

OUR FAITH

We all know, from both the scriptures and our Masonic teachings that the three principle rounds of Jacob's ladder represent Faith, Hope and Charity. We also have been told that Charity or Love is the most important belief, and, although I agree, let me point out that Faith is also mighty important.

Faith is all about whether you think you can or not, and in either case, you are probably right. The Great Book of Light, the Holy Bible, tells us emphatically that we can make something of ourselves through our beliefs; in Freemasonry this means faith in God, faith in others, namely, our Brothers, faith in ourselves, faith in our country and faith in life.

In fact, our whole Masonic career is built on Faith. Think back to when you first petitioned your lodge ... at least two men had faith enough in you that they recommended you to our Order. Then three members of your lodge visited with you and investigated you to the point that they too, had faith that you were worthy enough to be a Mason and a member of their lodge. Next, everyone present on the night that your investigating committee report was read had enough faith in the investigating committee and what had been reported on you, that they elected you to membership.

Then you appeared for your initiation and very close to the beginning of the ceremonies, you were asked in whom you placed your trust? Do you have faith in a Supreme Being? Do you believe in God? All along the way, men then Brothers had faith in you; faith that you would learn your catechism, faith that you would be passed to Fellowcraft and raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason, faith that you would not violate your obligations, faith that you would hold all worthy Brothers in as high esteem as they hold you, and so forth. And the faith continues even up to this very moment in time; is there anyone to whom another Brother has not said, "This is on the square!" He is indicating that he has faith that whatever he tells you, will remain with you, and you only.

How important is faith? The American Industrialist, Thomas J. Watson said, "The greatest asset of a man, a business or a nation is faith." As you can see just from the act of joining our fraternity, our total involvement in this Brotherhood is based on faith. Many celebrities and sports figures, many of our government leaders openly express their faith in God. (I wish they ALL did.)

I believe that faith in God is demonstrated through prayer. Johnny Unitas, who in his quest to become an NFL Quarterback exemplified his faith, he said, "Don't be afraid to talk to God; after all, He is our Father." Brooks Robinson, who I've always thought of as the premier third baseman of all time, expands on Doak Walker's answer to what is the most important thing in becoming a success in life. Doak Walker simply said, "The three P's -- Practice, Perseverance and PRAYER." Brooks Robinson goes on to explain, "You have to pay the price to get to the top in anything you attempt. Perseverance is being able to bounce back from the many roadblocks that one finds along life's way. And prayer, the most important of all, is the art of honestly asking God to help you in everything you undertake in life." Prayer is even more important to us as Masons because we are taught never to enter upon any great or important undertaking without first invoking the blessing of God.

I started this article about Faith with a statement that Faith is all about whether you think you can or not; and I leave you with a poem that explains that more fully:

**Whether You Think You Can Or You Can't
You're Probably Right**

If you think you are beaten, you are;
If you think that you dare not, you don't;
If you'd like to win, but you think you can't,
It's almost certain you won't.

If you think you'll lose, you've lost;
For out in the world you'll find
Success begins with a fellow's will,
It's all in the state of mind.

If you think you are outclassed, you are;
You've got to think high to rise;
You've got to be sure of yourself before
You can ever win a prize.

Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man;
But sooner or later the man who wins
Is the man who thinks he can.

SO MOTE IT BE!