

The Number '15' – A Masonic Connection

The number 15 has several connections to Masonry, the first of which is the total number of steps in the winding staircase. Additionally there were 15 Fellowcrafts that were part of that ancient conspiracy which we learn about in our ritual, 12 of whom realized their error and recanted, leaving just 3 impediments to hinder advancement. This should remind us that some steps we encounter in our journey may be harder to climb than others...unless you have help.

As we begin our climb towards the middle chamber, the first step we take is marked by a plumb, the tool of the Junior Warden who is representative of Hiram Abif, who through his designs made King Solomon's temple beautiful. Hence, this station is referred to as the pillar of beauty and is adorned by the most beautiful of the three original ancient orders in architecture, the Corinthian, provided to us by the Greeks.

The jewel of this station, the Plumb also originated from the Greeks. Originally nothing more than a simple lead ball on a string, it evolved as the Romans adapted it and changed the name to Plumbum, which shortened over time to the word Plumb that we use today. Using nothing more than gravity, this simple tool ensured that structures were perpendicular when placed on level ground. As structures remain upright, so should we endeavor to remain upright Masons. Acting schools teach students to imagine a string coming out of the top of their head to help maintain proper posture. We as Masons should have our own imaginary plumb line to keep ourselves just and morally upright.

This brings us to beauty. Confucius said "Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it". Take a moment to look around your lodge room. It's beautiful! What makes it beautiful? Is it the pictures on the wall, or the altar cloth, bible, and bookmarks? Beauty could be any or all of these things to each of us in an individual way, but what is the true beauty of a Lodge? To me, each and every one of you contributes to the beauty of Fraternal Lodge.

If we look past outward appearances and things only the eyes may perceive, we see true beauty every time we meet. The beauty of our Lodge is when we have brethren at our meetings, taking part in our classes, ritual work and community activities. We are now under severe restrictions as to how many can meet at one time, of course we miss the in person comradery and social time. But the beauty of Masonry is also in the heart. Keep your brethren in your thoughts and prayers. Pray that we will soon be back to the beauty of meeting one another in person and on the level. Behold how beautiful it is when even 2 or 3, or just 10 are gathered together. The beauty of a face is transient, but the beauty of a heart is everlasting and magnificent.

Living Stones - Masonic Thoughts for Today's Mason
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