



PAPER

In Whom Do You Put Your Trust?

Summary: The question ‘In whom do you put your trust?’ is explored within the context of Freemasonry.

‘In whom do you put your trust?’ This never to be forgotten question rings in the ears of every Freemason and reminds him of his Initiation into the Craft. The answer without exception is *‘in God’*. Later in the Ceremony we are charged to remember *‘the duties we owe to God by never mentioning his name, but with that awe and reverence due from the creature to his creator’*.

In most parts of our Ceremonies we use an allegorical name for God, such as the *‘Great Architect of the Universe’*. This reflects a very old tradition of not speaking His name directly. It may also help those who know Him by a different name, being of a different religion. Over the centuries, Men have lived and died by faith in God. Long before philosophy was born, Vedic Poets and Penitential Psalmists were praising God in Egypt six thousand years ago. A Poet sang of the unity, purity and beauty of God, which celebrated his presence revealed, yet concealed, in the order of life. It is difficult express these matters; much less to treat them as hard dogma. Freemasonry does not ask man to do so. All that it asks is that he responds, simply and humbly, telling us in whom he puts his trust in life and in death as the source, security and sanction of his moral life and spiritual faith; and that is as far as it seeks to go. It is a crucial question as everything in Freemasonry has reference to God, while pointing and leading to Him, the Great Architect and Master Builder of the Universe. Masonry through its symbols and in its spirit seeks to bring us into the presence of God, and for a while detain us there.

Reverting back to the title of this paper, we are reminded of the words in Proverbs 3:5–6, written over three thousand years ago:

‘Trust in God with all your heart and do not rely upon your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths.’

A point which is often misunderstood by the public as a whole is that Freemasonry is not a religion, nor is it a substitute for religion. It is neither interested, nor concerned, in how a man may develop his religious faith. We have no creed, no confession of faith, no doctrinal statement, and certainly no theology. We neither assert nor do we teach that one religion is as good as, or equal to another. Men of various religious faiths come into Masonry. They retain their own religion and are strengthened in the practice of their particular religious beliefs by the truths and teachings of Freemasonry.



However, it does stand for, teaches and practices, tolerance towards all faiths, that rest upon this first and fundamental principal: belief in the existence of a Supreme Being. That is a Landmark of Freemasonry, and that is why we ask the question at the start, before a Candidate is initiated. It is precisely because we are not a religion, we can come together as men of faith, as Brothers, in genuine friendship. From the beginning, it has been laid down that Religion, along with Politics, are subjects that are not permitted to be discussed in the Lodge. Freemasonry believes in principles, principles unite men, Theology and Politics divide them.

In essence, Freemasonry gets its vitality because its foundation is laid on the great truths from which come the great moral lessons it inculcates. Behind the two great truths, the 'Fatherhood of God' and the 'Brotherhood of Man', is the chief Masonic virtue; charity in its widest sense. We are taught to practice it at all times and to assimilate it into our lives. It is this virtue that leads Freemasons to do their duties, to stretch forth a helping hand to a fallen Brother; to hold a Brother's reputation equally with his own; to whisper good counsel in his ear, and in the most friendly manner; and to endeavour to bring about the best in him. In so doing the Mason is strengthening his own inner self and bringing about the best in himself. By so doing Freemasonry makes in men, strength of character, of thought, and emotional stability.

It is clear that our fraternity without God has no meaning, no purpose, and no mission amongst men. It would be like the house in the parable built upon sand which the flood swept away. To a Freemason God is the first truth and the final reality.

Recommended use of Papers

Papers offer a simple, direct means of advancement in a particular aspect of Masonic knowledge. They can be used in a variety of ways:

- Read at home for private study
- Shared for pre-reading by members of a discussion group
- Read aloud in Lodge or Chapter, or in an LOI/COI/new members forum
 - Followed by 'any questions'
 - As a precursor to a discussion (in which case much more time is needed, possibly more than double that allocated to the paper itself)
 - Supported by audio-visual aids, if necessary

They can be delivered by a single person or split into bite-sized pieces and read by multiple presenters (in which case, the speaker(s) should have read and practiced the delivery of the paper beforehand).

*Note: All biblical passages are taken from the Authorized King James version unless otherwise specified.

If the paper is to be used to introduce a discussion, the presenter will need to have thought about the material, done a little research, and prepared some open questions to engage with the audience. Kipling's dictum can be of help in preparing open questions, which should begin with one of his 'serving men', as follows: *'I keep six honest serving men (they taught me all I knew). Their names are, What and Why and When and How and Where and Who'*. Rudyard Kipling

If used as part of an event, the paper should be advertised and promoted by way of trailers, flyers and announcements, in summonses, letters, emails, notice boards, and on social media.

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

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