

LESSON IN LIVING

Impressions

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Remember the saying, "*You never get a second chance to make a good first impression*"? Have we ever received a poor first impression, which later turned out to be wrong? Vice versa, have we ever received a good first impression, and been disappointed later? What are some of the first impressions we've had? Have we seen a family member unexpectedly in an unfamiliar setting and received a "first impression"? Have we seen ourselves as we walked in front of a show window and received a "first impression"?

Appearance: Most of us are correct in feeling like our appearance is of prime importance in making a first impression. Although the world today is less inclined to judge others, still, political candidates, missionaries and ministers, and TV announcers who try to win our approval, dress well. And, of course, we know that wearing a big smile and looking people directly in the eyes can improve their impression of us. If we look in the mirror and smile, and then scowl, we will see how others view us. Or, perhaps we could make a video of ourselves?

Actions: We can't help but love those we feel exuding love toward us. Kind, helpful actions draw people close. And, "*Fine manners portray fine breeding.*"

Vehicles: In many instances, more people see us in our vehicles than in our homes. Therefore, it matters that we have decent transportation. Before I found out how underpaid teachers were, I remember how disappointed I was when I saw my favorite high school teacher driving a shabby little car. Not that our autos need to be expensive, but they can be clean and well maintained.

Housing: Aren't we all pleasantly surprised when we find a nondescript person living in a home that is well cared for? And doesn't one's front yard make an impression? It is usually first to catch the eye. Are the walks and drives clean? Are the lawns mowed and edged? Next in importance would be our front entrance.

Misc: How wonderful it is to associate with positive people: It's great to feel the joy they spread around! Isn't it nice to hear a person who speaks like a professional, or has a delightful accent? Perhaps we should tape-record ourselves to hear the impression we make. What a beautiful sight it is to behold people who stand erect and carry themselves regally. "*Confident carriage commands respect.*"

Are we aware of the season of life we are in? If we were an employer, would we hire us to fill the role we are playing? **Do we make a fine first impression?**