



The Corinthian Lodge No. 13

This lecture was delivered by Worshipful Master Bruce Brigden to the Brethren as part of Masonic Education during the Regular Communication on 13 May 6026 A.L. It is an impactful lesson about the role and thoughts of a Worshipful Master and certainly worth memorializing for the benefit of all Brethren, especially those who are considering travelling to the East. To those who follow, keep these words in mind during your journey and remember, others have achieved what you strive to do, learn from their lessons as you yourself travel to the East, because it is not just about occupying a chair but rather becoming a leader in all aspects of your life!

Brethren,

I would like to share some things about sitting in that chair in the East. I still remember the first time I sat there. You walk up there, you sit in that chair, and for a moment everything feels different. The room looks different. The responsibility feels heavier, and suddenly everyone is looking back at you. And I remember thinking "Alright... here we go." I had watched that chair for years, I had seen others lead from it, and from the sidelines it all looked straightforward, but I can tell you this, it looks very different from that chair.

Because from that chair you don't just see the Lodge, you feel the weight of it, and I realized that very quickly on a tough night. There was a meeting where things didn't go as planned. The timing was off, things felt out of sync, and I could feel it in the room sitting there in that chair, as I remember thinking 'This is on me.' Not in a negative way, but in a real way. That moment taught me something important, this role isn't about control, it's about responsibility.

But there was another night I'll never forget. A night when everything came together where the work flowed, the room felt connected, the Brethren were engaged and you could feel it, that sense of unity and of purpose. Sitting there, I didn't feel in charge, I felt proud! Proud of this Lodge, proud of the Brothers in it, and proud to be part of something bigger than myself. Those two moments - one tough and one proud, taught me more than anything else because they showed me what this role really is. It's not about being above anyone, it's about being responsible for everyone. Responsible for the tone, responsible for the experience, and responsible for the example. What I learned very quickly is this - the real work of that chair doesn't happen while you're sitting in it, it happens when you leave it because this role doesn't end when the meeting closes. It doesn't stay in this room, it follows you into your home, into your work, and into your everyday life.

This year hasn't just been about leading a Lodge, It has been about being shaped as a man, as a leader, as a husband, as a father, and as a Brother. If I'm being honest, some of the most important lessons I've learned didn't happen while sitting in the East. They happened after the gavel fell, when I walked out those doors, and had to live it, not just speak it!

I would like to share with you tonight what being Worshipful Master of The Corinthian Lodge No. 13 has taught me. It taught me about leadership, not authority, not being in charge, but about responsibility. Responsibility for the tone of the Lodge, responsibility for the experience of every Brother in the room, responsibility for setting the example, whether I felt ready or not. I learned that leadership is often quiet. It's listening when you want to speak, it's showing patience when things don't go as planned, and it's staying steady when others are looking for direction. I realized something quickly, if I expect that standard here, I must live it out there at home, at work and in everyday life because leadership isn't something you turn on and off - it's something you live.

It taught me to look at myself honestly. Freemasonry speaks of the rough ashlar, and this year, I've truly seen mine. The impatience I didn't always notice before, the distractions that pull me away from what matters, the moments where I fell short of the man I'm trying to be, and that's not always comfortable but it's necessary. Because it also taught me that improvement is a choice - a daily one. Not about being perfect, but about being aware, and putting in the work to become better, little by little. It taught me that Freemasonry doesn't just stay in

this room. At some point, I had to ask myself – “Am I bringing the same effort home that I give to this Lodge? It’s easy to be present here, it’s easy to be focused here, but what about when I walk through my own front door? This role made me more aware of that. More aware of how I speak, how I listen, how I show up for the people who matter most, and that awareness alone has changed me.

It taught me the importance of involving my family. At first, it can feel like the Lodge takes time away from them. Evenings are gone and energy spent, but I’ve learned that when your family understands what you’re part of, when they see the value, when they feel included in the purpose - everything changes. They don’t see it as time lost; they see it as something that is helping shape you into a better man and when that happens, Freemasonry is no longer separate from your life - it becomes part of your life.

It taught me that charity is not just something we do, it’s something we live. Not just in big gestures, but in small, everyday choices. Taking the time to help, offering patience instead of frustration and showing kindness when it’s not required. I’ve come to realize that the people who feel that the most are often the ones closest to us. It taught me that brotherly relief is not just words, it’s actions. It’s reaching out when someone’s not around, it’s checking in when something doesn’t seem right, it’s standing beside a Brother, not because you must, but because you choose to. And that lesson has carried into my life outside of this Lodge - making me more aware of others, more willing to step in, and more present when it matters. It taught me the importance of spending time together as Brothers - outside of Lodge. Not just working together but getting to know each other because real brotherhood isn’t built only during meetings, it’s built in conversations before Lodge, after Lodge, and during the time we choose to spend together. Those moments matter. They build trust., they build understanding and they build connection. How many of you have had your strongest Masonic conversations outside of Lodge? I’ve learned this - when those bonds grow stronger, the Lodge grows stronger. We support each other more, we communicate more and we show up differently. That is what creates a strong Lodge.

It also taught me that the Lodge must be part of the community, because if we only exist within these walls, we slowly lose our purpose. But when we step outside, when we give back, when we are visible, when we serve, people begin to see who we truly are and that matters, not just for the community but for the future of this Lodge. If our Lodge disappeared tomorrow, would our community feel it? The truth is that meetings alone won’t sustain it, ritual alone won’t grow it and what matters is our impact, our presence, and the connections we build.

Brethren, most of all this year has taught me that I am still a rough ashlar, still being shaped, still learning, still working on myself every single day. But now I am more aware, more intentional and more committed to becoming better as a man, as a leader, as a husband, as a father, and as a Brother. So, I leave you with this - what has your journey truly taught you? Not just what you’ve heard, not just what you’ve memorized, but what has changed you? More importantly, what are you doing with it? When you walk out of this Lodge, when no one is watching, when life gets busy, when it would be easier not to, what are you choosing? The lessons we speak about here, the principles we repeat, the values we claim, mean nothing if they stay within these walls. Freemasonry is not proven here, it is practiced here and proven out there - in your home, in your work, in your community and in the quiet moments when your character is tested.

Brethren, this Lodge can shape us, it can guide us, it can remind us who we are meant to be, but it cannot live our lives for us. That responsibility is yours! So when you leave here tonight, carry it with you, live it in your actions, show it in your words, and prove it in your character because the true measure of this Craft is not what we say in this room, it is who we are when we step outside of it. That is where the real work begins.

Thank you, Brethren.
WB Bruce Brigden

Original Signed by:

WB Alan L. Dicks Jr.
Chaplain

Original Signed by:

Brother Brian L. Cheney
Secretary

13 May 6026 A.L.