

Freedom, Family, Freemasonry
A Commitment for the Future
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What does freedom and family have in common with Freemasonry and what should our commitment be for the future?

As we think back in history, we need to remember the sacrifices that were made not only by our ancestor, but also by some of you that we might have the privilege to live in a free country and be assured that we will be able to pass these freedoms on to our families -- and that our sons, grandsons, and generations to come will be able to enjoy Freemasonry and the teachings and principles that go with it.

As I think about freedom, Masonic education and Freemasonry, I am reminded of what it says on one of the grade school buildings in our community. Over the front door are the words, "Only the educated are free." How true this is not only in our everyday lives, but also in our lives as Masons. It is certainly our duty as Masons not only to educate our Brethren about our fraternity, but also the rest of the world.

When we consider that Freemasonry is a way of life and that really our only secrets are basically modes of recognition, then there is really very little about Freemasonry that we can't talk about to our friends and family. When you consider that the word free in Freemasonry does not mean cheap, easy or without payment, then it is definitely our duty to pass on to the future generations the wonderful teachings of our fraternity.

We must understand that it is going to be hard to entice men to become members of something they know nothing about. Especially now, since we live in a time of multiple communications worldwide and that everyone wants answers to and has a desire to understand all facets before they become involved.

For many years our Candidates were told not to tell anyone anything about Freemasonry. What happened to them? When they received their degrees, they went through their lives saying nothing. That's why in 1998 we had in excess of 13,000 brethren eligible to receive 50-year pins and we still find ourselves unable to maintain a status quo of members.

We must replace ourselves. We don't need 600,000 Masons in Ohio to be a vibrant part of our communities, but we do need to stop our losses. To do this, let us go back to the basics of Freemasonry. Acknowledge those who have given us these freedoms. Be family oriented, involve our families in practicing the way of life Freemasonry teaches and be a part of our communities.

We made a commitment to a way of life when we became Masons, and it is

definitely our duty to make our payments on that commitment. Today more than ever, our way of life is needed. There are a lot of young men out there who do not like what they see, or what they are witnessing in their communities and country.

They do not understand and cannot tolerate the values of some people that are called leaders. Please go out and find these men and show them what we as Freemasons have to offer. A way of life and a commitment for the future that will make our communities a better place to live.