

Born Again Fundamentalist Freemason

Discovery Lodge April 2019

We casually speak about world-wide Freemasonry not realizing the influence it has and has had. As an example, there are 203 books in popular fiction that relate to Freemasonry plus numerous poems, articles, dramas, and movies. This does not include books aimed at discrediting our Craft, showing some relationship of Freemasonry to history or culture or Masonic literature aimed at we Brethren. All of this popular fiction to a lesser or greater degree, ask the same question as Tolstoy's "War and Peace". What is Freemasonry and what are the Brethren who make up Masonry. You may recall how Pierre in this novel, frustrated with his Lodge, devised four categories of those Brethren he met. The second category being the seeker which Pierre saw as representing himself. The seeker according to Tolstoy was the Brother who had not yet found the straight clear path in Freemasonry. Tolstoy wrote War and Peace in 1862 and from the Masonic records of the Lodges in Moscow concluded there was much confusion in the Temple.

Confusion in the temple. A polite way to bundle all the aches and pains of our Brotherhood. Brother Dwight W Smith a past grand master and grand secretary of the Grand Lodge of Indiana advises our aches and pains exist because we ruminate about symptoms rather than causes. He submits we utilize committees, surveys, discussions, workshops, and presentations because as a Craft we are prone to faulty diagnosis. He declares if the aches and pains are becoming pronounced, we need to correct the cause not the symptom and much of our committees, surveys, discussions, workshops, presentations and ruminating is about the symptom.

Smith exclaims we Brethren have not maintained those foundations that are in the self-interest of the Craft. Smith posits the cause of this abandonment may be laid at the feet of Brethren who work at the Craft to make it into something that is not Freemasonry. He says what we have lost sight of is what is prized in Freemasonry. That prize is Freemasonry is not a service club, luncheon group, civic league, sports club, political group, religious group or just another organization.

We know from our lessons Freemasonry is none of these. We know from our lessons the corner stone of our craft is comprised of Equality, Liberty and Fraternity. We are taught If a man does something that injures his own body, needlessly destroys something of human value, hurts another in any way, or deliberately makes himself or others unhappy he has done wrong. Our lessons are clear the moral man is one who accepts actions which aid in mankind's happiness even when those actions oppose his own self-interest and interferes with many of his cherished pleasures. The ability to see beyond oneself to the greater good is encased in the Drama of Freemasonry.

The drama of new birth or being "born again" according to HL Haywood in his book "Great Teachings of Masonry" is the forte of Freemasonry. From the old to a masonic new. Our legend of Hiram Abiff though many scholars do not agree on the facts of the legend they all seem to assent the basis for the legend is each man in Freemasonry is a "new creation" enabling his journey towards the Grand Lodge above.

The writings of our adepts such as Mackay, Oliver, Gould, Waite, Pike, Sickels, Chalmers, Howard, Preston and many others make it clear Freemasonry is more than the constitution and regulations, bureaucratic structure, the ritual, the meetings, the charities, the festive boards, the official visits, the GL gatherings, the dictates of those in influential positions, who a freemason knows, his historical status, his present position or what other groups he belongs to. These are the organization of Freemasonry not Freemasonry. Our adepts tell us when these become our focus, we lose sight of fundamental Freemasonry and we lose the self-interest of the Craft. None of our adepts conclude we need more committees, surveys, discussions and workshops, but what our scholars agree on is the central lesson to our legend of Hyrum Abiff is being "Born Again"

I sat with Brother Less the week before he was promoted to the Grand Lodge Above. He said the quintessence of being a Mason is his word. If that cannot be trusted, then Freemasonry cannot be trusted. My response was to thank heaven I had met another Born Again Fundamentalist Freemason

Our degrees, Adepts, and Authors such as King and Haywood instruct us a Born-again Fundamentalist Freemason understands the reasons we employ ritual and symbolism. He appreciates the significance of our initiation, our secrets and what it means to be on the level. A Born-Again Fundamentalist Freemason values our craft is the champion of liberty and understands our meaning of the Brotherhood of man. He believes in the father hood of God and a Freemasons conception of the endless life.

He is a Freemason who comprehends that sitting in our lodge is a privilege. No man has a right to be a Freemason and none of us who sit in a lodge not withstanding our professional status, academic background, financial standing, family background, previous family membership, have a right to be here. He is a Brother who appreciates the old charges are about action. They are to be applied to our lives in the Lodge and in the Profane world. He understands and believes that no religion or mode of worship precludes a man from becoming a Brother if he believes in the supreme being. A Born-Again Fundamentalist Freemason knows a Masonic temple is a temple of peace and the center of union between honest men. The happy means of consolidating friendships between all Brethren. He understands our relationships within our Brotherhood are based on personal merit.

A Born-Again Fundamentalist Freemason knows the duties we owe to ourselves are precisely those we owe to our Brothers. We wish our Brothers a good lifetime as we wish our own and promote good for all our Brethren. As a Brother we strive to know ourselves and to be at peace with ourselves which opens us to knowing the intimacies of our Brother and to honour their peace. We consider our Brother a second self and so as we love ourselves, we love our Brother. We know learning is a pathway to goodness and honour and support our Brother on their path as we ourselves move along ours. We govern our emotion, intellect, ambition, desires and ego assisting a Brother when he struggles with these imposters. Discipline and Duty are not simply words for us. They are a life style. To be virtuous is not a goal it is an imperative. We know that we create our own happiness, so we aid our brother in creating his happiness. We rest our opinions on foundations of fact not rumor and so protect ourselves and our Brothers from unfounded dispersions. We do not strive to master our Brothers but seek to master ourselves. We first see the positive in ourselves and the positive in our Brother. We number in our attributes self-discipline, compassion, responsibility, courage, perseverance, honesty, loyalty, and faith. As Brothers we do not crave worldly distinction but rather the

distinction of the soul. We know our soul and the souls of our Brothers will meet again in the Grand Lodge Above. We know the Supreme Being walks with us. Because of this and our Brothers we will never be alone.

Though our symbols form much of the visuals of Freemasonry, for the born-again Fundamentalist Freemason the bonds of Brotherhood are not explicitly dependent on these symbols. We have a shared faith that binds us as Brethren. Our faith is visible in our ideals and the way we connect with our Brothers. Our faith gives us reverence for ourselves, our Brothers and mankind. Our faith is an anchor for ourselves and our Brothers in our moral development. We are builders who build with humility, a gift of our faith. Faith does not need proofs but if we should need proof, we can see it in the way our Brothers treat us and we treat them.

A Born-Again Fundamentalist Freemason looks to our Masonic past and knows our faith, attributes and ritual of the Craft have been loved and practiced by our Fathers, Grandfathers and beyond. Our appointment as born-again Brethren is to never break the cable tow that has been left for us to revere. Our obligation is to strengthen our Craft to pass it on to future Brethren, unbroken, vibrant and momentous. We do this together because we are born again Fundamentalist Freemasons.

For the born-again Fundamentalist Brother as Smith says there is nothing wrong in Freemasonry that the observance and appliance of the old charges cannot fix. A Born-Again Fundamentalist Freemason joins a long pageant of "good men and true" men of honour and honesty. A Born-Again Fundamentalist Freemason toils so when the Profane speaks of the Craft there is no mention of secrets but rather the affirmation a Freemason is a man you can trust and respect. For the Born-Again Fundamentalist Freemason there is no confusion in the temple about who we are. We are Freemasons and privileged to be so.

Thankyou