

## Freemasonry & its Principles & Value

The first requirement that Masonry demands from a candidate for its mysteries & privileges is a declaration of his faith in God. Without this, in our own country at least, no man can become a Freemason. Following this declaration of faith, there is enjoined upon him the sacred duty of translating into the actual affairs of life those three great Principles on which the order is founded. Brotherly Love, Relief & Truth. An uninitiated man may regard himself as a little unit in the great human family, but when he enters the portals of Freemasonry & comes into living touch with its Principles, it is marvellous how quickly he realizes his capabilities & obligations as a member of regular organized society. It is impossible to exaggerate the value of a Freemason's Lodge in forming a true estimate of life in its manifold relationships. It is a place where inequalities perish in a sense of Brotherhood, beneath its banner men of different races & creeds, men of worldly wealth & men without riches, men of prominence in the high walks of life & men of ordinary social attainments meet in unity as brothers, being bound together by the common ties of initiation.



Freemasonry is more than a system of forms & ceremonies  
it involves the practice of its teaching in daily life. It helps  
to link men to G. A. U. & proclaims the meaning of life. It  
teaches equality & aims to establish a fraternity amongst men.  
By its ideals & principles it seeks to make a better world  
& a happier social order, for in Freemasonry this is that  
community of interest which makes for the general welfare of  
the race. It places in the foreground of its tenets not  
brotherhood alone but virtue, honour & mercy. It encourages  
men to be kindly disposed, loyal & honourable to each other  
& insists that brotherly love, peace & truth should be applied  
to all the experiences of common life. With this wider distribution  
of knowledge, we cannot seriously see fellowship in Freemasonry  
without being impressed with the wealth of its symbolism, the  
magnitude of its fraternity & the value of its teaching. Its common  
principles are love for G. A. U., love of country, respect for law &  
order & love for each other. These are among the great  
principles of Freemasonry. In all lands & among all races  
of civilized peoples Masonry is holding together vast multitudes  
of men who are pledged to those principles which tend to  
elevate character & promote brotherhood by inculcating  
justice, equity & charity. Built upon such sure foundations,  
older & more universal than any other existing fraternity it  
makes for liberty, friendship & benevolence.



Its members are taught always to look towards that light that  
leadeth into the realms of purity peace & usefulness by stressing  
the value of social virtues & upright conduct in all relationships  
of life. It creates a true sense of the relations between man & man  
to quote one instant what can be more beautiful than the teaching  
concerning our brethren who have been overtaken by circumstances  
of unavoidable calamity & misfortune. It is this bigger, broader  
sympathy which Freemasonry inspires & unites us all in the  
noble arts & science of the Craft

Every entrant into Freemasonry is impressed on the occasion  
of his initiation that, no institution can boast a more  
solid foundation than that ~~upon~~ <sup>on</sup> which Freemasonry rests  
the practice of every moral & social virtue. Without doubt  
we are living in a <sup>difficult</sup> new age... & indeed it is practically a  
new age & everywhere thoughtful men are alive to its value  
Old institutions old methods & old forms of procedure are  
being subjected to the closest scrutiny. Only those which  
are built upon principles of solid foundation like Freemasonry  
are likely to stand the test

Opportunities to make the best use of life are found in  
Masonry. Its foundation is so broad & firm that if rightly  
understood it cannot do otherwise than win to the service  
of humanity men who come under its spell. From beginning  
to end Masonry is shot through & through with the principles  
of <sup>good</sup> morality & social virtue & as these principles grip the  
hearts of sincere men gathered together from all walks &



occupations of life, they will eventually feel that they 4  
are bound together by a common tie. This explains how  
Masonry fosters in its members the qualities of self-reliance  
& self-help, qualities which will enable men to stand alone  
without attempting to invade the rights & claims of others.

The practice of every moral & social virtue, is required of all men  
of this world is to be what it was intended to be. Such virtues  
must be practiced. For brotherliness between man & man, the practice  
of noble ideals in all relationships, an unswerving reverence for  
human life, & a hearty co-operation in matters pertaining to  
social service, are not only foundations upon which social life is  
built, but they are the very essentials of Masonry.

It will be found that Masonry, when properly understood &  
interpreted, lays itself out to serve man regardless of race, rank or  
creed. Its main desire is to see that no man is denied the  
full inheritance of humanity. But Masonry can only achieve  
its full purpose when every member of the Craft realizes that  
he must express its principles & tenets in actual life.

The teaching of Masonry urges men to <sup>be careful to</sup> perform their allotted task  
while it is yet day, never to betray their trust, always to practice  
outside the lodge the truths they have been taught within it,  
& on all occasions to let their life be the embodiment & expression  
of the principles to which they have solemnly vowed their  
allegiance. Masonry has an abiding foundation. Its adherents  
therefore must be loyal & true. On such foundation we can  
individually raise a superstructure, perfect in its parts  
& honorable to the builder.



The Spirit of Freemasonry is not easy to define. Its disclosures are best discovered in action & service. The ideas behind it are as wonderful in their simplicity as in their sublimity but they become more luminous & intelligible when the rich & wonderful ritual of the Order is intelligently conceived.

The ritual is rich in lights & shadows & mysteries & it has a remarkable power in preserving the identity of the Fraternity & cementing its members in its universal fellowship.

One of the great features of Freemasonry is its symbolism. Symbols were the first means of expressing the thoughts of mankind. They possess remarkable mystery & depth & may be used to conceal as well as reveal. All truly great things speak to us through symbols. For example the deep meaning of love, friendship, patriotism & religion can be expressed only symbolically. Such language is more universal than speech; & Freemasonry has become a world-wide institution because its ritual is largely an assemblage of symbols. This symbolism is one of the glories of the Craft & the more we penetrate the mystic lore & find its hidden treasures, the more wonderful will it become to us.

The spirit, Principles, & Symbolism of Freemasonry date back to the early ages, though its organized form as we know it, came into existence only about two centuries ago. It has <sup>been</sup> fittingly described as an order which has ~~been~~ its centre everywhere & its circumference ~~now~~ nowhere. In all lands it has established itself & it embraces all classes of men, diverse in social status, politics & creed. Men of all faces, colours & tongues have become Masons & the tie that binds them together grows stronger every year.

Ours is a wonderfully great heritage. Let us value it. Masonry is as full of good as the lofty northern peaks are of snow in winter. The glad song of its teachings is



<sup>Music</sup>  
 - sweet to all who catch its spirit. It has still a great  
 work to do by revealing the value of Charity & inculcating  
 principles that will nurture the soul, enlarge the mind  
 & promote universal fellowship. In the temple of  
 Masonry we become dwellers for all time & we find it  
 a veritable palace of precious & increasing friendships.

We are blind until we see, that in the human plan  
 nothing is worth the making, if it does not make the man.  
 Why build these cities glorious, if man unbuilded goes  
 In vain we build the work, unless the builder also grows.

There is a destiny that makes us Brothers  
 None goes his way alone. All we send into the lives  
 of others  
 Comes back into our own.

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