox, Albert Berry, Brother and Sister F. A. Kaufman, J. D. Gould, Thomas Cox, Mrs. H. B. Ackley, M. M. Sanders, Rena Fulton, D. Gossadge, Chas. Murdock, Thos. Heald, Sis. H. B. Simmons, R. H. Schmardebeck, R. H. Goss, Leonie E. Walker, Robt. Ingle, Frank Bradt, C. Greaves, J. B. McGee, John Kurzen, Ida Kurzen, Evelyn Sutherland, Eben A. Keller, J. H. Coyle, A. Johnson, T. R. Leedy, R. L. Jones, Eastman Douglass, M. L. Wolf, Alfred W. Gleason, J. M. Easley, M. L. Staples, Mrs. Rosa Townsend, Mrs. Isanre A. Watson, D. A. Mackey, Wesley Hawley, M. L. Cobb, D. V. Berlage, Benj. J. Haytree, T. McNaught, Brother and Sister L. F. Hall, Sydney Stokes, F. A. Acheson, Fred Bright, R. L. Smith, F. L. Hickson, Mrs. G. W. DePriest, E. Whelpton, Mrs. C. W. Stiver, P. Crippen, H. L. Hauerwas, Mrs. F. H. Parmelee, Carrie Otteson, F. G. Giddings, A. H. Dooley and wife, J. McCarthy, R. H. Goza, Ed. O. Loe, S. W. Williams, H. J. Black, Nellie Hall, A. Z. Becker, Charles Toepfer, Lela E. McGee, J. A. Browne, T. C. Weaver, Eliza Breary, R. H. Barber, W. H. Jackson, A. J. Gibson, M. O. Field, Joe Ganson, Emma Shull, A. I. Ritchie, S. J. Fleming, C. R. Pitner, Mrs. W. H. Warren, J. W. Bell, Alma Swenson, Mrs. S. J. Fleming, Charlotte White, A. Cleveland, D. W. Loree, Elmer G. Berry, Chas. Ockerman, Benj.

Hershey, Mrs. M. Gardner, Mrs. M. R. Land, Alice G. James, Alice E. Bourquin, E. Louise Hamilton, M. Almeta Nation, Edith Hoskins, Mrs. Isaac Hoskins, Laura M. Whitehouse, Charlotte Gillberg, Ora Lee Sullivan, J. Violet Meyer, Mrs. M. Hartzell, Mrs. M. L. Roberts, Mrs. B. C. Stark.

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MY DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

It seems to me the most timely article that has ever appeared in the WATCH TOWER is the one in the June 15th number, under the caption, "Pay thy vows unto the Lord." I have wondered at times where this fleshly manifestation of love between opposite sexes would end, but I thank the Lord now that I believe nearly all, if not all, will end in all who are truly his taking the proposed *vow*. I am positive the dear friends have had not the least evil motive, and rejoice that the Lord has moved you to present the matter in so loving a manner, together with the suggestion of the vow, which should prove an impregnable barrier against further besetments along this line.

This is to advise you that I have with much appreciation made this vow to the Lord. I have taken it in the name of Christ our Lord, whose strength is sufficient in *every* time of need. The Lord bless thee and keep thee and all thy house. With fervent love, yours faithfully in Christ,

JOHN HOSKINS, – *Minn.*

DEARLY BELOVED PASTOR: –

The contents of June 15th TOWER have brought great joy to my heart, and I believe it pleasing to the Lord to express my appreciation of the same to you personally.

In Louisville, last April, Brother Rutherford so kindly told me of the "Pilgrim vow," which by the Lord's favor came to me at the "due time," when *he* had *prepared* my heart to receive it as the blessed privilege which it is.

How can I express to you the joy and happiness I have experienced in the Lord's love and favor since taking this sacred vow before him on April 24th! I do thank the Lord, especially for his surpassing favor in revealing this privilege to me *when* he did. The intervening nine weeks up to the present time have been *filled* with many lessons in love and humility, revealing an unusual gentleness in his leadings and care for me. May I ever grow in love for him and all of his, never [R4211 : page 220] lacking in appreciation of his manifold blessings – always striving to please him.

Our prayers have been with you many times daily, that you may have comfort and strength to perform your vows unto him; thanking him on every remembrance of you for the rich blessings which he has used you to bring to us.

I am confident, dear Brother Russell, that we Colporteurs have had your prayers that we, too, may be faithful to our vows in letter and in spirit, even unto the end – which prayers will avail much for us and are a great comfort to our hearts. We grow more thankful each day for our share in the harvest work.

With much love and prayers, I remain, yours in the blessed harvest work,

SISTER _____.

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