

Session 39 – The 2 Major Commitments of a Son

In our previous session we were talking about the necessity of the son's commitment. In view of that, we also examined the "pay-off" of that commitment; that we will be made perfect. At the end of our previous session, we left off while we were looking at Paul's warning to Timothy regarding as aspect of the policy of evil as it attempts to sidetrack local assemblies from their true purpose godly edifying.

1 Timothy 4:7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. 8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but **godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.**

After identifying the distractions, verse 8 gives us the thing every local assembly is to be engaged in; godliness. We also recognize that what God is doing with us now (with respect to godliness) is going to profit us in our life now as it is our vocational training for the heavenly places where we are going to have the responsibility to produce the life of God the Father out in those heavenly places. Therefore, it also has promise of "the life to come."

1 Timothy 4:9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. ¹⁰ For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. ¹¹ **These things command and teach.**

There in vs. 11 you have the job description of the pastor. His job is to protect the assembly from those distractions of the policy of evil and concentrate on the things that comprise godliness, which is to be produced in every member of that assembly by the pastor "commanding and teaching" them.

I now want us to turn over to 2 Corinthians. If you recall, this assembly of believers had purposefully stopped their sonship education. Paul wrote I Corinthians in an attempt to get them back on track. The Corinthians do get themselves straightened out. Previously they were intimidated out of their sonship life (godly edification) when they saw a particular kind of suffering they would have to endure if they persisted in exercising themselves unto godliness. But once they have decided to continue on, Paul writes 2 Corinthians to prepare them to go through "the sufferings of Christ." In this letter, Paul gives them the doctrine that is going to give them comfort in the midst of that suffering. As we turn over to chapter 13 of 2 Corinthians, we are coming to end of Paul's letter to them. I want you to notice what Paul says to them as he winds this up.

2 Corinthians 13:11 **Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect,** be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

Have you ever heard anyone say that? “I want you to be perfect; every one of you.” What does it mean to be “perfect?” Before, I would have said that it means to be “complete.” But to answer that question from the Bible, we turn to Colossians.

Colossians 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand **perfect and complete** in all the will of God.

Uh-oh! Paul tells the saints at Colosse that Epaphras is praying that they will be both “perfect and complete” in all the will of God. So, I can’t just come along and say that “perfect” means to be complete. The Bible makes a distinction between the two. In fact, “perfect” and “complete” are not the same thing.

A thing can be “perfect” and be incomplete just as a thing can be complete and not be perfect. Suppose you make a part for a boat, the keel for instance. You carve it out by hand and it is perfect. Crabbe’s says “that to which can be added is incomplete, that to which can be improved upon is imperfect. A thing is complete in all its parts. We count as perfect those things which want nothing requisite for the end, whereunto they are instituted.”

So when something is said to be complete, it is “full and nothing can be added to it.” In fact, if it lacked some part, we would say it is “incomplete.” It’s not all there.

But the word “perfect” is a word that is very context sensitive. When God deems something as perfect, then it cannot be improved upon. Ergo, if it can be improved, it is imperfect. And that can be understood in a lot of different contexts.

That word “perfect” causes people a lot of grief. They see God as the only one capable of being “perfect” and they are far from perfect. They think because they still have to deal with sin that they cannot be perfect, but that is not what God is talking about.

God expects us to be perfect in a particular context. And when we talk about this sonship education being a perfect education, do not doubt that it has the ability to make you perfect. Within the context of how God wants you perfected, He knows all about that you still struggle with sin, that you are a creature; but He can look at you as a son and He can identify that you are complete (you don’t need anything added to you) and that you are perfect (there is no more improving to be done). All that is left at this point is to put what you have to use!

Now I want us to go over to Ephesians 4 where Paul is discussing edification.

Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; ¹² For the **perfecting of the saints**, for the work of the ministry, for the **edifying of the body of Christ**: ¹³ Till we all come in the unity of the

faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **unto a perfect man**, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

What I'm mainly after in this passage is in vs. 13. God expects you to come "unto a perfect man." That isn't just extravagant language. That's the intended end of the curriculum you are being offered. That ought to amaze you that you can be, in your Father's eyes, perfect. And in the context of what is being discussed here, He actually expects you to be perfect.

Now turn over to Colossians 1 where Paul talks about being made a minister of all the wonderful things that he gets to impart; things like the mystery. We are looking for that word "perfect" again, but as we back up to get some context, there are some other things that we will point out along the way, before we actually get to the verse we are after. Let's start in verse 24.

Colossians 1:24 **Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you**, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

It is an advanced son (this is Colossians, after all) who can "rejoice in sufferings." This isn't just positive thinking or some such as that. This is describing a son who understands the doctrines of the sufferings of Christ and knows what those sufferings mean for him in eternity. And that understanding gives him the ability to "rejoice in sufferings." When Paul says this, he isn't just putting a positive spin on adversity; he sees those sufferings as a gift that have eternal reward attached to them; a reward of such magnitude that he will declare that the sufferings cannot compare with it. (Rm. 8)

Colossians 1:25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, **to fulfil the word of God;**

From this I take it that Paul is the final writer of inspired scripture, not John. Paul is not fulfilling prophecy since the mystery was hidden and not revealed to any man or angel. The "fulfill" used here has the idea that Paul's writings will "fill the word of God to fullness;" bringing it to completion. In fact, the original meaning of the word (old English definition) "fulfill" is: "to fill up, to make full." If something is full, then you can't add anything to it.

If my understanding of this is correct, then every other book in our New Testament was written before Paul completes all of his epistles.

Colossians 1:26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is **the riches of the glory** of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, **the hope of glory**:

Do you know where you are first apprised of that glory? Back in Romans 8.

Romans 8:18 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.

Colossians is building on what you were told back in Romans. It makes sense that Colossians is going to add to that original understanding that you were initially given. This curriculum, as all curriculums do, builds on itself.

Colossians 1:28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and **teaching every man in all wisdom**; that we may **present every man perfect** in Christ Jesus:²⁹ Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Now we have gotten to the place we were after. Did you pick up on the sonship terminology; “teaching every man in all wisdom.” And what is the end of that teaching; “that we present every man perfect...”

Then Paul says in verse 29, “whereunto I also labor...” Paul says that bringing every man to that “perfect” status is what his labor is all about! Now, let’s run one more reference on this word “perfect.”

2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may **be perfect**, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Now, taking all of this back to what Paul said to Timothy, the point I want to make is that “exercising yourself unto godliness” is going to take some effort on your part. Exercise, by any definition, involves effort. Any church that is involved in this exercise is not going to be considered a normal church. What’s correct and what’s godly is not the “norm” today. And, as I’ve said before, an education in godliness is not going to “feel” like church to vast majority of believers today. It is what every church is to be engaged in, but the counterfeit, supplied by the satanic policy of evil, is so pervasive and so familiar that the real work of the church can hardly be found any more. And what’s worse is that when it is found, it will be rejected by most believers.

Now, let’s go back to Proverbs 2 and read through those first 5 verses. Those first 5 verses are designed to test the son’s commitment to learning and there are 3 ways in which that is done. As we read this, I want you to notice the “ifs” that are contained in the passage because the 3 ways in which the son is tested will follow these “if” phrases.

Proverbs 2:1 My son, **if** thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; ² So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding; ³ Yea, **if** thou criest after knowledge, *and* liftest up thy voice for understanding; ⁴ **If** thou

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seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as *for* hid treasures; ⁵ Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

Even though we aren't going to read any farther right now, the verses that follow (vv. 6-9) are intended to check out the commitment of the son as to effectual working of what he is learning.

Basically, we can actually take that issue of the son's commitment to his sonship education and break it down into a couple of component parts. There are 2 major areas of commitment (or 3, if you're a pastor-teacher who's going to teach it—because you've got to make a commitment to teaching the curriculum).

The son has to make a commitment to the learning, which has 3 components to it (which follow the 3 "ifs") and he has to commit to making sure that the information he is given is effectually working in him. Later on, we are going to observe a passage where Jesus Himself does this very thing.

These 2 major areas of commitment correspond to the terminology that we've been utilizing all along when we talk about our being educated as sons; "sonship education and sonship edification." Those terms are different from each other in that you can go through the education and yet not be properly edified.

The 1st major area of commitment corresponds with the issue of us being properly EDUCATED as sons, or what you might call the commitment to LEARNING. In other words, it's the commitment to your sonship education. This commitment is to taking the time and engaging in what's necessary for you to get it.

We're not just robots or computers that just get hooked up to a data base (God or the Bible) and just have the information downloaded into our brains. Just gaining knowledge of a bunch of Bible doctrines doesn't develop the CHARACTER of your Father in you! All that doctrinal teaching (even though many of the things that get taught are good and right), that method of edifying the soul of the believer won't work!

That categorical, systematic, go to the "original" languages type stuff is just as useless and just as pointless to ever producing proper godly edification as following a Sunday School quarterly, or following 'Our Daily Bread' or engaging in Praise and Worship services or even in Bible study just for the sake of so-called 'studying the Bible.' (Or any other religious activity that claims to edify the soul!)

The truth is, when you talk about a commitment to learning, there is supposed to be a 'response' on our part. When you're talking about a response, you're talking about a responsibility on our part; aresponsibility and accountability, which are all aspects of being an ADULT (and we are

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adult sons). Briefly put, we have a responsibility for learning and we are going to be accountable for it.

Once we have come to understand and have the effectual working of Romans 8:14-15 (that we've been adopted as adult sons by our Heavenly Father; and that He is totally committed to personally teaching us by giving us His Spirit: the Spirit of adoption) , then there is a natural expectation that on our side of it we will reciprocate—and there will be a matched response out of ourselves to commit to learning it.

Well, that's the first major area of commitment to sonship establish-ment.

The 2nd major area of commitment in the son's initial, basic establish-ment as a son in now going to involve THE COMMITMENT TO THE EFFECTUAL WORKING OF THE DOCTRINE YOU'RE LEARNING.

(2) Commitment to the Effectual Working of what you learn.

Once the Father has exhorted you to commit to the proper level to the fundamental aspect of learning the curriculum—and once all that proper attitude that goes along with it is established in the son—the next thing the Father is going to do is to come along and exhort the son and say some things to the son concerning the NATURE of what He's going to teach!

It's going to go beyond just the vocational training that He's going to be teaching the son. The Father is going to give the son some insight into the CAPACITIES that the son's education has—especially in the area of understanding that this education and this curriculum has got some real power to it; some strength to it; some might to it—something you're going to have to depend upon.

The Father is going to introduce you to the fact that you will eventually face some stiff opposition to your sonship education. But what He's given you and what He's teaching you is going to be able to effectually deal with all that! It's going to make it so that you can handle the opposition, so that you can keep on going to the end.

From the beginning, even before the Father describes the details of the objective (your vocation in the heavenly places and the opposition you're going to face in getting the education), He's going to give you some information for you to appreciate so that you can intelligently commit yourself to the whole education's effectual working.

This is so you can say, "This thing that I'm committing myself to get: I can TRUST it implicitly (having no doubts whatsoever; no reservations; unquestioning) - I can depend on it totally! And if I'll do that very thing, the objective it has in view will be obtainable by me! It's not impossible at all! It's not even improbable!"

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By the time you get to the end of Romans chapter 8 (especially the effectual working of verses 31-39), by the time you get to through chapters 9, 10, and 11 and by the time you are going to present yourself in the first 2 verses of Romans 12 (which is the end result of your sonship establishment), the end result is to make it so that your commitment to your sonship learning is in place, and intact, and ready to go. Along with that is going to be your perception of the power, strength, and capacity of the curriculum to do and accomplish everything it says it will and that's all designed to produce in you a commitment to it's effectual working in you for each component of the education.

That makes it so that when you start off the education in earnest when the renewing of your mind gets underway, that you don't look at it in a half-hearted way or in a doubtful manner.

Right now I just want to get you to see these levels of commitment and to discover some things about them, but I perfectly intend to go back here when we get to Romans 8:26-39 and especially Romans 12:1&2 and review this with a view to you being able to come along and put checkmarks at each of these 2 major issues of your sonship commitment.

Session 40 – The First 3 Measures of the Son's Commitment

We have been looking at something that takes place in our sonship establishment whereby the Father, before we begin what we have described as phase 2 of level 1 (Proverbs 1:3), the Father sits the son down and tests him with regard to his commitment. That commitment is going to come in 2 areas which we laid out in the previous session; commitment to learning (the education) and a commitment to effectual working (edification).

Proverbs 2:1-9:

(:1-5) forms the exhortation to the first commitment issue.

(:6-9, along with 10-22) forms the exhortation to the second commitment issue.

Proverbs 2:1 My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; 2 So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; 3 Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; 4 If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; 5 Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. 6 For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. 7 He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. 8 He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. 9 Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

The entirety of the exhortation of Proverbs 2, (the son's commitment to the learning and the effectual working of the doctrine), that corresponds to the information you get in Romans 8,

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especially in verses 26-39. All that fits in to the basic establishment of the son in Level I and Phase 1: “To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of under-standing;”

Firstly, let’s deal with the first part of the commitment : the son’s commitment to LEARNING the education or learning the curriculum, which is found in Proverbs 2:1-5.

Notice that this (vv. 1-5) is one entire sentence broken up by several clauses. Also notice that there are 3 subjective “if” clauses in the first 4 verses—i.e., “if,” maybe you will, maybe you won’t—it’s up to your positive and proper response to each component in the exhortation. After all 3 of those “if” clauses have been properly dealt with (as a composite whole), then you get your “then” result.

1st “if” clause [verses 1 &2]:

Proverbs 2:1 My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;² So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding;

2nd “if” clause [verse 3]:

Proverbs 2:3 Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;

3rd “if” clause [verse 4]:

Proverbs 2:4 If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;

The resulting “then” clause—[verse 5]:

Proverbs 2:5 Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

When you read “the fear of the LORD,” it should take you back to Proverbs 1:7, which corresponds in our curriculum with Romans 8:14-15.

Here is the table of contents:

Proverbs 1:2 **To know wisdom and instruction;**

That “know” was to know it exists and know that it has worth or value. Now, here is the exhortation to that in vs. 7.

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

That “fear of the LORD” had to do the respect that you have for whatever you find that your heavenly Father wants you to do as His son. Now, in our epistles here is what corresponds to Proverbs 1:2 and 7.

Romans 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Here you were told that as a “son” you are going to be “led by the Spirit of God” through a curriculum whereby the Spirit will function as the “Spirit of adoption.” Our cry of “Abba, Father” is that initial cry of saying “yes” to what is being offered to us. The “fear of the LORD” in us tells us that if it is what our Father wants for us, then we also want it.

That was the very first sonship decision you had to make; whether you are going to engage in it or not. Therefore, the beginning of your sonship education amounted to the issue of whether or not you had the proper amount of respect and “fear” of the LORD in connection with what He wants to do with you as His son.

A childhood training of a son is supposed to produce a “fear” or a sacred respect (a healthy respect) for his father’s character. The child’s view of his Father’s reputation is seen by the child as something other adults admire and it causes the child to desire to “measure up” (so to speak) in his father’s eyes. (And not to be a “fool” in His eyes.)

Even though we weren’t children in the sense of being under the tutor and governor system of the law, we were ‘babes’ (so to speak) in our appreciation for all that our Father had done for us when He justified us and sanctified us. Romans 1:1-8:13 should have produced a healthy sacred respect and appreciation for our Father’s character, so much so that by the time we’re informed as to our being adopted as sons, that, coupled with what we’ve already come to appreciate about Him, would produce a “fear” or respect for His character so that we care (and it matters greatly) how we are viewed by Him. (Which should also happen with every father’s sons/daughters.)

But now, that initial “fear of the LORD” has to grow a little bit more. That’s why you have to move right on from “Knowing wisdom and instruction;” to “perceiving the words of understanding” and one of the things that dawns on you at that point is that this education my Father wants to give me isn’t going to take place in 5 minutes. Now, you come (or are just now coming) to the point where you realize that this is going to be a LIFELONG endeavor. And it’s at that exact point where you also realize that this is going to require a high degree of commitment out of you in order to get all that is designed and purposed within it!

The issue right now, as you’re confronted with those first 3 “ifs” in vv. 1-4, is that you’ve dealt with them, processed them in your mind and they all effectually work within you to the point where you make the decision to commit yourself to the education. When you do commit to it, to the level that’s described here, then as the first part of (:5) says, “Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD,” — and that’s understanding it, not in that initial fear produced by your childhood training, but understanding it in view of the rest of what it takes to get all that’s built into and out of this sonship education.

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To Review:

The 1st aspect understanding “the fear of the LORD” is to simply understand that (due to my Father’s excitement and desire to give it to me) this education is something that I need and WANT!

Now the issue is: What is it going to take for me to get it? It’s going to take something commensurate with what the Father did to put it out; there was work in putting it out and there’s work involved in getting it!

That’s why we went over there to 1Timothy 4 and looked at the “exercise” issue. It involves work to get the attainment. There’s a lot of “work” involved in exercise, especially physical exercise. In fact, the expression that’s most commonly used today is to call exercise a “work-out”!

So this is really an increased aspect of “the fear of the LORD” where the son is to now realize and have a healthy respect for how much the Father put into this and how much it’s going to take for you to get things out of it! The son is going to learn that there are actually 3 measures to his commitment to sonship learning!

The fact that this isn’t the exact same thing as was dealt with in the first exhortation (in 1:7), coupled with the fact that there are going to be 3 measures to your commitment explains why vs. 5 doesn’t just end at the comma, but it goes on to say, “... and find the knowledge of God.” [i.e., it’s stated slightly different because it’s doing something slightly different.]

What this is telling you is: It’s going to take the appropriate commitment to sonship learning in order to “find” that “knowledge of God.” That’s not “find” in the sense of where it’s located, because it’s all located in the Bible. More than that, it’s found in our epistles of Romans through 2 Thessalonians. It’s not finding it in the sense of where the words are located in the Bible. That’s not what the end of vs. 5 is referring to. It’s “find” or finding it in the sense of getting that knowledge that’s in the curriculum.

It’s “find” in the sense of becoming acquainted with; obtaining; receiving the education, the knowledge of God, the curriculum; the sonship edification. So, now we need to focus our attention upon those 3 measures of commitment and what they consist of.

- 1st Measure of Commitment: vs. 1-2

Proverbs 2:1 My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; ² So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding;

Notice that this 1st measure of commitment kind of has 2 parts to it. You’ve got (:1), and then as (:2) begins, it has that expression, “So that.”

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In other words, it seems that there is a particular degree to which you are to be receiving His words and hiding His commandments that He wants to make sure is there. Verse 2 is going to describe that degree; to the degree that you end up inclining your ear unto wisdom, and you apply your heart to understanding. If you get that accomplished, then that first measure of commitment is exactly what you've got!

At this point, you may be wondering what exactly is being described here. What's being described in this 1st measure of a son's commitment level to his Father's education, very simply put, is the issue of: **HONEST ATTENDANCE!** (:2-3)

"Inclining your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding are the things of an educational environment. As with education, the son is supposed to present himself to his Father on a regular basis and at appointed times for the purpose of being educated by his Father—to learn what his Father has to teach him.

Beginning in vs. 1, the Father confronts his son with the kind of commitment it's going to take in order to get that education. The Father wants His son to commit himself to these sessions they will have together. Therefore, the first thing He does is to talk to the son about honestly attending class (so to speak).

Honest attendance involves more than just bodily showing up, it requires that you apply yourself to the education. Honest attendance is about the son's attitude. The son can't just say, "I'm here, aren't I?" as though that is enough. Honest attendance is about the son's attitude to want that education. When the Father says, "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;" the Father expects the son to **BE THERE** in class in order to receive His words when He's teaching His words when the appointed time for imparting His words takes place.

But now the Father is going to deal with the way or the attitude that His son has when he does attend class. When it comes to measuring the son's commitment to that attendance, the very 1st measure of commitment the Father wants to make sure the son has is that he's not just going to show up at class time and simply 'occupy a seat,' but he's going to be there for the purpose of learning. He's attending because he wants to learn. He's attending because he really wants to receive his Father's words.

In other words, the son has come to class for the purpose of being Taught; he's got a teachable mind with the proper attitude toward getting it.

That's where vs. 2 goes on to making sure that whole attitude goes

beyond the 'just being there' situation, but it goes on to describe the quality of the son's attitude (or the degree of receiving those words and the hiding of those commandments). — "So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;"

Those words describe the son's attitude as being an honest one in being there. So when He starts giving you His words you should be sitting in your seat and all the while, "inclining your ear," not to physically hear it, but in the sense of making absolutely sure that you've got it!

When you "incline your ear" unto something, it's got your rapt attention and you are purposefully shutting everything else out. When your Father begins giving you His wisdom, and you're attendance is in all honesty, that is, there's a genuine desire to be there for the purpose of getting that education, then that saint's ear can be properly said to be inclined toward that wisdom.

The next thing that takes place, (once that honest attendance has caused the ear to be inclined to the Father's wisdom, and that wisdom begins to get produced in the inner man (heart) of the son) is that the son applies his heart to understanding.

When you apply your heart to something, you focus the thinking and the concentration of your inner man upon something in order to get out of it what you're supposed to get out of it. The end result is that adjustments will be made in the various details of your life that will begin producing the very character of your Father in what you think and in what you do!

- All these are some of the details that are all brought out when you encounter that 1st Measure of your Commitment to sonship learning/establishment: Honest Attendance (with honesty of heart) to get out of the class all that it is about—and Honest Attendance has identifiable and definable features and characteristics to it (that can be measured and checked) - and that (in a sense) has us waiting on every word that comes out of our Father's mouth—and has us taking all of the receptive features that God has designed the human being and the human mind to utilize in order to hear what He has to say and then apply all that He does say in an intelligent way—an understanding way.