

The District Light

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What Light?

The theme of 'light' is well-known in masonry, but is worth reviewing.



Our District deputy Grand Master, R.W.Bro. Tom McClellan, has chosen "To The Light" for his motto and guiding principal this year. He has spoken on this topic at several of the Official Visits. Here are a few of his thoughts on the subject:

To me, masonry is first and foremost about personal growth, or 'coming to see the light'.

At our initiation, the greatest revelation for each of us occurs after we declare that the predominant wish of our hearts is Light.

To me, that moment is all about leaving behind the darkness of ignorance and selfishness and moving forward into the light of the three great principals of Truth, Brotherly Love, and Service, also known as Relief.

Masonic light comes to us as we listen to the messages in the lectures, as we emulate those we respect, and as we begin to understand and appreciate the underlying spirit of masonry.



Thus, we seem to be responsible for our own enlightenment. Could we have a more direct path?

The lodge should be more than a place of business and degrees. It should be a forum for real instruction and study of the features that make our Order unique.

The brethren must encourage (demand) programs which educate them about the many facets of the masonic experience.

And How do We Do That?

Some lodges have mentors for the newest members and occasionally some masonic education is presented. But we want and need more.



"Take some more tea," the March Hare said to Alice, very earnestly.

"I've had nothing yet," Alice replied in an offended tone, "so I can't take more."

"You mean you can't take LESS," said the Hatter: "it's very easy to take MORE than nothing."

Initiation Revisited

One major purpose of a lodge is to initiate and advance candidates through the degrees. That is an excellent medium by which to give more light. The man is ready to learn and open to new ideas.

Initiation into any group is memorable. In almost every culture, the initiate knows what will be expected of him as he faces the trials by which he will prove his worth.

Masonry is a rare case in which the candidate enters blind, both literally and figuratively. The man is kept in the dark so he is unprepared for the ceremony, and thus unlikely to fully understand the significances of the acts or words that he experiences.

He is nervous and cautious, anxious about what might befall him. We should do more to prepare the candidate to benefit from his journey.

Initiation: Reconsidered, Revised

An excellent topic for discussion is “what can we do to make the candidate’s experience more meaningful?”

Wouldn’t it be a good idea to tell him why he is removing worldly goods? Or why we ask him to be clothed as he is? Or to prepare him to answer a few of the questions such as “Are you ready to . . .”

The expression, “you knocked and the door was opened” would be more meaningful if we had the candidate do the knocking.

A review of the ceremony by the brethren in lodge could refresh their memories and lead to a better experience for the next new mason.

R.W.Bro. Tom McClellan gave this explanation about one part of the initiation:

When we are made an Entered Apprentice Mason, each one was told to “rise, newly-obligated brother among masons,” symbolizing the elevating of the man morally, ethically, and spiritually.

Just as when we rise by climbing a hill or ascending a mountain, exposing ourselves to greater light (gaining a broader view of the world and our personal role in the grand scheme of things), so too our perception changes when we are lifted up above the concerns of our daily existence by the masonic degrees and their teachings.

Initiation Continues

One last thought: initiation goes on.

By way of the first degree a man is introduced to the society of masons, but he must then prove himself adept and continue the process.

True initiation takes all three degrees. Each has its lessons and insights to impart.

Some topics for discussion in lodge:

- Consider the import of the sets of working tools central to each degree.
- In what ways do the rough and perfect ashlar relate to our lives?
- In what ways are the degrees a spiritual journey?



Relevant Quotes:

In the obligation of the Masonic degrees there are things a Mason promises to do, and not to do. The don’ts are more important than the do’s. The don’ts prevent us from making grievous errors, while the do’s guide us down a path of proper conduct.

No one can be made a Mason passively, by communication; he must observe the degrees as a participant to achieve enlightenment.

Opportunities to Visit

Those who went to any of the Official Visits know the value gained by witnessing such events. Attending installations is another way to observe good work and maybe be inspired to bring back some new ideas to your own lodge.

On Wednesday, December 5, King Edward VII will hold the first of a series of district installations. A special guest will be R.W.Bro. Donald A. Campbell, the Deputy Grand Master for Ontario. This is a good time to meet the man.

Other installations:

- Dec 10 Merritt 168
- Dec 11 St Marks 105
- Dec 13 Clifton 254
- Dec 13 Copestone 373
- Dec 18 Myrtle 337 (8:00)

During each evening you will meet the men who will guide their lodges for the coming year.

And each lodge will welcome you and feed you.

Other Events

Dominion Lodge in Fort Erie has extended an invitation to all to join them for their Christmas Party following their meeting on Thursday, Dec. 6.

If your lodge has an event planned, inform John Newton so that he can post it on the district web site. 905-994-9444 or newt27@gmail.com

And tell this editor at bhodwitz@gmail.com

