

What better than ninets? Tenets.

We know that the three main tenets of Freemasonry are Friendship, Morality and Brotherly love. I stress main because there are many other tenets by which we live our lives. The definition of tenet is that of a principle or belief especially one of the main principles of a religion or a philosophy. While masonry isn't a religion and is not inherently religious, one could say that it is a philosophy which guides us to be better men as we strive to become that perfect ashlar to be laid into our place in the spiritual building when the time comes.

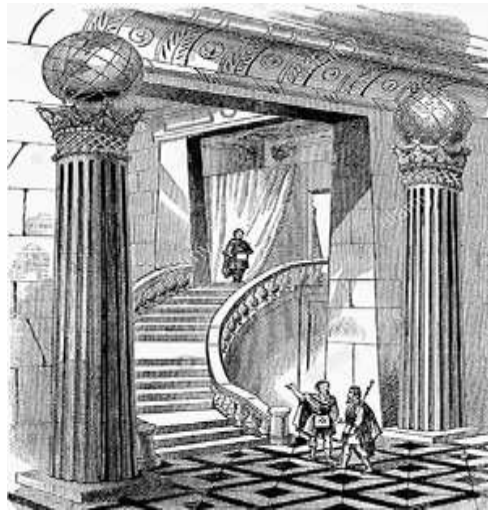
Let's dive a little deeper though, since we all may define each of these items differently.

Friendship in its simplest form is a state of mutual trust and support. In this sense just by joining our Fraternity we are all friends as there is an implied trust from the candidate during the degrees as he is conducted as well as the implied trust of the lodge that voted him to receive the degrees in the first place. But true friendships take time to build and strengthen over time. After being raised we reach a different level of friendship that establishes a connection between people that lets them openly share thoughts and feelings without concern of losing the relationship. A friend is someone you feel like you can tell anything to, for masons its defined as one of the five points of fellowship. This principle truly does extend further as we have friendships that have been built outside of masonry. How many of those friends are potential candidates?

To the Greeks we are indebted for Brotherly love. It is taken from the Greek word Philadelphia which translates to love of brothers. I know Wor. Jim is a fan of this one. It really means the love of ones fellow man as a brother. This expands upon friendship, as now every human being that has a claim upon our kind offices does so as an extended family. While like all families and brothers, we may not always see eye to eye and get along perfectly, at the end of the day family should take care of one another regardless of differences. That is what this tenet exemplifies to me. We may disagree about a topic be it religion, sports, politics, or something else, but ultimately we still get together for the holidays, special events and social intercourse even with those differences. I encourage us all to keep this tenet strongly in the forefront of our hearts and consciences during the times of unrest we see occurring and remember to care for our fellow man accordingly. If we as masons exemplify and demonstrate this tenet, others can learn by our example and mimic it until the family squabbles are over and we sit down to Sunday dinner.

The last tenet for reflection is that of morality. And it is subject to much debate, not as to its definition, but each individuals interpretation of its definition. The various definitions of Morality can be summed up as the principles concerning the distinction between right and wrong, good and bad, proper and improper actions or behaviors. Therein lies the problem as each person makes many of these decisions for themselves. What may be right for some, may be wrong to others, and while some organizations have some structure about what is right and wrong for those who are members.

They are not all encompassing and allow for much individual flexibility. When considering this tenet both as men and masons, I suggest you consider your actions against the working tools of our craft, specifically the square of virtue and the compasses that provide us due bounds to work within. Make your moral choices based on the fact of if the situation were reversed and instead of being the actor you were the audience, would it be acceptable to you. Morality will forever be a challenge since each situation can viewed differently by each individual viewer or participant. Let us as Masons strive to have our actions viewed with positive reflection as we incorporate this tenet with the other two and build trust and care for our fellow man.



'The Winding Staircase - A path to improving yourself in Masonry'

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