Masonic Vision and Mission Statements
By Ed Halpaus

“Do not miss a day’s enjoyment or forgo your share of innocent pleasure.”
Ecclesiasticus 14:14

The above quote, from the Apocrypha, is good advice for a happy life. A truism is that a happy life doesn’t happen by accident; it comes about because of a person’s values, life-goals, and choices; knowing and acting on what is important in life. Having a personal vision and mission statement is very helpful in planning for a happy personal and family life.

One very active Freemason, years ago, became disenchanted with his activities in Freemasonry; this caused him to evaluate what was important to him in his Masonic life. He secluded himself for this process of evaluation, so he could write out what made him happy in Freemasonry and what did not. The result was he wrote out his personal Masonic vision and mission statements.

Personal statements such as these are worthwhile to construct in many areas of life: A Personal Masonic vision statement answers the questions, ‘Where do I want to go?’ ‘What can I do to enjoy Freemasonry more?’ It talks about the future, and helps clarify hopes and plans; it’s a reminder of what one is trying to accomplish: A personal Masonic mission statement answers the questions, ‘Why am I a Freemason?’ ‘What is it that I enjoy in and about Freemasonry?’

Personal statements like these differ from statements for groups; a group vision statement is never shared with the public, while a group mission statement is. Personal vision and mission statements are just that; personal, so they are never shared. A vision statement focuses on the future; a mission statement focuses on the present.

Writing a personal Masonic vision and mission statement helps us focus on values and priorities as they apply to us as Freemasons, and how Freemasonry affects our personal life. Since writing his, our friend says he enjoys his Masonic life more now than he did decades ago.

Do you have a personal vision and mission statement for your Masonic life, as it relates to your personal life? These statements are a good way to determine what really matters to an individual in his life. Knowing what matters makes it easier to answer yes or no to the various opportunities that arise in Freemasonry, and its appendant and concordant bodies; based on their relationship to a Mason’s vision and values.

These statements should represent a person’s basic and true values: To be most effective a vision / mission statement should deal with four basic human needs: Economic; Social; psychological; and spiritual.

Economic: This involves the amount of money one is willing to commit to all areas of the Masonic Fraternity. The cause of stress for some people has been called the ‘3 T’s of membership; time, talent, and treasure. A Mason may want to consider how much he is willing to commit in dues, (and in what Masonic groups,) so they will bring him the most enjoyment, (fulfillment,) in his various Masonic involvements.
**Social:** The social aspect involves the tithing of time, not just for the Mason but also for his immediate family. A Mason might consider where he and his wife feel the most welcome and enjoy themselves the most. He also might consider social activities that include his children; are there social activities that include them as well? Do they have a good time in a safe environment?

**Psychological:** This is where growth comes in. Growth involves learning the lessons Masonry has for its votaries, so they can be wiser, better, and happier. A question more and more Masons ask themselves is; does my Lodge teach them to those who want to know?

A motto, (or favorite saying) of Freemasonry is; 'We take in good men and make them better.' One Brother maintains that some Lodges, struggling with membership, attendance, and finances, aren’t doing that; there are Lodges that don’t do what they advertise and claim to do.

**Spiritual:** This involves being involved; being able to contribute our talents. Freemasons tend to be men who like meaningful participation; being able to use their talents in a way that will be helpful to the groups they are members of.

Some groups, both within and without Freemasonry, are very closed in the operations of the group: Such a group might like the member’s treasure, and not be interested in his time and talent. Some Masons, when in such a group, will eventually find a group that is more open to involving all of the 3 T’s of membership.

Vision and mission statements, with the principles and values (the compass and constitution) a person holds as valuable, are essential to happiness in the involvements in so many areas of life, because it helps him clarify what really matters. It’s easier to say ‘no’ when there is a bigger ‘yes’ waiting in the future.

"A personal mission and vision statement does help a Mason in the enjoyment of his Masonic life." ERH

**Words to live by:** Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare.

"In the light of his vision he has found his freedom: his thoughts are peace, his words are peace and his work is peace." Dhammapada

**From the Great Light of Masonry:** "For you this whole vision is nothing but words sealed in a scroll. And if you give the scroll to someone who can read, and say to him, ‘read this, please,’ he will answer, ‘I can’t; it is sealed.’

“Leaders must invoke an alchemy of great vision.” Henry Kissinger

Please remember: if you would like to participate in the latest Masonic Monday Question, please go to http://www.lodgebuilder.org and click on the Lodge Education forum. When you have an answer send it to masonicmonday@gmail.com the Masonic Monday Question for the week of 03/02/09 is: “What was the name of the Master Mason who was shot and killed in a shoot-out with terrorists in front of Blair House in Washington D.C.?”

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With “Brotherly Love”,

Ed Halpaus
Grand Lodge Education Officer

Seek to mentor a Brother Mason:
It’s good for him, it’s good for you, and it’s good for Freemasonry!