

Tolerance — A Beautiful Tenet to Remember

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Masonry has so many beautiful and inspiring tenets among which are Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, to mention just a few.

Brotherly Love teaches us to love not only our own brethren in the fraternity and members of their respective families, but we also have to extend and share that sincere and genuine thing we call LOVE with our neighbors and all mankind, regardless of their religious beliefs, political leanings, race, creed and color. Indeed, if all mankind can practice and implement this biblical injunction of loving one another as we love ourselves, perhaps there will be no more wars among nations, there will be no more hatred among people; instead, there will be universal and lasting peace among all men under the Fatherhood of one God. But why is there no peace in this world of ours? Simply because there is greed among men for power, for honor and personal glory and for material riches, and there seems to be no end in sight and no satisfaction of men's desire for worldly things. Or is it because man, by his sinful nature, must suffer and be punished for his sins in order to learn a lesson or to change his nature from bad to good so he can finally recognize God's authority and power? Unless man learns to subdue his passions within due bounds, and to humble himself and recognize the supreme authority of God on high and to practice and implement love for all, can there be permanent and lasting peace upon this earth.

Relief teaches us to come to the aid of a brother in distress, to anyone who has met or is suffering from any misfortune in life. Unless there is love for our fellowmen, relief is

quite impossible to do and hard to undertake. When occasions come for us to extend our help, our much-needed help, we should not run away from such a responsibility otherwise we become as "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal."

Truth is the first and basic teaching we encounter in our early travel as Masons. It is a divine attribute and a basic foundation of all virtues of men. It teaches us to eliminate hypocrisy and deceit; and most important of all, we should act upon the square and deal plainly, sincerely and squarely with all with whom we come in contact.

TOLERANCE

While these inspiring tenets mentioned above are recognized and accepted as the principal teachings of Masonry, I personally consider another one as equally important and that is TOLERANCE. Whoever among our early founding brethren must have thought of Tolerance as one of our indispensable tenets should certainly deserve a prominent place in the hearts and minds of all Masons, past and present, and his picture should also find its proper place in the Masonic Hall of Fame. Tolerance teaches us and reminds us that we have to be understanding and sympathetic with our erring brethren. Let our motto be: "Live and let live." Let us co-exist in peace and happiness or even in sadness or sorrow. Now and then, there are brethren of ours who forget to do things expected of them inside or outside the Lodge. Some remain cool and inactive, negligent of their sworn duties and obligations to their brethren and to their Lodge.

Turn to next page

Some do not find time to attend Lodge meetings but have ample or sufficient time for worldly pleasures, forgetting the teachings and symbolism of the 24-inch gauge where we are taught to divide our time into three equal parts, whereby we should find a part for the service of God and a distressed worthy brother, a part for our usual vocations, and lastly a part for our refreshment and repose. There are brethren who are disgusted, unsatisfied and indifferent to another brother when some brethren fail to measure up to their expectations or when they failed to get what they want, like jobs, favors, priorities, promotions, choice positions, fat salaries, etc. Rather we should regard our membership in Masonry in such a manner that primarily we should serve instead of being served, help instead of being helped and to be assets instead of being liabilities. Similarly, I wish to recall to you the remarks made by the late President John F. Kennedy of the

United States of America when he said: "Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country."

Why brethren, can we not be so tolerant, so understanding and so sympathetic instead, to those who could not go beyond their limits or power? Why can we not remember that there is a limitation to everything and that to go beyond these limits may bring disastrous effects upon their positions or even the welfare of their families?

For the sake of unity among Masons throughout the world, unity being the strength and support of all societies especially of ours, the OFFENDER as well as the OFFENDED should both be tolerant, understanding and sympathetic to the other fellow's situation, for then and only then can we maintain unity and harmony within our folds and preserve this honorable and venerable Fraternity of ours for ages to come. △

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