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# Suitably Impressed and Unimpressed

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— Keith R. Blades

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19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope,

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

*(Romans 8:19–21)*

Wherefore our sonship education and edification is actually *highly specialized vocational education and training for us*. It is preparing us to occupy the various positions of intelligentsia of “the creature,” and in so doing to become its functional life-force for God.

Now with this being the case, each aim and goal of our sonship education is naturally a vital and integral part of the vocational education and training that we need as God’s “new creature.” For first of all each of them instills us with required knowledge and understanding that we need for being able to be the intelligence of “the creature.” By doing this, they then in turn provide us with the various capacities and abilities that we will need in order to carry out the creature’s functional life.

Accordingly, therefore, each one of our educational goals and objectives serves to provide us with the acquisition of the highly specialized knowledge, skills, and skill-sets that we will need in order to be able to intelligently function in the various positions of intelligentsia belonging to “the creature,” and thereby be able to properly direct and implement its governmental administration of the heavenly places, and produce the functional life thereof.

Wherefore the educational aims and goals of our sonship edification are truly amazing and marvelous. Without a doubt, therefore, we certainly should be suitably impressed with them as each one progressively equips and trains us for being able to be an intelligent part of one of the most extraordinary, distinguished, and phenomenal vocations that there is in all of God’s creation.

## More Impressive

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Yet when we examine our vocation a little closer, (and when in the course of progressing through our curriculum we are taught more about it), the goals and objectives of our sonship education actually become even more amazing and even more impressive.

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*... (the) policy of evil against us will take notice of any of our failures to become suitably unimpressed with what our Father contemns, ...*

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For in addition to the foregoing, they are also equipping us to be able to produce and carry out the *full measure* of the natural role that God has designed for “the creature” to have in creation. In other words they equip us to provide for the creature’s *full influence and interaction with the earth as its embodiment*, and also for *the fulness of its relationship with the rest of creation*. This is because in view of “the creature” having been “made subject to vanity,” the full expression of its natural role and function in creation has yet to be generated by it or implemented. In fact, God in

His wisdom has purposely prevented this from taking place, in view of the impact of “the bondage of corruption” upon “the creature.” What’s more, God even took steps during “time past” to greatly limit and restrict the creature’s influence, especially its ability to interact with the earth. This He did expressly for the good of man, but to a certain degree it was also for the good of “the creature” itself.

So then by being “made subject to vanity,” “the creature” has yet to be able to even carry out the full expression of its own natural role and function in creation.

But as God’s “new creature” it will not only be our role to provide “the creature” with its “glorious liberty,” but it will also be our honour and privilege to provide it with the ability to carry out the fulness of its function in creation. Consequently we also are being equipped to do this by means of the specialized vocational education and training that we are receiving through the aims, goals, and objectives of our sonship education and its “godly edifying.” For this reason we ought to be all that much more impressed with what we are given to learn.

Yet as amazing as this is, there is something else about this that should impress us even more. For with “the creature” having been subjected to vanity, this also means that its *full potential*, (i.e. all that God our Father has designed and intended for it to be able to do, and also for Him to be able to do with it), has yet to even be realized. In fact until God revealed “the mystery of Christ” and “the mystery of his will,” He had not even made known, or intimated, the full measure of the creature’s potential. Its natural role and function was known and understood, but its *full potential* was not. For rather than disclosing the creature’s full potential, or even giving any indication whatsoever about it, God also kept this information to Himself, while He awaited the proper time to make it known as a matter of His “good pleasure.”

So it was then that no created being, (not even the Adversary nor any of his cohorts), was able to realize or perceive the full use that God intends to make of “the creature.” Hence by subjecting “the creature” to vanity, (as well as by keeping “the mystery” a mystery), God did more than make it so that the present evil occupants of the creature’s positions of intelligentsia were wholly unable to perceive His undisclosed plan for delivering “the creature.” He also made it so that they were wholly unable to know all the *glory* that they had forfeited as the result of the folly of their sin and rebelliousness; which *glory* includes the glory of the creature’s full intended use in God’s plan and purpose in the ages to come.

And indeed Satan and his cohorts did forfeit great glory, just as Paul indicates when he says...

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto OUR GLORY:

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord OF GLORY.

(1 Corinthians 2:7–8)

But now that God has revealed His “hidden wisdom,” the *glory* of the creature’s full potential in God’s plan and purpose is also now made known. And the revelation of this information has also been to the crushing chagrin of the Adversary and his cohorts, just as Paul says.

However of particular concern to us is the fact that God’s revelation of the glory of the creature’s full potential is part of what He has “ordained before the world unto our glory.”

Hence we are to understand that with the glory of the creature’s deliverance, and of its full potential, no longer being ‘kept under wraps,’ God our Father is presently making provision for two things: (1) the full expression of the creature’s glorious and magnificent role in creation; and (2) the manifestation and exploitation of the exceeding greatness of its full

potential in the time to come. And according to the riches of God's grace unto us "in Christ," along with "our glory" in connection with the creature's deliverance, our Father is providing for all of this by means of the very things in which He is educating and training us — His "new creature" — and which are contained in the specialized curriculum for our sonship education and edification.

Without a doubt, therefore, we not only should be *suitably*, but also *highly impressed* with the overall design and purpose of our sonship education and edification, as well as with each of its amazing educational aims, goals, and objectives. For given the specialized nature of its vocational training, along with its provision for exploiting the creature's full potential, it is not an overstatement at all to say that 'There is no education like our sonship education.'

### Still More Impressive

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This, though, is not all that should impress us. For along with preparing us for our future vocation, each of our curriculum's educational aims and attainments also has a *present time glory* belonging to it. For each aim and attainment is also a point of achievement in our Father's purpose of conforming us to the image of His Son. And as such each has a manifest glory belonging to it; and one that also results in God being glorified thereby.

In other words, as we progress through our curriculum, and as each educational aim and objective that we achieve effectually prepares us and trains us for our vocation in the heavenly places, each one also corresponds with a recognizable aspect of the Lord Jesus Christ's own glorious character and image in accordance with "godly edifying." Hence our attainment of each aim effectually generates in us an identifiable feature or characteristic belonging to God's own glorious character, and it actually puts it on display.

This in turn also redounds right now to the glorification of God our Father by "the creature" itself. For as "the creature" earnestly awaits the time of our manifestation, it is also able to see how that through the effectual working of the excellency of the power of our Father's word operating within us He is able to successfully generate and produce within us a significant and necessary point of glorious attainment in His ultimate objective of conforming us to the image of His Son.

Now understanding and appreciating this also adds to the impressive nature of our sonship education and edification. For if "the creature" itself is marvelously impressed with what our Father is doing with us, and glorifies Him as it sees His sonship education succeeding with us, we too should be impressed with this very thing.

Furthermore as we successfully attain each educational aim in the course of our "godly edifying," this also makes an additional present time impact to God's glory; but one of a somewhat different kind. For in truth it also makes an impact upon the Adversary and his cohorts.

This is because it definitely aggravates the Adversary and his cohorts, (who not only presently constitute most of the intelligence component of "the creature," but who also presently strive to thwart the success of our sonship education), when our Father's word effectually works within us and we succeed with an educational goal. Since they know that we are God's "new creature," and since they know the purpose and value of our sonship education, (often to a far greater degree than many Christians do), it naturally irritates them, and even outrages them, to see God's curriculum for our sonship education effectually working within us.

Yet this kind of 'negative impact' also constitutes a glorious thing to our Father. For it not only confirms and further manifests the reality of His

“manifold wisdom” to the Adversary and his cohorts, but it also puts on display the grandeur and glory of the excellency of the power of His word operating within us, in contrast to the impotence and failure of their attempts to oppose the success of our sonship edification.

Hence we also should be impressed with the glorifying of our Father that occurs by these ‘tactical type’ victories that He achieves over the Adversary’s opposition to our sonship education.

Wherefore we have all the more reason to be *very suitably and highly impressed* with each and every one of the educational aims and goals that there are in the curriculum for our sonship edification. For each one is not only remarkable and marvelous as it pertains to our vocational education and training, but each is also truly glorious, and in more ways than one.

### **Impressed, Yes; but also Unimpressed**

Yet as we progress through our “godly edifying” and become more and more impressed with each and every component of our vocational education and training, at the exact same time something equally important, but of an opposite nature, also should be taking place with us. That is, we should become increasingly *unimpressed*, (or less and less impressed), with some other things.

And indeed this should be so. For as our “godly edifying” generates within us the components of godliness — Godly thinking, Godly behaviour, and Godly labour — it is also naturally designed to generate within us the very same thoughts, reactions, and responses that our Father has towards things that displease Him, or that are contrary to Him and to His desire for us. Or more to the point, as our sonship edification conforms us to the image of God’s Son and prepares us for our vocation as God’s “new creature,” by nature it is also designed to generate within us the same attitude of contempt and disregard, (and even disdain), that God Himself has towards things that are purposefully ungodly and/or that are

deliberately at odds with His desire to educate us as His “sons.”

Accordingly, therefore, many of our educational goals also have as part of their full effectual working the express intent of also causing us to become *unimpressed* with certain things. To become suitably unimpressed with things that not only make no real contribution at all to our “godly edifying,” but that if we are not careful can actually hamper it and/or corrupt it.

Now though we might have the tendency to think it more important to be suitably and highly impressed with the aforementioned glory belonging to each aspect and goal in our amazing vocational training, the truth is that it is just as vitally important for us to be *suitably unimpressed* with anything that might vie for our attention, and thereby subtly serve to distract us, subvert us, or otherwise hinder us from fully succeeding with our sonship education.

### **The Importance of being Unimpressed**

As we progress through the curriculum for our sonship education we are actually taught to become unimpressed with a number of things, (with some being easier for us to have contempt for and/or disregard than others). But those that we are taught about at the outset, and during the early stages of our “godly edifying,” are the ones which it is most needful for us to contemn. This is particularly so when we realize that if we do not become suitably unimpressed with them at the time that God teaches us about them, then they can become formidable stumblingblocks and hindrances to our ability to make proper progress in our sonship education.

In fact our Adversary knows this, and his policy of evil against us will take notice of any of our failures to become *suitably unimpressed with what our Father contemns*, and it will exploit this to its own advantage, as it seeks to hamper and thwart the success of our sonship education and edification.

Moreover if we fail to become suitably unimpressed with such things, they can even become ‘strongholds of resistance’ to us, and we may not even recognize that this has happened.

Hence if we fail to condemn what we ought to condemn, we can actually put ourselves in the most difficult position of all when it comes to being able to figure out what’s wrong. In other words we can put ourselves in the position of being ones who ‘oppose ourselves.’ And indeed ‘self-opposition’ is the most difficult form of opposition to detect, acknowledge, and overcome. For deliverance from it requires a degree of honesty of heart, (and hence honesty with oneself), that the position itself is quite averse to producing.

Therefore when we fail to become *suitably unimpressed* with what God our Father tells us that He discounts, denounces, or condemns, we ourselves can then become our own stumbling block, even our own worst enemy. For by having improper regard for something that God condemns, we actually carry around in our own minds the very means by which we can be tripped up, or sidetracked, or misled, or seduced, and thereby have the progress of our “godly edifying” impeded. And unfortunately we also carry around in our minds built in resistance to being able to honestly perceive and admit that we ourselves are actually hindering our own “godly edifying.”

Wherefore when we fail to become suitably unimpressed with something that our Father condemns, we actually can give it ‘a second lease on life,’ so to speak. What’s more, we also foolishly provide the opportunity for us to be deceived into becoming *more impressed with it*. Whereupon we open ourselves up to the double danger, and double disaster, of being deceived and of deceiving ourselves.

### **Unimpressed Indeed**

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So then just as it is essential for us to be suitably and highly impressed with the grandeur and glory

of our sonship education, and with each of its aims and goals, it is also equally essential and vital for us to be suitably and strongly unimpressed with those things that our Father teaches us to disregard, discount, ignore, scorn, and/or condemn as He does. The success of our “godly edifying” truly depends upon this as well.

### **The Mechanics of Becoming Unimpressed**

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In much the same way that learning about the grandeur, value, and glory of our sonship education causes us to become suitably and highly impressed with each of its aims and goals, so also do we become suitably unimpressed with things that God our Father condemns when we learn that they are worthless and useless for our vocational education and training, or that they will be nothing but a detrimental distraction and a waste of precious time to us.

Wherefore as we go about receiving our sonship education and become more and more impressed with it, at the same time what we are learning may also be designed by our Father to make it so that we become increasingly disinterested and unimpressed with something that men in general find fascinating. Or what we learn may work to cause us to become unimpressed with something that we find agreeable and pleasurable because we are impressed with how the world esteems it and places great value upon it. Or it may work to make it so that we become more strongly unimpressed with something about which we might not yet be suitably or fully unimpressed.

So by the effectual working within us of the various aims and goals of our sonship education they provide us with the kind of perceptive knowledge, understanding, and discernment that we need in order to ‘see’ past the outer appearance of what seems to be impressive, and to thereby know the truth about it as our Father does. And this is designed to effectually causes us to lose our respect or esteem for them, or our fascination with them.

Hence as this occurs some seemingly impressive things have their ‘covering veil of respectability’ effectually drawn off by what God teaches us to understand. Then we are enabled to ‘see’ that what gives the appearance of being good or profitable to us is actually anything but that. With other things their outward attractiveness is described for what it really is, and it is shown to be nothing more than a ‘facade of beauty.’ Then the real ugliness of what lies underneath, or operates in the background, is exposed to the eyes of our understanding.

And then there are also some seemingly impressive things for which we may already have a measure of godly disdain, but for which we need to be much more strongly unimpressed, if we are going to avoid being surreptitiously seduced or enticed or subverted by them. When this is the case, we are taught more about the nature of their ungodliness, and about their detrimental and destructive capabilities, so that greater and stronger godly contempt for them can be generated within us.

Once again, since it is not only vital for us to be suitably impressed with the aims and goals of our sonship education, but also to be suitably unimpressed with anything that could impede or hamper it, our Father has designed our curriculum to effectually produce both sentiments within us as we progress through it.

### Being Suitably Unimpressed

As was previously mentioned, though we are taught to become suitably unimpressed with a great number of things throughout the full scope of our curriculum, those that we are taught to condemn at the first are the most fundamental and essential for us. Wherefore if we are benefiting as we should from the beginning portions of our “godly edifying” then we should have a healthy dose of godly disregard, or discounting, or contempt, or even disdain, for some specific things.

Now for simplicity’s sake these initial ‘contemptible things’ can be divided into 2 main groups, with the first coming from the effectual working of our instruction “in Christ,” and from our sonship establishment, and from our dispensational orientation, (which we receive in Romans 1–11); and the second coming from the doctrines that comprise the beginning of the curriculum for our sonship education, (as is set forth in Romans 12–16). And among those that can have a very definite negative influence upon the success of our sonship education, there are 3 main items in each of the two groups with which we should be suitably unimpressed.

### From Romans 1–11

Simply and briefly described, by the effectual working of our instruction “in Christ” and our sonship establishment we should come to have godly contempt for, (and so be totally unimpressed with), the following:

#### (1) Our Flesh

As God has Paul teach us in the latter part of Romans 7, it is absolutely futile for us to try to put our sanctified position “in Christ” into practice in our daily lives after the energy and efforts of the flesh. For just as Paul declares in Romans 7:18...

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

(Romans 7:18)

And as he says in conclusion...

25b So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

(Romans 7:25b)

Our flesh, therefore, is absolutely useless and worthless when it comes to us ‘living unto God.’

We are wholly unable to suppress sin or to produce the righteousness of God by our own energy and/or efforts, even when trying to do so by using the law of God. Hence by “walking after the flesh” we will be nothing but a complete and utter failure in our Christian lives. We will be functionally dead unto God, with all the attending misery and wretchedness that goes along with being a complete failure.

Wherefore by the effectual working of Romans 6:1–8:13 within us we should be totally unimpressed with our flesh. In view of its impotence and enmity against God, it should be a contemptible thing to us, just as it is a contemptible thing to God.

## **(2) The Sufferings of This Present Time**

Though none of “the sufferings of this present time” are things with which we would have the tendency to be favorably impressed, they can impress us nonetheless. For they can impress us with their trouble, hurt, pain, and difficulties. In other words they can impress us in the sense that they can overwhelm us and/or dominate us with their discomfort and distress.

However we do not need to be impressed with them in the sense of allowing them to deject us or depress us, or by being bullied by them into putting us into a state of despondency or despair. For through the effectual working of our sonship establishment, we are taught something specific by which we are expected to become suitably unimpressed with any of “the sufferings of this present time” that we will experience.

For as Paul says...

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

*(Romans 8:18)*

Simply put, the magnificence of the knowledge of “the glory which shall be revealed in us” ought

to make such a powerful impression upon us, (filling us with such joy for what God is now doing and thrilling us to the core for our role in it), that it causes us to “reckon” that no ‘suffering of this present time’ can come close to being compared with it for importance and worthiness of our mind’s occupation.

So then instead of making a big issue out of some ‘suffering of this present time’ that might afflict us, we are enabled to just ‘push into the background of our minds’ by the effectual working of the incomparable knowledge of “the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

Or in other words by the effectual working of this particular knowledge we should become suitably unimpressed with “the sufferings of this present time.” And so with godly patience and contentment we should be genuinely pleased to endure any such “sufferings,” gladly making our own personal deliverance from any suffering subordinate to the far greater issue of what God is doing in this present dispensation of His grace, together with our role in it.

## **(3) The General Course of This World**

As we receive the fulness of our dispensational orientation and establishment through the effectual working of Romans 9–11, we are also able to learn more about the general “course” that this world has been on throughout its history, and also of the evolution of man’s ungodliness that has been taking place. In particular we are taught about the climactic point to which man’s ungodliness had evolved at the very time when God suspended His program with Israel and brought in this present dispensation of His grace and longsuffering.

*...our Father has designed our curriculum to effectually produce both sentiments within us as we progress through it.*

Along with this we are also given to understand that as “the course of this world” continues on during this present dispensation, man’s ungodliness will not only continue to evolve, but it will worsen. In particular man’s emphasis will be upon proudly promoting himself and his achievements like never before.

Accordingly, therefore, rather than acceding to the truth of evolving ungodliness, man will boldly and increasingly protest against any such thing. He will profess evolving humanness, and will describe the “course of this world” as one that shows him achieving mastership over it. In support he will point to his impressive achievements in areas such as scientific knowledge, discovery, advancements, invention, technology, exploration, culture, society, quality of life, and the like.

In short man will become more and more impressed with himself and with his accomplishments. Wherefore he will define the present “course of this world” in terms of man’s evolving greatness, as he defiantly denies the truth of his evolving ungodliness and fervently works to replace it with a substitute reality.

However as ones who know the true “course of this world” and the end results of the continuing evolution of man’s ungodliness, (and who also see the growing darkness that is taking place in men who choose the alternative reality that man has created), we should not be so gullibly impressed with man’s achievements. Instead we should be quite unimpressed with them, knowing that they are not what they appear to be, or are touted to be.

So it is then that before our sonship education actually even begins, we are expected to become suitably unimpressed with at least these three things.

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## From Romans 12–16

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But then once our sonship education and its conforming us to the image of God’s Son is actually underway, (and so the ‘renewing of our minds’ as per Romans 12:2 is occurring with us), the effectual working of what we learn also works to generate within us suitable godly contempt for some other things, including the following:

### (1) The Wisdom of This World

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Our Father actually begins to teach us about the foolishness of “the wisdom of this world” as part of our sonship establishment. For when He taught us the basics of how He would be educating us, and what our “godly edifying” would consist of, He gave us to see that our sonship education is vastly different from what the world offers and the education that it pursues. Hence at that time we were expected to perceive that “the wisdom of this world” cannot contribute to our “godly edifying,” and it would be foolish for us to think so and to pursue it.

However once our sonship education gets underway and we actually begin to get ‘conformed to the image of God’s Son,’ it should become all that much more apparent to us that “the wisdom of this world” is useless and worthless to us.

But more than this, we should begin to clearly see that it is not only fraught with the foolishness and emptiness of ungodly men’s vain imaginations, sophistry, and corrupt reasoning, but that any attempt to incorporate any of it into our sonship education actually will do damage to our edification and to our vocational training. Hence we should recognize that it is harmful and even dangerous to us.

Accordingly, therefore, we should give heed to Paul’s reproof to the Corinthians, if we like them think otherwise.

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

(1 Corinthians 3:18–20)

Wherefore what begins in us as godly disregard for “the wisdom of this world” at the time of our sonship establishment, should become strong godly disdain and contempt for it. For as we progress through the early stages of our sonship education and our Father instructs us in ‘His wisdom,’ we also acquire His understanding that ‘the wisdom of this world is foolishness with Him.’ And this, naturally enough, ought to cause us to become more and more unimpressed with this world’s wisdom.

## (2) The Fashion of This World

In like manner should we also become increasingly disenchanted with, and so unimpressed with, “the fashion of this world.” For this world’s criteria for determining what is meaningful in life, what is noble, what is honourable, what is worthwhile, and the like, are clearly not founded upon godliness. Instead “the fashion of this world” is primarily and predominantly hedonistic. As such its pronouncements regarding what can bring a person happiness, satisfaction, and contentment, and therefore what makes one’s life full and rich, are founded firmly upon the pursuit of carnal pleasures, and the acquisition and possession of material things.

However our Father has designed that our sonship education not only expose “the fashion of this world” for what it is, but that it also displace the world’s criteria for happiness, satisfaction, and contentment from our minds, and that it

replace them with His. Therefore by becoming suitably unimpressed with “the fashion of this world” we too ought to operate upon the following sonship awareness.

13 Happy *is* the man *that* findeth wisdom, and the man *that* getteth understanding.

14 For the merchandise of it *is* better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

15 She *is* more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

16 Length of days *is* in her right hand; *and* in her left hand riches and honour.

17 Her ways *are* the ways of pleasantness, and all her paths *are* peace.

18 She *is* a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy *is every one* that retaineth her.

(Proverbs 3:13–18)

## (3) The Works of Darkness

As an advancement upon our godly contempt for the general “course of this world,” (and especially for its present haughty and supercilious brand of ungodliness), we also get taught about the specific “works of darkness” in this world that are more or less the Adversary’s favorites. In other words they are the “works” that not only best support “the darkness of this world,” but they are also the ones that best sustain and further promote the iniquity of man’s ungodliness in God’s sight.

Now though we naturally should not be favorably impressed with any of these “works of darkness,” the expectation is that as we are taught more about them we would become even more unimpressed with them, perceiving them to be even more distasteful and detestable than what we first recognized.

Therefore in accordance with acquiring an increased godly disdain for these things, our Father’s expectation is that we would respond

just as He has Paul exhort us to do in Romans 13:12.

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

(Romans 13:12)

## Are You Both Suitably Impressed and Unimpressed?

So then along with us being *suitably impressed* with each of the aims, goals, and objectives of our sonship education, our Father has also definitely designed that we become *suitably unimpressed* with some other things; especially anything that can either clearly or surreptitiously work against the success of our “godly edifying.”

Wherefore it not only behooves us to make sure that we are *suitably unimpressed* with the few fundamental things that have been mentioned, but that we are also unimpressed with all similar type things. For if we are “sons” who want to ensure the success of our sonship education, we too should be able to say with our apostle Paul...

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,...

(Philippians 3:8)

— K. R. Blades