

Charge at Initiation

Brother:

You are now admitted, by the unanimous consent of this Lodge, a fellow of our Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity – ancient, as having subsisted from time immemorial – and honorable, as tending in every particular to do honor to those who conform to its noble precepts. The greatest monarchs and most exalted heroes and patriots, of all ages and countries throughout the known world, have been encouragers of Freemasonry; and many of them have presided as Grand Masters of Masons in their respective Jurisdictions, not thinking it any lessening of their highest dignities to level themselves with their Brethren in Freemasonry and to act upon the same Square as they did.

The world's Great Architect is our Supreme Grand Master; and the unerring rule He has given us, is that by which we work. Religious disputes are never suffered within the Lodge; for, as Freemasons, we worship God as our consciences require, and thus we are united as in one sacred band.

There are three general heads of duty which Freemasons ought always to inculcate, namely: to God, our neighbor, and ourselves; to God, in never mentioning His Name but with that reverential awe which a creature ought to bear to his Creator, and in looking upon Him always as the God over all; to our neighbor, in acting upon the Square, or doing as we would be done by; and to ourselves, in avoiding all intemperance and excesses, whereby we may be rendered incapable of following our work, or led into behavior unbecoming our laudable profession, and in always keeping within due bounds, and free from all guilt.

In the State, a Freemason is to behave as a peaceable and dutiful citizen, conforming cheerfully to the government under which he lives.

He is to be a man of benevolence and charity; not sitting down contented, while his fellows, much more his Brethren, are in want, when it is in his power, without prejudicing himself or his family, to relieve them.

In the Lodge, he is to behave with all due decorum, lest the beauty and harmony of its workings should be disturbed or broken; he is to be obedient to the Master and other officers set in authority over him, and is to apply himself closely to the business of Freemasonry, that he may the sooner become skilled therein, both for his own credit and for that of the Lodge, and thereby earn advancement as the wages of his labors.

He is not to neglect his own necessary avocations for the sake of Freemasonry, nor to involve himself in quarrels with those who through ignorance may speak evilly or despitefully of it.

He is to be a lover of the arts and sciences, and is to take all opportunities to improve himself therein.

If he recommends a friend to be made a Freemason, he must vouch him to be such as he really believes will conform to these duties, lest by the misconduct of that friend at any time the Lodge should pass under evil imputations.

Nothing can be more shocking to all faithful Freemasons than to see any of their Brethren profane the sacred Rules of Freemasons; and such as do, they wish had never been admitted into the Fraternity.