

**T.F.S.**

**Three, five, and seven**

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**By Stan Shapiro MD, Grand Lodge Education Officer G.L. of MN**

**#205**

*“What we need is not more distrust and division. What we need now is acceptance.” Tom Daschle*

Brother Ken Baril is an accomplished author and Freemason and a valuable member of our Grand Lodge Education Committee and Writers Guild. He sent the following well written article for this publication.

**MAKING GOOD MEN BETTER**

by Ken Baril, Grand Lodge Education Committee, AF & AM of Minnesota

**Making good men better is to extract the essence of the Masonic experience. The ritual and ceremony serve to convey and teach certain moral lessons and elevate the individuals to a position higher than themselves. The lessons are things you have likely already heard or have learned in a moral society. What makes them unique to Freemasonry is that they are presented in a specific format and context.**

**We have come to realize, during the time we have been members of this grand fraternity that we have met men we would have never met otherwise. We had the opportunity to get to know these men, not by their looks or touch, but by their hearts, minds and souls. If we would have passed any of these men on the street before we became Masons, the chances are we would not have noticed them.**

**We have met numerous men who have truly touched our hearts in many ways. We have learned through their example to be more compassionate, more understanding, more forgiving, more sincere, and above all, more loving. Not one of these men has an uncharitable disposition; therefore, they are all true Masons.**

**Masonry strives to teach its members that it would be great if we could convey this message throughout the whole world in ways we would have never thought possible.**

**We look to build on the positive example of others and bring those virtues, which are beneficial to them and to ourselves. No man is perfect, and we are taught that the lodge is a moral workshop in which the rough ashlar is to be polished for use and beauty. If our lodges had been too exacting, none of us would have gained admission.**

**As Masons, we treat those brothers who have unfavorable and irritable traits, not with bitterness, nor with good-natured easiness, not with worldly indifference, nor with philosophic coldness, but with empathy, patience and loving kindness. At our Altar of Obligation, we learn to look for the best in men, find their strong points and cast aside the negative and unfavorable traits. We are taught that we should attempt to see the best in our Brethren, to cast the best light on their actions, to see them and to hear their words in the most positive light, in the most CHARITABLE light. We are also taught to have a benevolent goodwill toward, or love for, humanity and be lenient in our judgment of others. This most benevolent Brotherhood has men of good character.**

**We meet brothers who may be ignorant, weak or even ugly of spirit, driven by some blind force as all of us are apt to be, and if so, our tact and brotherly love and charity may be tested and tried, but more often than not, we can bring them back to intelligence, strength and beauty. As the Bible states, “Judge not, lest ye be judged.” Truly, this is a wise saying, no less true today than when first said. As the old Greek said, “Know thyself,” because if we do not know ourselves, we cannot know others. It behooves us**

to put ourselves under the spell of all the influences the Supreme Architect of the Universe is using for the making of man, among which the spirit of Masonry is one of the gentlest, wisest and most benign.

If our erring brothers must be censored or expelled, they must also be treated with compassion. The Supreme Architect of the Universe waits to welcome them back with joy. They have done themselves a far deeper injury than they have anyone else. With empathy, prayer, and pain, let our hearts beat in harmony with all the powers The Supreme Architect of the Universe is using for their recovery. "There remains Faith, Hope and Charity; but the greatest of these, *is Charity.*"

As Master Masons, we have learned the Five Points of Fellowship, and these lessons must be foremost in our minds. This is how we, as Masons, "*Make Good Men Better!*"

S.K.B.  
3/20/11

**Words to Live By:** "*Whenever you're in conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude.*" *William James*

**If you have any comments, suggestions, or questions, please send them to:** [shapiro.stanley@gmail.com](mailto:shapiro.stanley@gmail.com)

The Education Videos by our education committee can be viewed at:  
<http://www.youtube.com/glmned>

The latest Masonic Monday Question, and some of the past questions, can be viewed at [www.Lodgebuilder.org](http://www.Lodgebuilder.org) and at [www.mn-masons.org](http://www.mn-masons.org)