



VOWS FOR SPIRITUAL POWER

A. W. Tozer

Some people object to taking vows but in the Bible you will find many great men of God directed by covenants, promises, vows, and pledges. The psalmist was not averse to the taking of vows. "Thy vows are upon me, O God," he said, "I will render praises unto thee" (Ps. 56:12).

My counsel in this matter is that if you are really concerned about spiritual improvement—the gaining of new power, new life, new joy, and new personal revival within your heart—you will do well to make certain vows and proceed to keep them.

A carnal man refuses the discipline of such commitments. He says, "I want to be free. I don't want to lay any vows upon myself; I don't believe in it. It is legalism."

There are many religious tramps in the world who will not be bound by anything. They have turned the grace of God into personal license. But the great souls are ones who have gone reverently to God with the understanding that in their flesh dwells no good thing. And they know that without God's enablement any vows taken would be broken before sundown. Nevertheless, believing in God, reverently they took certain sacred vows. This is the way to spiritual power.

There are five vows I have in mind which we do well to make and keep.

Deal Thoroughly With Sin

Sin has been driven underground these days and has come up with a new name and face. You may be subjected to this phenomenon in the schools. Sin is being called by various fancy names—anything but what it really is. For example, men don't get under conviction any more; they get a guilt complex. Instead of confessing

their guilt to God and getting rid of it, they lie on a couch and try to tell a man, who ought to know better, all about themselves. After a while, it comes out that they were deeply disappointed when they were two years old or some such thing. That's supposed to make them better.

The whole thing is ridiculous because sin is still the ancient enemy of the soul. It has never changed. We've got to deal firmly with sin in our lives. Let's remember that. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink," said Paul, "but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Righteousness lies at the door of the kingdom of God. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

This is not to preach sinless perfection. This is to say that every known sin is to be named, identified, and repudiated, and that we must trust God for deliverance from it, so that there is no conscious, deliberate sin anywhere in our lives. It is absolutely necessary that we deal thus because God is a holy God, and sin is on the throne of the world.

Don't call your sins by some other name. If you're jealous, call it jealousy. If you tend to pity yourself and feel that you are not appreciated, but are like a flower born to blush unseen and waste your sweetness on the desert air, call it what it is—self-pity.

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THIS ISSUE

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MILLVILLE DEDICATES SANCTUARY

If you're resentful, admit it. I have met people who live in a state of sputtering indignation most of the time. I know of a preacher who acts like a hen thrown out of the nest. He keeps running in all directions clucking and complaining—somebody is always doing him wrong. Well, if you have got that spirit, you must deal with it now. You must get that out of you. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. Instead of covering it up and trying to find a Greek marginal rendering somewhere to hide it under, call it by its right name and get rid of it by the grace of God. Then there is your temper. Don't try to christen it by some other name. Call it what it is. If you have a bad temper, you will either get rid of it or it will get rid of much of your spirituality and most of your joy.

Let's deal with sin thoroughly. Let's be perfectly candid. God loves candid people.

Never Own Anything

I do not mean by this that you cannot have things. I mean that you ought to get delivered from the sense of possessing them. This sense of possessing is what hinders us. All babies are born with their fists clenched, and it seems to me it means "This is mine!" One of the first things they say is "mine" in an angry voice. That sense of "this is mine" is a very injurious thing to the spirit. If you can get