

The Discoverer

The Monthly Newsletter of The Lodge of Discovery

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Greetings Brethren,

The lead article this month is an interesting essay sourced from South Africa.

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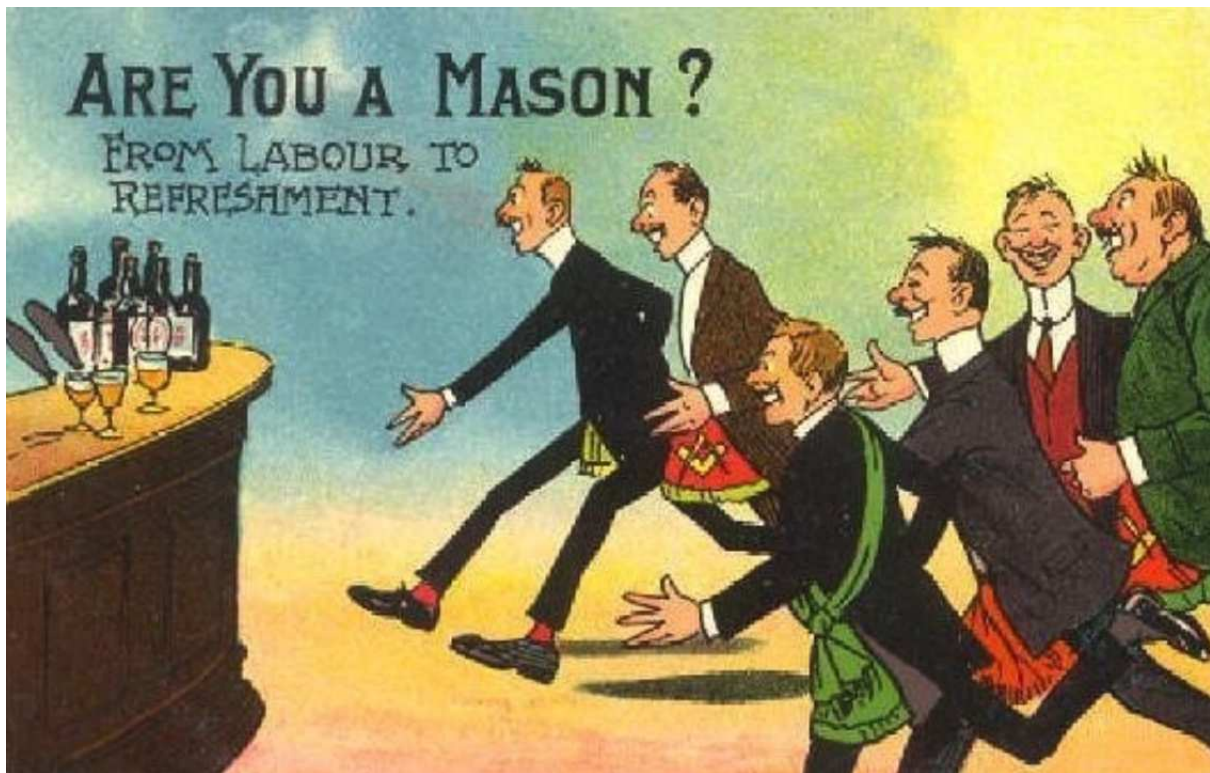
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You and the Image You Project

Almost all the candidates I have interviewed for freemasonry - when asked why they wished to become a Freemason, give one of the reasons - **"TO BECOME A BETTER PERSON"**. The chances are you also gave that as a reason. Now that time has past, I pose the question to you as a Freemason. "Why did you join Freemasonry" and "What image are you projecting?" A difficult question one we sometimes don't give enough thought to. If I were to ask you to sit and with a pencil and paper describe the image you project. What would you say about yourself? In other words, how do you want others to see you?

THE IMAGE YOU PROJECT IS YOUR LEGACY – WHAT IS YOUR LEGACY?

Most of us would like it to be said, 'He is a good guy, a good friend, and a good father/grandfather. He makes a difference. "He lives his life well" etc.

The phrase "lives life well" what does that mean? To some it may mean that you have achieved certain objectives; to others, it may mean that you are following certain moral or ethical imperatives in your life, or that you can afford to take your family on holidays.

On the other hand is it possible that you are projecting an image similar to Ebenezer Scrooge's in the classic tale, "A Christmas Carol?" What would be your reaction if you were to get a glimpse of your destiny? How do you want people to think of you? So, regardless of your religious or faith-based orientation, there is an important life lesson to be taken from this Dickens story.

In contemplating your image you should take a step back hypothetically and ask. How do I live? What have I done for others or to others? How am I able to decide right from wrong? What am I living for? Wealth? Power? Service? Longevity? Reason? Love? Faith? Family? God? Virtue? Happiness? Fulfillment? Comfort? Contentment? Integrity? These are taxing questions but for a freemason concerned about his image this should not be a difficult task, more especially if we are living our life according to the core principals and tenets of Freemasonry the most important of which is contained in the charge to a newly invested Entered Apprentice.

As a Freemason, you were charged to seriously contemplate the VSL and to regulate your life by the Divine precepts it contains. A tall order the VSL is a thick book and gives us many lessons. These can all be summed up however in the short phrase "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" The Charge further goes on instructing us to live our life practicing the four Cardinal Virtues, Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude, and Justice.

"LET PRUDENCE DIRECT YOU; TEMPERANCE CHASTEN YOU; FORTITUDE SUPPORT YOU; AND JUSTICE BE THE GUIDE OF ALL YOUR ACTIONS".

The words mean naught but prose unless you really appreciate their meaning and live them. If you were to apply more modern names you may refer to them as Wisdom, Moderation: Courage, and Justice, The Cardinal Virtues are not the sole property of Freemasonry. They are ascribed to Plato the Greek Philosopher around the century 400BC and also included in the writings of Aristotle. They were later incorporated into Christian doctrine by the Catholic Church and became the basis for Christian teaching. They were only incorporated into Masonic ritual around 1750, although you will be able to deduce from The Regius Poem (1390) the oldest Masonic Documents does not specifically name the Cardinal Virtues but adherence to the very high principals is clear.

Perhaps you are already living what can be described as a Masonic life without having to reflect on Masonic ritual, taking your inspiration from other sources. This is great and will no doubt assist you with the task at hand of writing about ourselves.

The Cardinal Virtues provide us with the yardstick we require

“LET PRUDENCE DIRECT YOU, TEMPERANCE CHASTEN YOU FORTITUDE SUPPORT YOU AND JUSTICE BE YOUR GUIDE”.

Sounds like some real good advice – So now determine how you measure up. In contemplating the Cardinal Virtues we need to apply some deep philosophy, so here goes.

Prudence: A fancy word for having common sense/being careful. Someone who thinks things through. “What is the best way for me to do the right thing?” Prudence means to make the right decisions and then to act. It teaches us to regulate our lives and actions agreeably and of reasonably. The difficult part about this, is that sometimes, we may not know until it’s too late. We should always consider all situations, prudent person learns from his mistakes. We’ve all found ourselves at one time or another saying something like, “I wish I hadn’t”, or “with hindsight I would have...” It is this realisation that gives us the insight to know for the future what the prudent course of action should be. An important element of prudence is the willingness to seek the advice of other wise or prudent people.

As an aside, for our Lodges, prudence is of the utmost importance. We must be especially prudent on proposing, scrutinising and balloting for new members, because if we are not, the results may be undesired, and irreversible.

Temperance: Temperance is the virtue of moderation and self-control especially in indulgence in pleasures Temperance is the direct opposite of the two deadly sins gluttony and lust. The chief violations against temperance are drunkenness and impurity.

Put simply temperance is about 'moderation' and 'self-control'. Exercising temperance places conditions upon our habits and passions. You have heard the saying “to tame the passions”. It frees the mind from the allurements of vice.. When we think of temperance more often than not we associate this with the consumption of alcohol but the lesson applies to us in many different areas of our lives, including tempering our language, our boastfulness our rudeness.

The temperate person asks himself how does the use of this good thing whether it be food, drink, sport, sex, study, music, company, properly express my true dignity as a rational human being? Temperance then is the virtue which enables us to control what has traditionally been called the Lustful appetite, our desire for food, drink and sex. Basically there is nothing wrong with these things but they can become crutches or escapes from our human and every day responsibilities and this is when they need to be tempered. Temperance enables us to moderate and control these desires.

Fortitude: is something pleasure seekers don't aspire to. They lack fortitude. Instead they just drift through life without wanting anything better they moan and groan when there is work to be done.

Fortitude really is that noble and steadfast purpose of mind whereby we are enabled to undergo any pain, peril, or danger, when prudently deemed expedient. Put more simply, fortitude is courage. However, as Freemasons, it is be more in the line of moral fortitude, or moral courage that we use as a beacon. As Freemasons we must have the courage to act rightly in the face of opposition, shame, scandal, or discouragement. Fortitude describes a habit of steering a middle path between foolhardiness and cowardice.

Justice: can be defined as the power or habit whereby one person renders to another that which is his rightful due. For human beings justice is perhaps the most difficult of the virtues, since it is the attitude of mind and heart which is constantly looking towards the goods or possessions of others. Justice is generally understood to mean what is right, fair, appropriate, and deserved. It requires us to render to every man his just due without distinction. Justice teaches us not to take that which is not rightly ours. It also means settling our debts both to our debtors and society. In the Old Testament Justice was seen as an "EYE FOR AN EYE" Today justice is a tempered action. Justice is achieved when an unjust act is redressed and the victim feels whole again. We often hear it referred to as closure.

Justice also means an offender is held accountable for his behaviour. If an injustice is committed it is quite acceptable to seek restitution or compensation but not seek vengeance in such a way as to harm the other party.

Justice also takes on a whole new meaning - As a Freemason you were charged when you entered the Order "to be exemplary in the discharge of your civil duties, by never proposing or countenancing anything which may disturb the peace and good order of society; by paying obedience to the laws of the State in which you reside..... and ever losing sight of the allegiance you owe to the Sovereign of your native land". That is Justice

Perhaps you are starting to get the picture. How do you measure up on the PRUDENCE / TEMPERANCE / FORTITUDE / JUSTICE scale? These are the starting points to the development of your legacy and will determine how others see you.

Your legacy is not only something that you will leave behind. Your legacy is something you build every day you live.

Listen to this poem I came across while researching this paper (I don't know the author)

*I don't want to be remembered as the guy who was good or bad at sports;
The guy who was physically strong or weak;*

The guy who was good or bad looking;

The guy who was talented at one thing but definitely not in another;

The guy who was smart or dumb or even worse, average.

I want to be remembered for the love that I gave;

For the friendships that I made;

For the caring and compassion that I showed towards others;

For the happiness that never seemed to go away

Which I shared with every person that I possibly could;

And for the faith and hope that never died inside.

A Masonic Essay By Wor. Bro Clive Herron Marine Lodge No. 627 IC, Durban South Africa

And with acknowledgement to SRA 76

DID YOU KNOW?

Question: Why must the Brethren be convinced that the Candidate has no metal about him, "or else the ceremony, thus far, must have been repeated?"

Answer. The reasons given in the "Charity Lecture" are adequate and complete. The reason for this deprivation arises from an ancient superstition of "pollution by metals" as shown in the account of the building of King Solomon's Temple. [1 Kings, 6 & 7] "...there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building." The proof or test is required, because all other points in the "preparation" of the Candidate are readily visible during the perambulations, but the absence of metals would not be visible, hence the special test.

The Knife and Fork Degree

by A. J. Disbrow

I don't attend the meetings,
for I've not the time to spare.
But every time they have a feast,
you'll surely find me there.
I cannot help with the degrees,
for I do not know the work.
But I can applaud the speaker,
and handle a knife and fork.
I'm so rusty in the ritual,
that it seems like Greek to me,
But practice has made me perfect,
in the Knife and Fork degree.

Rays of Masonry

"What Masonry must Preserve"

It is well to pause at times and ask ourselves the question: "Whence arises my love for Freemasonry?" Does my enthusiasm arise from the devotion to a name, an institution, or does it come from the desire to understand the great principles and teachings, truths which stand today as they have stood since creation?

Institutions have grown big and powerful only to lose sight of their original purposes. Numerical values have been the goal of these institutions; they have branched out in their various ramifications and have become arrogant because of that power figured in numbers. Their political influence far exceeds their spiritual influence. The most heinous crimes have been committed by religious zealots. The history of persecutions throughout the ages is the story of religious intolerance.

The design of Masonry is to develop individuality, individual thought, so that men may concentrate on the substance and not the shadow. The work of Masonry is to preserve, not cold edicts, not idle claims to infallibility, but those things which insure to posterity rights that are God-given, and which can only be preserved in the hearts of all mankind.

Masonry is the agency for the preservation of all that is worthy to be preserved. If principles are preserved the agency need not be concerned about its place in the future.

Dewey Wollstein 1953.

Did You Know?

Question: 'What is the symbolism of the Rough Ashlar and the Perfect Ashlar?'

Answer: The more or less official symbolism of the Ashlars says that the Rough Ashlar is for the Entered Apprentice to work on, and the Perfect Ashlar is for the use of experienced Craftsmen when they test or adjust their tools.

But symbolism in Freemasonry is a very personal matter, and I believe that we enter the Craft to build spiritual Temples within ourselves. For me the Ashlars are our symbolic foundation stones. In English practice, the Candidate is placed in the North East part of the Lodge [where the Rough Ashlar rested in former times] and he stands at his own spiritual foundation stone, to hear the Charity Lecture, one of the great lessons of Freemasonry. In the Second Degree, he stands in the South East corner, for a similar exhortation. Broadly, I equate the two stones with the Candidate, upon his entry and progress in the Craft. He comes, in rough, unpolished condition, unaware of what the Craft holds for him, and ignorant of its teachings. Later, the polished stone marks his progress in the Craft and his greater understanding of its objects, duties and responsibilities. I should add that the Ashlars belong to an era when there were only two Degrees [Entered Apprentice and Master or Fellow Craft], and this may explain why the Perfect Ashlar, representing the peak of Masonic experience, comes in the second Degree. Finally, there are my own personal views and I

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The Old Past Master— ATTENDANCE

"There are a lot of Masons in this old lodge tonight" began the Old Past Master. "See the new faces? Must be most two hundred. Pretty good attendance, what?"

"But is it a good attendance?" asked the Very New Mason. "Why, there must be six hundred members on the rolls. Seems a pity they can't all get out to enjoy this kind of an evening, doesn't it? Seems to me Masonry fails when she has so many on the rolls who don't come regularly to lodge."

"I don't agree with you!" answered the Old Past Master. "Masonry succeeds because she gets so many of her members to take an interest! True, she might...if she were a wizard... so interest every one of her devotees that all would crowd the lodge room every meeting night. Then, I think, there would be no use for Masonry, because the millennium would have come. But in place of being discouraged because only a third or a fourth of our members attend, I am always highly encouraged because so many do attend.

"You see, my brother, Masons are picked from the general body of men by two processes, and neither one of them works out for the very best interests of the Order. The first process is a man's making up his mind he wants to be a Mason. If we could go to the best men and ask them, we would get a lot better men than we do, of course. Equally, of course, we would vastly injure the Order by making it seek the man instead of the man seek its gentle philosophy. I wouldn't change that unwritten law for anything, but the fact remains that as the first selection of Masons is made by the profane, it isn't always for the best interests of the Order.

"The second selective work is done by committee. Now in theory every one appointed on a committee to examine a member is a sort of cross between a criminal lawyer, an experienced detective, a minister of the gospel, a super-perfect man, a well read Mason and an Abraham Lincoln for judgment!

"But as a matter of fact most committeemen are just average men like you and me, and we do our work on committees in just an average sort of way, with the result that many a self-selected candidate slips into our ranks who has no real reason for being there. The theory is that all men become Masons because of a veneration of our principles. The fact is that a lot become Masons because their brother is one, or their boss is one, or they want to wear a pin and be a secret society member, or they hope it will help them in business.

"They get into the lodge and find it quite different from what they expect. They learn that they can't pass out business cards, that it doesn't help them because the boss belongs, and that they don't have to come to lodge to wear a pin. If they are the kind of men to whom Masonry doesn't appeal because of her truth, her philosophy, her Light, her aid in living, they wander away. They become mere dues-payers, and often, stomach Masons, who come around for the feed or entertainment.

"Don't let it distress you. It takes all sorts of people to make a world and it would be a very stupid place indeed if we were all alike. There is room in the world for the man who doesn't care for Masonry. He has his part to play in the world as well as the man to whom Masonry makes great appeal. Do not condemn him because he has become a member of the fraternity and found it not to his liking. At least there is something in his heart which was not there before.

"And let me tell you something, my brother. There are many, many men who become Masons, in the sense that they join a lodge and pay dues, although they never attend, who do good Masonic work. There is Filby, for instance. Filby has been a member of this lodge twenty years and has never been in it, to my knowledge, since the day he was raised. I don't know why. I rather think he was frightened, and showed it, and has been afraid of being laughed at, now that he knows there was nothing to be frightened about. But there was never need for money that Filby didn't contribute; there was never a committee appointed to work on the Masonic Home that Filby didn't head. There was never any work to be done outside the lodge that Filby didn't try to help do it. He is a good Mason, even if he doesn't attend lodge.

"And there are lots of young men who join the fraternity and neglect their lodge in early years, who turn their hearts towards it in later years; boys who are too fond of girls and dances and good times to spend a moment in serious thought while they are just in the puppy age, who grow up finally to become thoughtful men, turning their hearts toward the noble teachings of this fraternity and becoming most ardent lodge members and attendees.

"Oh, no, my brother, never weep because we have but a portion of our membership at a meeting. Be glad we have so many; be happy that those who come, come so regularly and enthusiastically, be proud that there is such a large number of men content to sit through the same degrees year after year to learn what they can, let sink deeper the hidden beauties of the story, absorb a little more of that secret doctrine which lies behind the words of the ritual.

"Masonry is not for yesterday, for today, for tomorrow alone. She is for all the ages to come. The Temple Not Built With Hands cannot be built alone by you and me, nor in a day, nor yet a century. And remember that the stone rejected by the builder was finally found the most necessary of them all. Perhaps the man who doesn't come now to lodge may be the most earnest and powerful Mason of tomorrow. Only the Great Architect knows. Masonry is His work. Be content to let it be done His way."

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Thought for the day—Brother, I, too, own a television set, but that does not keep me at home on lodge night. I have never yet had one of the characters on television come off the screen and shake my hand. They have never offered me the warm friendship that my lodge brothers do. They have never handed me a cup of coffee or a doughnut. No! Never!

The Fable of the Four Men!

I got off a bus this morning, and being in no hurry, I began philosophizing on the actions and probable character of three men who had alighted just ahead of me.

The first one was even then half-way down the block and was going with such rapid strides that he had already put a hundred yards between himself and the next man. "There," I moralized, "goes a hustler - a man who's bound to succeed in life."

The second man was walking slowly and picking his way carefully. He impressed me as one who would do fairly well in the world, but would do better if he had more of the other fellow's pep.

But the last chap was just dawdling along in the most shiftless sort of way. I very quickly set him down as a loafer and ne'er-do-well.

Just then a most disconcerting thought flashed into my brain: All three were ahead of me!

The Brotherhood Journal. 1921.

News from the South

Lodge Birthdays

Charles Kleiman 26 (J)

Work is well in hand in preparation for the inaugural meeting of the LOD Chapter with a goodly number of visitors from New Zealand and Fiji.

Meanwhile those in blue are preparing for another excellent ritual of *Installation*.

THE HANDSHAKE.....

The Handshake is one of the most powerful gestures between people. In business it symbolizes closure, affirmation and a contract. It also symbolizes warmth, friendship, trust, and honour. Members of the Masonic fraternity have stretched forth their hands to all men, using the handshake as an act of brotherly love, relief, truth and a general concern for others. The purpose of Freemasonry is quite simple; to strengthen character, promote respect for others and to help those in need.



Humour

PHYLISS DILLERISMS

Whatever you may look like, marry a man your own age. As your beauty fades, so will his eyesight.

Housework can't kill you, but why take a chance?

Cleaning your house while your kids are still growing up is like shoveling the sidewalk before it stops snowing.

The reason women don't play football is because 11 of them would never wear the same outfit in public.

Best way to get rid of kitchen odours: Eat out.

A bachelor is a guy who never made the same mistake once.

I want my children to have all the things I couldn't afford. Then I want to move in with them.

Most children threaten at times to run away from home. This is the only thing that keeps some parents going.

Any time three New Yorkers get into a cab without an argument, a bank has just been robbed.

We spend the first twelve months of our children's lives teaching them to walk and talk and the next twelve years telling them to sit down and shut up.

Burt Reynolds once asked me out. I was in his room.

What I don't like about office Christmas parties is looking for a job the next day.

The only time I ever enjoyed ironing was the day I accidentally got gin in the steam iron.

His finest hour lasted a minute and a half.

Old age is when the liver spots show through your gloves.

My photographs don't do me justice -they just look like me.

I admit, I have a tremendous sex drive. My boyfriend lives forty miles away.

Tranquillisers work only if you follow the advice on the bottle - keep away from children.

I asked the waiter, 'Is this milk fresh?' He said, 'Lady, three hours ago it was grass.'

The reason the golf pro tells you to keep your head down is so you can't see him laughing.

You know you're old if they have discontinued your blood type.