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DDGM Talks

Talk Number 7

Title: Something to Think About

Presented at: St. Andrew's Lodge No. 661

Date: March 22, 2019

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

The title of my message tonight is "Something to Think About". This evening I wish to pose some "something to think about" questions and provide some possible answers, but not necessarily all...further answers are up to you.

Question Number One: "Why are you here this evening?"

Perhaps one of the following would be your answer;
The Master met me on the street and reminded me. I really wouldn't be able to say I forgot under those conditions.
Had to bring food. May as well stay now that I'm here.
Had to get out of the house as my wife was hosting the weekly all girl card and wine party.
Had to make a report on something.
Like Easter or Christmas with church...seemed like the right thing to do since the DDGM was coming.
Nothing on TV.
Have to pay my dues and didn't want to pay postage.
I was looking forward to spending an evening with good friends.
(My favourite) I was looking forward to hearing the DDGM's message.
I wanted to share in the work of the Lodge.
Another reason? "Something to think about, my brethren!"

Question Number two, then: "Why did you become a Mason at all?"

Maybe one of the following would be your answer:

It runs in the family. My dad was a member and so was my grandfather, therefore it seemed like the right thing to do.

I had a very fine opinion preconceived of Masonry.

I found this story interesting in this respect.

A young man passed a pawnbroker's shop and noted the pawnbroker standing in front wearing a rather large and beautiful Masonic emblem. The young man passed on for half a block, apparently in thought, then turned back, stepped up to the pawnbroker and addressed him, "I note you're wearing a Masonic emblem. I, too, am a Mason. It happens that I am greatly in need of \$100.00. I shall be able to repay it within ten days. You don't know me, but I wonder whether the fact that you are a Mason and I am a Mason is sufficient so that you would lend me the money on my personal note?"

The pawnbroker mentally appraised the young man, who was clean cut, neat and well dressed, and, after a moment's thought agreed to make the loan on the strength of the young man being a Freemason.

The two went into the pawnshop, where the young man signed a note, received the \$100 and then went on his way. Within a few days the young man returned and repaid the loan as agreed, and that ended the transaction.

About four months later the young man was receiving his Entered Apprentice degree. So, he hadn't been a Mason when he borrowed the \$100 from the pawnbroker!

After he had been admitted for the second section of the degree, and placed where all candidates are placed, the young man looked across the room and noticed sitting there was the pawnbroker from whom he had borrowed the \$100 earlier on the strength of being a Mason. His face turned crimson and he became nervous. He recollected the admonition he had just received from the Worshipful Master. He wondered whether he had been recognized. Apparently not, so he planned, at the first opportunity, to leave the lodge room and avoid the pawnbroker. So as soon as the Lodge was closed the young man moved quickly for the door, but the pawnbroker had recognized him, headed him off, approached him with outstretched hand and smile. "Well, I see you weren't a Mason after all when I lent you that \$100.", the pawnbroker commented. The blood rushed to the young man's face and he stammered, "No, I wasn't, but I wish you'd let me explain. I had always heard that Masons were charitable and would help a brother in distress. When I passed your pawnshop that morning, I didn't need that \$100. But when I saw that Masonic emblem you were wearing, I recognized an opportunity to learn whether what I had heard about Masons was true. You let me have the money on the strength of my being a Mason, so I concluded that what I had heard about Masons was true, that they are charitable, that they do aid brethren in distress. That made such a favourable impression on me that I presented my petition to this Lodge and, here I am. I

trust that, with this explanation, you will forgive me for having lied to you?"

The pawnbroker responded, "Don't let that worry you. I wasn't a Mason when I let you have the money. I had no business wearing that Masonic emblem that you saw. Another man had just borrowed some money on it and it was so pretty that I put it on my lapel for a few minutes. I took it off the minute you left. I didn't want anyone else borrowing \$100 on the strength of being a Mason.

When you asked for that \$100, I recalled what I had heard about Masons, that they were honest, trustworthy and cared for their obligations promptly. It seemed to me that \$100 wouldn't be much to pay to learn whether what I had heard about Masonry was true, so I lent you the money and you repaid it exactly as you said you would. That convinced me that what I had heard about Masonry was true. So, I presented my petition, and I was the candidate just ahead of you."

The two in the story I have related were induced into making application for admission to Masonry because of what they had heard of Masonry, and by experiences that what they had heard was true. One expected to find men who were charitable, and ever ready to extend aid to a needy brother, and the other expected to find men who were honest, paid their bills and were trustworthy.

Our preconceived opinions may have run along the same lines, or they may have been different, but they still were based

on what we had heard, what we expected and what our experiences had shown us about Masonry.

Question Number three; “now that you’ve joined, why stay?”

Is it because you enjoy the fellowship and camaraderie?

Is it because you believe in the concept that Masonry makes good men better (more virtuous, more enlightened)?

Is it because you believe in helping others (scholarships, benevolence)?

Something to think about, my brethren!

Question Number four; “What can we each do to make the stay better for all?”

(Some possible answers)

Attend Lodge regularly

Help with the work

Help with the planning

Show excellence in personal work

Display enthusiasm for the work and encourage others

Visit other Lodges, visit other “shut-in brethren”

Encourage enthusiasm for fellowship

Be there for the brother in need

Have you some more?

Something to think about, my brethren.

Humans seek excellence in life, in self, in associates, in business; they seek challenges, they seek commitment and they seek "belonging". Masonry embodies these characteristics, and if we make the added effort to make the stay better for all, our fraternity could well be the talk of our communities, our personal satisfaction would skyrocket, and our society as a whole would be the better as a result.

Something to think about, my brethren!

Thank you, Worshipful Bro. Bradnam, for the opportunity to speak openly, congratulations to you my new Brother, Bro. _____ and thank you Brethren for your time and attention this evening. Thanks again and take care.