

## **A Magic Chest full of Treasure.**

Good Evening my brethren, tonight my brief talk will provide you all with a gift. A magical chest that will provide you with a great treasure. How many of you as kids played adventure games where you built a pillow, couch or even a tree fort. Or were pirates on the quest for a treasure chest buried in some mysterious location marked by an “X”? While many of us have grown out of some of those games of imagination, we can still go on that adventure and get a real treasure as our prize. Those forts or strongholds were designed to protect us from the bad things in life and keep them outside and away from us.

The focus of this month is the cardinal virtue of Fortitude, and while it is not a physical building, it demonstrates the same type of strength but as it applies to our character. Just like the physical forts withstood assaults from enemy forces and protected those dwelling within, so too does our Fortitude provide us the strength to withstand temptation and bear suffering in silence. It allows us to continue to perform our duties even in the face of adversity.

We all started on an adventure when we knocked on that door and learned the mysteries of Freemasonry. During those degrees we had the best example of Fortitude in the widow’s son, who even though he was assaulted, in danger and extreme pain, held fast and did not reveal that which was eventually lost. While we may not face the same extreme situations, we should remember this lesson when faced with those who do not understand or disagree with our viewpoints or organization. We must exhibit Fortitude in adhering to the Charges placed upon us during each degree and not respond to negativity, criticism or confusion in a like manner. By maintaining the strength of mind to respond appropriately and also maintain our secrets, we ensure the best possible future for our organization.

I am sure you have all hear the idiom “Cross my heart and hope to die” while this is not part of our masonic obligation, if you perform this action you will find the treasure I promised you at the beginning. When you cross your heart, you will find it is in a magical chest, the chest of a just and upright Mason and the treasure is the Fortitude to do what is right no matter what. The best thing about this treasure is the more you share or give it away, the more valuable it becomes. My hope is that you will all be rich men from sharing your treasure throughout your several stations in life. Thank You.



***‘The Winding Staircase – Further steps on the path to improving yourself in Masonry’***

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