

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER

# DISCOURSE

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## “A fine line”

Dear Brothers:

If you have followed the “Discourses” you undoubtedly know the view expressed on the obligations we have taken, the responsibilities we have assumed and opinions on what a volunteer is all about. This being said my Brothers there are other parts of our obligations, tradition and rituals, which also reinforce Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, together with help, aid and assistance. This my Brothers is a fine line we must all walk after due and careful consideration in every case.

Every year around this time, we hear or are exposed to the horror stories of Brothers being passed over or dropped from the line, we hear about electioneering, we hear about Brothers dropping out or leaving the Fraternity, and you know this could have all been avoided for the most part, had we acted as the Mason we all are supposed to be.

Undoubtedly, our Lodge Brothers will fit in one of the three categories listed below and as such they need to be treated according to the effort they put forth in the discharge of their duties and commitment to their new positions in the Lodge.

There are Brothers which when elected or appointed to a station or place in the Lodge, or appointed to serve on a particular committee never go any further than having their name on a badge or on their Lodge/Grand Lodge record and forget their responsibilities for the job they have accepted, they face no difficulties because they do not plan to do anything.

There are also those Brothers that have accepted their responsibilities and labor as diligently as possible within the confines of their ability, work, family and church/synagogue permitting.

And, then we have those Brothers that have accepted their responsibilities and labor as diligently as possible and have succeeded in all their endeavors because it has not interfered or conflicted with their work, family and church/synagogue permitting.

The different scenarios described above demonstrate what probably occurs in most Lodges, and anyone can see how they need to be treated differently.

The first thing we must do as leaders is understand and recognize the difference in the three scenarios and plan to act firmly and with resolve to see that the proper response is given to all of them. As humans we need to be acknowledged, and sometimes doing nothing is one way to attract attention to see if anyone even acknowledges our existence.

Let us discuss our first scenario; here we have a Brother that for some reason or another has found himself in a position where he is required to perform certain chores, let us say that this Brother was thrust into this new position, let us also say that no one explained to him what his responsibilities were, let us further say that after this Brother was installed or accepted his new job no one gave him the information on how to proceed, that no one offered to guide him in any direction and whether or not he was abandoned or not by his peers, this does not diminish the responsibilities he has undertaken.

As a man and Mason that has given his word, he is obligated to find out for himself what the requirements are and what his new responsibilities demand of him. The failure of those in leadership roles to inform him of his duties does not diminish his obligation and although it may compound his work load nonetheless he is still responsible for the performance of his duties. If you choose to follow the lead of those that failed in the instructions by not performing your duties you are no better, and use that as an excuse for your failures, you deserve nothing more than the ridicule of your Brethren, and as such you should not be rewarded with social promotions.

The second scenario a Brother is given certain responsibilities and he works hard and strives to fulfill them to the best of his abilities but at times he cannot make it, or fulfill a particular commitment because his work, family or church/synagogue have limited his cable tow, and yet he gives us a heads up of his circumstances and asks for help, aid and assistance. We as Brothers should step up to the plate and give this hard working Brother a hand so that his obligations may be met.

This Brother should be encouraged to go on through, to continue to service the Craft and he should receive the respect and admiration of all his Brothers for his dedication to service, and honor to the commitment of his obligations. The leadership of the Lodge should recognize this Brother's efforts and praise and reward accordingly.

The third scenario the Brother does everything right, knows his responsibilities and performs them diligently and swiftly. This Brother also needs the recognition of the leadership and the Brethren of the Lodge that he will know that his efforts are appreciated.

Around the time of election we find many cases where we must walk the fine line and analyze the performances of our Brethren while they were in charge, did they fulfill their obligations or not, if not why not, what were their limitations, were the failures in performances willful or were they involuntary; was he offered help, did he ask for help, or did he ignore his responsibilities.

One thing for sure, after careful analysis and I mean careful, because you have the future of a Brother and definitely that of your Lodge in hand, your just and upright conduct as a Mason before your God and man must be that your actions never come into question from anyone more specially yourself, that you did not do the right thing for your Brother or the Lodge is one action you may not want to live with for the rest of your life, so judge carefully and with justice.

If you are not intimately aware of the Lodge and what has transpired during the year and cannot properly perform the analysis required to make an intelligent decision it would almost be better if you did not participate in the election. Do not approach a Brother and ask for guidance, for you do not know the reasons why he may steer you one way or another and may use your vote to work against a good Brother or for the detriment of the Lodge.

If someone approaches you with unsolicited information on how to vote at the elections, you must know that this is a violation of the Digest of Masonic Law and is clearly a case of electioneering and as such you should report the violation that this Brother(s) is dealt with accordingly. If you receive a phone call soliciting your participation in some kind of cabal to unseat a Brother or defeat or support some measure in the Lodge, ask the Brother if he will be willing to do the same in front of all the Brethren and in Lodge convene, that all the Brothers may benefit from his wisdom, otherwise do not take the advice, further more report the break in the law to the Worshipful Master or District Deputy Grand Master that the culprit(s) may be dealt with accordingly regardless who and how many are trying to perpetuate this misdeed.

Do not let your friendship be used against you or a Brother. He who is a true Brother and friend would not be using his friendship against you to perpetuate a wrong on another Brother whether you consider him a friend or not, remember as a Mason you are to be able to reason these things out on your own and you owe it first to thyself be true.

Do not be used as a pawn to wrong another Brother whether or not it is done behind the ballot, because you can never hide from your conscience, and the wisest knows not how soon before you stand naked before that great white throne where you may have to answer for all your deeds done while in the flesh, remember to keep eternity in view in all your actions.

Remember that light, more light and further light on this subject is always best, if these actions are questionable, if they are whispering, if they are pulling you to the side, you are most likely being used for someone else's sinister plots, do not get caught in it. Expose to light and you will see that it will not stand to the scrutiny of light and the test of righteousness.

My Brother, be involved, be engaged, do the right thing by all concerned, do not get involved in plots and conspiracies to hurt your Brothers regardless of who they may be. Think how it would feel if you were in the same circumstances and ask yourself how would that feel, would this action against you be justified if not it would not be justified for you to do unto others. Remember you have to live with the man in the mirror and justify to him and He who knows all the consequences of your actions.

These crude and insensitive actions cause more disharmonies, more discontent, and more disruption in our Lodges, among our Brethren than any other actions in the Lodge, and certainly they do not live up to the honor and reputation of the principles and tenants of this Fraternity. "Masonry is a Way of Life" live up to its principles.

Remember part of the Charge that was delivered to you, the Brethren at every installation since time immemorial. "I, therefore trust that you will have but one aim, to please each other, and unite in the grand design of being happy and communicating happiness. Finally, my Brethren, as this association has been formed and perfected in so much union and harmony, in which we greatly rejoice, so may it long continue. May you long enjoy every satisfaction and delight which disinterested friendship can enjoy." Live up to it, it will make you a better man & Mason.

Respectfully and Fraternaly Submitted, I remain your most humble servant

Jorge L. Aladro

Deputy Grand Master

***If you would like to receive, these newsletters make request at email below if you would like to forward to your list of friends you have my permission and thank you in advance.***

*"My Brothers, the newsletters are intended to be thought provoking, to get you to think creatively, to get you thinking what if?, to dare you to improve yourself and your Lodge."*