

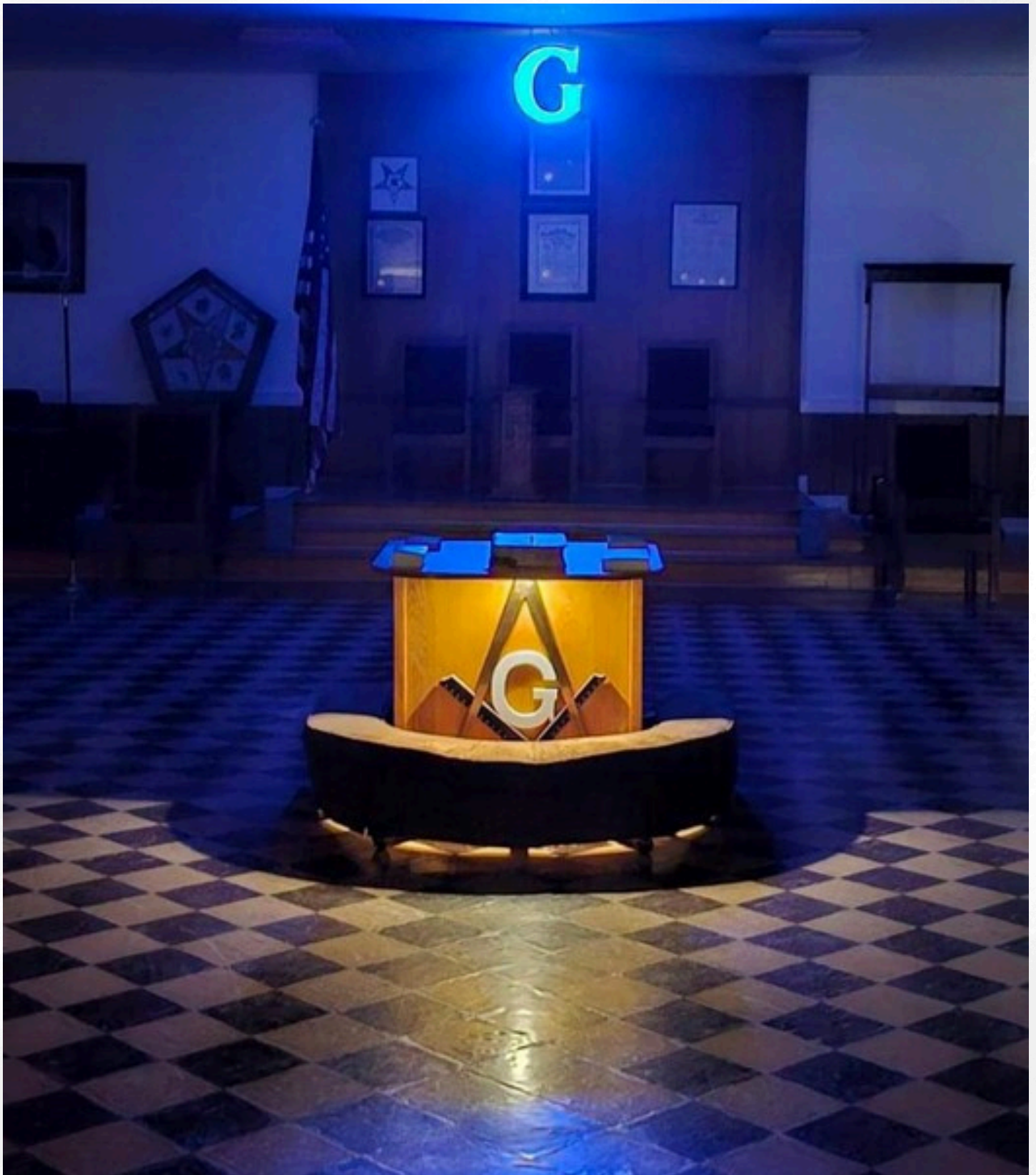
Semper Fidelis

TRESTLEBOARD

May Brotherly Love Prevail, and Every Moral and Social Virtue Cement Us.

Edition 8

Volume 2026



Did You Know?

Oops!

On January 24, 1961, a U.S. Airforce B-52 bomber broke apart over Goldsboro, NC and dropped two 4-Megaton hydrogen bombs.

Officers of the Lodge 2026

Master - WB J.P. Ledford
 Senior Warden - Antonio Saenz, Jr
 Junior Warden - Jimmy Johnson
 Treasurer - Earl Wilson
 Secretary - WB Jason Caldwell
 Senior Deacon - Nate Bailey
 Junior Deacon - Austin Dorschel
 Senior Steward - Steve Lewandowski II
 Junior Steward - Jeff Blackwell
 Chaplain - WB Denny Norris
 Tyler - Harry Weatherly, Jr

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Brethren, please do not forget to take a moment, as we always do in our Lodge; to remember the sick, ailing, and those away from their families defending our way of life...and add to it our families.

Look to the East

The changing of the seasons is much like the changing of our lives. Just as nature moves from spring to summer, summer to fall, and fall to winter, people go through different stages of growth and change. Each season brings something new, and each stage of life gives us new experiences and lessons. Although change can sometimes be difficult, it is a natural part of life.

Spring represents new beginnings and growth. During spring, plants begin to bloom, animals become more active, and the world seems full of fresh possibilities. Our lives also have times when we start something new, such as beginning school, making new friends, or starting a new career. Like spring, these moments can bring excitement, hope, and opportunities to grow.

Summer can be compared to the active and joyful periods of our lives. It is a time when nature is full of energy, and people often spend more time enjoying themselves and making memories. In our lives, we may experience periods when we feel confident, successful, and happy. However, just as summer eventually gives way to fall, these enjoyable periods also change, reminding us to appreciate them while they last.

Fall and winter remind us that change and endings are also necessary. In fall, leaves change color and eventually fall from the trees, while winter brings a quieter period of rest. Similarly, people sometimes have to let go of relationships, experiences, or parts of their lives in order to move forward. Even though endings can be sad, they can prepare us for new beginnings. Just as the seasons continue their cycle, our lives continue to change, teaching us to accept each stage and look forward to what comes next.

JP Ledford
Master



On the Secretary's Desk

Brethren,

The Point Within the Circle serves as a reminder that, while each Mason is an individual, he is part of a larger whole, constantly bound by the ethical framework of Freemasonry. It teaches us to circumscribe our desires and keep our passions within due bounds. As we think about this symbol, we realize that this is part of a balance between zeal and wisdom. As we each go through our Masonic journeys, take a moment to contemplate this symbol and what it means and how we can apply it to our daily lives.

As of this posting, we still have 13 Brothers who have yet to pay their dues for 2026. While this year has been busy and immensely successful, remember that we rely on these dues as a way to pay for our bills and charities. If you have any issues with this in getting this rectified, please let me know and we will see if we can get something worked out.

If you need something, please feel free to call any of your officers, because, unfortunately, if we do not know about what is happening in your life, we cannot be there for you as Brothers.

If you have any updates to your mailing address, phone number, email address, please send to: semperfidelislodge680@gmail.com.

Jason Caldwell
Secretary



“THE GRAND
OBJECT OF
MASONRY IS TO
PROMOTE THE
HAPPINESS OF
THE HUMAN
RACE.”
GEORGE
WASHINGTON

UPCOMING EVENTS

Brethren,

Upcoming events are in the works and if you have any ideas for our Lodge bring them up so we can all benefit from your ideas.

- 02 Sept - Fellowcraft Degree
- 05 Sept - Breakfast
- 07 Sept - Sojourners
- 08 Sept - OES
- 09 Sept - Stated - GL Amendments
- 10 Sept - Ritual Workshop
- 13 Sept - DeMolay Meeting
- 19 Sept - Breakfast
- 22 Sept - OES
- 23 Sept - Stated - WB JP Ledford
- 24-26 Sept - Grand Lodge
- 26 Sept - Ladies Night Out



All of these events are located on the calendar online with details.
Please log onto Grand View at nc.grandview.systems.

If anyone wants to help with the upcoming events, please let the Officers know.

Happy Birthday Brothers

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

09/02 Gerald Jerome Filipiak
09/04 William Fredrick Wall
 09/07 James Patrick Fitzgibbons
09/08 Edwin Harold Alexander, Jr
 09/10 Jason Abraham Walsh
09/10 John Drew Warlick
 09/14 Eric Patrick Mederos
 09/16 Felix Joan Castillo Villegas
 09/18 Bill Hudson Gross II
 09/24 Robert Wayne Rideout, Jr
 09/26 John Charles Wile
 09/28 Ian Alton Trott
09/29 Lynn Hill Thomas
 09/29 Cody Andrew Jellison



Those in BOLD are over the age of 70

Necrology Report

Brethren,

As of our last report, we have not had any notifications of any Brother 'Laying down forever his working tools of life.'

Keep watching out for each other and ensure our Brothers are doing well.

Ensure your families know your wishes upon passing. Notifying the Lodge and requesting Masonic Honors (if you so desire) is vital to ensure we get things accomplished according to your wishes.



The Wisdom of Yoda

"I am looking for a lot of men who have an infinite capacity to not know what can't be done"

Random pictures of the Lodge:



Our Junior Warden and Secretary
at the Tennessee Cave Degree



Jacksonville Chapter Master
Counsitor Chris helping get
school supplies for Easter Seals



DeMolay and Rainbow
keeping the community clean!!



Education

Tempering Passion with Wisdom: The Mason's Internal Struggle

This subject that touches every man who has ever lived and is a struggle as old as humanity itself. It is the battle between passion and reason, between impulse and wisdom. It is the Mason's call to subdue his passions and improve himself in Masonry. From the moment we are first prepared as candidates, we are taught this fundamental lesson. We learn that a Mason must keep his passions within due bounds. But what does this truly mean? And more importantly, how do we actually accomplish it in our daily lives?

Understanding Passion

Passion is not merely anger, though anger is certainly included. Passion encompasses all the powerful emotions that can override our better judgment. It includes rage and hatred, envy and jealousy, greed and lust. It includes pride that makes us deaf to correction. It includes fear that paralyzes us from doing what is right. It includes desire that blinds us to consequences. These passions are not in themselves evil. They are natural parts of our human nature. Anger can motivate us to correct injustice. Desire can drive us to achieve great things. Even pride, in proper measure, gives us dignity and self respect. The problem arises when passion becomes our master instead of our servant. The problem comes when emotion overrides reason.

The Nature of the Struggle

Every man knows this struggle intimately. We have all felt anger rise within us and struggled to contain it. We have all experienced desire pulling us toward things we know we should not pursue. We have all felt the sting of wounded pride tempting us to strike back in word or deed. This is the human condition. This is the internal battlefield where our true character is forged. The struggle is not to eliminate passion entirely. That would make us less than human, cold and unfeeling. The struggle is to master passion, to temper it with wisdom. The struggle is to ensure that our reason guides our actions, not our emotions.

Why Masons Must Master Passion

As Masons, we are held to a higher standard. We have obligated ourselves to be better men. We have promised to subdue our passions and improve ourselves. But there are practical reasons beyond our obligations. A man ruled by passion cannot be trusted. He is unpredictable, dangerous to himself and others. A man ruled by passion cannot be a good brother. His emotions will poison his relationships and divide the fraternity. A man ruled by passion cannot be a good citizen. He will act rashly, without consideration for consequences. A man ruled by passion cannot find true happiness. He will be forever tossed about by the storms of his own emotions. Only when we master our passions can we be the men we aspire to be. Only then can we be true Masons.

The First Strategy: Self Awareness

The first step in mastering passion is knowing yourself. You cannot control what you do not acknowledge. You must become aware of your own triggers, your own weaknesses. What situations make you angry? What circumstances tempt you toward envy or greed? When does your pride become a liability? Each man must examine his own heart honestly. This requires courage. It is not pleasant to face our own faults squarely but it is necessary. I recommend this practice: at the end of each day, spend a few moments in reflection. Ask yourself: when did passion rule me today? Ask yourself: when did I allow emotion to override wisdom? Ask yourself: what could I have done differently? This daily examination is the foundation of self-mastery. Over time, you will begin to recognize the warning signs. You will feel passion rising and have the chance to control it before it controls you.

The Second Strategy: The Pause

When you feel passion rising, pause. This sounds simple, but it is profoundly powerful. Do not speak immediately when angry. Do not act immediately when fearful. Do not decide immediately when desire clouds your judgment. Pause and breathe. Count to ten, or to one hundred if necessary. In that pause, create space between stimulus and response. In that space, wisdom can enter. The ancient Stoic philosophers taught this practice. They understood that we cannot always control what happens to us. But we can always control how we respond. The pause gives us that control. It allows reason to catch up

with emotion. It prevents us from saying or doing things we will later regret.

The Third Strategy: The Long View

Passion lives in the moment. It demands immediate satisfaction, immediate reaction. Wisdom takes the long view. When passion urges you to act, ask yourself: what will this matter in a year? What will this matter in ten years? Will my action today bring me closer to the man I want to be? Or will it take me further from that goal? Consider the consequences, not just for yourself, but for others. How will my actions affect my family? How will they affect my brothers? How will they affect my reputation and my peace of mind? This perspective has the power to cool the hottest passion. When we see our momentary anger or desire in the context of our entire life, it often seems less urgent. We realize that the satisfaction of passion is fleeting, but the consequences may be lasting.

The Fourth Strategy: Redirect the Energy

Passion is energy. It is a powerful force that can be destructive or constructive. The key is not to suppress it entirely, but to redirect it. When you feel anger, channel that energy into productive action. Instead of lashing out, use that fire to fuel positive change. When you feel envy, let it show you what you truly value. Then work to achieve those things through honest effort. When you feel fear, recognize it as a signal. Use it to prepare and plan rather than to paralyze. Some of the greatest achievements in history came from redirected passion. Men took their anger at injustice and channeled it into reform. Men took their fear of death and used it to motivate meaningful living. Men took their desire for significance and directed it toward service. This is the alchemy of self-mastery. Transforming the lead of base passion into the gold of virtuous action.

The Fifth Strategy: Seek Support

No man masters himself alone. We need our brothers to help us in this struggle. This is one reason why the Lodge exists. When you are struggling with passion, talk to a trusted brother. Sometimes simply voicing our feelings robs them of their power. Sometimes a brother's perspective can show us what we cannot see ourselves. Do not be ashamed to admit your struggles. Every man here has the same battles. The difference between the wise man and the fool is not that the wise man never feels passion. It is that the wise man seeks help in mastering it. Within these walls, we should feel safe to be honest about our struggles. We should be able to say to a brother: I am angry, help me see clearly. We should be able to say: I am tempted, help me stay strong. This is what brotherhood truly means.

The Sixth Strategy: Practice Virtue Daily

Mastery is not achieved in a day. It is built through daily practice of virtue. Each day, we have countless small opportunities to choose wisdom over passion. In traffic, when someone cuts you off, you choose patience over anger. At work, when someone takes credit for your idea, you choose dignity over revenge. At home, when your family frustrates you, you choose love over irritation. These small victories matter. They build the habit of self-control. They strengthen the muscle of wisdom. Over time, what once required great effort becomes more natural. The pause becomes instinctive. The long view becomes your default perspective. The choice of virtue becomes easier with each repetition. This is how we improve ourselves in Masonry, my Brethren. Not through grand gestures, but through daily practice.

The Greater Purpose

Why do we struggle to master our passions? Is it merely for our own benefit? No, it is for something greater. When we master ourselves, we become capable of serving others. A man at the mercy of his passions cannot truly give of himself. He is too busy managing his own internal chaos. But a man who has achieved some measure of self-mastery has energy to spare. He can listen to a brother's troubles without being overwhelmed. He can give counsel without letting his own emotions interfere. He can stand firm in the face of adversity. He can be the rock that others lean upon in times of storm. This is the Mason's duty and privilege. To be a better man so that we can better serve our fellow men.

The Honest Truth

This struggle never completely ends. Even the wisest man will sometimes fail. Even the most self-disciplined brother will occasionally be ruled by passion. I have been a Mason for many years, and I still struggle. There are still days when anger gets the better of me. There are still moments when pride clouds my judgment. But here is what I have learned: the struggle itself is valuable. Each time we engage in this internal battle, we grow stronger. Each time we choose wisdom over passion, we become more the men we wish to be. The goal is not perfection. The goal is progress. The goal is to be a little better today than we were yesterday. The goal is to keep trying, even when we fail.

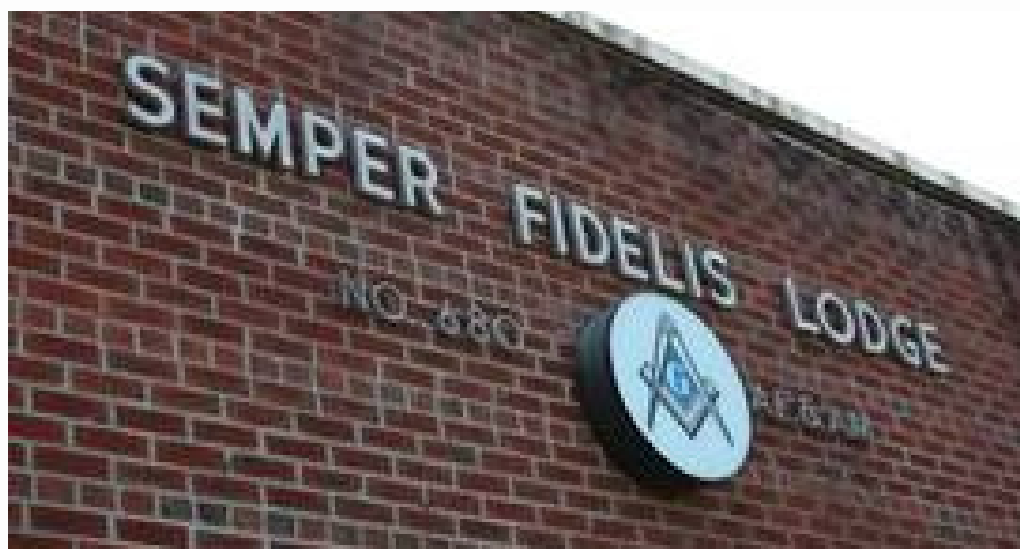
The Reward

What do we gain from this constant struggle? We gain peace of mind. A man ruled by passion is never at peace. He is always agitated, always reactive, always at the mercy of external circumstances. But a man who has learned to temper passion with wisdom knows serenity. He may still feel strong emotions, but they do not control him. He remains steady in the storm. We gain better relationships. When we master our passions, we become better husbands, better fathers, better friends, better brothers. We do not wound those we love with hasty words spoken in anger. We do not damage relationships through jealousy or pride. We gain self-respect. There is a deep satisfaction in knowing that you are the master of yourself. That you are not a slave to your emotions. That you can choose your response to life's challenges. This is true freedom. Not the freedom to do whatever we want, but the freedom to do what we know is right.

Closing Words

The call to subdue our passions is not an easy one. It requires daily vigilance and constant effort. It requires humility to acknowledge our faults. It requires courage to face our demons. It requires wisdom to know the difference between suppressing emotion and mastering it. But this is the work we have committed ourselves to as Masons. This is the labor that makes us better men. This is the struggle that transforms us from rough ashlar into polished stones. Let us support each other in this work. Let us be patient with ourselves and with our brothers when we fall short. Let us celebrate the small victories along the way. And let us never forget that the struggle itself, the daily choice of wisdom over passion, is what defines us as Masons. May we all continue to temper our passions with wisdom. May we all continue to improve ourselves in Masonry. May we all become the men we are capable of being.





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