

The act of initiation is more than a simple induction ritual. In many esoteric organizations, it serves as a method to illuminate inner portals which are typically hidden from the physical world. Once “light” has been directed upon these portals, the candidate is given keys which allow them to enter and explore the rooms that reside just beyond the realm of mundane existence.

In Freemasonry, this method of illumination and education define the Blue Lodge degrees. There are many emblems to be absorbed, lessons to be learned and symbols to be deciphered. Each degree is very unique and imparts a treasure trove of inner wisdom for those who choose to look deeply within the ritual as well as the knowledge lectures. Given the vast amount of information presented to the candidate, many of the keys placed in their grip may be overlooked or even slip through the experiential cracks. While we can always read the volumes of literature dedicated to the physical signs and symbols, there are verbal keys that may escape our attention.

Perhaps the most important verbal key we receive in the Entered Apprentice degree is one that is not obscured or hidden within the ritual. It is the very first challenge we receive as well as the very first affirmation we state in open lodge. When properly grasped and employed, this key has the potential to unlock the mysteries of our place in the universe; laying the groundwork for the great work to follow and setting the stage for true advancement as men and Freemasons

What key holds so much power and yet is so often overlooked?

It is a simple question asked of all candidates upon entering the lodge room and embarking upon the mysteries of masonry for the very first time: “In whom do you put your trust”.

For many candidates, an answer is given, the initiation continues and the question is quickly forgotten. But what of it? How important is this key? Additionally, are we truly aware of the awesome power that is unleashed when we not only state the source of our trust, but actually live it?

We already know that in order to become a Freemason, one must profess a belief in a supreme being. Who that Supreme Being is and how this Supreme Being is worshipped is the sacred domain of each and every one of us who enter the lodge for the first time. Does this mean that every man who is a Freemason takes this prerequisite to heart? No, we have all encountered Brothers, who by their actions and conversation betray the fact that they really do not believe in a Supreme Being.

This is not a surprising attitude. In this day and age, many people have a hard time accepting the concept of a Supreme Being. We have been taught that science can provide all of the answers and that belief in a Creator is nothing more than superstitious nonsense. We carry this with us in all aspects of our life. Thus, when we kneel down for the first time before the altar of Freemasonry, some of us are not truly convinced where our trust lies.

Given the societal views on the concepts of God, creation and the universal forces that lie beyond the scope of science, it becomes easy to see why some may hesitate when they are asked “In whom do you place your trust”. It is a question that is chock full of connotations, dogmatic constraints and the ultimate surrender of assumed omnipotence. Although a candidate may believe in a Creator, he still might find it very difficult to publicly acknowledge this.

It is for this reason that the candidate is, and should be, on his own for this critical question. This is a key that must be earned in order to truly unlock one of the greatest mysteries: Who am I and where is my place in the universe?

Often, Brothers will try to help by whispering the answer to faltering candidates as they puzzle through the question. In doing this, they are allowing a very important key to slip through the candidates fingers. The inability to answer this question is worthy of a trip back into the preparation room, for silent contemplation, meditation or prayer until the answer is reached. If the correct answer is never reached, then the candidate is obviously not yet ready to take his place in a fraternity that demands belief in a Supreme Being as a core tenet.

While admission of faith is a liberating and incredibly powerful key, putting your faith in something greater than yourself is the ultimate act of universal cooperation. All faiths, from the Abrahamic to the Pagan, employ the concept of prayer in their belief systems. Beseeching a Supreme Being, whether it is Jehovah, Allah, Jesus or even the Hermetic concept of the One sets a progression of events into place. For the individual, it can be a well needed respite from endless worry; allowing the mind to start formulating solutions as opposed to grinding away at the same seemingly insurmountable problem. I know that in my life, the phrase from the 1st Knowledge Lecture, “My trust being in God, my faith was well founded” has served me very well in times of tribulation.

What is it about this key that is so powerful? Simply put, it transcends simple affirmation by employing universal laws that promote spiritual and personal growth. When it is broken down into component parts, a series of 5 universal truths emerge, with each individual truth supporting the one preceding it. These core elements have been the backbone of many established religious systems as well as the Western and Eastern mystery traditions.

Breaking it down to its 5 core elements, the following interpretation is revealed:

1. “Your trust being in God”

This act of supplication allows the candidate to see the universe and his place in it. All esoteric and religious systems define boundaries to assist mankind in realizing that as powerful as we are in this plane of existence, there are greater forces and principles at work. We are but a cog in this great wheel of existence. By placing our full trust into the universal hierarchy, we set into motion the ability to create and

accept reality. Thus, trust becomes the first step in moving forward as masters of our lives as opposed to bystanders who are seemingly adrift in the seas of fate.

2. “Your Faith is well founded”

When taken with the preceding affirmation of trust, this core element unlocks the power of positive thinking and visualization. It is one thing to trust; it is another matter altogether to act on that belief. In many esoteric systems, well founded faith allows creation in the different planes of existence. The hermetic axiom declares “As above, so below” while the Bible states “¹Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you”.

3. “Arise”

In all faiths, adherents are tasked to rise above the mundane. Whether you are a Christian being asked to elevate yourself from the base desires that create complications in life to a Buddhist who mentally attunes to a higher consciousness for the purpose of creating change, the concept of rising above the ego is a primary charge that propels the individual from a life spent in darkness to an illuminated way of being.

4. “Follow your Guide”

The role of a spiritual guide is represented in many organized religions as well as esoteric communities and alludes to receiving instruction from a divine mediator. This mediator is represented as an external entity in many belief systems or as a higher expression of self in others. Adherents of the Abrahamic faiths call this entity the Guardian angel. Some Pantheistic systems use lesser deities as guides while others employ the concept of spirits who inhabit the natural world. Even atheists, who eschew the notions of powers greater than themselves, cannot deny that source of wisdom and morality that gives good instruction comes from within.

5. “Fear no danger”

This is the final act of a divine principle that allows true change to occur. It is the culmination of the previous series of affirmations and sets the stage for changes in events and circumstances or the acceptance of difficult problems. For example, a martial artist can train for years in his discipline, yet if he allows fear to dictate his actions, all of that training is for naught. Accordingly, the power of fear can keep us from opening doors of opportunity or growth and keep us imprisoned in circumstances that we could easily change. This affirmation exhorts us to act in good faith; to do what is right regardless of the perceived danger.

Taking all of these concepts together, we find that the very first lesson a candidate receives before the altar of masonry is the lesson of self mastery: To know one’s place in

¹ New International Version, Luke 11:9

the Universe; to trust in those universal principles; to rise above the petty and mundane, to listen from the deep wellspring of divine guidance that resides in the soul of every man; and to act with perfect confidence that your travels will return you to the source of creation.

Works Cited

Author's Name. Bible. English. New International Version. Wheaton Ill: Tyndale House
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