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PERHAPS WE OUGHT TO TAKE AN INVENTORY

By the Editor

Business men think it is profitable for them to take an inventory of their assets and liabilities at least once a year, to see if they are making progress, or going behind in their business.

The Apostle Paul in his epistles seems to recommend a similar practice for the people of God. Let us quote some of his exhortations: "But, let a man examine himself." I. Cor. 11-28. Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves. II. Cor. 13-5.

The psalm writer evidently felt that he could not depend on self-examination so he called on the Lord: "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." Psa. 138: 23-24.

I think the Psalmist was very wise in asking God to search his heart, and thoughts, for in our examination of ourselves we are likely to be very lenient with ourselves, and not mark our own papers very hard. If it were our neighbor or fellowman or some one that we did not like, that we were examining, perhaps we would mark them much harder than our own, because we sometimes condemn things in others which we tolerate in ourselves.

Again, the Psalmist did not have the facilities for examining hearts that we have: He had only the Old Testament scriptures, while we have the teachings and life of Jesus, and many very helpful epistles, and also the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. Hence the Apostle points us to the scriptures, and to Jesus, as the criterion or standard by which we can judge ourselves.

Here is a very good test: Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Rom. 8-9.

The Apostle frequently warns us in his writings of our danger of being deceived about our spiritual state. He says, let no man think of himself more highly than he ought to think. Paul knew the subtlety and purpose of Satan, and calls him the old deceiver—he deceived Adam and Eve and brought ruin to the race of man, and he is still working at his old job.

So, Paul says: "The Spirit of Christ" is our test. To have the Spirit of Christ, means so much. We say, who can pass the test? It means we resemble him, we are like him, in every walk or phase of our life. In taking our inventory or examining ourselves we will need to hold ourselves up beside him, as he is revealed in the gospels.

Note some things recorded about him in the

word, then examine ourselves as we go along. First, let us say, he was True because he was the Truth, the origin of truth. When he spoke, he spoke the whole truth; he never told a half truth to save Himself, or to please people, hence, he was hated, and suffered for the truth. He never spoke a part of the truth with his lips, while in his heart he knew he was deceiving his hearers. The Psalmist said in describing the upright man: "He speaketh the truth in his heart. Psa. 15:2.

Second, he was righteous. He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. I. Pet. 2-22. He was free from guile or deception of any kind. He never practised affectation to try to impress people that he was different than he really was.

Did you ever meet a person who tried to appear kind, gentle, loving, agreeable, sweet in disposition, very friendly to your face, and you knew that down in that heart there was an unsubdued, carnal spirit, that only needed to be stirred by some provocation to show what was the real condition of the heart? And suddenly that serene, calm spirit of a short while ago would change to one of anger, scolding, wrath, perhaps unkind words, backbiting, abuse, etc. You can often tell how much grace one has by their reaction to trials. This is especially true when one professes the grace of entire sanctification.

Did you ever see a preacher who pretended to cry when he preached or prayed, and it seemed quite real, but you knew it was not, for you knew him outside the pulpit; he was only trying to impress the people that he had a great burden of soul for the needy. That is just affectation.

Yes, Jesus was kind, loving, generous, helpful to the poor and needy. He was anointed with the Holy Ghost, and went about doing good.

And in all these ways we may manifest His Spirit. But we think that the most outstanding of all His noble traits of character was His spirit of sacrifice, and perhaps that is where many of us fall furthest short of manifesting the Spirit of Christ.

Under the old dispensation sacrifice meant to slay a beast, shed its blood, and offer it to appease the wrath of the offended god, or if the worshipper was a Jew he made his offering to God the Lord as a type of the sacrifice of Jesus, who gave himself, poured out his life-blood for us. The Apostle said he suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps. I. Pet. 2-21.

So sacrifice means suffering. Paul wrote to the Church of Rome: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice holy

acceptable to God which is your reasonable service." Rom. 12-1. The body is the center of man's interest. What shall we eat, drink, and where withall shall we be clothed: Hence when God has our Body he has all of our interests.

Sacrificial service is costly service. The people in Malachi's day offered cheap, inferior animals to God—the lame, and blind, and sick—and God would not accept them, but pronounced a curse upon them. Mal. 1-14.

What think you? Are we sacrificing in our service to God? Do we serve until it hurts, or do we buy all the nice things that we want, and often do not need for ourselves? Look into your ward-robe now Why are all those clothes hanging there not being worn, about as good as new? Hats, coats, dresses, etc.!

Oh, you say, I can't wear them; they are out of style. Who said they were out of style, and you could not wear them? Who set the style? Or where did you get the style? Did you get it from God's book? He tells us how we ought to dress. If you get your instructions on style from God's Book me-thinks you will find that the styles don't change so often. Someone has said: We get our styles from New York. New York gets them from Paris, and Paris gets them from hell.

You will also find instructions about hair-
(Continued on Page 5)

A NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

Christian leaders are calling attention to the fact that Presidential Proclamations calling for prayer, repentance and civic righteousness at critical times in history have proved turning points in world affairs.

They cite the example of President James Madison, during the 1812 war crisis, proclaiming the "third Thursday of August as a day of acknowledging the transgressions which might justly provoke divine displeasure, of seeking merciful forgiveness."

Biographical accounts picture Abraham Lincoln kneeling until the morning hours, some nights never retiring at all during the Civil War Crisis. When the worse had come to the worst Lincoln proclaimed April 30th, 1863, as a "Day of National repentance, fasting and prayer: that the united cry of the nation might be heard on high and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins." Lincoln held that God rules the world on the principle we reap what we sow and in his summons to prayer said, "We have forgotten God. Those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord. The awful calamity of war which now desolates the land may be but divine punishment."—Sel.