

CHARGE

My Brother, a few moments ago, over there behind the altar when you were raised from a dead level to a living perpendicular you became, theoretically speaking, a Master Mason. Whether or not you will become one in reality rests entirely within yourself. You were deemed honest in your expressed desire to be made a Mason, and I earnestly urge that you prove to the fraternity that they were not mistaken in their judgement and have not erred in admitting you into this ancient and honorable Order of ours.

It might be well at this time to ask yourself what it is to be a Mason. Do you think that a membership in a Masonic Lodge will make you a Mason? If you have a proper conception of the Order, you will admit that it does in name only. A membership in a Masonic Lodge can no more make you a Mason than a membership in a musical club can make you a musician. However, it is quite apparent that if you have a proper inclination and a natural talent, in such a membership you will have a helpful stimulus among congenial and kindred spirits. So it is in Masonry and the Masonic Lodge.

It is the involuntary thoughts of your heart and the voluntary acts of your life that determine your character as a man and a Mason.

Masonically speaking, men are divided into four classes: first, those who are not Masons either in name or by nature; second, those who are Masons in name only; third, those who are Masons by nature; and fourth, those who are Masons both in name and by nature. In this class you will find God's noblemen, and if I could not be numbered with them, I would rather be a Mason by nature--that is in my heart--than a Mason in name only.

In passing through the Degrees, the practice of many commendable virtues was impressed upon you. Perhaps only a few of them may be recalled at this time, and there are far too many to reiterate now, but I would like to sum them all up by reminding you of one symbol in the First Degree--that of a point within a circle. You were told that this point represented an individual person-- That is you. The circle--the boundary line of your duties--is clearly defined for you in the sacred scriptures and elucidated by the patron saints of Masonry and if you keep yourself thus circumscribed, it will be impossible that you should materially err.

Your virtue, honor and reputation are concerned in supporting with dignity the character you now bear. Let no motive make you swerve from your duty, violate your vows or betray your trust, but be true and faithful and emulate the example of that celebrated artist whom you, this evening, have represented: then you will have rendered yourself deserving of the honor we have conferred and will merit the confidence that we have reposed.

Finally, my brother, I congratulate you, and may the Supreme Architect of the Universe guide, guard, and protect you throughout your life and endue you with a competency of His divine wisdom so that by the secrets of our arts you may be better able to display the beauties of brotherly love, relief, and truth.

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