

District Deputy Grand Master's Official Visit

Meridian Lodge No. 687

Accompanying Lodge – Buchanan Lodge No. 550

Ancaster Temple

Wednesday February 11, 2009

Brethren, over sixty years ago, Abraham Harold Maslow, who received his PhD in 1934 in psychology from the University of Wisconsin, developed a theory in psychology called 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs'. He proposed that desires develop in an individual in a chronological order from lower to higher desires, ranging from physiological requirements to safety requirements to belongingness and love requirements. As these needs are satisfied, we can then move to esteem wants and self-actualization. Higher order requirements appear as lower order ones are fulfilled. In other words, the difference between wants and needs. A simple example of this is that I may want to be a professional athlete, but what I need is oxygen, food, water, safety, etc., and it is not until these are satisfied that I can think about activating my want as an athlete. Brethren, I could expand on this topic in much more detail, but I will leave that for another time. However, this theory made me think about the question, **what is important in life and how important is it?**

When I look around this room, I think most of us if not all would agree that what is important is not necessarily the material possessions, but rather things like our health, our wife or significant other, our children and grandchildren, etc. I think the big house, the expensive car, or money; important as they may be will not be found at the top of the list.

Sometimes when I need a reminder, all I have to do is stand in front of our refrigerator and look at the pictures that my wife has attached to it. Generally, the pictures are of my two daughters and my two grandsons. Very few pictures are with my wife Bev and I, but if they are, you can bet one of the grandchildren are in the picture. I don't think that Bev considers herself or me as not important; but rather, it points out the priority or importance of the others. Bev even has a few pictures of friends' children and grandchildren; which just shows that they also have a special attachment or importance with us.

Brethren, this question of how important is it is just not meant for our personal life. Let's sit back for a minute and think about the question as it pertains to the lodge and our meetings. I have listed some of the things that I think are important, but by all means, this is not an all-inclusive list.

How important is it to:

- **Greet and welcome the members and visitors** - This is true in general but even more so with a new candidate. Make them feel at home and with the candidate, make him feel relaxed. He may know only a couple of the members.
- **Open the lodge and close at a reasonable hour** - There is no question that our expectation is that the lodge will open as per the stated time and except for some unusual situation, e.g., weather, that should happen. Finishing is equally important and I believe that sometime after 9:30 p.m. and before 10:00 p.m. is reasonable. It is obvious that there are times when this will not happen, but these should be the exception and not the norm. The camaraderie in the banquet room is an important part of the evening. If the lodge doesn't close on time, many of the older members

and those that need to go to work in the morning will leave. Running a long night is a good way of losing the attendance of these members.

- **Perform the ritual properly** - This goes without saying. The work is to be performed as per the Grand Lodge mandate. There is no variation. We all agree that sloppy work is not what we want. This is more for the mechanics of the work, but Deacons that have practiced and been coached properly can make all the difference in the degree and leave a favorable impression with the candidate. The sharpness that the Deacons lead the candidate around the room and the turns at the Warden's chairs, when done properly is a treat to see. I also believe the members like to witness good ritual work and will look forward to the upcoming meetings for more of the same.
- **Recognize and congratulate the brethren** - Many people long for a sense that their hard work is part of something worthwhile, something important, and that their personal efforts make a difference. They crave for assurance that their contribution is both recognized and appreciated. Many of us have struggled with our floor work or memory work, and wasn't it nice when a brethren came up and congratulated you. You know your work may not have been up to par, but his hand or pat on the back probably reassured you to stay with it and not back away.
- **Be truthful in your praise** - Brethren, as I said above, congratulating a brother for his work is important, but don't go overboard with the praise. He will know if his work is sub par and will see right through you if you are too strong with your praise. If it is bad it is bad, but remember even a pig can wear lipstick. Find the positive aspect of the work.

- **Introduce esteemed brethren** - The other night I took a moment to introduce and recognize Bro. Russell Irvine, a member of Seymour, my mother lodge, and also a recipient of the William Mercer Wilson Metal. At the close of lodge he thanked me for acknowledging his presence. You would have thought I gave him a million dollars. To him, this acknowledgement was probably better than the money.
- **Remember our ailing brethren and widows** - This goes without saying. A simple phone call or a visit is all that may be required.

Brethren, we live in a world of fast pace and busy times. Let us not lose sight of what is important. Let's not lose personal touch with what is important.

Thank you