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THE GRAND LODGE OF INDIANA

FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS

A Legendary Brotherhood.

Your fellow craft degree is approaching. Depending on your progress and your lodge's schedule, it may be scheduled in the coming weeks. We hope that your time with your mentor, the materials that you've been given, and these emails have helped clear up some of the questions that you have. It's okay to still have questions as your progress, there's ample time to go back and revisit them after you're a master mason. Seek out masonic literature, ask your mentor, talk to informed brothers, or ask a grand lodge masonic educator in your area as you continue your search for answers.

This week, we're going to touch on three more areas as you prepare for your next degree:

- The Words, Grips, and Tokens are our means of recognition by which we can prove ourselves as masons and enter lodges. As you will learn, each degree has its own version of these. Typically, masons will use those of a master mason (if they have been raised to that degree) to recognize each other. In addition to the words, grips, and tokens, dues cards and letters of introduction are typically used when you visit a lodge outside of Indiana.
- The Altar and "Volume of Sacred Law" sits at the center of the lodge. Every lodge is subtle in its differences but is arranged in basically the same way. At the center of the lodge, you will always find an altar of some fashion and a religious text of some kind. The text we refer to as a "volume of sacred law." The book (or books in some cases) that lays upon the altar represents whatever religious book you hold to be sacred, regardless of whatever book is actually on the altar. Your lodge (or a lodge that you visit) may have a volume of sacred law that differs from your religious text, but you are to respect the book upon the altar as if it were your own. Freemasonry teaches tolerance and respect for all faiths,

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working tools that you were presented with during the degree to turn ourselves from a rough stone (ashlar) into a finished one. Much has been written on this part of masonic philosophy. You'll see stones as well as working tools within your lodge. This is a powerful message about self-improvement, and it can take a lifetime to achieve "perfection." How are you working on your ashlar in your own life? How are the brothers of your lodge working on theirs? What can you do to help a brother who's working away at his?

Continue being an active participant in your lodge activities! Try to meet at least one new brother at every event you attend. Use the grand lodge website to find some nearby lodges and connect with them on social media. Keep an eye out for masonic license plates and brothers in public. We're easier to find than you might think!

Mentally prepare yourself for the fellow craft degree. You will be taught more lessons, and the teachings of the entered apprentice degree will be built upon. Go into your degrees with an open mind and a wiliness to learn. The degree will only take an evening or afternoon, but it can take a lifetime to apply its lessons.

Fraternally,

The Grand Lodge of Indiana Education Committee

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