

YOU AND YOUR 'SELF'
by
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Brethren: Our Grand Master's theme this year is 'Focus on the Man' -- an excellent theme. One of the Basic thoughts in Masonry. so when your Workshop Committee asked me to be one of the speakers this year I felt I could speak on some related topic. However, they later gave me the workshop theme of 'Revolution with three subtitles of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Also it was suggested that I base my talk on some Masonic principles such as Faith, Hope and Charity. A Real Challenge. I hope that when this is finished that you will be able to say that the result was a benefit to you as an individual Mason.

It has already been a great benefit to me as it has bolstered by feelings of insecurity to think that someone thinks I have something to say to you - a group of concerned Masons. concerned or otherwise why are you here this week-end? Perhaps you might think of the word 'SAGE' when you think of me. NOT as a man of wisdom but a bit of spice that might make your future a little more flavourful.

How can we focus on ourselves as brothers in masonry? We can use our understanding of Faith, Hope and Charity to create a REVOLUTION in our living use of personal LIBERTY, to recognize human EQUALITY, in order to develop the many-fold pleasures of wholesome FRATERNITY.

REVOLUTION has many meaning but I have chosen the more acceptable connotation of 'Change'; then it can have relevance to us as individuals and as Masons. Let us examine this concept briefly before we proceed. Change may be initiated by nature or by man. Changes initiated by nature we usually accept and then try to adapt to the change but changes initiated by man are different. Such changes may be classified as follows:

Rate - slow or fast, evolution or armed revolt
Direction - progressive or retrogressive
Status - controlled or uncontrolled
Results - beneficial or detrimental

In fact we should want and encourage change at an acceptable rate, in a progressive direction, which we can control for our own and for mankind's' benefit. As we review history we can see too man cases where these criteria have not been met and individuals, small groups, nations and even all mankind have suffered. In today's world we are in a mess. In this mess a result of uncontrolled change, change without consideration for others, or too many changes at the same time? Today with mass media, rapid translations etc., we are being buffeted by waves of change, large and small, coming from all directions at the same time. no wonder we are confused. Is there an answer? Yes! The answer lies in You and I, but we will have to examine some other ideas before we come to us.

Firstly, I suggest, that the greatest changes that affect us as individuals are, or have been, initiated by an individual who had a very deep influence over the thoughts of others. For example:

Christ with his influence over 12 disciples
Alexander Graham Bell and his four protégés
Martin Luther and his parishioners
Nicolaus Copernicus and his fellow astronomers

These individuals developed beliefs that changed the thinking and the future for millions of people.

Secondly, I suggest, that the majority of mankind are not aware of their great potential. today athletes are breaking records almost at every major competition. We are having humans doing things, such as landing on the moon, which were science fiction of 20 years ago.

And my third suggestion is that those great humanitarians throughout history understood themselves better and utilized their potential more efficiently than most of us do today. Often a realization that a great need existed triggered a demand that they use themselves to a far greater extent in order to meet this need. A good modern day example is Dr. Tom Dooley's effective action in Vietnam's hospitals. In a few short years, even though fighting a losing battle to incurable cancer, he revolutionized medical treatment for millions.

So you can see that I agree with the great German Psychologist and Philosopher, Dr. Carl Gustof Jung. He believes the answer lies in a return to a human philosophy based upon the importance of the individual and away from those based on belief in mass movements for good. We are reaping the results of a Mass Revolution which has created a devastating situation where we are losing our liberty, equality of opportunity, and eventually may lose our right to meet with those of common interests unless they are in a subservient position to state or church. He claims that salvation is in the rebirth of the individual.

OH, INSIGNIFICANT 'ME' --- WHAT CAN I DO?

Let us listen to what Pete Seeger thinks about people like you and I.

Are we but the product of our environment? Are we in a continuous rut? If you believe so then I can see no hope for you as an individual. If I believed that we were but the product of our environment, I would not be standing here in front of you now. I HAVE FAITH. The Great Architect of the Universe, blessed me and you with a complex and efficient physical structure in which he housed a fantastic computer called a mind. The computer controls the physical structure, but what controls the computer? Not the environment. It has only educated the computer with facts and feelings. Some of you may say that God controls but let us not blame him for the mess we are in. I believe that God gave each one of us the potential of control but some of us have allowed the control to be assumed by the computer or act as mere robots under the control of others. Perhaps we have placed the emphasis on developing our minds and protecting our bodies but allowed our souls to grow up like Topsy. Let us remember one of our first Masonic teachings. --- and on the foundation laid this evening may YOU build a super structure, perfect in its parts, and honourable to (you) the builder'.

Then, if you can have faith in the knowledge that The Great Architect has given us the control over ourselves, you can understand that possibly the great men of the past and present have a better understanding of their own 'SOUL' or 'SELF', and so are able to direct their minds and bodies to their maximum potential. they had a goal, some good and others destructive. Is this proof that God gave us three wonderful parts, the physical home, the mental computer, and the controlling soul, but he did not dictate or restrict our freedom as to their use? God did give us direction which we in masonry are charged to follow in reaching our individual goals.

I believe that each one of us has the potential of self-determination. This belief is the basis of MY HOPE. I hope that each of us tries to discover this potential control and in so doing becomes more aware of each individuals hidden strengths. Development of our own 'Self' or 'Soul' will make each one of us a better human being and more capable of being of benefit to others of our world society.

This last point is the basis of the need for change in the average individual. change in his relationship with others. MY HOPE is based on a recognized, planned change in You and I. That change will result in a greater awareness of the needs of others, which in turn will develop a greater ability in You and I to be CHARITABLE TO OTHERS. Charity is the result of MY FAITH and MY HOPE.

CHANGE: I cannot give you great experiences or support my beliefs by historical research. I can only base my opinion on my own humble experience. It may be wrong to come to such a deep philosophy on only my own life but really all our life decisions are based on only one person's senses - our own.

I look back on my life and see many years of wasted time, wasted energy and wasted potential. I have done more in the past year than I would have expected myself to do over three times the span, ten years ago. Some things that I have done I would never have attempted to do even three years ago. This talk is one of them. however, do not take this as boasting but as an apology for the many years when I should have been doing so much more than I did. I'm ashamed.

Please examine this analogy to the River of Life. (they are dangerous to use but this one seems appropriate). Each one of us is floating down this River of Life after starting as a small drop of life. Our trickling stream broadens into the wide river of society which moves relentlessly towards the Sea of Tranquillity. As we approach this final resting place our breadth of associations with others narrows down to a few close friends and relatives as we enter the meandering delta of old age.

A number of years ago I realized that I was floating down this river sometimes travelling fast and at other times very slowly. I wondered if I was in control or did those around, my environment, control my actions. Was I a rudderless piece of floating debris, of no use to anyone? Was I in command of my own destiny? Was the frustration that I felt a helpless fight against the overpowering current? Should I give up in apathy and drift along without a purpose and expend my allotted time in this ever changing but monotonous life? I woke up, became aware of myself as a person. You might say that I pulled my 'Self' up on a floating log and looked around. It was beautiful; it was sad; it was frustrating; and it was challenging. The beauty was in the realization that even at my age I could see a purposeful life before me. The sadness was in seeing others I knew that were giving up, or speeding their journey through senseless living, or floating along in apathy as I had been doing. There were also the young of our society who can see no apparent control or purpose as they see their parents and older acquaintances swept along. Frustration, because I did not really understand even my own self at that time. (and I am still working on it) Challenging, because around me were others on floating logs, some in canoes and boats, with and without oars or paddles, and others in power boats. I did not understand at first but the degree of each individuals understanding of their own 'Self' or 'Soul' was what determined the control over their own destiny.

This awareness of the importance of control of myself through my 'Self' resulted from a greater faith in God's gift to me, a human being, with the power of self-determination. This FAITH gave me a freedom which I never had controlled before. Faith in god, an awareness of myself as an important individual, and freedom of choice and decision, these three lead to my liberation from the shackles of the past. FAITH LED TO LIBERTY. STEP ONE.

The first step was the most dramatic. The second step of HOPE was apparent but very elusive. In order to move from a position of being a short-tempered, frustrated, fearful worrier to become a satisfied employee, a wholesome husband, a considerate father, or a

welcome friend or relative was going to take some time. At this point I could have made a serious mistake. I could have blamed it on my business surroundings. I did but before making a change I asked for professional assistance and was guided into a vocation which suited my desire to be in a position of helping others. Helping others, but without reason, was a shallow type of Selfishness.

A detailed study followed. I discovered that I had approached this task with reason and very methodical but without understanding. God had given me a body, a mind, but also a Soul; the control. I had left the development of my soul, or my 'Self' as I like to call it, to God but He gave it to me to use and develop. After many years I am now starting to understand MY SELF. This has given me THE HOPE to take the next step.

The hope that I have been able to realize relative to myself has made me realize that if Ed Dayman can change, and continue to change gradually, there is also hope for all the rest of mankind. This hope for all based on this hope and trust in myself, gives me a deep feeling of equality among all mankind. HOPE LED TO EQUALITY. STEP TWO.

I am only at present working on the third step. I trust that the development of Charity to all mankind will lead me to membership in a worldwide Fraternity of Brotherhood. I now truly believe that CHARITY WILL LEAD TO FRATERNITY. STEP THREE.

In my research to date I have discovered five certain signs that one must follow, or should follow, in order to have a deeper understanding of your fellow man. This understanding should place one in a better position to know when it is true charity, not class snobbery or state and institutional welfare.

1. **AWARENESS;** of your actions and their interactions with other human beings. See how they affect others. Are they socially polite? Do they get angry? do they ignore you? Are they patronizing? For example: my wife says that I overcome my feeling of insecurity by giving an impression of knowing it all. This causes others to 'bristle' towards me. You might even be feeling that way now. It is hard to tell standing up here, but I am now able to tell when I am in a small group. The book 'Self-Actualization vs Manipulation' has been a great help to me.
2. **ANALYSE;** your initial actions with others. Were your actions initiated from personal motives; for the benefit of others; or for the co-operative benefit of all? Once you can determine the true underlying reasons for your actions you can then begin to determine the type of action that you wish to initiate. If it is for a cooperative benefit then the other person will not feel antagonism towards you as you are not manipulating him for your own selfish purposes.
3. **RELATIONSHIPS:** From the second step you should look at your relationships with others from the point of view of how you treat them. Do you treat them as things or as human beings. As Jourard says, An 'I -IT' relationship or an 'I - THOU' relationship. Whereas step two is an analysis of the motive behind your actions, this step is an analysis of your feelings towards other humans. If you treat them as non-human entities they will immediately feel antagonism, fear, insecurity and frustration in their interpersonal relationship with you. Also, the other person will immediately react in a negative manner towards you and what you are expressing. Open communication will not result. In fact, the reverse will likely result and you will not reach your objective.
4. **FEELINGS;** are important. Tune yourself into those uncomfortable feelings though they be ever so faint. You may have built up an immunity to them and find it difficult to

recognize them. These are the warning signals to you. some people call it their intuition. Others say they do not do certain things because they do not feel right to them. when you feel worried, distrust, fear, uncertainty, frustration, etc., then quickly examine both yourself and the other person as to the possible and real intentions of both your actions. If they are feelings of Joy, Happiness, Satisfaction, etc., then you will know that the other person is treating you as a human being and you are relating to him as a human being. You can initiate this situation in either a positive or negative way and so can the other person. When you are fully in control of your 'Self' you may even create negative feelings in others intentionally to gain a future benefit for all concerned. the intent of your action is very important.

5. GOAL: You must initiate the action with an intent for success in a predetermined goal. this goal can only be reached if you treat the other with TRUST. If he makes you angry etc. let him know by telling him, but in telling him be very sure that you respect him as a human being. do not treat the other with disrespect no matter what your feeling. This step is called self-disclosure. This lets others know who and what you are and in letting them see deeper into your inner person you should have a deeper and more meaningful relationship with them. I hope that I have been a good example of this step here tonight. I have let you see a part of me in my continuing search for knowledge and understanding of myself.

I have tried tonight to be humble in this presentation but I find it difficult when I am proud and happy with my progress. As I stated earlier that two years ago you would not have seen me on this platform for any reason. Over the past few years I have gained a deeper love and understanding of God. Partly, I am doing this for him. I have also gained a better understanding of my self. Partly, I am doing this for me as I hope that it will help me. I am gaining a greater understanding of the need for all of us to consider change in each one of us. I love Life and Masonry is a part of it. Mainly I am doing it for Masonry and you my brothers.

FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY.
LIBERTY, EQUALITY AND FRATERNITY.

No human life is so frustrating and so unsatisfying that it cannot be improved and no human life can be so complete that it cannot be made more wholesome. So brethren I repeat - On the foundation laid this evening, may you raise a super structure perfect in its parts and honourable to you the builder.

CONSTRUCTIVE CHANGE
in
YOU AND YOUR 'SELF'

The significance of three steps and five steps did not strike me until I just now finished reading this final draft. Perhaps this indicates that I am still not a Master in Masonry not having reached a full understanding of Charity.

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