

The Perfect Points and Something Else to Think About.....

In the ritual of our Entered Apprentice degree the question is asked, “How do I know you to be a Mason?” The answer given is “by certain signs, tokens, a word, and the perfect points of my entrance”. Well, the signs, tokens, and words are how we identify one another as Masons. The “perfect points of my entrance” are then explained to the Apprentice, but I would like to offer a different perspective. We’re going to think outside the box just a bit. These ‘perfect points’ of our entrance go beyond the lodge, chapter, council, asylum, consistory, or shrine center. The perfect points of your entrance are what truly show you to be a Mason.....to everyone outside of our great fraternity.

It is the perfect point of your entrance when you go into work on Monday, put aside all the ‘stuff’ from the work-a-day world and be thankful to have a job where you’re enabled able to support yourself and your family. To be honest, recently I’ve had a lot of trouble with that on most Monday’s,...,and some Tuesday’s, and a Wednesday or two. But I know it’s just the minutia of my job. It’s not a perfect point for me yet, but I’m working on it!

It’s the perfect point of your entrance to go to Church on Sunday or Temple on Saturday, there to truly worship God, and not just to be seen going through the motions. To thank Him for his Fatherhood, and ask Him to help you to be a better man. I have to do that every day...how about you?

It is the perfect point of your entrance when you enter the voting booth, as a well informed citizen. Or perhaps it’s when you proudly stand at attention when ‘Old Glory’ passes by, and your eyes well up with tears, because you are a true and thankful, patriotic American.

It’s the perfect point of your entrance, going home after a hard day’s work, there to serve and spend time with your family, to love your wife, and educate your children or grandchildren, and realize that even the love you have for Masonry can’t hold a candle to the love you have for them.

They are the perfect points of your entrance into a hospital or nursing home to visit a forgotten brother or widow, or maybe even your own family member who you may have neglected.

And yes, it’s the perfect point of your entrance when you go to Lodge and put aside petty differences and quarrels in the name of brotherhood. These perfect points of your entrance are how I will know you are a Brother Mason, and how you will know you are one, to yourself.

I take my Masonic oaths and charges very seriously, as I'm sure you do. As I worked my way toward the East over 30 years ago, the officer's manual I was given by Rt. Worshipful Bill Roper, Jr., included the candidate charges from each degree. They were highlighted in yellow, each one with a scribbled note in Rt. Wor. Bill's own handwriting that reminded me of these important "things to look to".

Because you see brethren, while it is important to our continued existence that we recruit new members, it is more important that we recruit new Brothers. We don't just need more members in Masonry; we need more Masonry in its members. Those charges given at the end of each degree don't tell us how to go out and bring in more petitions, but they *do* tell us how to act if we want good men to join with us. If we don't act as Masons in our everyday lives, the order is already dead.

My brethren, in that same Entered Apprentice ritual we are also asked, "Where were you first prepared to be made a Mason?" The answer, of course is... "in my heart". This is where everyday we must continue to prepare ourselves to be Freemasons. It's not the destination of becoming a Mason that's most important.....it's the journey you travel to get there, and the path you continue to trod toward being a better man. No outward symbol, no apron or ring, no jewel of silver or gold, no cornucopia, square, or level proves us to be a Mason. It's the way we act that will tell the world we are Masons.....*if* those actions are first prepared in your heart.

I believe most, if not all of us have had the experience of hearing someone comment on the positive or negative aspects of an organization based solely on the fact that "they know someone" within that organization. Our individual behavior as members of the Masonic community does have a direct and lasting impact on what opinions the general public holds about Freemasonry.

So, I leave you with this rather personal thought. Hopefully, way down the road, long after they have finished my Masonic funeral service.....no one will really care how many honors I may have been given. No one will care that I devoted many hours to researching Masonic Education topics or that I worked very hard to become a decent ritualist. No one will care how many Masonic degrees I collected along the way, but a small part of the world will know if I made a DIFFERENCE!

Depending on whether the impression I leave behind is positive or negative, it could ultimately determine if Masonry gets credit, or the blame. Brethren, the challenge is ours! Let's work at making our daily lives reflect the principles of Masonry...the perfect points of our entrance. We need to live like Freemasons every day....'it's something to think about'!