

The Lodge of St. Francis, No. 4899 on Monday 9th January 1933.

This paper was first given at Godson Lodge, on past masters' night in November 1932 when about eighty brethren were present. I propose to repeat it almost word for word, but in addition, and at request of Godson brethren, there is now a summary that will occupy about five minutes. My belief is that the summary is both useful and necessary.

I wish, most particularly, to direct the attention of the brethren to the fact that masonry is full of symbolism. We are told at a very early stage in our career that it is "a peculiar system of morality etc". As a general thing we do not progress far beyond the working tools and some of our ornaments; and it's time to go to sleep or even to die before we have made more than a nodding acquaintance with one-tenth part of our symbolism and moralising. To refer to the spiritual side of masonry is to receive the "fishy" eye: and one is almost reminded of the fate of the youngster who asked his richer pal to hand over a share of an apple, or alternatively to give him the core. You may remember the answer, "There ain't goin' to be no core." Well, there was a core, but it went the same way as the remainder of the apple, and was thus lost to the unfortunate boy. There is a hidden meaning, both moral and spiritual, behind every tiny detail of our ritual, and we must not lose it. That is our great secret - and mystery, and it is up to us to knock, to seek, and to ask. The ancient Jews had ritual in abundance, both inside and outside the Temple. They knew every line of it - they lived every dead word of it -

but how few of them, outside the prophets, seers, and great teachers, broke through the veil to the spiritual meaning - the only part that really mattered. They were plainly told "These ye ought to have done - but not to leave the other undone;" and incidentally those words are for us, also, in connection with our masonic ritual and teaching, and in our daily lives.

I do hope that this wholly uninspired and very ragged writing may awaken in us all a desire for more. I have endeavoured to keep to simple thoughts and simple words, freely admitting my own inward blindness, yet conscious of the fact that there is light allaround us if we can but have our eyes opened. To change the metaphor, let us dig, let us dig together. Truth is at the bottom of the well, but the well has got choked through neglect - hence the need to dig all together. Our efforts in this direction are now backed up by a suggestion and request from Provincial Grand Lodge.

Copyright  
 Library and Museum Trust

Extract from pages 6 and 7 of

"The Masonic Why and Wherefore".

-----

But the sacrifice God requires is a contrite heart, and seeing that this degree symbolises the spiritual rebirth of the aspirant towards the Light, we may interpret this perambulation with the c.t. round his n.k as indicating that he is prepared to sacrifice his old life so as to gain a new and higher one. Neither can we ignore a secondary, but equally important, meaning. We are captives, bound by the chains of the flesh, and offenders against the law, coming in bondage to sin, but seeking to be freed from our bonds by the word of God.

Copyright Worcestershire Masonic  
Library and Museum Trust