

Tennessee Knight Templar News

SIR KNIGHT RONALD J. COATES, RIGHT EMINENT GRAND COMMANDER
 GRAND COMMANDERY KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF TENNESSEE

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Edited by: Jesse J. Harper, KCT



On Thursday, October 16th, Right Eminent Grand Commander Ronald Coates, and representatives of West Tennessee Regional Commandery #13, Dickson Commandery #41, and DePayens Commandery #11 conferred the Fellowcraft Degree at Centerville Lodge #618.

This was a great event and a wonderful way to promote York Rite Masonry.

Please be sure to share any photos from your conferrals or events so that they can be publicized.

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If you are aware of any members who are not currently receiving this monthly newsletter, then please have them send an email to Jesse Harper with their name, email address, and Commandery number: jesssharp@comcast.net

Only about half of our membership is receiving this newsletter on a monthly basis. Assist us in getting this newsletter distributed to every Sir Knight on our rolls.



**From the Right Eminent Grand Commander
RONALD JASPER COATES
RIGHT EMINENT GRAND COMMANDER
Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee**

November Message from the Grand Commander

**Some Basic Masonic Tenets
Part 2**



I would like to call your attention to more basic tenets of Freemasonry (Morality and Tolerance).

We are taught that Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. It is this concept of morality that forms the very essence of Masonry. In the Entered Apprentice degree, a brother is informed that Masonry is a system of moral instruction, and every degree in Masonry further supports this premise. The Fellowcraft is taught the symbolism of morality as applicable to the working tools of that degree. In the Master Mason degree, it is graphically presented to the candidate that morality is one of the three "Precious Jewels" of a Master Mason.

Morality as accepted by Masons can fundamentally be defined as "conformity to ideals of right human conduct." Masonry itself is a system of morality. It portrays and interprets the meaning, intent, and purpose of morality. Such is its definite mission, and such is its proper field of endeavor.

Every civilization, from the beginning of time, has had a system or code of morality. These moral codes have differed from civilization to civilization, and the moral code of savagery is much different than that of what we consider to be a higher order of civilization. This degree of difference in moral codes is entirely dependent on man's conception of his duties to God, to his neighbor, and to himself. It is not happenstance that our ritual directs attention to these three duties in all degrees of Masonry. Duty is so strongly intertwined with our system of morality that these three duties form the inherent basis of what we consider the highest code of morals practiced by man. Morality does not exist merely in believing, but in believing and doing. What value has morality if the one who possesses morality does not practice it in his daily life? It is the duty of each Mason to practice and teach the moral lessons as referred to in the very first degree of Masonry. Masonry direct no man to a specific creed or belief; we only expect him to believe in a supreme being. As long as he believes and carries forth the duties based upon a mutual system of morality, the concepts, tenets, and premises of Freemasonry remain intact.

Almost any modern dictionary will provide multiple definitions of tolerance. These definitions range in applicability from an aspect of a scientific measurement to an attitude associated with interpersonal relationships. The definition that we, as Masons, are particularly concerned with is the one that states “a fair and objective attitude toward those whose opinions, practices, race, religion, nationality, or the like, differ from one’s own” or similar words.

Tolerance is one of the basic tenets of Freemasonry and, in one of its most abstract forms, is one of the first questions that a candidate for Freemasonry must answer before even being considered for membership. Every brother has satisfactorily responded to the question of “Do you believe in the existence of a supreme being?” By including this requirement, we, as Masons, have tacitly informed the prospective member that we not only require that he believe in a supreme being but also that his personal religious convictions are just that—personal. We are not going to tell him how or what to believe, but we try to convey to him the universality of Masonry and that it accepts as equals men of all faiths, ethnic origins, academic achievements, and professions.

This concept of “Tolerance” is then interwoven throughout the degrees of Masonry. The three degrees of Symbolic Masonry emphasize it, and most of the appendant organizations include it as a fundamental teaching in degrees or orders.

While we identify “Tolerance” as a premise of Masonry and encourage its practice as one of the beauties of the lessons of Freemasonry, the incongruity exists that makes our teaching and practice of “Tolerance” the bone of contention of most of our detractors. We consider it as one of the most important Masonic Virtues, and yet it is the one that those who want to find fault with Masonry zero in on.

Our ritual has much to say about our duties. Let us continue to embrace and practice “Tolerance” as a Masonic Virtue, and while we should not be required to publicly justify our beliefs in the tenets of Freemasonry, we may be called upon to defend them. Should this occur, keep in mind those other Masonic Virtues of Friendship, Morality and Brotherly Love.

Respectfully in your service,

Ronald J. Coates
Right Eminent Grand Commander
Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee

GENERAL ORDER NO. 3

To the Grand Commandery, Knights Templar of Tennessee, and to the Officers and Sir Knights of the subordinate Commanderies:

On November 11, 1919, then President Woodrow Wilson from the White House penned these words:

A year ago, today our enemies laid down their arms in accordance with an armistice which rendered them impotent to renew hostilities and gave to the world an assured opportunity to reconstruct its shattered order and to work out in peace a new and juster set of international relations. The soldiers and people of the European Allies had fought and endured for more than four years to uphold the barrier of civilization against the aggression of armed forces. We ourselves had been in the conflict something more than a year and a half. — With splendid forgetfulness of mere personal concerns, we modeled our industries, concentrated our financial resources, increased our agricultural output, and assembled a great army, so that at the last our power was a decisive factor in the victory. We were able to bring vast resources, material and moral, of a great and free people to the assistance of our associates in Europe who had suffered and sacrificed without limit in the cause for which we fought. Out of this victory there arose new possibilities of political freedom and economic concert. The war showed us the strength of great nations acting together for high purposes, and the victory of arms foretells the enduring conquests which can be made in peace when nations act justly and in furtherance of the common interest of men. To us in America the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with — solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service, and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the council of nations.

It is my order that all subordinate Commanderies have a Veterans Day Observance. If participating in a public function where Sir Knights appear in public, a dispensation is required.

This General Order must be read at the first stated Conclave following its receipt and made a part of those minutes.

In His Service



Ronald Jasper Coates

Grand Commander

From the Eminent Grand Prelate

Sir Knight Dickie W. Johnson, PGC

Prelates Devotion for November

THE HARD REALITY OF DISAPPOINTMENT

A few years ago, there was a game show on TV where a person could pick Door No. 1, Door No. 2, or Door No. 3. They did not know if they would get the grand prize or nothing.

That is when the cold, hard reality of disappointment could set in if they picked the wrong door. That was just a game, but in real life we all face disappointment. People do not act like they should; breakups happen; friends or family let us down; loss of a job; loss of a loved one. The list can go on and on. We often face the hard reality of disappointment.

Maybe the biggest disappointment in history happened to the disciples of Jesus when He died on the cross. When Jesus died a painful and inhumane death, their vision of freedom from the Romans was crushed. When Cleopas and his companion met Jesus on the road to Emmaus, they expressed their disappointment, saying, "Are you the only one in Jerusalem that does not know what happened to Jesus?"

Disappointment can be brutal, and yet the Scriptures tell us, "*Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes in the morning.*" (Psalms 30:5) It took three days of sorrow before the disciples realized what had really happened. Jesus was not going to be King of Jerusalem. Jesus was the Eternal Son of God! Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes in the morning.

Are you experiencing disappointment? Has someone you love let you down? Perhaps you have lost a job you needed badly. Maybe someone broke a trust you had in them. That is when the cold, hard reality of disappointment sets in.

When disappointment happens, do not give up. Stay close to the Lord. Lift your heart to heaven and ask for His guidance. Remember: Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes in the morning! Did not Jesus tell us, "*I have come that you may have life and have it in abundance*"? Our Lord and Savior has something much better for you than what you may have lost.

Many thanks to Rev. R.A. Matthews, J.D., M.Div., B.A., for her thoughts about disappointment.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

In His Service,

Dickie W. Johnson, PGC
Eminent Grand Prelate
Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee

Why Every Christian Mason Should Be A Knight Templar

by Alvin B. Lowe

1968-69 Grand Prelate, Grand Commandery of Utah

Originally printed: *Knight Templar Magazine*, September 1969

When a man is initiated, passed, and raised into the first three degrees of Freemasonry, he receives the foundation stones of Masonry. This is the basis on which he may build his Masonic education. This can be likened to the basic education received in grade school.

In the Blue—or the Symbolic Lodge—the Master Mason has received the great lessons of Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice. We are deeply impressed with “the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of man, and the immortality of the soul.” We are startled by the assertion of our Grand Master, Solomon, King of Israel, “I fear the Master’s Word is forever lost.” To complete the symbolism of Freemasonry, the word must be recovered. Hence, the necessity for additional degrees. The explanatory degrees of Freemasonry, sometimes called the higher degrees, of which the York Rite is one path or school, give a broadening of the three basic degrees. These can be compared to high school and college because without these additional degrees and orders, our Masonic education cannot be complete.

The Blue Lodge symbolism deals with the material side of life. The York Rite, especially the Royal Arch Degree and Order of the Temple, deals with the spiritual side of life.

Our Masonic knowledge and experience will be enriched as we elect to receive the lessons of Charity, Moderation, Industry, and Humility, which are so eloquently portrayed in the Red Lodge, or the Chapter of Royal Arch Masons. Here—in Capitular Masonry—is the continuing drama of the Blue Lodge, and here we receive something of value that has been lost.

In the Mark Master’s Degree, we are taught what workman’s wages are and how to receive them. This degree is historically the second half of the Fellowcraft Degree. In the Past Master’s Degree, we learn how to govern and rule a lodge with moderation and decorum. In the prologue to the Most Excellent Master’s Degree, we learn of sacrifice and why King Solomon, instead of David, his father, was chosen to build the Temple. In the second section of this degree, the completion and dedication of the Temple is most beautifully portrayed, and in the Royal Arch Degree, we are rewarded by receiving that for which we have so long wrought, the Lost Master’s Word. Without the Royal Arch, the Master Mason Degree is like a song half sung, a tale partly told, or a promise unfulfilled. The Royal Arch stands as the rainbow of promise in the sky; it stands as the promise of the resurrection of that which was lost and that which shall be recovered!

Here it might well be to quote from a leaflet, “What is Royal Arch Masonry,” printed by the authority of Roscoe R. Walcutt, then General Secretary of the General Grand Chapter, Royal Arch Masons:

“Oldest and Largest Rite”

“Founded as a national organization in 1797, existent in all parts of the civilized world, you will, upon your exaltation as a Royal Arch Mason, become a member of the oldest and largest Rite of Freemasonry in the world. Any Royal Arch Mason will be happy to present your name as a candidate for advancement in the mysteries of Freemasonry. You will be happy when you have received this additional Masonic Light.”

Here we take another step in our Masonic education and programs to the Council of Royal and Select Masters—known as Cryptic Masonry or the Purple Lodge. The Royal Master’s Degree further explains the Master Mason’s Degree by telling of a Fellowcraft, a workman in the quarries, who in true humility asked, “Grand Master, Hiram Abiff, when shall I receive the Master’s Word?” And after patiently listening to the explanation of why he may never receive it, he returns to his place in the quarries. The

Select Master's Degree explains the sacred treasures and the secret word. Here we learn of the virtue of silence and secrecy, and this is a further explanation of the Royal Arch. The Super Excellent Master's Degree is also explanatory to the Royal Arch. Here we are taught fidelity to vows, the wisdom of worshiping God, and the punishment for perjury. Here we are welded into a circle of Friendship, in an unending chain of fraternal union, as symbolized in the Blue Lodge by the point within the circle.

Thus far any Mason, regardless of his religious beliefs, may apply for and receive these degrees.

But the three Commandery Orders, known as the Chivalric Masonry, are the crowning achievement of our progress in Masonry. These three Orders can indeed be compared to completing our college education. The first of these, the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross, teaches the almighty force and importance of Truth. Thus far, all Masonic Degrees and Orders, from the Entered Apprentice through the Red Cross, have been from the Old Testament of the Holy Bible. The next two—the Order of Malta and the culminating Order of the Temple—being Christian, bring us to the New Testament. In the Order of Malta and its introductory degree, Knight of St. Paul or Mediterranean Pass, we represent a Soldier of the Cross, on our way to the Holy Land, who is taught to keep his sword untarnished and to wield it with virtue. In what has been termed the most beautiful and inspiring of all the Degrees and Orders of Freemasonry, the Order of the Temple, we are Knights of the period following the Crusades. Here we are admonished to live in accordance with the sublime precepts taught by our Lord and as presented for our guidance in the four Gospels. The principles of Templar Masonry are thus a focal point for all those Masons who desire to demonstrate their sincerity, devotion, and love for all mankind by their actions as well as by their words. Here, indeed, is a guide of life for all Freemasons, and such a guide is among man's best weapons for combating the encroachment of Communism.

Templar Masonry is a spiritual wealth that is deeply comforting and satisfying, that places its teachings deep in the hearts and minds of Masons who are seeking the supreme value of life. Knights Templar are committed to the defense of innocent maidens, destitute widows, helpless orphans, and the Christian religion. Knights Templar are defenders of the Faith, enlisted under the banner of our blessed Saviour, the Prince of Peace, our beloved Teacher, and great Way Shower. Knights Templar are proud to be known as Soldiers of the Cross, who by their loyalty and devotion have dedicated themselves to the service of this great Christian Order, which has the respect and admiration of the public at large and of Masons everywhere.

No Christian Master Mason should be satisfied until he has discovered the true Light—so his own light may shine before all mankind, that they may see his good works and thereby glorify our Father, which art in heaven. This ritual implants its beautiful teachings deep in the hearts and minds of all Masons who believe in the Christian faith and wish to be followers of Christ, who, by His wonderful example, has set a goal for all of us to follow.

It is here that we are taught to uphold and practice the Christian virtues, to have compassion toward our fellow man, to love our country, and to honor and have reverence for our flag! It is here we reaffirm our faith in the immortality of the soul and the eternity of life through the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Blessed Saviour, who we, as Knights Templar, acknowledge, adore, and worship as the Son of God, who died that we might live! It is here that the teachings of the Christian religion, patriotism, and Masonry are united in one grand Order! This is the heritage that belongs to all Christian Masons! This is the Valiant and Magnanimous Order of the Temple!

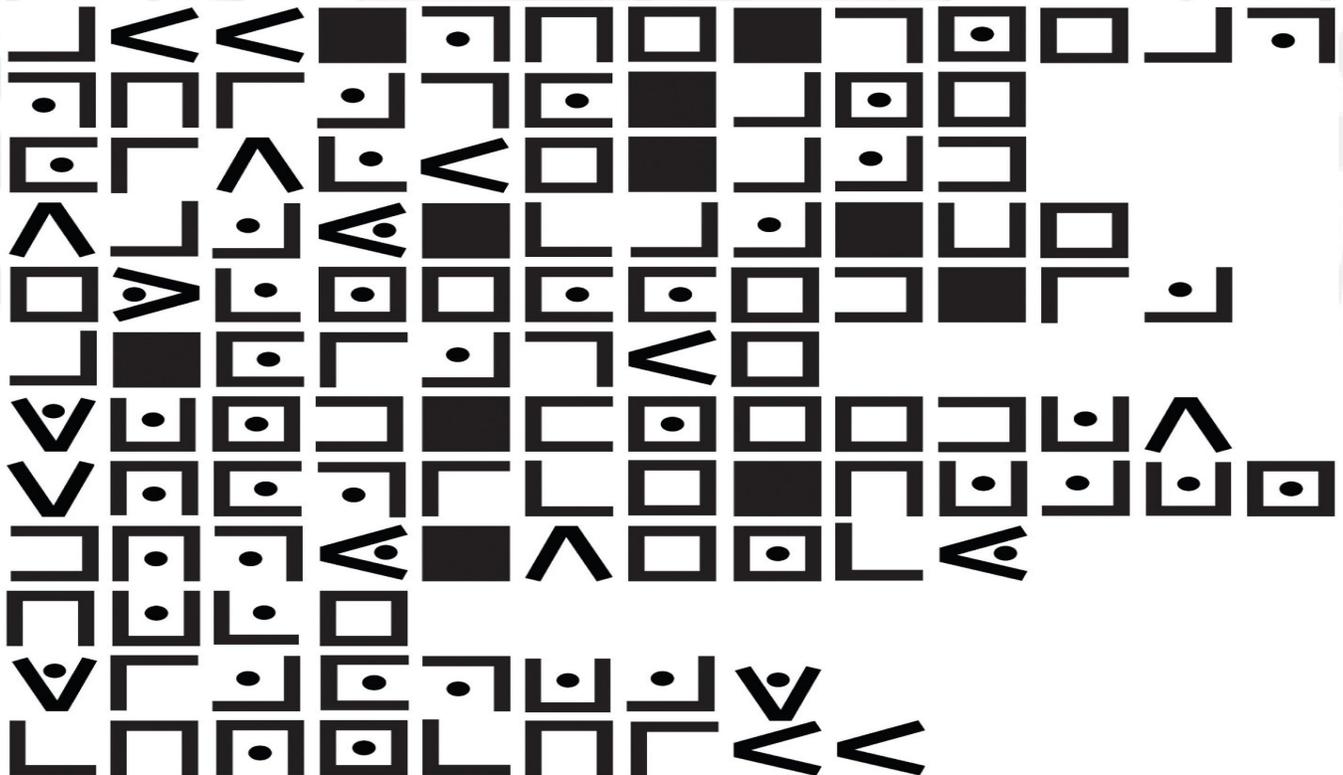
Knoxville Valley KCCH Investiture



On Sunday, October 26th, Past Grand Commanders Chuck Thames, Mike Weems, Clarence Crump, and Robbie Beam participated in the KCCH Investiture for the Knoxville Valley of the Scottish Rite.

All cast members, including these Past Grand Commanders, are 33^o Scottish Rite Masons. Also in attendance were Past Grand Commander Jack Akard and Very Eminent Deputy Grand Commander Tim Sutton.

Something to Decipher





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MISSION

The mission of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee is to provide every Christian Freemason in Tennessee the opportunity and resources to develop, be engaged in, and exemplify a Christian chivalric lifestyle.

THE VISION OF THE GRAND COMMANDERY OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF TENNESSEE

The Knights of the Grand Commandery of Tennessee are a group of men who share the Christian faith, exemplary character, a dedication to excellence and the service of others, and a desire to share the chivalric experience with other Christian Freemasons. Our Knights are actively engaged with one another in accomplishing this goal and in maintaining this standard of lifestyle and behavior.

Request for Submissions!

Sir Knights – We need submissions for the Tennessee Knight Templar News. Is your Commandery going to confer any of the orders soon? Did you have some sort of unusual or fun event? Send us an article to share with the other Tennessee Knights and include photos if you have them.

We would also like to have your thoughts and ideas about how we can make Tennessee Templary more fun and exciting. Send us an article!

Please send news and events going on in your Commandery to:

TNKTNewsEditor@gmail.com