

Back to the Basics
by Midnight Freemason Guest Contributor
Bro. Kenneth Bealer

Have you ever heard something that changed your outlook on something? At a masonic symposium I recently attended, I heard a presentation that did just that. The presentation was on the working tools of the Entered Apprentice. The brother giving it talked about the working tools that you know of and those working tools within the degrees that you wouldn't think of. He went over 15 working tools with evidence as to why this working tool is needed by the Mason. What really affected me during his presentation was his idea that an Entered Apprentice must fill his toolbox with these tools, but it is up to us as Master Masons to also explain why and how these tools are used to work on our rough ashlar to turn them into the perfect ones. He explained that through the degrees the brother is shown these tools, but they also must be explained further. We all remember going through the ritual, there is no way that one could grasp all of that at once and be ready in one day. That is when the mentor must help the brother understand and be a guide on his journey, not just to help memorize the memory work. During and after this lecture, it really got me thinking back on my own experience of going through the degrees. After this reflection, I felt that this brother was totally right.

I want to make it clear that this presentation did not make me think bad or ill of my own lodge or the mentor who helped me through my degrees. After hearing this presentation, I discovered that some working tools were missing from my toolbox. I now knew that there were deeper meanings to the ones I already had. I wanted to ensure I had a complete toolbox because I felt that the perfect ashlar could not be formed without the tools I was missing. I also felt that I needed the knowledge to use them properly, so that I could, in turn, help mentor the next generation of Masons who would come after me.

How was I going to do that? Well, I was going to have to go back to the basics. I was going to have to go back and re-read the 3 degrees, go back over the ritual, the lectures, and the memory work. I would have to attend my lodge more and ask for assistance from my brothers if I still didn't understand some of the above. I understood that it would be a process and that it would take time, but as we all know, Masonry is a long journey that takes a lifetime. But hearing the presentation allowed me to realize that during that journey you must stop and help others who may come along the journey as well.

I'm so glad that I went to this symposium, because to tell you the truth brothers, I was on the verge of leaving this fraternity. I thought that I was no longer getting anything else out of Freemasonry. I now know that I had just skimmed the surface, and it was my duty to dive deeper to gain the light I need to work in the quarries of everyday life. The Grand Architect of the Universe was not letting me quit and I praise him for this. We must have the tools to work on the ashlar that we need to set the steps that we will need to climb the stairs of knowledge which is needed to one day be able to draw out our temples upon our trestle boards. I would like to thank brother and author John S Nagy on this lecture he gave and giving me new light on my purpose to my masonic travels.

Kenneth Bealer resides in Denver Colorado. He is originally from Pennsylvania. He didn't become a mason until he moved to Colorado. He was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason in 2012, at Aurora Revelation Lodge #156 in Aurora, Colorado. He is also a member of the Research Lodge of Colorado and a member of the Colorado College of the SRICF. He works as a project manager for a commercial flooring company in Colorado and lives with his beautiful wife Jennifer and our 2 fur babies Finn and Raven.