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## DISCOURSE,

*Before the Grand Lodge of North Carolina, on St. John's Day, December, 1828, by the Rev. Thomas F. Hoyt, Grand Chaplain, published at the request of the Grand Lodge.*

...ay, as I am the truth and the life.
John 14, 6.

...universality of a belief in a God, ...e implied belief in the future ex... of man, must owe its origin to ... communication from God, or to ...races of him, designedly left in ...ecks of creation, for the purpose ...ling man, through nature, up to ...'s God. This communication ...essary for the present, and for ...rnal happiness of man. God, ...wills the happiness of his crea... has, in different ages, given dif... degrees of light on this impor... subject.

...light of nature, shining around ...nt, sinless beings, might possi... each them all that is necessary to ...own of God and of themselves. ...know that, if sinful beings do not ...o retain God in their thoughts, ...glorify him as God, they are ...ut excuse: "For the invisible ...of him from the creation of the ...are clearly seen, being under... by the things which are made, ...his eternal power and Godhead." ..., however, the darkness of sin is ...ved from the mind, the sinner ...have but very indistinct ideas of ...and of what is necessary to secure ...our. In all the works of nature, ...e is heard on the breeze, speak... ...ace to the troubled soul.—No ..., of all the thousands flowing to ...ean, washes away his sins—no ...from all the millions of stars and ...around the throne of God, points ...y to that throne, as the home of ...—No grace to forgive, no power ...ew, no mercy to save the unholy, ...d soul, is discovered in all that ...s there is a God. Like the vivid ...ing, in night's darksome hour, ...ght of nature only startles by the ...ear of the glories it reveals. It ...ot soothe and win by the mercies ...olds. Yet it is the light of hea... tells of God: and prepares the ...for receiving brighter light, with ... lustre, pointing to a more per... ...th, and saying, "This is the ...alk ye in it." In the days of ...atriarchs, and of the Prophets, ...as pleased to give brighter mani...ons of his holy character, and of ...ty of man, than he had before gi... Man began to hope in his God. ...ffered the sacrifices appointed, ...g in the mercy promised. But ...atem was not faultless. The ... the faithful were turned to him, ...o all the promises pointed; and ...d to find *in him*, that which ...d long sought.

...he fulness of time, *the promised* ...ne as the light of the world. With ...werful grasp of the Lion of the ...f Judah, he tore away the co... of eternity—brought down to ...w the perfections of God—clear... ...blished the immortality of man... ...t, with the blood of love, the ...at leads to glory—and taught the ...escape from darkness and des... The light of nature need shine ...er. The Priesthood of Aaron, ... its splendid rites and costly ..., its types and shadows, may ... withdrawn. They must give ...to the sun of righteousness, the ...and the morning star, who now ..., *I am the way, and the truth,* ... *life.*

...term, *The way and the truth*, is, ...ewism, and means, *the true way.* ...ord *way*, is, by metonomy, put ...ide. The expression, *the life, endless felicity.* With this ex... of our text, it will read—I am ...guide, who leads to endless feli... That is, the Lord Jesus Christ ...words are spoken by him) de... "That his is the only name gi... ...o Heaven, whereby we must ...d his teachings, the only sys... unfolds the true character of ...ed shows, what man must be... ...d do to be saved. If we receive ... will receive us; if we reject him, ... cast us off forever."

...comes us in a matter of so much ...nce, carefully to examine the ...erogative claimed in the text. ...on investigation, we find it to ... we necessarily ought to grant ...to follow this guide, fearing no ...

Let us briefly examine some ... evidences by which it is proved ... should acknowledge Jesus, as ...e guide, leading to endless fe...

...writings of the Old and New ...ent are genuine, authentic, and ... This assertion is not made for ...pose of avoiding a critical ex... ...on of the subject; but, because ... will not, at the present, permit ... statement of the proof. Our ...ee types; they court, they chal... things investigation. Now all the wri... ters of the Old Testament did prophesy of one, who was to be the truth, and the way, and the life. Many of these writings make express mention of him—describing the time of his birth, his person, his character, and his history, so minutely as to have brought upon them, from infidels, the accusation of having been composed after the events foretold did actually take place. The Prophets called this guide, "the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace—Emanuel, (God in connexion with man) the Fellow, (the compeer, the equal) of God; in whom the gentiles were to trust, & all nations were to be blessed—A light to lighten the gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel." The Evangelists and Apostles record the fulfilment of the prophecies; the miracles performed by Jesus, in attestation of his divine nature and mission—the precepts and doctrines which he taught—the voice of God, declaring, this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him (i e) obey him.—The history of his sufferings, and of his love—the mighty efficacy of his power; and, the positive assurance, that he will come again to be admired in those who believe, and to take vengeance on all those who refuse to follow him as the True Guide.

There is no teaching of this true Guide, which has not a direct tendency to secure the happiness of man, in this world, and, at the same time, to make him wise unto eternal life. Here is one very strong proof of his divinity; viz: the application of his doctrines to the character and condition of man, so as to lead to certain happiness. Other systems of morality and theology have had their day. For a while they exerted a partially salutary influence on a favoured few. But increasing knowledge, a change of circumstances, and the vain attempt to give them a practical influence on the mass of mankind, have swept them into oblivion. Philosophers manufactured a religion; and that religion invariably made the people superstitious and wretched; because it did not suit the wants of human nature. Let none object, "that these philosophers, living in ages of darkness, were comparatively incompetent to the task they assumed." It is true that they were incompetent. But the reason why they failed was not, that they did not possess powers of mind sufficient for the purpose, if unassisted human powers could have accomplished it. The few remains which have descended to us, as specimens of their genius and talents, are sufficient to prove, that they were of no pigmy race. In mercy to mankind, God permitted these master spirits to exert all their powers in the investigation of religious subjects. Their brightest results do not now throw the faintest light on man's present and eternal hopes. In the same spirit of mercy, when human nature was boasting of the perfection of its powers, and when, in all the departments of science and literature, the most astonishing success attended the labours of those engaged in them, God again permitted those, whose boast it was, "*we light the world,*" to manufacture a system of religion. And what was the effects of this new system? It slaughtered a nation, and called the world to its funeral. The names of the French Philosophers, with Payne and Voltaire at their head, and the frenzied, bloodstained, corrupting systems which they devised, will stand forever, as gloomy beacons, warning the presumptuous not to venture, with unhallowed feet, on holy ground. Not so is the religion of Jesus. It suits every age, condition, and country. Wherever it goes, it abounds with the fulness of the blessings of peace. It shall stand until the Heavens and the earth pass away. It is the wisdom of God, descending in love, adapted to the real wants of the sinner.

The gospel is a sure way. All other plans for the bliss of man have been deficient in this: however beautiful they may have been in theory, shadows, clouds and darkness did rest upon them; there was no certainty attached to them. But for all that Jesus asserts, he gives us, "thus saith the Lord." Jesus is the chief corner stone, elect, precious. Upon the precepts and promises he has given hang all our hopes of felicity beyond the grave. Take them away, and we are ruined. In vain we enquire the way—the chart is lost!—In vain we labour for wages; the trussel board, on which the master has drawn the certain plan, will be found no more. What is the condition of those who have not the Bible? Let their multiplied absurdities, superstitious and iniquities answer. Such would we be without it; for it is the only true and certain guide, leading to glory.

The means which are proposed to accomplish the salvation of mankind, by the true guide, are such as can assuredly do it; and the method of operating with these means, such as will effect the end proposed. The nature of man is sinful. Sin gives rise to those passions and appetites which must be subdued, if we are to become happy. The gospel proposes the only way in which these passions may be subdued! While the light of nature may teach us, that something more is necessary to be known of God, and of ourselves, than we do know; while by the law is only the knowledge of sin; the gospel is a full and a perfect system of what we must believe and do, that we may be saved. No man can refuse his assent to the doctrine, that we must be born again.—all our views, and feelings, and practices, in a state of sin, entirely changed, and we become new creatures, before we can be in a state of bliss. Before we are ignorant of the way in which this change can be wrought; the gospel teaches it to us. The heart of man loves sin, is averse to holiness, and finds its chief delight in those things which destroy it forever. It is the holiness of Jehovah arrayed against our darling lusts, that stirs up the powerful opposition which is felt to the gospel. On any other subject man would be rational. Were only half the evidence, which proves the truth of the christian religion, adduced in favor of a religion which pandered the human passions, and proved, that holiness is not necessary to salvation, there would not be an infidel on earth. While the love of sin remains in the heart, opposition to God will exist; and so long as it does, happiness cannot be found. The true guide removes this love of sin, by sending the holy spirit to convince of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. The soul is thus brought to loathe that which it once loved; to long to be delivered from it, until it is compelled either to perish in despair, or find relief in being reconciled to God. The holiness of God is set forth in its beauty, by the same spirit; and the soul, comparing itself with it, cries out: wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death? A view of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, producing a desire to repent, is imparted. But repentance alone never restores to favor. Pay me what thou owest, is the language continually proceeding from the throne of justice. The true guide points out what is to be done: "repent, believe, and thou shalt be saved." The helpless soul replies: "Lord, I would believe; help thou my unbelief." Then a flood of lights from a fountain of love, is poured into it. The eye is turned to Calvary. It sees the Saviour, the true guide, sustaining all the weight of sin, the just for the unjust. It was love that brought him down from heaven to suffer. It is love which nerves him to the dreadful task. It is love which says, forgive the penitent; for I have died. It is love which whispers, "look to me, and live." The hard heart is softened, it melts into tenderness. It loves. Its opposition to God is gone. His holiness is no longer dreaded nor hated. All his attributes are now lovely. In Jesus, mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other. No wonder that this view creates the soul anew; for it beholds in it, a just God, through Christ Jesus, justifying the ungodly who believe. And now a most interesting scene is presented to our view: A being, once the slave of sin, and led captive by his lusts, now entirely changed, panting after holiness—Once moving down the stream of destruction, thoughtless and hopeless, now labouring up the narrow path of life, through crosses and denials, with a total disregard to earthly joys, looking for an immortal crown in heaven. Angels look down with rapture, and gladly become ministering spirits to the heir of salvation. Possessed of an incorruptible treasure, and of substantial joys, the renewed soul lives only for God, and for eternity. Receiving continually grace for grace, he goes from strength to strength. Imitating the captain of his salvation, he goes forth, armed with no weapon, but love, no armour, but prayer, and a guileless life, to spread around him the blessings of the gospel. Sorrow and sighing flee before him; joy and gladness attend him; while the encreasing throng of multitudes, saved like himself, swell the song of, "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace; good will toward men!" Human nature assumes a new dignity. Its thoughts are heavenward. Its actions heavenlike. And through the blessings & tender mercies of God, it rests not, until the day star spring from on high visits every isle & nation; and the joy & peace of the gospel are sweetly felt by every heart in the whole earth. Oh, it is only the true guide who can produce blessings like these, and this he does by love. Ought we not, therefore, to give to him the honour due to his name; and to acknowledge him, as "the way, and the truth, and the life?"

Have we done this? abandoning every refuge of lies, and taking hold on the Lord our righteousness, and relying on the sacrifice of God, are we following this true guide to eternal life?

To you, my mystic brethren, with the plainness and freedom of a brother, I put the question, are you obeying and following this guide? Possessed as you are of high privileges, do you not feel doubly bound to honour him, whom the two Johns, the great patrons of masonry, loved with their whole hearts, and served with their whole strength? Brethren, you are called upon, by every valuable consideration, thus to yield yourselves to the light of Heaven. The world knows nothing of us, except our outward actions. It misrepresents, ridicules and hates us, because it knows us not; and because we too often live beneath our calling. You know, my brethren, that there is not a single precept taught in the principles by which we are governed, that inculcates any thing unfriendly to the strictest virtue, nor that countenances the least departure from the soundest morality. As Christian Masons, we can point to our work and say, "from turret to foundation stone," we build a temple adorned with truth and love. Every stroke of the gavel on the rough ashlar is only intended to prepare living and polished stones, for a spiritual building, not made with hands eternal in the Heavens. True we do not claim for our institution the regenerating power of the gospel. We render to the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and to him alone, the honour of that great change, which constitutes the highest act of creative power. But we open our doors and our hearts to all, who are found worthy. We reject not, we banish not from our order, those who are not, as yet, fit subjects for the lodge above. We are willing that any, who will conform to rules interfering not with any duty they owe to God or to man, should avail themselves of the rights of masonry. We employ all who wish to labour; knowing that they shall receive, every man, that which is right. Because our society does not exert a power it does not claim—because we are willing to regard every son of man as a brother, and to give him all the assistance in our power, leaving it entirely to him to improve it or not, and to the judge of all to render to him a sentence of justice, according to his works; the world blames us! This is as ungenerous, as it is unwise. It is unkind in those who are without, thus to treat us. They might know, if they would, that they do us wrong. The purest system of morality ever devised by man, is masonry. If it fail to reform the lives of men, it only affords an additional evidence of the deep depravity of the human heart, and of the absolute necessity of divine power and grace, through a redeemer, to make man a new creature. But it does not therefore follow, that this morality is to be contemned. If, in accordance with the teaching of the true guide, our left hand knows not what our right hand does; our charities are silently and unobtrusively bestowed—If we prefer first, to attend to our own household, and then, to others having a claim on our benevolence; shall we be without reward from him, who seeth in secret? If, applying ourselves to means which teach us to reverence God, love our neighbour, and always to desire that which is good; shall we abandon these means, because some make shipwreck of themselves and seal their own condemnation? Shall we abandon principles, which no good man, knowing them, has ever despised? If, in our intercourse with each other, we use a silent language, unknown by the world but which, is understood without an interpreter, wherever a mason is found, shall we be blamed for this? Those who are highly prejudiced against masonry, and indulge in bitter feelings and invective against it, should be more cautious. They may, for aught they know, be found fighting against God. We ask them what is masonry?—They cannot tell, because *they do not know.* Why, then, should they be so inveterate in their ignorance? Instead of thus acting, in the presence of him, whose all-seeing eye searches into the inmost recesses of the human heart, we say, that we do believe christians could exert an influence connected with masonry, which would tell with a mighty effect in eternity. Most cordially and sincerely do we wish that every christian was a mason, and every mason a christian. We do believe that masonry, in the hands of christians, would prove, even as it now is in part, and as it was originally designed to be, a most powerful auxiliary to those means, which are to be employed in extending the knowledge of God, throughout this ruined world.

The question is not now to be settled, shall masonry be established! It is established. Its advocates are found in every land. Regardless alike of the treachery of its friends, and the malice of its foes, it continues to flourish; and numbers among its workmen, some of the greatest, wisest & best men of the present and the past ages. And it will continue to exist as long as chastity, truth, and love shall be lovely and desirable among men. It is a powerful institution. It cannot do harm even in the hands of bad men. It may not do the good it aught—nay it does not do the good it might. But if all the good and virtuous were initiated, were bright and worthy, the result would produce blessings indeed to many in the world.

But, brethren, do we not too often give the world cause to think, and to speak lightly and hardly of us? When Masons are found speaking irreverently of God, neglecting his worship, violating his commands, immoral and unprofitable in their lives, unchaste in their conversation, unkind in their families, unjust in their dealings, sensual in their appetites and ungovernable in their passions, it is not strange that the institution, thus dishonored by ourselves, should be dishonored by the world.

When King Solomon walked the floor of the temple, then all its stones were lively stones, and all its gifts were spiritual. For many succeeding ages Masonry was the smallest name for all that is high, noble & refined. Originating with those who framed the Land, it was supported by Kings who loved it. Where Masonry was not an empty name there is it now. Kings gladly engaged in its cause, and called their talents to beautify and adorn the lovely structure. Then it was an honour to be called a brother; for then, every where the heart met heart, and souls were bound by love. And thus it should be now. For what is Masonry? It is that which forbids whatever can injure either directly or indirectly, ourselves, our families, our country, our God. Brethren is this not so? You know it is, and can and do testify to its truth. What is Masonry? Would you have a further answer? Go, ask the good Samaritan. The widow finding a husband, and the orphan a father in every brother. The hand that wipes the tear from sorrow's eye. The voice that soothes the mourning breast. The benevolence which enters the mansions of poverty, hangs around the bed of the dying, and supports the faint. All that brotherly means, that faith teaches, that hope inspires. Contemplate a being governing himself by the rules of virtue, acting on the principles of heavenly philanthropy, with a reference to the will of God; following the true guide, causing this parched world, wasted and blighted by the angry passions and sinful propensities of sinful rebels, to bloom again like the Eden of God.—View from pole to pole, the confused noise of the warrior hushed, every kindred and people embracing as children of one family, and bowing around one altar, and singing the praises of one God.—and you have your answer.

Were Masons what they ought to be, all would delight to be their friends. For a worthy Mason, is an honour to the world. Brethren, if the worldlings knew what we know, what would they think of us? If, with the spirit of the true guide, one were to enter the temple, and drive from it all who profane it, who would escape the thongs? But a day of retribution and of vengeance is at hand. The Grand Master is coming. His rule is in his hand. Our work will be tried. Woe to him on whom the vow unperformed is found. He shall be held up as an example of God's displeasure against that servant, who knew his Lord's will and did it not. Woe, woe to those who are highly exalted in point of privilege, & abuse their high favours. They shall be cast away forever. While happy, yea thrice happy, he, whose work shall be approved; who, following the true guide in faith, hope, and charity, shall be permitted, when the cap stone is raised, and the temple completed, to join with the innumbered ransomed of the Lamb, in shouting "grace, grace unto it," in a kingdom where faith and hope shall be lost in love.

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The following anecdote, which has often been told in private circles, appears in the *London Atlas*:—"Mark Supple was a reporter to the *Morning Chronicle*; Peter Finnerly (his crony, coadjutor, and fellow countryman) used to tell this story of him. Mark was big-boned, and loud-voiced, and had as much wit and fun as an Irish porter could carry—often more than he could carry himself, or knew what to do with. He took his wine every day at Bellamy's, and then went up into the gallery, and reported like a gentleman and a man of genius. The members hardly knew their own speeches again, but they admired Mark's free and bold manner of dressing them up. None of them ever came to the office in the Strand to complain that the tall Irishman had given a lame, speaking version of their sentiments—they pocketed their flowers of their metamorphoses, and good-fathered speeches they had never made. Mark's way was the hyperbole; a strong vein of orientialism, with a dash of a long trotter. The thing took, Mark Supple was a favorite, and presumed upon it. One evening, as he sat at his post in the gallery, waiting the issues of things, and a hint to hang his own tropes and figures upon, a dead silence happened to prevail in the House. It was the period that Mr. Addington was Speaker. The bold leader of the press-gang was never much on serious business bent, and at this time he was particularly full of meat and wine. Delighted therefore with the pause, but thinking that something might as well be going forward, he called out lustily, "A song from Mr. Speaker!" Imagine Addington's long prim, upright figure—his consternation and utter want of any preparation for, or clew to repel, such an interruption to the rules and orders of Parliament.—The House was in a roar; Pitt, it is said could hardly keep his seat for laughing. After the bustle and confusion were a little abated, the macebearer came up into the gallery to take the audacious culprit into custody; and demanded indignantly to know who it was, but nobody would tell.—Mark sat like a tower on the hindmost bench of the gallery imperturbable in his own gravity, and safe in the faith of the united brotherhood of reporters, who alone were in the secret. At length, as the Serjeant-at-Arms was making many fruitless inquiries and getting impatient, Mark Supple pointed with his finger to a fat Quaker who sat in the middle of the crowd, and nodded, sworn that he was the man. The Qua-

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*Scolding.*—I never knew a scolding person that was able to govern a family. What makes people scold? Because they cannot govern themselves. How then can they govern others? Those who govern well are generally calm. They are prompt and resolute, but steady and mild.

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A Southern paper publishes the following communication—

Why was General Jackson at the battle of New-Orleans, like a bad Grammarian?

[We presume the answer to be, because he cut up the *King's English.*]
*N. Y. Morning Courier.*

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...We hear, every day, of [illegible] of recent removals from office. Mr. Charles J. Nourse, we learn, is to be removed from the Chief Clerkship in the department of State, and Mr. Randolph appointed in his place.

Richard Henry Lee has been removed from a Clerkship in the Office of the Paymaster General. This gentleman is the grandson of the illustrious patriot whose name is indissolubly connected with the author of that work, which, in the estimation of the enlightened, transmits to posterity the leading features of the life, identified with the origin, progress and ascendant of the American Revolution. His only fault is, that he is supposed to have been a friend of the late administration. *See also Intelligencer of Saturday.*

No man of the day in which he lived, understood human nature better than Mr. Jefferson. Surely none had studied the character of the aristocracy more closely than he. Hence in his last letter, he said that they considered themselves born booted and spurred ready to ride upon the backs of the people.

What else could induce a complaint at the removal of Charles J. Nourse from an office obtained by gross subserviency to the coalition, and at the expense of one of the most gallant officers of the late army. The only matter about the case of Mr. Nourse is that he should ever been permitted to remain one single hour in office under the present Executive.

But Mr. Richard Henry Lee, *the grandson of General Lee*, has been removed!! Wonderous. Why did not Mr. Gales at the same time inform us, that Mr. Lee was appointed by Mr. Adams in *February last*, as the reward of his partisan services; and that to make room for him, the son of one of the most gallant officers of the revolutionary army, who had discharged the duties with great fidelity, and whose earnings are the chief maintenance of a family of orphans, was put aside. The tears and distress of the widow and orphans, the zeal, fidelity, and faithful discharge of public duties, weighed nothing with the late administration, when put into the scale against an aristocratic partisan of Mr. Adams. And when we would ask, was Mr. Gales known to complain of any removals or appointments made by Mr. Adams? *His* favors were given to the gentry, who were booted and spurred to ride the people; and Mr. Gales has too much of the *Englishman* in him to complain of *such* appointments.

But is not the whining importunity of the coalition one of the strongest justifications of the policy of the present Executive? By the policy of our laws, entails, that strong pillar of British aristocracy, were broken down. The nature of our institutions gives to the property of the country a free, active and unfettered circulation. So should it be with the offices.—Break down the barriers which the incumbent aristocracy would raise between the offices and the people—let it be known that the people hold the controlling influence—and intelligence, virtue, honor, and public service of the living incumbent will be substituted for the claims of departed ancestors.

We hear few of but little else than that Mr. Gales and he has been twenty-five or thirty years in office! Is there one of these Congressmen who would not, if required, have refused to be so long in office, to have called public attention upon a procession for one third of the time? Let those who are in office discharge their duties with more fidelity and live