

Living the Journey: It's About Time

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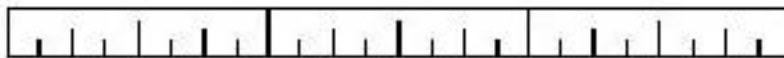
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The principles of Freemasonry and its many fascinating customs and practices are considered timeless. In fact, the question of Time goes straight to the heart and soul of our honorable fraternity. We symbolically acknowledge the centrality of Time through two of our most visible symbols: the 24-inch Gage and the Scythe.

We are introduced very early in our journey to the twenty-four inch Gage as *“an instrument made use of by operative Masons to measure and lay out their work. But we as Free and Accepted Masons, are taught to make use of it for the more noble and glorious purpose of dividing our time. It being divided into twenty-four equal parts is emblematic of the*

twenty-four hours of the day; which we are taught to divide into three parts, whereby we find a portion for the service of God and a distressed worthy brother, a portion for our usual vocation and a portion for refreshment and sleep”ⁱ.



While *“the Scythe is an emblem of time, which cuts the brittle thread of life and launches us into eternity. Behold! What havoc the Scythe of Time makes among the human race; if, by chance, we should escape the numerous evils incident to childhood and youth, and with health and vigor arrive to the years of manhood; yet withal, we must soon be cut down by the all-devouring Scythe of Time, and be gathered into the land where our fathers have gone before us”ⁱⁱ.*



We learn through the experiences accumulated through our travels about these masonic symbols that while each represent Time, they do so from separate and distinct perspectives according to how they relate to respective journeys. But if we internalize those symbols, might we then find that Time itself is a symbol unto itself? YES!

Once we layout and measure our Time and labors against the twenty-four inch Gage under the burden of knowing the Scythe is in the wings, waiting its moment to accomplish its singular and ultimate task, we must then look at how our time is divided and see the illustration, you can see that Time becomes the symbol of the priorities we have set in our journey. If we study our twenty-four inch Gage and find that 75% of our time is allotted to our usual vocation and the remaining 25% is divided between service to God and a distressed worthy brother and your usual vocation, then that allocation of Time becomes the representation or symbol of how you have prioritized your life and journey. You will see clearly – rather Time is showing you – your life is about your vocation and little else.

Few of us are able to claim 33 as the symbol of our lives and journeys, representing a twenty-four inch gauge evenly divided among our three core areas. There is no standard for which of the three is most important or any "correct" allocation of our time. Our time should be intentionally divided - to the extent possible - by ourselves, divided in such a way that the priority of our life is clear, obvious, and of our own choosing. When we do the analysis to determine how the symbol of Time is representing our own particular life, we should then be prepared to make decisions. Is our life and our investment of time what we want and need it to be? If not, are we willing and able to do what it takes to make it so?

It is up to us, individually, to take stock of the imminence of the Scythe against the remaining time on our own twenty-four inch Gage and adjust our labors and pursuits accordingly. Only we know the particulars of our lives and of our journeys and only we can make changes in the allotment of Time to shape our journey into what we hope and want it to be. The question for each of is this: can we, can I, ensure that my Time represents the life and the journey I want and need, and do I have time remaining before the strike of the Scythe to make the adjustments necessary to allow me to live the life I most want and need?



Ponder this well my brother, I am! May the blessings of Heaven rest upon us and all regular masons and, above all, may brotherly love prevail!

ⁱ Monitor of the Lodge, Grand Lodge of Texas

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