

# Making Good Men Better

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*Making good men better is a distillation of the purpose of the Masonic experience. The ritual and ceremony serve to convey and teach certain moral lessons and elevate the individual response to a position higher than themselves.*

*The overall purpose of Masonry is to provide a way to help each member become a better person. We do not propose to take a bad man and make him good; rather, our aim is to take the good man and make him better.*

*We try to place emphasis on the individual man by:*

- 1. Strengthening his character**
- 2. Improving his moral and spiritual outlook.**
- 3. Broadening his mental horizons.**

*We try to impress upon the minds of our members the principles of personal responsibility and morality; to give each member an understanding of and feeling for Freemasonry's character; and to have every member put these lessons into practice in his daily life.*

*We try to build a better world by building better men to work in their own communities.*

## Fairy Dust?

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**M**aking good men better is no easy task. One of our biggest catch phrases in explaining the Craft is that we make good men better. This is usually said with ease and brushed over like it just happens after you receive the Master Mason's fairy dust. This each of us know is not the case nor are we assured we will ever have the secrets of this Craft, quite the contrary actually. We are told it is a monumental task to enable oneself to receive all the Craft has to bestow. From our memory work to our obligations Masonry is shown not to be for the faint of heart.

How *are* good men made better? Intelligent contemplation on this question will quickly discern that Masonry makes a very bold claim in its making good men better. A Mason if you will, must be tempered like that of steel but in place of carbon the Mason is tempered with knowledge and wisdom. The true master is like the steel of a samurai sword which has been heated and folded back into itself for months if not years. This process pushed out unwanted impurities which in turn hardened the steel beyond any known at that time; this made the samurai legends of their own time. Masonry can be thought of in this process. That we emerge the young obdurate man into the heated but yet controlled environment only to bring him out to be pounded by wisdom and knowledge shaping his character and future then dunked into soothing cool waters of brotherly love which instantly locks this wisdom and knowledge into our core so that it sees its way from generation to generation. How can we as Masons expect to hold true to the claim of making good men better if we are not ready to make the sacrifices of being often tried?

While Masonry affords us many goods times with good men to have them with this is not the intended purpose of our Craft. Freemasonry was designed to help us with our greatest responsibilities and that is ourselves and actions. As bold and vast as Masonry is its teaching cannot help you in the slightest if you are not ready to receive them. Just as in life Masonry opens itself in levels and what was overlooked the first time stands out the second go round. The child cannot understand old age without the experience of manhood. Nor can the Entered Apprentice understand the teachings of the Master without the experience of a Fellow Craft. It is therefore important to understand we are all on different levels of life trying to ascend to the next so we must be ready for our brother's sake to be often tried.



Freemasonry itself holds a level in society and it is not only our duty to maintain this level of attainment but we must progress this level to new heights so the light of Masonry will live on as strong as it has for so many generations. This starts with our west gates. It is fair to say we make good men better but not all good men are prepared to receive what Masonry has to offer nor do all good men have the facilities to keep pace with what Masonry demands.

It therefore behooves each and every one of us to take the matter of admission into our Craft as one of the highest duties we carry out as Masons. The good Masons should be careful to allow only real good men or else find themselves with real problems down the road. When you see a new face joining us for dinner make sure you at least introduce yourself and get an impression of who this man is wanting to join our Craft. Admission into our Craft is a privilege or reward for your present character made up by your past actions. This is the tempered mortar Freemasonry seeks and it is our solemn duty to ensure only the best prepared mortar is brought into this great fraternity.

Once admission is gained the Mason must become comfortable with being out of their comfort zone. Masonry has a way of finding the initiates comfort zone and pushing him out of it to encourage self-growth. This is the nature of a good man being made better.

While it is important that we reflect on the business of our operative brothers we must also as speculative Masons endeavor to enrich our present vocation and that is the business of light. Knowledge and wisdom make up the light we seek and are the binding force to the farthest reaches of antiquity. From Confucius who first articulated the Golden Rule as we know it today to the first mind to contemplate and relate to their surroundings. We are forever connected to these people because their light still guides us today. We must remember it is not the words these men left us that are important it is the deeds they inspire. While the Master fervently seeks the light he must not forget to remain true to his trust, virtuous in his conduct and

humble before his Deity. These are the actions that make a master plumb, square and level.

I would as well implore every Mason to contemplate with regularity the divine tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. This triad of tenets are vastly different from one another and when properly applied form an almost indestructible spiritual unit. These tenets show the good Mason the keys to a happy, successful life. The regular contemplation of these tenets will allow the lips of wisdom to whisper that divine counsel which will lead the master to a better and deeper understanding of himself and life.

Correctly understanding and applying the Craft is not only a duty we hold to ourselves and each other but one we hold to generations to come. Let us not allow the light nor the reputation of Freemasonry dim in the least.

Let us the generations of today join together as done so many times in the past for the efforts of building that house not made with hands. Let us bequeath to those men and Masons to come something greater than we received. Our Craft is the voice of valued wisdom from the farthest reaches of antiquity so let us amplify and add to this wisdom so Freemasonry may do what it has done for centuries, lead mankind to better and brighter days.

**Source - W/Bro. Rhit Moore, Fort Worth Lodge # 148**