

# William O. Ware Lodge of Research

## BOOK REVIEW

October 2021

### Contemplative Masonry

C.R. Dunning Jr.

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Worshipful Brother C. R. “Chuck” Dunning openly describes the three degrees, their true meaning and what a Brother Mason should focus on while we travel through our life.

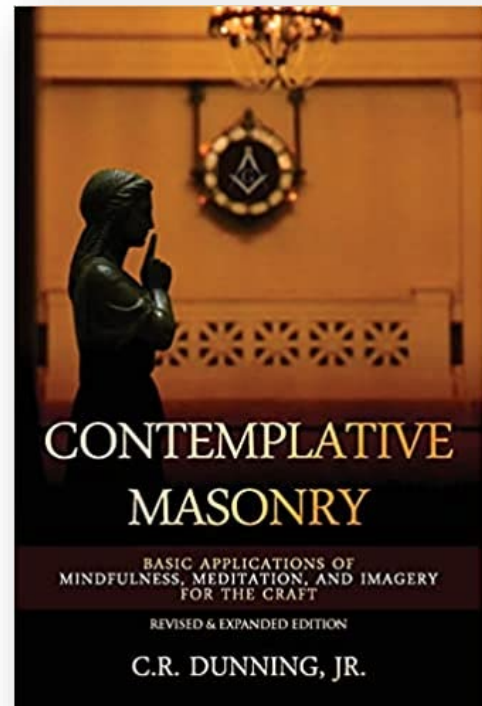
As Speculative Masons, we are taught to admire the wonderful works of creation, and we are to be more reverent and inspired than one might otherwise be. There are four (4) topics focused on in his book – the Spiritual, Mental, Emotional, and Physical aspects of Freemasonry.

Physically, we see symbols, hear statements, and move our bodies to continue the practice of our obligation to God, our country, family, and our brotherhood.

Emotional health teaches us to subdue our passions, which to us is a degree of complete mastery.

Mentally we are taught to improve our minds and consciences with the study of the arts and science.

Spirituality lets us recognize and acknowledge a belief in Deeds. We maintain faith and hope in our eternal life.



As speculative Masons, we need to look into ourselves from a conscious and unconscious perspective to shed more light on our daily lives.

Health and Disease are discussed as the equilibrium on balance and harmony, or the lack thereof, in our lives and in our Lodges. Masonry becomes an intentional part of a brother's spiritual life and creates a hunger in oneself to pursue wisdom, strength, and beauties in others.

W. B. Dunning illustrates the three common aspects of our Ritual which are Initiation, Instruction, and Membership. Masons mentor in ways to support one another in all three of these areas. This teaching is important in our temples, as well as in society.

**Contemplative Masonry** brings to light the importance of study and meditation, and references numerous ways prior to lodge meetings to focus on why we are there, and what we take away from our time there. I thought it was interesting that he advises not get to lodge too early, or stay late, but to enter Lodge and then leave immediately when lodge is closed. Meditate on the workings of the Lodge and write it down. In doing this reflection, future ways to improve yourself and your Lodge may appear.

W. B. Dunning describes the three degrees and their inner workings, and how important it is to practice mindful and prayerful behavior. The exercises listed in each degree will help any Mason or Lodge focus on the true goal to be better men. As Entered Apprentices, one of our primary concerns is in learning how to work in the quarries of life.

As a Fellow Craft we learn the study of the seven (7) liberal arts and science and to polish and adorn the mind.

As a Fellow Craft in the book it notes, your conscious mind is in the seat of authority with regard to your behavior. You were created for it to be so, and you should respect and maintain that arrangement.

Lastly, the Master Mason is a man at one with both Nature and Divinity, who teaches and records for future generations of men. One reflects on the experiences of the Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft, and builds further on the preparation of the degree and final raising. His task now is to realize an integration of the spirit as fully as possible.

As a Master Mason, we say we are seeking a Master's Wage, and some may think of a monetary aspect. It was brought to my attention through **Contemplative Masonry**, that these treasures are light and the Lost Word -- the greatest wages for a Master Mason.

In closing, W. B. Dunning's work opened my eyes to the worthiest product of our work as Masons, and that is Love

**Contemplative Masonry**, named by the **Southern California Research Lodge** as the third most popular book on Freemasonry published since the year 2000, is available from most online booksellers.