



TRESTLE BOARD

September 2017

Midland Lodge 144
1st and 3rd Thursday
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This edition produced and edited
by Russell Ward



From The East: First Prepared In Our Hearts, but What Does It Mean?

We have all been asked this question, "Where were you first prepared to be made a Mason?" The response: "In my heart." But, what does it mean? What does it symbolize? How does being prepared first in our hearts, equip us to start on the path of Freemasonry? In my time as a Mason, I have thought about that question a lot.

To begin, we must look at the human heart itself. We all know that it's an organ. We all know that it must be healthy in order for us to live without the need for a transplant. However let's go deeper. The heart is a muscle; it provides the mechanism by which our lifeblood is transferred throughout our body. In other words it is a hub for the transportation system of our life-force.

So then how does being prepared in our hearts help us to become Masons? To begin I will include several excerpts from the Volume of Sacred Law displayed on our altar, the Holy Bible.

Romans 10:10 says: "For with the heart one exercises faith."

Ephesians 1:18 states: "the eyes of your heart having been enlightened that you may know what is the hope to which he called you, what the glorious riches are which he holds as an inheritance for the holy ones."

Now obviously these passages are giving great importance to the heart regarding our spiritual life. We can also use these as a parallel to see why we are first prepared in our hearts as Masons.

Our hearts are where the majority of our decisions stem from. It's there we first begin to feel a true love for our spouses, children and family. It is our hearts where the seeds of greatness sprout forth from. It is with the heart our true intentions are found. So how fitting it is that with such an important part of our being, we are first prepared to undertake a journey that will last us a lifetime. Now that we have determined why we are first prepared in our hearts, let's examine what it MEANS to be prepared in our hearts first.

Luke 6:45 says, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh."

Being prepared means to be fully equipped to handle a task or tasks assigned or entrusted to us. So, what ARE we being entrusted with in Freemasonry? We, as true and lawful Brothers are being admonished to have our brother's best interest at hand, treat each other as equals even though in our daily lives and Masonic journey we may have positions of higher responsibilities.

Matthew 20:26 says, "Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,"

Philippians 2:3 states, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,"

We are also charged to uphold the virtues of morality and fair dealings with those who are neighbors even though they may not be Masons or members of the Masonic family and to guard the integrity of our institution with all our being. So, why does being prepared in our hearts symbolize all of this?

Luke 6:31 states: "Do unto others as you 259

would have them do unto you”

It's important to note that these are my own words and are not representative of any Grand Lodge, subordinate lodge, or any other branch or body of Freemasonry. They are merely representative of my personal thoughts to possibly shed some light on a subject that concerns us all.

Let's see how being prepared in our hearts symbolizes such important things. The heart being such an important organ to our life is also an important part of our Masonic life as well. It is with the heart we care enough to whisper good counsel in a Brother's ear when he makes a mistake that could jeopardize his integrity or ethics.

Proverbs 15:22 says, “Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counselors they are established.”

It is with the heart, we with Brotherly Love, help out Brothers who are new to the craft or those who may be in danger of falling by the wayside. It is with the heart we make our obligations and strive to stand by and adhere to them.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 says, “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”

The heart is what we use when we dispense Masonic charity, without wanting anything in return.

2 Corinthians 9:7 states, “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

It is also with the heart we become joyous when we meet a Brother in our daily travels whom we may not have known but he greets us as if we have known each other for years. It is also with the heart, where we strive to attend the meetings of our lodge, motivating ourselves with Brotherly Love and wholesome instruction. Not regarding such a time as a chore that we must complete with annoyance, but rather as a place of encouragement, that will refresh and strengthen

us as we journey upon the level of time.

Colossians 3:23 says, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters”

Our hearts is where we must begin to develop a bond so strong that contention cannot even begin to tear away at it. It is in our hearts we must begin to truly feel Brotherly Love for our fellow traveling Brethren. The heart is where the unity and tenets of Freemasonry MUST FIRST reside, then it will radiate forth from our mouths and through our actions, to shine light forth on the world. It is then we have been first equipped to BEGIN to discover the beauties of our noble institution. It is in our hearts the qualities of a true mason reside and from which his works will be fruitful. To be prepared in the heart first means we are to regard a Brother for his internal qualities and not because of his race, social status, or financial standing. His affiliation, as long as it's true and lawful, should not matter. We are the heart of Freemasonry, it is with true and genuine Brotherly Love and affection in our OWN hearts, Freemasonry's life-force with be replenished and strengthened and continue for time forever.

Colossians 3:13-14 says, “Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

May it help those of us who are new and strengthen those us who are aged in the craft. We have more work to do together as a Lodge. Let us run this race together. There is a great cloud of Brethren sitting in that Celestial Lodge that are cheering us on. I for one will strive not to let them down.

Hebrews 12:1 tells us, “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,”

Fraternally,
Bill Miller, PM, Worshipful Master



From The West

Extra Mile

We are winding the year down for 2017 and it is amazing to see how different our lodge is. Anytime you lose a brother and gain new Masons it changes the dynamic ever so slightly. Our lodge has been faced with many medical challenges that have caused us to rethink our priorities in life. There is an old saying, if money can fix it then it isn't a problem. This is so true when we spend so much of our time chasing that dollar, when real problems can't be helped.

I think one of the best things a new Mason can do is learn the working tools. The ones I like the most are the Fellowcraft. The first admonishes us to walk uprightly in our several stations before God and man. This reminds me to be forthright and truthful when dealing with our brothers and devotion to God. You don't talk bad about a brother and you let him know if you think he is being misled. Squaring our actions by Virtue and remembering that we will not be on this planet forever. These are things money has no impact. If you are truly a good man, you will be good with or without money.

Speaking of money, I recently read a book by Dave Ramsey that has ignited a fire in me about being out of debt. It's called the Total Money Makeover. I was already doing many of the things he recommended but his philosophy

made me attack my debt with purpose. He has a set of "Baby Steps" that start with save \$1,000 as fast as you can. Sell something, get there quick. Then cut up those credit cards, the only reason you have one is for emergencies. Now you have \$1,000 put back, if you need more than that get a short-term loan. The next is pay off the smallest bill you have first regardless of the interest rate. When it is paid off, you "snowball" it to the next bill.

This time last year I had four credit card payments, student loan, two car loans, and a house mortgage. I now only have the car and house payment. By this time next year, I will only have one car payment. 2019 zero car payments and my only debt will be my house payment. It is a struggle but if you sacrifice and live like your friends won't, one day you will live like your friends can't. Join me on this journey to financial peace. Get the book or let's talk one on one about it.

Being a true brother is being there in good times and bad, richer for poorer, sickness and in health. It is like a marriage; you go the extra mile. We have shown much of this kind of behavior toward one another this year and I expect us to carry on this legacy we are building.

See you in Lodge.

Tony McCool

Senior Warden

Important Dates to remember:

**Murder Mystery Dinner Theater
September 22nd, 23rd, 29th, and 30th**

**Country Breakfast Fundraiser October
14th**

Fall Festival October 21st

Grand Lodge October 24th

November 16th Thanksgiving Potluck

Tree Trimming November 25th

**Everyone please come out and join us
for breakfast. As always, we are
grateful to have your support.**



From The South

Brethren, we are having a great year at Midland due in large part to each one of you. I can tell you that is my honor and privilege to serve as your Junior Warden this year. Having volunteers such as you step up like you have whenever I have called on you makes my job easy. I know that there is still work to be done and I have no doubt that many of you will step up to help to cut the grass, clean the Lodge, and serve at the remaining fund raisers.

Recently the Worshipful Master asked for comments that he could include in this year's Lodge of the Year submission. I really did not have any trouble putting some comments together. I know that you are now part of my family and I appreciate each one of you.

Our lodge has become a center for the local community here in Midland and the community comes out in force to support us. It does not matter if it is one of our country breakfast fund raisers, or our Murder Mystery Dinner Theaters we have members of our local community that come out to support us. That makes Midland Lodge a shining light to many in our community. We can be proud of that and by shining our light in the community we have attracted and will continue to attract men who want to become master masons.

Finally, I will leave you with one request, continue to pray for the brethren and their families listed in our weekly email and now more than ever pray for our country.

Fraternally
Russell Ward
Junior Warden

From The Desk of the Secretary:

Brethren, occasionally we may need to go over some rules of lodge decorum, so I have provided some information and insight that we might consider.

ETIQUETTE

When the Lodge is open, it is a form of grave disrespect for a member to pass between the East and the Altar except during progression in the degrees. The Master should always have the Holy Writ, his inspiration and Light, directly in view.

The Lesser Lights are placed in a triangular form about the Altar and it is customary not to walk between the Altar and a light. The theory is that the Altar and the three lights about it represent the Sanctum Sanctorum, or Holy of Holies of the original tabernacle in the wilderness. Into this the High Priest could go, but only to return the same way. Brethren enter this symbolic representation of the Sanctum in a lodge room, but do not use it as a passageway by passing through it.

THE MASONIC RING

The Masonic (Square and Compasses) ring is not an official item of Masonic Jewelry. General consensus seems to be that if the wearer wishes to advise OTHERS that he is a Master Mason, then he should wear the ring with the compass tips toward the fingertips. If the ring is worn to remind the wearer that HE is a Master Mason, then he should wear it with the compass tips toward the wrist. (haha)

One thing I've noticed lately. A lot of us are turning our bodies during the opening and closing of the lodge - we should only turn our heads. We are only to shift our bodies when we pledge allegiance to the flag.

That's all I got for now. Visit your lodge as often as you can - and do it because you want to be there! See you in lodge.

UP COMING EVENTS

Murder in **MUSIC CITY** Sept 22nd, 23rd, 29th & 30th

MYSTERY DINNER THEATER **RESERVATIONS REQUIRED**

Make your reservations now



Doors open at 6:30 pm
Show will start at 7 pm

You can get tickets call
(706) 662-5812
(please leave a message)
or by emailing

midlandmurdermystery@gmail.com

You can also buy tickets at

www.fam144.com/mmdt
or
www.freshtix.com

Tickets are \$30 payable by
cash, check, or credit card



Dinner will be served at
8701 Garrett Road
Midland, Georgia

BACK STAGE GRILL

Will start you off with a
great appetizer

Then they will be cooking up an
Award Winning
Brunswick Stew,
Open Pit BBQ Platter
with Corn on the Cob
and Salad.

Finish off the dinner with
Banana Pudding

2nd Annual Lodge Photo



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