

## “THE VOW”

(Discourse by A. M. Saphore, page 114, 1916 Convention Report.)

Many and great are the benefits of our “Vow Unto the Lord.” It produces Reverence for God and keeps the heart in the proper attitude of consecration. It aids in producing a daily reliance upon the grace provided through Jesus Christ our Lord, present though now unseen. It causes an increasing interest in the highest interests of the harvest work and its workers, including oneself as one of the workers, and increases faith in the power of prayer as being a means in aiding to the best results.

It assists by means of *detailing* that which was included in the original consecration to God. An architect at times finds that his contract reads thus: “The architect shall, from time to time, provide detailed drawings of any parts of the building as requested by the contractor, and these detailed drawings shall be considered as a part of the original contract.” Similar to this, our vow *details* “thoughts” and “words” and “doings,” etc. All this was included in the original consecration, but we are now greatly benefited by detailing on all parts of our building, and this is not a new consecration, but rather parts of the original contract.

Additional to this I have found it beneficial to have a little book with a page or more for little details. If I find I am specially faulty on a particular part of my contract, I specialize on that part by promising the Lord to be more watchful and more faithful on that detail. Then I mark it down in the book and often go over the list to see how diligent I am in performing my contract of consecration and its details. If we are faithful, the Lord will permit us to see all the important weaknesses which need attention and by renewing the vow each day and often referring to the additional details as suggested by the vow and listed in the little book, we shall have a strength to perform His will that would not otherwise be ours.

Let us not think, however, that even all this close scrutiny and continual effort will keep us from the need of forgiveness through the blood of our precious advocate. His blood will be necessary until our contract is finished, not that we should continue in sin that grace may abound, but that, after we have vowed and detailed and done our best, yet we come short of doing as perfectly as we desire to do and we praise God for the cleansing blood.

The more careful we are to note and correct our detailed weaknesses, the greater we see is the work necessary in us before we will be ready for the new body which is to be the “house not made with hands” in which the new mind, now being developed, is to dwell eternally.

The value of the vow in protecting God's people from the snares of spiritism and occultism is great indeed. No doubt its value along these lines will be yet greater in the near future. Our safety is in refraining even from investigating along these lines which we know are not of God.

The value of the vow along the line of making "straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let us rather be healed," (Heb. 12:13) is of inestimable value. We do not know each other's weaknesses, neither should we put any confidence in our own flesh. We know not what great benefit these conclusions will be to us in the near future, for a flood of evil seems to have lately started and is spreading in the minds of many.

Only those accepting all the provided protection will be saved from its influences which at first, to the pure-hearted, is not seen in its hideousness, but through the vow, they are protected and they see later from what they have been graciously protected.

Let us *daily* renew this vow unto the Lord and *daily* seek to fulfill it. This is the proper method if we would get the real value from it, and if there are, in my hearing, those who have made the vow their own and who do not renew it DAILY, or if there are such as have not taken it as yet, I recommend a DAILY renewal of it before the Father and I assure you that its fruitage is well worth the daily planting and watering.

The value of the vow will live long after our earthly course is ended, even as this vow which I will now read you has lived for over 100 years and even today it speaks and is a further evidence of the value of our vow unto the Lord.

This vow was found recently among some other old manuscripts by a Sister in the Truth, whose relative, no doubt, the young man was who made the vow in September, 1814. It is as follows:

"Eternal and ever blessed God. I desire to present myself before Thee with the deepest humiliation and abasement of soul; sensible how unworthy such a sinful worm is to appear before the Holy Majesty of heaven, the King of kings and Lord of lords, and especially on such an occasion as this, even to enter into covenant transaction with Thee.

"But the scheme and plan is Thine own. Thine infinite condescension hath offered it by thy Son, and Thy grace inclined my heart to accept of it.

"I come, therefore, acknowledging myself to have been a great offender, smiting on my breast and saying with the humble publican, God be merciful to me a sinner.

"I come invited by the name of Thy Son, and wholly trusting in his perfect righteousness, entreating that, for his sake, thou wilt be merciful to my unrighteousness; and wilt no more remember my sins.

"Receive, I beseech Thee, Thy revolted creature, who is now convinced of Thy right to him, and desires nothing so much as that he may be Thine. This second day of

September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fourteen; and in the twentieth year of my pilgrimage, do I with the utmost solemnity, surrender myself to Thee.

“I renounce all former lords that have had dominion over me; and I consecrate to Thee all that I am, and all that I have; the faculties of my mind, the members of my body, my worldly possessions, my time and my influence over others; to be all used entirely for thy glory, and resolutely employed in obedience to Thy commands as long as Thou continest me in life; with an ardent desire and humble resolution to continue Thine through all the endless ages of eternity; ever holding myself in an attentive posture to observe the first intimations of Thy will, and ready to spring forward, with zeal and joy, to the immediate execution of it.

“To Thy direction also I resign myself, and all that I am and have, to be disposed of by thee in such a manner as thou shalt in thine infinite wisdom judge most subservient to Thy glory.

“To Thee I leave the management of all events, and say without reserve not my will, but Thine be done. Rejoicing with a loyal heart in Thine unlimited government, as what ought to be the delight of the whole rational creation.

“Use me, O Lord, I beseech Thee, as an instrument of Thy service! Number me among thy peculiar people! Let me be washed in the blood of Thy Son! Let me be clothed with his righteousness! Let me be sanctified by his spirit! Transform me more and more into his image! Impart to me, through him, all needful influences of Thy purifying, cheering and comforting spirit! And let my life be spent under those influences, and in the light of Thy gracious countenance, as my Father and my God! And when the solemn hour of death comes, may I remember this my covenant, well ordered in all things and sure, as all my salvation and all my desire, though every other hope and enjoyment is perishing! And do Thou, O Lord, remember it too! Look down with pity, O my Heavenly Father, on Thy languishing dying child! Embrace me in thine everlasting arms! Put strength and confidence in my departing spirit and receive it to the abode of them that sleep in Jesus, peacefully to wait the accomplishment of Thy great promise to all Thy people, even that of a glorious Resurrection, and of eternal happiness in Thine heavenly presence.

“And if any surviving friend should, when I am in the dust, meet with this memorial of my solemn transactions with Thee, may he make the engagement his own; and do thou graciously permit him to partake in all the blessings of Thy covenant, through Jesus Christ to whom with Thee, O Father; and the Holy Spirit, be everlasting praises ascribed! Amen.

“DAVID LYON,

“South Amboy, New Jersey “September 2nd, A.D., 1814.”

Our vow, dear friends, brings the matter of consecration *up to date*. Let as many as are the Lord’s consider well the making of it their own, and may its blessings and protection, together with much fruitage of Christian character, be the blessed result. Amen.