

November 2010

**Address given by the Provincial Grand Chaplain at  
the Provincial Service held at the Methodist Church,  
Northallerton on Sunday 17th October 2010**

What I want to say today is bound up in the **Rule of Three** and our response to that rule.

Now the rule of three is a commonly known rule. It is simply that good things come in three's.

In matters spiritual we have in St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians the passage where he speaks of Faith, Hope and Charity.

In matters of faith we hold to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; The threefold nature of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And in Freemasonry we have our foundations of another great trinity; That of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

**Brotherly Love**

I was at a Lodge meeting the other night and the man who was responding to the visitors toast got to his feet and began by commenting that he had been so often to that lodge and that he had made a lot of friends, but he said "I do not want to call you friends, tonight I call you Brothers".

That spoke volumes, for it said something about the world wide tie which binds freemasons together. We might be friends, we might be neighbours, we might not even have met, but above all we are brothers.

**The second of the Masonic trinity is that of Relief.**

Freemasonry does all that it can to help relieve the sufferings of others. I do not need to tell you of the sometimes enormous sums of money we give to charitable causes and to bring immediate relief to large scale sufferings.

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In addition there are smaller and more local donations that we make to a myriad of good causes.

In the best tradition of giving we do not shout it from the hill tops nor broadcast it far and wide. It is nice when it is recognised, but that is not our reason for giving.

I would just add a word of warning. Freemasonry is not solely about charity, important though that is.

Relief is but one part of our reason for being; It is one of the three pillars upon which we rest and we should never allow it to become greater than the other parts of our trinity. A trinity has to be even in all its ways or it will be un-balanced and will in time fall.

### **And that brings us to Truth the final part of our trinity.**

In our meetings we speak frequently of truth, we use words like fidelity, honour and integrity which all have their roots in truth. We seek for truth and we try to live by the truth.

We speak easily of these things because they are part and parcel of our Masonic life. We pledge ourselves on our honour to speak the truth both inside and outside our Lodge building.

So there you have the great Trinity of Freemasonry.

### **Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.**

But they need to be more than just to be emblazoned in our Lodge Rooms; they need to be worked on unceasingly.

In the world of faith, the Church, of whatever denomination or creed, is a corporate body. The Church demands, asks, beseeches, calls and so on. Freemasonry is just the same. The Corporate body that is Freemasonry makes its decisions, gives its pronouncements and offers its largesse.

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But we leave it to the corporate body at our peril. For just as the Church is made up of individuals, so Freemasonry is made up of individuals; It is to the individual that we must always look.

In our Lesson from Isaiah the scene is one of great pomp and majesty, there are angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, but it is the lone individual who responds to the call of God to go and speak for him.

So it is with Freemasonry, it is only when the individual steps out from the line and says here am I, I will go, that Masonry becomes the power for good that it should be and what our forefathers wished it to be.

It is only when men of integrity step forward and in their daily lives show the Trinity of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth to be alive and well, that our great movement will continue to be a power for good throughout this often sad and sorry world. Whom shall I send, who will go for me, said the Lord, and in words which each one should echo, Isaiah said "Here am I, send me". AMEN