

2008

January



Happy New Year

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DREAMS

by William "Ray" Fischer

You have passed your third degree exam and now you are a Master Mason. So now what.

You have several choices in front of you:

- (1) Become an officer. (2) Become proficient in ritual work.
- (3) Join one of the many other organizations only a Master Mason can join.
- (4) Slowly fade away like so many do never to be seen or heard from, except for dues time.

There are other options but these are the most prevalent.

If you do the fifth choice in this list you will never know any more about Masonry than you know right now. You will never be any use to the fraternity nor will the organization ever be useful to you.

If you stay with one or more of the top four you will learn how a group can act as a team. You will see how much more the team can accomplish than just one person alone. This does not mean that we are not individuals. Masonry teaches free thinking and this can only be accomplished through self-sufficiency. A determination to be free from all types of restraints is preferred.

Free thinking will open up your thoughts, your hopes, your aspiration. You will be able to express yourself by using your head and embrace those ideas with your heart.

What all of this means is that you should:

Speak with your head

Listen to your heart

And always, always follow your dreams

MASONIC LIGHT

by the Rev. Dr. James M. Floyd, Jr., MPS
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Are you a source of light, or of darkness?

We create our own reality. What we expect from life is what we receive. If we expect and look for the trouble, disagreement, and negativity in situations that is what we are sure to find. If however, we expect and look for the good, cooperative, and positive outcomes in situations that is what we will experience.

Life cannot, and does not always go smoothly. We cannot appreciate the good times and the joys that life brings without the rough times and the sadness that must cross our path on occasion. It is our response to these times that defines who we are.

Brothers, I am guilty of being a source of darkness. That is, in seeing and focusing only on the problems in lodge that I perceive need to be corrected. And in being privy to, and a part of, the occasional personality conflicts that are destined to arise in any group.

Yes, there are problems in every lodge. Yes, we do not always agree with, or get along with each other. This has always been, and always will be. But we cannot be negative about these difficulties. Our negative thoughts are like a cancer which spreads and weakens us, and those around us, emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

It is easy to fall into the trap of negativity or darkness. But, with effort on our part, and the assistance of the G.A.O.T.U., we can instead choose to open our eyes to the light. My Brothers, that light is Brotherly love. Love is being positive and expecting the best life has to offer. Love is knowing that, although our human frailties will result in disagreement, where there is hope and understanding there can be the peace and harmony to work together towards a common goal.

So, for the sake of the Fraternity and your well-being, I urge you to make the commitment to change your life, to become a source of Masonic Light, that, like the Sun in the heavens, all the world can see.

WHO IS WISE

by William "Ray" Fischer

Have you ever asked yourself, of all the people I know who do you consider to be wise? Who would you consider to be a hero? Who would you consider to be rich? Who would you honor?

Some of the wisest people known lived in the same small town their whole lives and never ventured more than fifty miles from it. They became wise through listening to others who traveled, and talked to those who had already learned. They were seekers of knowledge, but not adventures.

A hero, it is said, is a person who overlooks the fear and does what is necessary to save others. We can not always forget the danger because fear or self-preservation stops us from placing our-selves in mortal jeopardy. Those who say "I didn't think about it I just did it" are the ones who push their fear aside and did what was needed. They subdued their passions.

Have you ever had the misfortune of watching those night time soap operas like Dallas, Dynasty, or Falcon Crest. People rich beyond belief with no morals. They selfishly devour everything in their path. They are not happy with just their share, but want everyone else share too. There is no portion large enough for them.

When we honor a person we show him kindness, love, consideration and most of all respect. Mainly because he has shown kindness, love, consideration and respect towards others. He has helped and honored people through out his life. So when we ask the question:

Who is Wise? He who learns from all men. *Who is a hero?* He Who subdues his passions. *Who is rich?* He who is happy with his portion in life. *Who is Honored?* He who honors others.