

## From The East

### Are You A True Seeker?

To me, the most vital component of Freemasonry is faith. Declaring that you have it, acting on the heartfelt inward promise that you will never allow it to be shaken, and that you will be divinely rewarded for possessing it by putting it into practical application in everyday life. But faith in what?

As of late there has been much discussion in our Lodge about religious freedom and tolerance, and the moral fiber on which our country was founded. Even those who know little of Freemasonry are acutely aware of the strong connection of the Craft to our founding forefathers. There is no doubt that George Washington, Benjamin Franklin and all the other great Masons who aided in designing and constructing our country meant faith in God, and they clearly and continually state precisely that. This country was founded on religious tolerance but that tolerance was meant to be extended within the different denominations of Christianity only, and they were not implying anything other than that. Christianity is the precept upon which America was born, dedicated, and up until now, preserved. Study some of the writings of Thomas Jefferson and you will observe a true perspective of the religious climate of this era, and learn what the intentions of these men were, along with their opinions and exhortations of the dangers of not exercising those principles correctly.

Gradually in this great country of ours, the term God has been taken out of our schools, out of our work places, off our buildings, and now there is a movement to even remove God from our religious holidays, all because someone wants to replace Him with either agnostics, atheists, or another religious concept altogether. No matter of the hundreds of thousands of men and women who have fought and died to preserve this country for the last 250 years in His name. The Holy Bible, the Great Light in Masonry, which we take as the rule and guide to our faith and practice, openly lies upon our altar, and it, along with our founding forefathers, warns us about this very thing.

I must say I found it extremely uplifting to read the Grand Master's Message in the newest edition of Texas Mason magazine. Most Worshipful Grandmaster Michael Wiggins states, "self-centeredness, selfishness, and selfish motives are not in keeping with the reverential spirit required by the true seeker of Divine Light and Wisdom." My brothers, the operative term here is, true seeker. Are you a true seeker? In his address, our Most Worshipful Grand Master mentions God no less than seven times. His God, my God, your God, and the one and only God of whom this country was founded.

Should we exercise tolerance, religious and otherwise, in Freemasonry? Yes. Should we reject the very precepts upon which America was divinely created? Absolutely not! One thing we should always avoid in the practice of Freemasonry is to never let politics, or religion, interfere with the good works we set out to accomplish, allowing tolerance to be our best ally. But we should not do it at the mere risk of sacrificing our heritage, our legacy, and the very principles of which this country was formed. In this highly charged politically correct world in which we now reside, often we find ourselves 'in between a rock and a hard place.' However, don't confuse the obligation to respect the rights of others with relinquishing your own personal belief system, thereby submissively handing over your freedoms just to avoid contention. I would venture to say that during the American Revolution this idiom was encountered regularly, and it is obvious by the outcome, that our forefathers not only took this to heart but also did everything within their power to protect those rights, with the intention to preserve those rights and principles for future generations. Since those future generations are now upon us, my question is, do we want to freely give away those rights and privileges of ours just because someone demands that we sacrifice our philosophies in order to honor and accept their philosophy?

God is mentioned and reverentially referred to in the opening and closing of our Lodge meetings, God is mentioned throughout all the degrees, and we solemnly swear upon His name to abide by all the dictates of our obligation.

When we stand before God one day, the omnipotent Creator of all things, to be judged according to our actions in this brief life, what will be the outcome? God, in all His grace, gave us the gift of free agency, so that we may make our own choices, and in turn, we will be judged by those choices. My choice is if it's good enough for George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, our Most Worshipful Grand Master, and the countless hundreds of thousands of Masons who passed down the mantel to this generation, then, I too, will be a true seeker.

May God Always Bless Us, One, and, All.

**Duke Davis, Worshipful Master**

## The West Gate

What really motivates you? What is motivation?

Motivation implies movement. It means the difference in getting up and doing something rather than just sitting there and doing nothing or letting someone else do it - that is apathy and indifference.

Webster defines motivation as "causing or having the power to cause motion; an impulse from within. "

It has always been interesting to me that when someone is really motivated they will overcome almost all obstacles to achieve the goal or desired result. They will conjure or muster "the power", or energy to do what it takes to make it happen.

When there is no motivation there is no power or energy, and then comes all kinds of excuses why someone cannot move themselves to set things into motion and cause things to happen, and the end result: FAILURE.

As Masons there is, in history, a list of names of great men who made things happen, in this country's government, in education, business, the arts, science, music and the list goes on and on. No doubt they were motivated, and this motivation caused action, and that action gave great results. And many others benefited from it.

So what motivates you to action. In the business world it can be the satisfaction of doing a job well done, but in most cases it is the amount of money we are paid. The better the job the more you can be paid.

We are not paid any money for the work we do as Freemasons, but we do receive rewards for our works. Our pay can be in the form of knowing what we have done good for others and observing the reactions displayed in our local community. We participate in helping a family during Christmas. Have you read the "thank you" cards sent from these children written by their own little hands? Or, how about honoring a fellow brother with the Golden Trowel award celebrating what he does for others in the community and seeing the happiness displayed by him, his family and friends. Then, honoring a citizen with the Community Builder award and knowing that the local Newspaper noticed what we did for her and seeing the support she had that night. A few weeks ago, during our most recent Education Banquet, I heard the shaking voice of a student say, "Oh My God" when he was informed that he was chosen to receive the scholarship award, and then finally hearing the Frederickburg School Superintendent say at that meeting that it was good that Masons recognized the good they do for education and the students.

We are doing a lot of good for others locally. If we feel as we say we do regarding our Fraternity and know the good it can do to ourselves, our families, and others in our community, then let's do something more than just think and talk about our future actions. May we stay Motivated, and know that our pay and or rewards are in doing good deeds, to benefit others, and that the "G" displayed in our Lodge room is a reminder that the Architect of the Universe can also see what we are doing and will give us that smile of approval. That, Brethren, is priceless!

**Sal Pacheco, Senior Warden**

## The South Gate

It is April and we are well into the year 2015. We hosted a successful education banquet this past month and awarded three scholarships to three deserving young men and women. Judging by their character and high school accomplishments, it makes me rest easier knowing that the future may be in good hands after all. We were also able to present the Lamar Medal to two very hard working, and dedicated educators from Harper and Fredericksburg. Teachers don't get enough recognition for the job they do each day. Trust me; it is not as easy as it looks.

My topic this month will be the second working tool of the Entered Apprentice, the common gavel. When presented with this tool, we are told how it is used by the builder to create stones that better fit the builder's use. Let's examine how we as Free and Accepted Masons are asked to make use of it. I think about this often each day. How many things do I keep running around in my head that are not necessary? Whether it is the guy who cut me off in traffic or the person in the express lane at the grocery with too many items, it is hard for these things not to bother me. Are those things really something I should dwell on in my life? I think not. I try each day to find the good in life. When doing so, I tend to be a happier person. I try not to get caught up in the trivial things and focus more on the big picture. Is getting cut off in traffic going to ruin my day? It shouldn't even be a factor in my day. As I get better at trimming out the negative, it seems that life is a little smoother. In my opinion those vices and superfluties may hold a person back. I am continually working to be a better living stone. It may take some focus and personal redirection, but it is attainable.

I will close by referring back to the students that are receiving those scholarships. So often we worry about this generation being able to handle the future. I choose to focus on the fact that these young men and women will lead us into a new era of technology and advancement that we can only dream about. I feel that is a good example of using the common gavel in my daily life. How about you?

**Randall King, Junior Warden**

## Mouth To Ear

Masonry as you and I know it has a proud heritage. Since 1717 when Lodges grouped themselves together to form the first Grand Lodge, down to the present time, Masons have distinguished themselves in government, in business and in every phase of human endeavor. Despite this tremendous and unsurpassed record of achievement by Masons, we find the image of Masonry misunderstood by some non Masons. Image is very important .

Lets talk about image for a moment. A great deal of my business was conducted by long distance telephone. I may talk to a customer for years before I have the opportunity to meet him face to face Through the years I have noted that voice does not always match the image projected through the telephone. I remember one occasion I was speaking with a customer in Monroe, Louisiana. I was a young salesman and trying very hard to please this customer. But it seemed that regardless of my efforts he alway came across as very overbearing, hard talking, and somewhat abusive. We were speaking one day about a convention in Los Angeles and he asked me if I was going. I remember it particularly well because it was the first convention that I had the opportunity to attend. We arranged to meet in the hotel lobby. He asked me what I looked like and I told him I was six foot four, 220 lbs. and 24 years old. He remarked that he was about the same. Now remember, the only image I had was what I had conceived in my mind through his voice and actions. I was standing in the lobby of the hotel and I heard a voice behind me which I recognized at once. When I turned to shake his hand, I met Arthur Bruik who latter

became a very good friend. He was five foot three weighed 145 lbs about 60 years of age and white haired.

I tell you this story to illustrate that images can be deceiving.

What do we mean by Image as it relates to Freemasonry? The question asked is what kind of shadow or light are we the members casting?

In the early 1940s, the war years, I spent a lot of time with my grandfather. My father was in the service and my mother worked hard trying to hold the family together. My grandfather was the first image of a Mason I can remember and I developed at a early age what I held Masonry to be. I recall in most towns in south Georgia two story buildings with the square and compasses on them. That was where the good guys were if I got lost from my granddad that is where I should go. Even at that early age I knew that Masonic membership was a privilege sought by outstanding men of all backgrounds and talents... men who were impressed by words and action of Masons with whom they associated. Masonic temples were the focal points of the intellectual and social life of the community. Dignity, courtesy, charity and consideration for their fellow men characterized the few public appearances by Masons. Masons that I came in contact with from the time of my early childhood through my teen years as a member of DeMolay made a lasting impression on me.

I recall our chapter dad Ham Horton. He was a great Mason and a pillar of the community. His goal was to lead and to direct us to become good men and maybe someday Masons. His image was both good and that of a Mason. He cast a wonderful shadow and image of a Mason.

In recent years changes in social standards, life styles, needs for community activities and attitudes toward organized groups generally have resulted in a decrease in interest in the Fraternity both from within and from those who might be potential members. Although the basic tenants of Freemasonry have not changed and will not change, the image of the Fraternity in the public mind needs to be enhanced. Past Grand Master John E. Jack Kelly charged us in 1987 Sesquicentennial of Masonry in Texas, to "Walk Proud, Act Proud, and Be Proud" and that we will help Masonry to be recognized for the outstanding institution that it is...the greatest fraternity in the history of mankind.

Perhaps equally important we should cast a true and correct image of Masonry upon the mind of the new candidate so that he is not disappointed after he starts his journey through the degrees to become a Master Mason. It would seem that with the exploding population of our nation that Masonic membership would be at an all-time high.

Thousands of young men are coming of age and should be petitioning our lodges, but they they are not. Why? Could it be that we are not casting the correct image we have been talking about? These young men will become the leaders of the future....the men who will guide the destiny of America in the critical years ahead.

It was from just such young men in the Revolutionary days that were produced from Masonry such revered members as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere and countless others. A fact that is generally overlooked however is that these men for the most part became Masons first, practiced Masonic principles in their lives, were recognized as good men casting a proper image of Masonry as you and I know it and then became great leaders of our nation.

Let's think for a moment about how we can improve and enhance our image in the public domain. We should remember that our words and actions leave an impression. If we display Masonic emblems on our clothing or automobile we should be especially careful to portray nothing but the highest moral and ethical principles in our endeavors.

A Mason should live according to the beautiful lessons of morality he has been taught. He should demonstrate

by example the merits of Masonry to such an extent that other good men will want to become Masons.

In the final analysis what we need to improve the image of Freemasonry everywhere is dedicated Brethren of unquestioned character who are willing to act in every area of their private and public lives "As just and upright Men and Masons."

As Past Grand Master Kelly said so well, "Do you believe in Masonry? Show me. Show it in the image you project in your work. Show it in the image you project in your community. Show it in the image you project in your church. Show it by demonstrating your compassion for your fellow man. Show your Masonry in the image you proudly project in every phase of your life."

As the poet so ably said,  
"Let's be a Mason every day,  
Not only on Tuesday night.  
For it's being a Mason all the while  
That gives our craft its light...."

What kind of shadow are you casting?

What kind of image are you presenting?

Think about it.

**W.M. Mike Gower**  
**Past Grand Master Texas 1999**

## Labors of the Craft

Wednesday, March 18th, we held our annual Education Banquet at Fredericksburg Inn and Suites. Scholarships were presented to Elaine Marie Lochte from Fredericksburg High School, Micah Middleton from Harper High School and the Wilbur Hall NJROTC scholarship was presented to Florecita Colmenero from Fredericksburg High School. In addition, the Mirabeau Lamar Award was presented to top educators Cheryl Flink from Fredericksburg ISD and Jay Harper from Harper ISD. What a wonderful evening this was!

Thursday, March 26th we had an Entered Apprentice degree.

Our final Traveling Masters night of the year was Monday, March 2nd and we visited Medina Lodge. This concluded our official visits and the concept is working well. WM Bob Austin attended our stated meeting on March 9th along with two other brethren from Rising Star Lodge, so the concept is catching on. Thank you, brethren!

The Breakfast Boys Social Club will convene this month on Tuesday, April 21st at City Café beginning at 8:00 AM. All Masons are welcome for an hour full of food, laughs and fellowship.

The Lunch Bunch will meet on Monday, April 27th at Gatti's Pizza at 11:30 AM. Masons, wives and friends are all invited.

Join us at Fredericksburg Lodge #794 as we host the Master Wardens Secretary Meeting on Wednesday, April 22nd. All Masons, especially new Masons, and wives are invited. Dinner will be served at 6:30 PM followed by the meeting at 7:00 PM.

We currently have two EA's preparing for proficiency in the first section.

## Words of Wisdom

“One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors.”

- Plato -

“I don't understand why people think everything has to have meaning. While painting the Mona Lisa did Leonardo Da Vinci intend to have greater meaning than a work of art that he made?”

- Devin J. Monroe -

“I wanted to change the world. But I have found that the only thing one can be sure of changing is oneself.”

- Aldous Huxley -

“Any man who thinks he can be happy and prosperous by letting the government take care of him, better take a look at the American Indian.”

- Henry Ford -

“If a writer wrote merely for his time, I would have to break my pen and throw it away.”

- Victor Hugo (1802-1885) -

## Tongue in Cheek

One day a six year old girl was sitting in her classroom. The teacher was going to explain evolution to the children.

The teacher asked a little boy, “Tommy, do you see the tree outside?”

Tommy said, “Yes.”

“Do you see the grass outside, too?” she asked again.

“Yes,” Tommy replied.

“Now, go outside and look up and see if you can see the sky,” the teacher told him.

Tommy returned quickly and said, “Yes, I saw the sky.”

The teacher then asked Tommy, “Did you see God up there?”

“No”, Tommy answered.

“That's my point,” the teacher explained. “We can't see God because he isn't there. Possibly, he just doesn't exist.”

The little girl spoke up and wanted to ask the boy the same questions. The teacher agreed, so the little girl asked him, “Tommy, do you see the tree outside?”

“Yes,” Tommy said.

“Do you see the grass outside, too?” she asked again.

“Yessss!,” Tommy replied once again.

“Did you see the sky, too?” the little girl asked.

“Yessss!,” Tommy said.

“Tommy,” the little girl said, “Do you see the teacher?”

“Of course,” Tommy fires back.

“Do you see her brain?” the little girl asked.

“Well, uh, no,” Tommy said.

“So, then according to what we’re taught here in school today,” the little girl quips, “She possibly might not even have one!”

‘For we walk by faith, not by sight.’ II Corinthians 5:7

## Recipe of the Month

### **Cream of Cilantro Soup**

By Carol Bradshaw

One Bunch Fresh Cilantro  
One 32 oz. Reduced sodium, Fat Free Chicken Broth, Divided  
Two Tablespoons Butter  
Two Tablespoons All Purpose Flour  
One 8 oz. Container Fat Free Cream Cheese  
One 8 oz. Container Light Sour Cream (or Greek Yogurt)  
One Garlic Clove, Minced  
¼ Teaspoon Salt  
¼ Teaspoon Ground Red Pepper  
¼ Teaspoon Ground Cumin  
Garnish: Fresh Cilantro Sprigs, Sour Cream

Remove stems from cilantro and coarsely chop leaves. Process cilantro and one cup chicken broth in a blender or food processor until blended, stopping to scrape down sides. Melt butter in a Dutch oven over medium heat; whisk in flour. Gradually add remaining three cups broth, whisking constantly until mixture is smooth. Boil one minute. Stir in cilantro mixture, cream cheese and next five ingredients; simmer soup for 15 minutes.

Makes 6 cups; serving size, 1 cup

From the Fredericksburg Lodge #794 “Recipes, Remedies and Ramblings” – 2012