

# The University Heights Messenger

April 17, 2011

## “I Will Perform My Vows To You”

“I will come into your house with burnt offerings; I will perform my vows to you” (Psalm 66:13). One thing that has struck me as I participate in the daily Bible reading program placed in the bulletin each week is the number of times similar statements are made throughout Scripture. At the time of this writing our Old Testament reading plan only has us in Numbers 14 and Psalm 69. However, the seriousness of fulfilling one’s vows to God has been emphasized many times already and will only become more frequent as one continues following the reading plan.

A vow is a solemn promise. In this case it is God’s people making a solemn promise to Him. Those of us who are Christians have made this vow. The vow was sealed to us, so to speak, upon our cleansing from sin in the waters of baptism. It was then that God accepted our vow to change masters. Romans 6:22 says, “But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and it send, eternal life.”

I’m not sure how often we consider the vows we made to God upon His cleansing us from our sins. We *should* consider them always for a vow carries with it responsibility. It will not do to make solemn promises to someone and then take those promises lightly, even breaking them regularly. It becomes even more serious when the One with whom we break faith is the One who saved us. So, what was the nature of our vows to God upon becoming Christians?

Foremost, as Romans 6:22 showed us, we promised to make God our Master. Not only are we servants to God, we are unworthy one’s and must view ourselves as such. Jesus said as much in Luke 17:10. “So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.’”

Humility must exist within our servitude to God. We were not bought because we were particularly lovable or because of individual merit.

On the contrary, salvation was made available to us even when we were drowning in sin and stained through by the world. God’s love and compassion, along with His sense of justice, led Him to take the steps He did (Romans 5:6-9). We certainly merit nothing by performing our vows to serve Him faithfully. I *need* Him, not vice versa.

It would do us all well to remember that a servant does not serve his master only when it is convenient and the wishes of his master do not conflict with his own. On the contrary, the faithful servant learns to recognize his master’s will and place it above that of his own. Just consider Jesus in the Garden before His death (Matthew 26:36-46) to see the portrait of a humble servant.

Speaking of Jesus, part of our vow to the Father was that we would follow the example of the One He sent to deal with the sins of the world (1 Peter 2:21). While “what would Jesus do” is a popular question among religionists of the day, “what *did* Jesus do” is a better question. Truly, there are very few situations in which we find ourselves where Jesus Himself did not provide an example for how to properly face the challenge. If not Jesus personally, His apostles provide examples. If actual examples do not exist, more than sufficient instruction has been provided for how a Christian should behave in any circumstance.

Speaking of the apostles, we vowed to God that we would follow their doctrine (Acts 2:42), understanding that it did not originate with them but they received it directly from the Source (John 16:12-13; Galatians 1:11-12). The Christian goes through life with an inerrant guide book leading those who follow it faithfully right to the very gates of heaven itself. We are not left to our own devices, blindly grasping for actions and attitudes that we hope will please God. We possess something that lets us *know* what pleases Him.

If we would fulfill our vow to follow the apostles doctrine, we must fulfill our vow to become the child of God described for us on nearly every page of the New Testament. In doing this it is not only our relationship with God that’s affected, it

is also our relationship with man. No longer are we willing to go along with the crowd to engage in sinful and ungodly behavior. Instead, we seek to inject righteousness and godliness into whatever circle we find ourselves and pray that through our example (1 Peter 2:12) and the power of God's Word (Hebrews 4:12) souls will be pricked to a through examination of their own life and what, *Who*, is missing from it.

This means that part of our vow to God is willingly serving as His agent among the lost souls we interact with each day (Matthew 28:19-20). As far as I know, University Heights, or any congregation for that matter, has never had to replace the doors because lost souls caved them in desperate for the truth being taught inside. If lost souls are going to know the truth it will be because faithful saints led them to it. While there are those who have sought and found the truth on their own, they are very few and far between.

Finally, part of our vow to God was that we would treat one another with the kind of love that can only exist among those who share one hope, one faith, and one Lord (Ephesians 4:1-6). We vowed to him that we would no longer be complainers, gossips, slanderers, liars, or backstabbers. Rather our treatment of one another will be characterized by kindness and compassion, with our Lord Jesus Christ and the Word of truth as our standard for all things (Ephesians 4:29-32).

So, how are *your* vows holding up?

AL

**IN NEED OF PRAYERS:**

**Jeff Howerton** hopes to be back to work and with us very soon.

**Jackie Litmer** continues to deal with sickness due to her pregnancy.

Let us remember the men laboring for the Lord in other parts of the world whom we financially assist.

Let us also remember our brethren throughout the world who are currently suffering due to natural disasters or fighting in their homelands.

Our members: **Jim Edwards, Glenn Davis, Glenn Kimberlin.**

Others: **Edith Tirey, Tom Curtis, Linda Hill, Robin Miller, Vina Krassow, Tom Curtis, Courtney and Aubree Reeves, Tabetha Lynn, Tom Curtis, John Bennett, Dennis Brennan, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Wes Kidd, Gail Stein, Shannon Gilbert**

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

The congregational meeting will be this afternoon.

Our spring meeting with Mark McCrary begins today! Let's all make our plans to attend that meeting and continue inviting folks!

**BIBLE READING SCHEDULE**

- Sun:** Num 16, Ps 70, John 12
- Mon:** Num 17-18, Ps 71, John 13
- Tue:** Num 19-20, Ps 72, John 14
- Wed:** Num 21-22, Ps 73, John 15
- Thu:** Num 23-24, Ps 74, John 16
- Fri:** Num 25-26, Ps 75, John 17
- Sat:** Num 27-28, Ps 76, John 18

**SERMON TOPICS:**

Sunday AM. Gospel Meeting begins with Mark McCrary

Sunday PM. Gospel Meeting