

## A New & Holy Vow

At age 39, I met my husband. By our second date, he'd bought my engagement ring...but he didn't pop the question until the Lord told Him to a month later. When he proposed, it was on the very day the Holy Spirit had confirmed in my heart that I was to say "yes" if Robin asked. That night, in a stunningly decorated sanctuary with candles and rose petals, after enjoying a decadent sushi dinner and the song Robin had written and played on the piano, my sweet husband knelt and asked me to marry him. It was perfect! *Or was it?* Why did I awake the next morning feeling sick to my stomach? What was wrong? Had I made a mistake?

### *Eradicating Unholy Vows*

The morning after my husband proposed, I was filled with the hugest fear I'd ever felt. I suddenly realized, after years of living single with Jesus, I was petrified to get married.

As I sought the Lord, He showed me that I'd made two "unholy vows", years prior, when I was a young girl. During a time when my family was going through some difficulties, my childish heart at age 11 or 12 vowed not to marry or have children. It wasn't a blatant statement; that's why I hadn't been consciously aware of it. It was more like a deep-seated determination within my heart.

I believe we can all be tempted to make unholy vows. They say, "*I will do what it takes to never feel this pain again.*" Or, "*I'll make sure no one ever does that to me!*" Then we build our lives around that vow. But it is not of the Lord. Marriage and family are of the Lord. I knew that in my head, yet my heart felt betrayed after I said "yes" to something I'd vowed against.

I suddenly found myself face to face with the spirit of fear. Did you know that fear is a spirit? I'm not talking about the fear of the Lord, which is a good, healthy, awe and respect and wonder and love for God that provokes obedience.

The fear of the Lord says, "You are God, I am not, and I'm okay with that." On the other hand, the spirit of fear is something that doesn't come from God. "*God did not give us a spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind.*" (2 Timothy 1:7) Isn't it freeing to know that this kind of fear is a spirit? It's something separate from me. *It isn't me!* How much easier is it to be free from

something, when that thing is not *me*. We can be freed from the spirit of fear, and God has told us how to do that.

*“Submit to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7)*

If God hasn't given us the spirit of fear, then it can only come from one other source. Resist the devil. How? Submit to God, then refuse to agree with that evil spirit of fear.

When the Lord exposed this during my engagement, He prompted me to make a list of every specific fear I had about getting married. Then, I prayed through each fear, submitting it to God, asking Him to forgive me for listening to the father of lies. Satan does not know the future!

Then I told the spirit of fear to leave, and replaced each lie with the truth.

If you are a disciple of Jesus, then He has given you authority over all the power of the enemy. (Luke 9, Matthew 10, Mark 6) Your inheritance as a child of God is authority over all the power of the enemy, in Jesus' name. Take hold of that authority—it's yours by His blood! Whether you exercise it or not, you still have it. Why not use it? God gave it to you- you're *His* child, not a child of the father of lies.

Have you noticed how both fear and faith both project into future? Which one will we walk with? Which one will we coddle and hug? I was coddling fear, thinking it was saving me. But it wasn't- That fear was a stronghold! And if I'd let it remain, I'd not be married, I'd not have my son...I shudder to think.

My wedding day was my day of freedom. It was the day of a new vow, replacing an old, unholy vow. Likewise, the day of my son's birth was the day of a new and godly vow. God loves double portions. It's all over the Bible. Even Job was given back double what he lost, after he prayed for his friends. It fascinates me that God gave me a double blessing—a husband and a son—and that the very fear the enemy tried to use against me, had to do with the area of blessing God had in store. I believe Jesus has a double blessing in store for you, as well. It's possible that the very area of your life where your struggles are, may be the very area He is planning to double bless you. May it be so, Lord.