

**Sunday Masonic Paper No. 778**  
**My Masonic New Year's Resolution**  
**by Bro Fred Milliken**

Three comments:

Do you believe in coincidences? I don't.

Do you believe in Angels? I do.

Guess you know where to classify me now.

Before I went to bed on New Year's eve, I read a piece from a friend and Brother who said that he was going to spend his New Year's day in contemplation of what he had done in 2011, and what he had failed to do, and how he could make 2012 Masonically better. Did he visit and help Brothers in need often enough? Did he listen and think about those Brothers who had asked his advice and those that had whispered in his ear? Did he walk the extra mile, did he let anyone down?

He asks himself: Did I hold true to my values all year-long? Did I lose a friend through lack of communication to too much of it? Did I do all that was required of me in time of need? Did I make new friends? Did I create any enemies? Did I leave something undone that I could have finished, and many more questions that I ask of myself. These are some of the things that he was going to cogitate on.

On New Year's morning I read a piece from Canadian Brother Wayne Anderson's Masonic Newsletter – Sunday Masonic Paper No. 611 – where Brother Doug Gray pondered:

“As we approach the count down toward the end of 2011; and the beginning of a New Year, it is a time many use for some reflection! I just wanted to remind everyone that although Masonry is well known as a “Progressive Science”; it should also be remembered as a “Reflective Science.”“

The true purpose and value in Masonry is to gain knowledge of ones self; and his own relationship with God. We must use our Lodge time as a place to think, to consider our fellow-man, to become “Human” and to gain “Wisdom”. Looking inward is the place to begin, evaluate shortcomings with respect to our obligation, our charges and our commitment to the working tools or each degree. Brotherhood is our vision in Masonry. How well do you know your Lodge and District Brothers?

Buddha taught that men are so entangled in the “Tragedy of Life”, they are bound together out of sympathy in a “Brotherhood of pity...” Zoroaster taught that men are brethren because they are warriors in battle between “Light and Darkness” a “Brotherhood of Battle...” Confucius taught that men are brothers because of “common obligations”, and a “Brotherhood of Service.”

In my practice of religion I am quite familiar with “centering prayer” which is much like meditation. You take a symbol, a phrase, an idea, or a short scripture reading, and you meditate on it for hours, making sure you clear your mind of all else. You contemplate the thought you have chosen, repeating it over and over and listening for an answer. If your mind wanders onto something elsem you force it back often, by repeating out loud your chosen thought. Over and over, hour after hour until you have an answer. Where the answer comes from I am not going to get into. That is up to your own personal belief system.

So, not believing in coincidences, and getting pushed by my Angel, I decide to do some Masonic centering prayer/meditation on the Masonic symbol of the Point Within A Circle. I cleared my mind of everything but the Point Within A Circle and began. Soon, I found myself in a closed maze where I went around and around. At one end I bumped into St. John the Baptist; at another end the Holy Scriptures, and at a third point, St. John the Evangelist. But what was the message, what were they trying to tell me? Over and over I pondered and meditated.

After some time it was clear to me that I was being strongly urged to make a Masonic New Year's Resolution – a commitment to accomplish something in the coming year. But further meditation yielded no clue as to what that Masonic New Year's Resolution should be. This was not going to be as easy as I thought. Maybe this is where free will comes in. It's all up to me. But I am not sure what I should choose.

Perhaps you have some suggestions?