

Victory Of Wellness

V.O.W.

Your Challenge To Vow

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Purpose

The V.O.W. program is a plan of action for you to VOW to God as to which personal activities you are willing to follow as you allow Him to bless you with a higher degree of wellness.

Vow Defined

A promise made to God voluntary and deliberate.

A form of worship —an act of religion.

A profession to God that God is due the dedication of your actions.

An exercise of love made with God—love in action.

Act of putting God first in everything.

An acknowledgment that makes God your only chance to live.

A promised gift to God.

A commitment—a devotion or dedication to a cause or Christ.

A covenant—a solemn agreement that is binding on all parties.

A consecration—setting something apart for a specific purpose.

Everyday Vows

Simple statements such as:

I'll meet you at 3 o'clock.

I'll pick you up at 7 o'clock.

I'll help you do that.

I'll call you.

I'll pray for you.

Legal Vows

Legal vows include all documents you sign.

Legal commitments: (I agree to)

Pay my rent on the first of each month.

Make my car payments.

Pay my credit card bills.

Honor my lease agreement.

Biblical Vows

When you agree to be a child of God you accept all of His teachings.

Can you think of any command that God gives in the Bible to which you would say, 'no God I don't believe I should have to do that one?'

Biblical vows:

Tithing—giving 10 percent was common in the Old Testament.

Marriage—faithful to only one.

Love—even your enemies.

Worship God and only God.

Christian Vows

Accepting Christ as your Lord and Savior carries responsibilities.

Although grace and mercy will save you, you have to take some action on your own to be eligible.

What are your responsibilities?

What does accepting Christ as your Lord and Savior mean?

Your confession and baptism are your vows to live for Jesus.

You vow to follow everything Christ teaches.

You voluntarily promise God to love only Him.

You agree to be different from the world.

Biblical Examples

There are many examples of vows by those who lived during Biblical times.

God has always expected people to follow-up on what they say they will do.

Jacob vowed to tithe—Gen. 28:20-22

Israel vowed to completely destroy the Canaanite cities—Numbers 21:2

Jephthah vowed to sacrifice a burnt offering—Judges 11:30-31

Hannah vowed to dedicate her son to God's service—I Samuel 1:10-11

David vowed not to sleep until he found a dwelling place for the Lord—Psalm 132:1-5

Absalom vowed to serve the Lord—II Samuel 15:7-8

God's Vow

The Rainbow

Genesis 9:13-15, "I set my rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember my covenant which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh—Genesis 9:13-15."

The Land—

"To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates...—Genesis 15:18."

Over 400 years later, God heard the groanings of the children of Israel in Egypt and He "remembered his covenant—Exodus 2:24."

The blood of Jesus—

God calls the blood of Jesus the "blood of the everlasting covenant—Hebrews 13:20." God has always kept His covenant with His people, even to the death of His Son.

Daniel's prayer—"O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant and mercy with those who love him, and with those who keep his commandments—Daniel 9:4."

Jesus' Vow

Jesus made a vow to man and never lost site of His commitment. His last vow to you was that He will return to take you home with Him.

How difficult would it be to know that your vow would cause you great pain and death and still complete your vow?

Jesus vowed to go to the cross for you—and He did.

He did it voluntarily and willingly.

Satan tempted Him often to go back on His promise—but He didn't.

He wept in the garden and asked the Father to let the cup pass from Him—Matthew 26:39.

Because He did not go back on his promise, you have the opportunity to live in Heaven.

Participants

When you make a vow it involves more than just you.

Remember when you speak you bring everyone who hears you into your life

If you don't want them in your life, keep quiet.

You—Vows are voluntary. No one is forcing you to make a vow. If you don't want to, then don't.

God—A vow to God is a promise to the one who has the power of life and death. How could anyone think lying to Him would be advisable?

Anyone directly affected by the vow—If your vow involves others directly, then you must take into account their feelings and concerns.

All people who know about your vow—When other people know you have vowed to do something they are watching to see if you keep your word. They are judging Christianity by your actions and words.

All Christians—Because Christians are in the family of God and are brothers and sisters to Jesus, what affects one affects all. Making a vow with God is making a vow with all the family and visa versa.

Guidelines

You would never join some social club without asking what would be expected of you. Guidelines help you know whether or not you want to participate. Before making your vow you must understand the following guidelines.

A vow, being a personal act, binds only the person who makes it.
You should avoid vows that are embarrassing.
A vow, even in an unimportant matter such as a New Year's resolution, presupposes the full consent of the will.

God approves of vows because they are useful to man; they strengthen his will to do what is right.
A vow is a good action, but should be made with prudence and discretion.

All obligation ceases when the fulfillment of the vow becomes impossible or harmful, or if the reason for the vow ceases to exist.
God is pleased to grant blessings in exchange for a vow—as long as you remain faithful to what you promise.

One who can say sincerely, “if I had known this or that, I would not have made the vow,” is not bound by the vow.
The object of the vow must be something that is humanly possible, for no one can be bound to do what is impossible.

A vow is not something God demands that you do—but really likes for you to do.
It is a voluntary saying—I want to give my very best.
God does not like blemished offerings. In the Old Testament the sacrifice had to be without defect.

You should say to God, I give this gift, not because I owe you (which you do), but because I love you and I want to say thank you. In other words you make vows because you are thankful. Christianity is not about payback; it's about gratitude.

A vow must be acceptable to God.
The sacrifice must not come from sinful activities.
Putting a career above family to make money for God is not acceptable.

Warnings

God takes vows very serious, both His and yours. Think before speaking!
How you treat your vows can determine where you spend eternity.

Don't be offensive to God!

Unlike the simple breach of a promise made to a man, a failure to give to God what has been promised Him is a matter of great importance, a very serious offence.

You are not afforded the privilege of playing around with commitments made to God!

There is no sin in not making a promise to God, but there is sin in delaying to pay the vow—Deuteronomy 23:21-23.

God requires accountability!

If you make a promise and it turns out to be inconvenient, you must still keep that vow—you

promised it to the Lord.

A rash vow is one made without forethought, and without a serious resolve to fulfill it. This sort of vow should never be made.

A vow unfulfilled is worse than a vow never made—Jeremiah 11; Deuteronomy 11; Ezekiel 17:19-20.

Watch what you say!

But God says you are responsible for what you have said—Leviticus 5:4-5; Proverbs 20:25. James tells you not to swear by heaven, or by earth, or by any oath; but let your yea be yea; and your nay (no) be nay lest you fall into condemnation—James 5:12.

Be careful of excessive devotion!

The mouth can be a cause of sin and a source of destruction in your life, so it's worth heeding the warning: "Let your words be few—Ecclesiastes 5:2. Don't overload yourself with yeses.

Words are cheap; actions are what count!

As a Christian, you may "talk a good game" of faith, yet live in a way that contradicts your words. Instead, you should "put feet on your faith" by such actions as caring for the poor and disadvantaged and showing fair treatment to others—James 1:27-2:26.

Don't be slack in paying your vows!

"When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it. He has no pleasure in fools: fulfill your vow—Ecclesiastes 5:4."

Don't be a fool—fulfill your vow.

You must not break your word!

"This is what the Lord commands: When a man makes a vow to the Lord or takes an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he must not break his word but must do everything he said—Numbers 30:1-2."

Don't break your covenant!

Covenant breaking weakens patience, perseverance, honesty, courage and all other virtues. Covenant breaking is immoral and sinful.

You must perform what comes out of your mouth!

"Whatever your lips utter you must be sure to do, because you made your vow freely to the Lord your God with your own mouth—Deuteronomy 23:21-23."

You must not go back on your vow!

"Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger, 'My vow was a mistake.' Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands—Ecclesiastes 5:6?"

Read Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 for the following summarized warnings!

1. Don't be quick to utter a vow, or anything else, to God.
2. If you do make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it.
3. Once you've made a valid vow to God, you can't retract it.
4. If you make a vow to God and fail to carry it out, you have offered to God the sacrifice of fools.
5. If you fail to carry out your vow, you have allowed your mouth to lead you into sin.
6. If you fail to carry out your vow, you open yourself to God's anger, and the destruction of the work of your hands by Him.

Procedure

Make sure it is something you wish to do as a sacrifice to God.

Make sure it is something God will be pleased for you to do.
Make sure you are totally dedicated to fulfilling your vow.

You may wish to visit with a spiritual mentor about your desires and plans.
Always spend time praying to God for guidance.
Read God's instructions in His Word.

Engage in a special, private ceremony as you make your commitment. This is a vital step of the procedure!
Tell others about your vow so they can help you through their encouragement. God knows if you are doing this in a bragging fashion, which would be wrong.
Remember it is not about you; it is about being thankful to God.

Self-Disciplines

There are many different areas of your total wellness for you to consider.
Everyone is different as to which areas represent his or her greatest struggles.
Your plan may involve only one area or several areas.
Self-discipline is essential for successfully a vow.

Self-Disciplines

- ***S**elf-control
- ***E**xpectations
- ***L**ifestyle
- ***F**ellowship

- ***D**istress
- ***I**ntant-gratification
- ***S**pirituality
- ***C**ommitment
- ***I**ntelligence
- ***P**ersistence

- ***L**laughter
- ***I**ntrinsic
- ***N**utrition
- ***E**xercise
- ***S**leep

Self-Control

With any health endeavor you must have the ability to take control of your actions and be responsible for what you do. No one else can do it for you or force you to participate.
Key words for self-control are moderation, temperance, and responsibility.

Expectations

Your expectations must represent the results you are capable of achieving. They must be realistic.
However, remember that God is helping you, so don't underestimate your abilities. You will never achieve great results if your expectations are always low. Don't allow fear to rule.

Lifestyle

Wellness involves more than just one or two areas in your life. It is a total way of living.
Lifestyle changes must be made with the mindset that they are for long-term.
Your lifestyle for the future is set at a very young age and it can be changed.

Fellowship

God created Eve because it was not good for Adam to be alone. You need fellowship.
Positive relationships with others, especially your family and friends, are vital to your social health.

Others see Jesus through their interactions with you, and through the sacrifices they see you making.

Distress

Stress and distress are part of life and they are not necessarily detrimental to your health. How you respond to stress and distress determines their effects on your wellness. Dealing with stress in a healthful manner can eliminate many health problems.

Instant-gratification

Creating a desire for instant gratification is one of Satan's oldest tricks. He used it on Adam and Eve and he uses it today. He tells you that you need to feel good right now; don't wait on God to provide. Feeling good is not necessarily good for you. Delayed gratification has great merit.

Spirituality

There is nothing more important in this life than your spiritual walk with God! All components of your health are affected by your spiritual wellness. A strong faith gives you courage to be physically fit. Likewise, other areas of wellness can influence your spiritual wellness. A strong faith gives you courage to be physically fit and maintain a healthful lifestyle.

Commitment

It is well known that you only succeed at things to which you are completely committed. Optimal wellness requires a strong commitment. Remember God expects only your best. God is committed to you—are you committed to Him?

Intelligence

Mental health (emotional health) is a vital part of your total wellness. Knowledge and accurate information are necessary for you to make wise decisions about your lifestyle. God gave you the ability to reason and understand and He expects you to use it—educate yourself concerning concepts of wellness.

Persistence

For easy accomplishments, very little persistence is needed. When the going gets tough, will you stick it out to achieve success? With God's help you can complete your vow; quitting won't be an option. You have to be more persistent than Satan to defeat him.

Laughter

Enjoying life is good for your health—Proverbs 17:22. Laughing stimulates your body systems through 'internal jogging,' contributes to longevity, and boosts the immune system. Laughter is essential to stress relief.

Intrinsic Motivation

Your desires that come from within you and not from outside pressures are defined as being intrinsic in nature. Wellness activities resulting from outside pressures are seldom successful long-term. Improving your wellness must be what you want because of your desire to please God.

Nutrition

Negative effects of wellness for most people result from poor nutrition. It's true you have to eat to live. The question becomes how much, how often, and which types of

food should you eat.

Do you know the personal effects that negative eating patterns can produce in your life?

Exercise

Society has rapidly become less and less physically active. How about you?

Calories in your diet not used by the body will remain in the body as fat tissue. Extra calories will be burned only through an increase in physical activities. You must balance calorie intake with calorie expenditure to maintain your weight.

Sleep

God rested and you are made in His image; your body needs its rest.

When your body is under stress from lack of sleep, it will not function well.

Major health problems can develop when you deprive yourself of sleep.

Positive Biblical Gifts

Genesis 4:3-4—Abel's gifts were acceptable to God.

Genesis 22:7-10—Abraham was willing to give his son's life to God.

1 Samuel 1:11—Hannah gave her son to God's service.

Matthew 2:11—the Magi from the east gave great gifts to Jesus.

Matthew 25:14-17—two servants' actions and gifts were acceptable.

Luke 21:1-4—a poor widow gave to God all she had to live on.

Negative Biblical Gifts

Genesis 4:3-5—Cain's gifts were not acceptable because of attitude.

Matthew 25:18—the one talent servant's actions were not acceptable.

Acts 5:1-2—Ananias and Sapphira lied about their gifts to God and died.

Considerations For Gifts

What level of sacrifice do you wish to give?

Is your vow something you already have been doing for some time?

Is your vow something "quick and easy" for you?

Considerations For Gifts

Is your vow difficult for you to fulfill? Is it a challenge?

Is your vow something you have wanted to do for a long time, but haven't?

Will your vow make a major impact on your health and wellness, or have little or no effect?

Think Before You Vow

In John 14:1-12 Herod promised (vowed) to give Herodias' daughter anything she wanted for dancing for him and his guests. He was distressed when she asked for the head of John the Baptist. He reluctantly kept his promise and John was beheaded. What would it take for you to break your vow to God?

In Judges 11:30 Jephthah vowed to God if he was victorious in battle he would sacrifice as a burnt offering whatever came out of the door of his house when he returned. He won the battle. Upon his return his daughter ran out of the house. He kept his vow. What would it take for you to break your vow to God?

Scriptures To Study

Psalms 51:17

Proverbs 3:5-6; 9:12, 17; 14:23; 18:16; 21:5-6

Isaiah 1:13

Matthew 10:8

Luke 23:46

Romans 6:23
II Corinthians 8:12; 9:6-7
Ephesians 2:8-9
Philippians 4:18
Colossians 4:5
I Timothy 4:7
Hebrews 11:4
James 2:18; 5:16
I Peter 4:13

Pitfalls Of Failure

If you were to break your vow:

What might cause it?

What circumstances could arise?

To whom would you talk to before breaking your vow?

Being aware of possible pitfalls will help you succeed. Know the answers for yourself, because Satan knows them.

Decision Time

Do changes in your life need to be made to improve your wellness?

If so, which changes need to occur?

Which changes are you willing to vow to God that you are going to make?

Do you understand the seriousness of making a vow to God?

Making Your Vow

1. Pray first— God answers prayer.
2. Sign your commitment form and turn it in.
3. Engage in a ceremony of your choice.
4. Seek encouragement from others.
5. Express your thankfulness to God often.

The gift is important, but your attitude is very important.

Making a vow isn't about you it's about God.

God will use your gift to His advantage.

What is your level of trust?

The form on the next page is to be used for your vow to God. Feel free to copy it for a friend if you are your friend's sponsor. As a sponsor you must go over all materials with your friend so he or she understands the full impact of making a vow. Stress the importance and value of the ceremony.

Victory Of Wellness(V.O.W.)

I thank and honor God for the blessings in my life, and I vow (promise) to improve my personal wellness through the actions described below. Upon the completion of my commitment I will reevaluate my vow to determine if I am willing to continue. Consider Deuteronomy 23:21-23:

“21If you make a vow to the LORD your God, do not be slow to pay it, for the LORD your God will certainly demand it of you and you will be guilty of sin. 22But if you refrain from making a vow, you will not be guilty. 23Whatever your lips utter you must be sure to do, because you made your vow freely to the LORD your God with your own mouth.”

My vow is in effect between the dates of _____ to _____

I have completed my personal ceremony acknowledging my commitment to God. _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please check appropriate box: Male _____ Female _____

Name of sponsor who presented this program to you _____

SELF-DISCIPLINES

Write statements below in which you are willing to make changes to honor and thank God indicating your vow to Him. Write for as many areas as you need. You may add additional vows later, but removing one after beginning is not acceptable. Feel free to add vows of your own for areas not included in this list. Consider Proverbs 20:25:

“It is a trap for a man to dedicate something rashly and only later to consider his vows.”

Self-control - _____

Expectations - _____

Lifestyle - _____

Fellowship - _____

(over)

Distress - _____

Intant-gratification - _____

Spirituality - _____

Commitment - _____

Intelligence - _____

Persistence - _____

Laughter - _____

Intrinsic - _____

Nutrition - _____

Exercise - _____

Sleep - _____

Other vows - _____

_____ Check here to indicate any vow that is too personal to list, but that you have had a discussion and prayer time with God and He knows the change(s) in your lifestyle you are vowing to make.

Congratulations on your trust in God to see you through!