

THE WISEMAN SAYS:

It is vanity to desire to live long,
and not to care to live well.

SPIRITUAL STOCK-TAKING

Bessie Follett

"Let a man examine himself." 1 Cor. 11:28

At the first of the year the stores were busy taking stock to determine their profit and loss, and to find out how they might improve in business.

Stock-taking is a job that has to be done very thoroughly. Nothing is left to chance. Everything has to be counted, weighed or measured, as the case may be. Sometimes there might be boxes or other objects piled in front of the things to be counted. These hindrances must all be removed, regardless of the inconvenience it causes, so that the stock-taker can see exactly what is there.

This is a good time for spiritual stock-taking. We should examine ourselves and find out our true standing before God. Let us remove any hindrances in our lives that may mar our vision and prevent us from knowing our true spiritual condition. If those in the business world are so careful about material things, how much more important is it that we should be careful in spiritual matters.

Let us get alone with God, and ask ourselves some questions. We should review our past lives as we would a book that is written, recording everyone of our actions, both good and bad. What do we find there that we are ashamed of? Let us notice the little things wherein we have failed. Have we been too hasty in judging one another? Perhaps we have made some harsh or unkind criticism, or spoken the wrong word which cut some other person as a knife. Probably we did not realize it then, and even made ourselves believe we were justified in saying it, but how does it look now, under the searching light of the Holy Spirit?

Perhaps we see many places where we might have given a hand-shake or a smile, or a word of comfort, but we failed to do it. Or maybe we failed to stand true to our convictions at some crucial test, and consequently lowered the standard of Holiness in the eyes of others. Have we been faithful in our church attendance? Have we helped shoulder the work of the church, or did we leave it to the other fellow? What about those promises we made to God back there? Have we been faithful to them? What spiritual progress have we made? God knows us in every detail, but do we know ourselves? Let us pray like the Psalmist David: "Search me O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Remember there is a book in heaven in which is recorded all our words and actions. Let us send up a good record during the coming year. May the failures of the past be stepping stones to greater victory in the future.

As we notice the context of the text, we find that Paul is exhorting us to examine ourselves preparatory to partaking of the Lord's supper. To do this would mean a monthly examination for most of us, and would keep us in an up-to-date experience, ever pressing on to spiritual attainments in grace.

In closing, I would say with the Apostle Paul: "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PAGE

"Let no man despise thy youth"—I. Timothy 4:12

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WHO SAID IT?

The following are some quotations from the best known men of the Bible. How many do you recognize?

1. Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.
2. If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.
3. Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!
4. Be sure your sin will find you out.
5. Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.
6. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.
7. Where thou diest, I will die, and there will I be buried.
8. For the people had a mind to work.
9. The joy of the Lord is your strength.
10. All that a man hath will he give for his life.
11. No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.
12. The heavens declare the glory of God.
13. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
14. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.
15. A man that hath friends must show himself friendly.
16. Here am I; send me.
17. Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears.
18. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.
19. Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days.
20. O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
21. Seek ye first the kingdom of God.
22. None of these things move me.

Answers Next Issue

FRIENDLY OBSTACLES

Louis E. Thayer

They are your friends—the tasks which seem so hard;

The barriers which ever block your way;
Rough spots which tend your progress to retard;

The problems which you wrestle with each day.

These are your friends for, as you toil along,
These are the things which make you fit and strong.

Steep hills alone can teach you how to climb;

Hardship alone can teach you to endure.
Through forced delay you learn to value time;

The rocky path but makes your step more sure.

Ugly and grim these things may seem to you
And, yet, you learn from them to battle through.

OUR FOUNDATION

Take away the Bible from us and our warfare against intemperance, and impurity, and oppression, and infidelity, and crime is at an end. We have no authority to speak, no courage to act. Who, then, can adequately estimate its immeasurable influence on the world's greatest literature?—William Lloyd Garrison.

SOCIETY LETTERS

Our page needs a friendly touch.
Can we not have more reports from our societies?

DOES THE BIBLE SAY THAT?

1. The people of this modern architectural age are not the only ones who have enjoyed their summer parlors. Egdon, King of Moab, used to sit in his. Read Judges 3:20.

2. From 2 Kings 21:13, it is evident that men had to help their wives wash dishes. Turn to the reference and find out how men do it.

3. We all recognize the need of having clean teeth. God said to Israel a long while ago: "I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities." Amos 4:6.

4. Did you ever think of saving the tears that you shed? David prayed to God: "Put thou my tears into thy bottle." Psalm 56:8.

5. A broken tooth or a foot out of joint would be very painful, but the wise man in Proverbs said: "Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint." Prov. 25:19.

6. It is fun to play toss and catch with a ball. God said to one country that he would "surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball into a large country." Is. 22:18.

7. A door turns on its hinges, and is often in motion, but it gets nowhere. Solomon likens a door to a slothful man who spends his time in bed. Prov. 26:14.

8. Bottles, in Bible times were usually made of skins, and if hung near the fire or smoke, would become parched and shrivelled up. David in a period of spiritual dearth said: "I am become like a bottle in the smoke." Ps. 119:83.

9. A fortification that a fox could break down would not stand much of a siege; yet Tobiah in making fun of the walls of Jerusalem said: "That which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall." Neh. 4:3. W. H. M.

THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND

'Twas battered, scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth the while
To waste his time on the old violin

But held it up with a smile,
"What am I bidden, good people," he cried,
"Who'll start the bidding for me?"

A dollar, a dollar! now two, only two;
Two dollars, and who'll make it three?
Three dollars once, three dollars twice;

Going for three?" But no!
From the room far back a gray-bearded man
Came forward and picked up the bow.

Then wiping the dust from the old violin
And tightening up the strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet,
As sweet as an angel sings.

The music ceased and the auctioneer
With a voice that was quiet and low
Said, "What am I bid for the old violin?"

And he held it up with a bow.
"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two,
Two thousand, and who'll make it three?"

Three thousand once, three thousand twice;
And going and gone," said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We don't quite understand
What changed its worth?" Swift came the reply,

"The touch of a master's hand."

And many a man with life out of tune
And battered and torn with sin,