



Nugget

Distinguishing characteristics of a Freemason

Index

Characteristics of a Freemason - Virtue, Honour and Mercy

Summary

The Characteristics of a 'Good Freemason', Virtue, Honour and Mercy as described in the Lectures.

Keywords

First-Degree, Virtue, Honour, Mercy

The distinguishing characteristics of a good Freemason

In an unusually direct section of the lectures, we are told of those excellencies of character we should possess.

Virtue demands the application of reason at its highest level. It requires integrity and harmony, and for you to spread your affection appropriately among those to whom it is due; it is reflected in the health, strength and beauty of your personality and soul. The perfection of Virtue is achieved when the force of conscience instinctively makes you respond in the way that reason, at its best, would have dictated. Remember and act within the boundaries determined by the Four Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude and Justice. Be especially careful to maintain in their fullest splendour those truly Masonic ornaments: Benevolence and Charity. Happy is the man, who has sown in his breast the seeds of Benevolence; he does not envy his neighbour; does not believe in casual and unpleasant gossip; is able to forgive those who have caused him injury; and does not bear a grudge for the injuries he has suffered. Charity is born of Benevolence, whose seeds we should allow to germinate in our hearts and tend throughout life, so that they may flourish and blossom. Every approach to these high standards is a step towards the perfection of Virtue, and along the path of happiness; but any deviation therefrom will send us along the path of sadness.

Honour is the consequence and extension of Virtue. It is the true foundation on which we build our trust in one another. It implies a combination of our natural feelings for Virtue, Truth and Justice. I am sure that, as true men of honour, you will not will not be satisfied simply by carrying out your duties as a man and a citizen, but will go further, to the benefit of your fellow creatures. By way of illustrations: you may choose to give, when you might with propriety refuse; and to forgive, when you might with justice resent. The whole of your conduct ought to be guided by the noblest sentiments of your incorruptible heart.

Mercy is a refined virtue: it is the companion of true honour, and able to moderate the harshness sometimes demanded by Justice. Consider the showers of springtime, which fall on the earth to refresh and invigorate the growing plants: so mercy, acting on the heart, purifies and refreshes the spirit. It is an especial attribute of God, on which the best and wisest of us must rely. For when this mortal life is over and we are called to account for our actions, we must surely trust in His Justice and His Mercy.

Virtue, Honour and Mercy distinguish a good Freemason, and may they ever be found residing in your breast.

##END##

Recommended use of Nuggets

Nuggets offer a short, simple and readily absorbed means of progressing Masonic knowledge and an easy way to introduce learning to Lodges and Chapters. It is hoped that they will become a regular feature of Lodge and Chapter meetings as well as a source for private-study.

Nuggets can be included as an item in the summons and read at most Lodge/Chapter meetings. They can be:

- Read by either a new or an experienced Mason with the minimum of preparation and practice; *though ideally, they need to be read a few times beforehand.*
- Themed with the meeting or activity.
- Used to initiate a discussion within a Lodge/Chapter, LOI/COI, or group.
- Read at home and shared as a topic for a future discussion.
- Used as a focus for an unplanned, informal discussion.

For further nuggets and other learning materials visit 'Solomon' at <http://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

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