It’s Inventory Time

By Danny Simmons

 All retail companies take inventory at least once a year. Inventory is usually frowned upon by most employees. It is not a time that we enjoy, but it must be done. The law requires it.

 Retail companies are required to take inventory so they can be taxed on all of the merchandise they have in stock. Inventory is also a good thing because it helps to clean up the mess that has been made during the previous year. After inventory is completed, the company has a much better grip on what is in stock.

 Knowing that inventory is correct is a wonderful thing for the company, as well as the customer. If a customer walks in and wants to buy a specific item, the salesperson can promptly inform them whether or not there is one in stock. If inventory shows that there is not one in stock, then the salesperson can confidently say, “We’ll have to order one for you.”

 Taking inventory, though sometimes painful, is absolutely necessary. It helps us better understand where we’ve been, where we are, and where we are going. It also helps to clean up the clutter that we have allowed to build up.

 With this idea of inventory in mind, I would like to suggest that we all take inventory on our spiritual lives. What are our strengths? What are our weaknesses? What is it we should spend more time on? Are there some things in my life that I need to concentrate on removing? How much time has gone by since I have cleaned up and itemized the things that dictate who I am?

 These are all questions that we need to have answered regularly. I have come up with a few things that may help us as we take inventory on our own lives. Keep in mind that when Christians take inventory, they should make sure that all things that are important to them are tied closely to our service to God. **Romans 12:1** says, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”

 One of the best ways to evaluate our current position is to look at our kids. How much time have we spent with them concerning the will of God? Do they know how precious Jesus is to us as parents? The age of our children really doesn’t matter. Whether our kids are two years old or twenty years old, they should know what comes first in the lives of their moms and dads. I’m currently thirty-seven, and I know that my father’s love and deepest hopes rest on the promises of God. What a powerful encouragement that is to me!

 Another part of our life that will help us take inventory is looking at how we spend our time. The time that we have on earth is a precious gift from God. **Psalm 31:15** says, “My times are in your hand…” We should always consider how our time is being spent and whether or not it is pleasing to the Lord. I can already see that I’ve got some cleaning up to do. We can use our time to comfort brothers and sisters who may be sick or mourning. We can encourage a fellow Christian who may be stumbling. We may even be able to devote a little more time to reading God’s word.

 Here is a third thing we can consider when taking inventory. What do we do with our money? Where we spend our money can tell us a lot about what’s important to us. We should always give back a portion of what God has blessed us with. **2 Corinthians 9:7** says, “So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.” We should always be on guard when it comes to how our money is spent. If it is becoming harder to give with a cheerful heart, we should certainly want to find out why. Has the portion that we give back to God gotten smaller because of our dedication to worldly things? We need to keep a close eye on our hearts.

 Here is one last thing we can look at while doing inventory. Where are our efforts being dedicated? There are many things that demand our effort in this world: work, school, kids, household chores, family, and even playtime. You and I have a responsibility to make sure that the will of God is guiding us in our efforts.

 It takes effort to pray. It takes effort to sing hymns. It takes effort to resist the devil **(James 4:7)**.

 Let’s all take inventory of our lives, and be sure that we are doing all that we can to please our Father in heaven. If we do take inventory and straighten things up, it will show. Our children, our money, our time, and our efforts should all be dedicated to God. **1 Corinthians 15:58** says, “Therefore my brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”