

The District Light

information and Masonic Education
(Niagara B District)

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The Question of 'Light'

This issue of The District Light returns to the theme of Light. A number of perspectives will be presented but, at the risk of telling too much, the conclusion seems to be:

Light is not a gift, but a reward.
not given, but earned,
not bestowed, but discovered.

Now follow the thoughts of our contributors as they strive to deal with the concept of masonic light.



To begin with, any acquired insight is achieved both passively and actively. We can have the warmth of the light pass over us:

- by being in a peaceful place;
- by witnessing or participating in rituals that are solemn and illustrate truths;
- by listening to masonic education
- by being in contact with men who behave with calm dignity;
- by being greeted with smiles, handshakes, and kind words;
- by being able to unload a stress by giving voice to what bothers us;
- by having someone listen to our problem or condition without judgement or criticism;
- by sharing in prayers;
- by being equal to others: we meet on the level as equals.

Of course, for any goal worth attaining we must:

- determine what resources are available;
- begin to research or practice;
- continue.

A Long Time Coming

As a teenager I witnessed impressive relationships my father had with uncles, clergy, local businessmen, city police, mayors. I didn't realize that they were all Masons.

I wanted to know more, but I lived in an era where my father would say, "That's none of your business, and don't touch that masonic stuff! When you're old enough, we'll talk about it."

Alas, that never happened; he passed shortly after I came of age.

I waited twenty-four years before seeking out a Mason for that conversation. I regret that gap. I am thankful for that conversation.

I now have many brotherly relationships that I value in Masonry.

Tim Dunn, Perfection Lodge, St. Catharines



Using the Tools

I was fascinated about how the Parable of the 24" rule helps a man guide the 24 hours of the day; or how the square helps a man stand upright and perpendicular.

Further, the basic tools of a hammer and chisel: basic tools that allow a lowly man to endeavour and become industrious by finishing a rough ashlar using basic tools with little need more than initiative. Patience and persistence lead the way

That is how a man sees light; by seeing the basic implements of labour and industry and being encouraged to learn to utilise them to make his way.

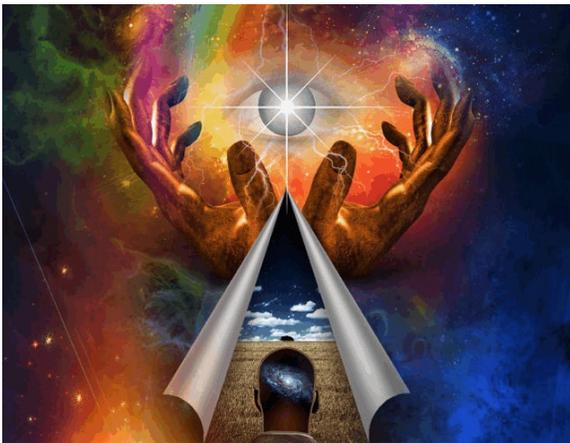
It's kind of fascinating when we knock it down to the basics.

Robert Everett. Palmer Lodge #372

The Process

Freemasonry provides tools which a man may learn to use to improve his mind, body, and soul. Its maxims and degrees inculcate responsibility, knowledge, and love of self and society. It is a way to learn from unlearning and teaches how to think as opposed to being indoctrinated.

Caleb W Haines, Konosioni #950



The Light

To me the light would be the personal gain that masonry gave me. I have grown in ways that I don't think that I would have if I had not become a Mason. Masonry has shown me that we are all equals and we should all be treated like I would like to be treated.

Ronald Jordan, DDGM Niagara B

Being enlightened comes from becoming more aware of what the ritual is about. It shows you how to better yourself by following the guidelines portrayed in the work, by becoming more aware that the teachings which go back to the ancient mysteries (so different from what they are today). The message we receive is the same as then, only veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols.

Anonymous

The purpose of prayer
is not to list your requirements
but to report for service.

The Grail Quest

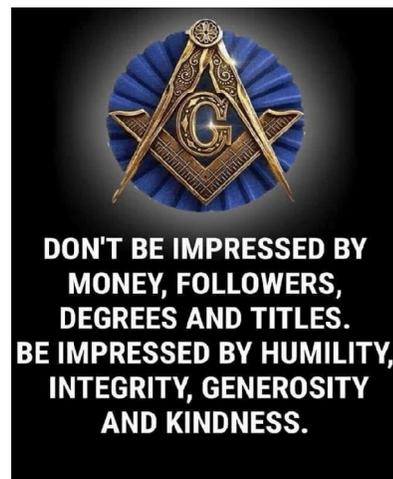
The code of conduct assigned to the concept of a Holy Grail encompasses an ideal, much as masonry does. Laurence Gardner, in his book, *Bloodline of the Holy Grail*, says:

The Holy Grail has been symbolized by many things, most commonly as a chalice, especially one that once contained the life-blood of Jesus. It has also been portrayed as a vine weaving its way through the annals of time. The fruit of the vine is the grape, and from the grape comes wine.

In esoteric Grail lore, the chalice and the vine support the ideal of 'service', whereas the blood and wine correspond to the eternal spirit of 'fulfilment'.

The spiritual Quest of the Grail is, therefore, a desire for fulfilment through giving and receiving service. That which is called the Grail Code is itself a parable for the human condition, in that it is the quest of all of us to achieve through service.

The Grail quest is governed by an overriding desire for honest achievement. It is the route by which all can survive, for it is the key to harmony and unity at every social and natural station.



Is Freemasonry the Answer? by Scott Rowe

Much of today's world seems to be faltering on the edge of a dark abyss that threatens to swallow us back into those darker, more violent periods of times gone by. The horrific events that are reported serve as stark reminders that down through the pages of recorded history there has been a bloody trail of death meted out in the name of religion.

In light of the constant religious wars from the time of the Crusades, the horrific Spanish Inquisition, and through the traumatic and often bloody parting of the Catholic and Protestant divisions of Christianity, it is more than understandable that at the dawn of the new Age of Enlightenment there was a growing segment of the population ready and wanting a change. The stage was set for men of good report and sound morals to put aside the differences of religion and embrace the common good found in all faiths.

Thus the principles of Freemasonry were born, established on the novel premise that a neutral ground could be established where men of all religions, political beliefs and social status could come together as equals. The ground was neutral in that the purpose of Freemasonry was to benefit a man's character, not change his mind. The right to pursue a man's faith in whatever manner he chooses was then, and remains today, still an inviolate right of all brethren. It is the reason Freemasonry has survived and flourished across so many lands and varied cultures and religions over centuries of time.

Today we bear sad witness again to atrocities around the globe in the name of religious differences, political differences and ethnic incompatibilities. It was a time like this, some three hundred years ago, when Freemasonry was conceived as a better way forward for those willing to put aside their differences. Perhaps again it is time to herald the benefits of an organization that judges none by their religion, teaches the importance of charity towards others, and encourages respect to all.

Freemasonry could very well be the answer.

Illuminati

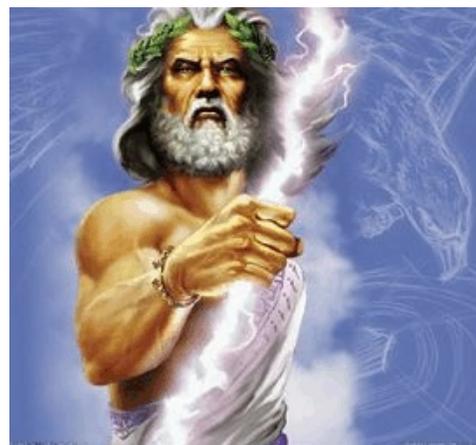
It was on May 1, 1776, that Adam Weishaupt, a professor of law at the University of Ingolstadt, founded the Order of the Illuminati, a secret organisation formed to oppose religious influence on society and the abuse of power by the state. It fostered a safe space for critique, debate and free speech.

Inspired by the Freemasons and French Enlightenment philosophers, Weishaupt believed that society should no longer be dictated by religious virtues; instead he wanted to create a state of liberty and moral equality where knowledge was not restricted by religious prejudices.

Beginning with some of his students and then recruiting others to the Illuminati cause, including Freemason lodges, the clandestine group grew to more than 2,000 members throughout Bavaria, France, Hungary, Italy and Poland.

The organisation didn't evade the establishment for long. Just a decade after its creation, the secret society was infiltrated by Bavarian authorities. The Illuminati was shut down and Weishaupt was banished from Ingolstadt.

Yet the idea of a secret society revolting against the state has captured imaginations ever since, encapsulated in conspiracy theories cooked up by those who believe the Illuminati was never actually disbanded.



Masonry Under Attack

The Independent, a newspaper in Britain, ran a story critical of freemasonry, stating that two Freemasons' lodges, established for members of parliament and political journalists are continuing to operate secretly at Westminster.

The piece can be found [here](#).
It was the first of other articles.

Robert Lomas, author of *The Hiram Key*, wrote a response which can be found [here](#).

What To Do?

If we have some light, we should let it shine. That's easy to say, but more difficult to do.

Often the best advice is to take small steps on the path towards the perceived goal.

A navy Seal gave a stirring address at a graduation ceremony, telling the audience to begin change by making your bed. You can view it [here](#).

Unless someone like you
Cares a whole awful lot,
Nothing is going to get better.
It's not.

Dr. Seuss, the Lorax

Once you have a mission or purpose, the next step is to spread the passion to other people.

The question we ask is, "How to we engage people, inspire them, and motivate them?"

The answer, in three parts, is:

- 1 - Autonomy
- 2 - Mastery
- 3 - Purpose

It is summarized in 2½ minutes [here](#).

"Most people have a disease: they think that once they've had a really good idea, they've done 90% of the work.

Coming up with the idea is easy. Working to make it a reality is the hard part."

Steve Jobs

How to Get "Good"

Considering our age, we may think that our learning time is over because we don't have enough time left. This self-imposed barrier is not physical, but emotional – we are scared to try, to fail

Although it is probably true that it takes 10,000 hours to become the top expert in a field of endeavour, you can get 'good' in 20 hours. Really.

The 4 steps to maximize learning in 20 hours are:

- 1 - Deconstruct the skill
- 2 - Learn enough to self-correct
- 3 - Remove practice barriers
- 4 - Practice for at least 20 hours

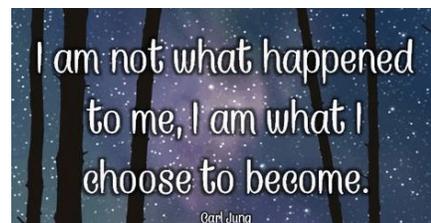
View the explanation and demonstration [here](#).

Ode to Joy

There has been quite a lot of information to digest so far. Time for a break. Here is an uplifting experience of some good music, with good images. [Joy](#).

In The District

Many events are available for you to advance your masonic education while being entertained.



An Entered Apprentice Evening

A gathering will meet with the purpose of recognizing the many new masons who have joined the lodges of our districts and to answer their questions. The symbolism and allegory of the degree will be discussed.

Come to Ivy Lodge at 4276 Mountain Street in Beamsville on March 27, at 7:30.

DeMolay Event

Planning is progressing to establish a local chapter of DeMolay, an organization for boys. Although sponsored and supervised mostly by masons, it is independent.



Ontario DeMolay invites you and your spouse to attend their March Annual Communication and Degree Presentation on Saturday March 10, 2018, at the Scottish Rite Cathedral, 4 Queen Street North, Hamilton, starting at 3:00 p.m.

The guest of honour will be M.W.Bro. Paul E Todd, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario.

The meeting is open to all adults over the age of 21. The wearing of Masonic Regalia is approved by Grand Lodge and encouraged by DeMolay Ontario.

This event is the semi-annual communication of the Ontario Provincial Chapter of DeMolay, combining all the provincial chapters and featuring the presentation of the DeMolay Degree.

Chapters from Windsor, London, Guelph, Barrie, Mississauga, Ajax, Port Hope, and Ottawa will be represented. The grouped chapters provide the opportunity for the youths to meet, to share ideas, and to have the numbers present to perform their ritual in proper form.

Information about Ontario DeMolay and an application form can be found [here](#).



Official Visits

Thurs. Mar. 8: Copestone in Fonthill.
Tues. Mar. 13: St. Mark's in Chippawa.

Advance Notice

On Tuesday, April 17, The semi-annual dinner and meeting of the Niagara District B Masonic Association will be held at the Kimono Restaurant in Welland. Your lodge representative will have the tickets. Arrange a car pool.

On Saturday, April 14, masons of Niagara B will meet at Brock Daylight lodge, St. Catharines, at 10:00 a.m. for our inter-district official visit .

This would be an excellent time to get new (or inactive) masons out into the masonic world.



Other Random Bits

One man with conviction will overcome a hundred who have only opinions. Churchill

A good source of information aimed at those who harbour an anti-masonry point of view can be found [here](#).

Some pieces of advice are so good that they lives on through time. [Here](#) are some good ones with editorial explanations.

When you talk to God,
you are regarded as praying.
When God talks to you,
you are regarded as schizophrenic.