

## ARE WE LIVING MASONRY ?

**By: R.W. Bro. E. A. Davies; Published in THE TRACING BOARD;  
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A Real Freemason is distinguished from the rest of Mankind by the uniform unrestricted rectitude of his conduct. Other men are honest in fear of punishment, which the law might inflict; they are religious in expectation of being rewarded, or in dread of the devil in the next world. A Freemason would be just if there were no laws, human or divine except those written in his heart by the finger of his Creator. In every climate, under every system of religion, he is the same. He kneels before the Universal Throne of God in gratitude for the blessing he has received and humble solicitation for his future protection. He venerates the good men of all religions. He gives no offense, because he does not choose to be offended. He contracts no debts, which he is certain he cannot discharge, because he is honest upon principle.

*(The Farmers Almanac, 1823 - Author Unknown)*

The fact that a man has taken the degrees of Freemasonry does not automatically make a person a better man. The strength of Freemasonry, lies not in the strength of its numbers, but in the extent to which its tenets are put into practice.

With daily newspaper headlines, radio and television news providing evidence of the greed, selfishness and godlessness stalking the world today, there was never more need than now for unity in Masonry and for the practice of its principles. Freemasonry is a highly personalized art, one to be practiced by each member individually. The tenets of Masonry are not intended for officers or committee members alone.

No man is actually a Mason, nor is he transmitting unimpaired the tenets of our craft, if he merely bears the title of a Mason, pays his dues and delegates to others the practice of Masonry.

It would be tragic, indeed, if history were later to record that this generation of Masons had, as individuals, lost the ancient art we profess to practice.

Freemasonry has grown and prospered in the past because the good work of individual Masons, as well as lodges, attracted wide attention, and the public in general became convinced of the fraternity's worthiness. Men were attracted to Masonry because it was an organization in which men did not seek help, but gave help to others, and they wished to acquire for themselves the reputation of being Master Masons devoted to this way of life.

Churches of different denominations came to recognize that the teachings of Freemasonry were a vital and living support of the Church, the laws of God and of the principle of brotherhood. They came to recognize that Freemasonry interfered with neither denomination nor faith, but in fellowship and reverent devotion to God, strengthened men in the faith of their choice.

While it is true modern times require us to establish committees - finance, benevolence, sick visiting, social, etc. - Masons will cease to practice Masonry if they delegate all such responsibilities to the officers and the various committees, especially if the same individuals serve year after year.

Let us not wait for assignments. Let each of us be alert to the needs of other Masons and be quick to perform what the lectures have taught us to perform, not waiting to be asked.

The Masonic art will never be lost in these troublesome times if individual members will occasionally take a look at their own performance and ask themselves: Have I been observing the teachings of Masonry to mankind more especially toward brother Masons? Have I been able, even once in recent weeks, to help a person or a brother Mason or his family by deed, word of encouragement, word of sympathy or friendliness?

It is the individual performance, which counts in Masonry, not its fine building, nor its wealth nor the size of its membership. Only by the acts of individual Masons will Masonry continue to live through a succession of ages, its principles a vital force, its tenets unimpaired.

How often have we heard it said that a lodge is unable to do much because of its small membership. The strength of Masonry does not lie in its large membership but in the extent to which its tenets are put into practice. If Freemasonry really aims to make all men brothers, to bring harmony among races and nations of the world at large; if Freemasonry is to help, aid and assist the needy and troubled; if it hopes to liberate men from the tyranny of ignorance by means of the light of freedom and the sacredness of the individual, then it is up to us as individuals to set an example and we can then say we are living Freemasonry.

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*(The Farmers Almanac, 1823 - Author Unknown)*

Submitted by D. Roy Murray, PDDGM  
King Solomon Lodge, No. 58, GRS  
Victoria Lodge, No. 13, GRA