

# DISCOURSE

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## “Proficiency, a double standard?”

Dear Brothers:

Proficiency is another subject we often discuss in our Lodges, and in the midst of many of our gatherings among the Brethren. This topic has surfaced many times at our Annual Grand Lodge Communications, basically this topic has been discussed in many ways, many forms by all, in all kinds of places. Further, this subject brings out a variety of emotions that covers the entire spectrum of human conditions.

Lets us start by looking at the reality of proficiency, we require it of new inductees whatever degree they are in until he becomes a Master Mason. Why? Is it not as important to be proficient as a Master Mason as it is in the previous two Degrees? I dare say it is not only as important I would venture to say it is more important. This notion sends the wrong message, to the Brethren coming through, it goes against the thought that Masonry is a never-ending study, it infers that he has learned everything he needs to know, when we all know the truth is quite contrary to the practice. So I ask of my Brothers to help me understand the reason of why this practice is perpetuated.

Our next level of proficiency we run into is that of the Officers of the Lodge. Our custom practice of progression seems to have lost its meaning over the years with the lack of education in our Lodges, Districts, Zones and State level. We no longer expect much of the Officers if anything at all, and proficiency is one that has suffered a great deal in the last fifteen or so years.

Practices are something that it is almost none existent in most Lodges compared to what it used to be in yester years not too long ago. To those Brothers and Lodges that continue this great tradition of studying, practicing and learning, I CONGRATULATE YOU, do not give up, we appreciate your effort and you and your Lodge are the better for it.

To those Officers that put no effort and are given a pass for not performing their duties; we pity your inability to take your obligations to heart. Your actions are painfully obvious to everyone although you cannot see them. My Brother the difference is Self-respect, Accountability, and Honor. Something we promised to work on and improve ourselves, so we can become better men, better husbands, better fathers and better citizens, which is Masonry's promise to the world.

How can we as upright men and Masons demand of the initiate something we as Master Masons and Officers of the Lodges often fail to do? I believe that leading by example is the best lesson we can deliver to the newly initiated Brothers and demonstrate to our Brethren that we take our obligations seriously. Let us live up to our commitments, let us perform our duties, let us restore the faith of those who had faith in us to do the right thing and perform our obligations.

Let us make a commitment to ourselves not too settle for mediocrity, let us deliver the message that business as usual will no longer be accepted. We deserve more and must expect more from our representatives in the Lodge, District and State level. Also, let us give them the support and atmosphere needed for them to be successful. Success should not be measured by social advancement, good ole boy connection, or sympathy, no sir success is measured by hard work, dedication, performance.

Remember, we the Craft owe certain responsibilities to the success or failure of the Lodge and Officers, because if we fail to make the right decisions, and elect Brothers that are not ready to lead, we fail. If we fail to assist the Officers in the operation of the Lodge when called upon, we fail. If we fail to take active rolls in our Lodges and they fall back in disrepair, we fail. So, we as sideline Masons have to step up take our responsibilities to heart and do what we should always be doing and that is “Masons always rise to the occasion.”

To my fellow Lodge Officers we have a lot in common, we operate in the same circles, we have the same responsibilities, and we have the same burdens of leadership. I say unto you my Brother that you as a leader and representative of your Lodge, expect certain performances from the Grand Lodge Officers and that is your duty to do so. But remember my Brothers that as Officers of your Lodge you also owe the same performances to your Lodge Brothers that bestowed on you the honor to represent them. Also remember that as Officers of your Lodge you have certain responsibilities to your Brothers and to Grand Lodge that must be performed in order to maintain a properly Chartered Lodge. Please do not take them lightly, you would not appreciate us taking ours lightly either.

Proficiency is for everyone, do not cheat anyone of the learning experience it brings to every Brother. Expect your Officers to do the same in their jobs. Proficiency in the Ritual separates us from a social club to a Masonic Lodge. The beauty of our Ritual has set us apart for centuries, keep up the tradition, you owe your sons and grandsons this much. KEEP IT ALIVE.

Respectfully and Fraternaly Submitted, I remain your most humble servant

Jorge L. Aladro  
Senior Grand Warden

***If you would like to receive, these newsletters make request at email below if you would like to forward to your list of friends you have my permission and thank you in advance.***

*“My Brothers, the newsletters are intended to be thought provoking, to get you to think creatively, to get you thinking what if?, to dare you to improve yourself and your Lodge.”*

***Note: If you would, like to have any of these presentations made at your Lodge or District Associations feel free to call.***

***“Masons always rise to the occasion”***