



### THE FOUNDATION OF ODD FELLOWSHIP—

rests securely upon a belief in the Fatherhood of God (a Supreme Being) and the Brotherhood of Man.

Its aim is the development of a higher, nobler, practical manhood; the elevation of character to antagonize selfishness; to extend sympathy and aid to those in need, making their burdens lighter, relieving the darkness of despair; to war against vice in every form, and to be a great moral power and influence for the good of humanity.

The first tenet of the Order is **purity**—a purity of life and conduct; the three golden links, **friendship**, **love** and **truth** weld us together—the foundation of our Order. The three pillars of, **faith**, **hope** and **charity**, staunchly support us through the journey of life. As a final crown, our Order teaches **universal justice** for one and all.

True fraternity is of the spirit. If you have true spirit of fraternity, you will live and promote the principles of Odd Fellowship.

## The Door of Odd Fellowship

The Initiatory Degree is the door of Odd Fellowship. Once across the threshold we find the first lesson of our fraternity, in which there is an endeavor to create a light of understanding, to remove the bonds of selfishness or envy, to establish the first lessons of faith, hope, purity of life and conduct, love, truth and to offer a challenge for a pathway of life.

Here is unfolded in brief the story of creation, wherein God created the heavens, the earth, the plants, all forms of animal and bird life, and as his final masterpiece he made Man. Here is awakened the responsibility of the individual to God the Creator.

As the sands in the hour glass slowly trickle through the narrow neck to the bottom of the glass, so are we reminded that our span of life here on earth is slowly passing away. It therefore behooves us to awaken to a sense of our responsibility, utilizing, to the best of our ability, the amount of time we have upon this earth in the services and causes of humanity. In the performance of such services there will be found a happiness, a contentment, and a fuller and richer life.

Only one life, so live it well,  
Keep thy light trim and bright;  
Eternity, not time, will tell  
The worth of that Life's light.

As the evening of life draws to a close, may we hear that plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord." Thus is the lesson of frail mortality brought forth; an admonition for purity of life and conduct, with a pathway of life presented for us to follow, but there is also presented the **Hope** of eternal life.

Upon this broad basis the door of Odd Fellowship is opened—a fraternity established, and as other degrees of the Order are presented, a richer and fuller aspect of Life is given, extending through the Odd Fellow Lodge and into the

Encampment or Patriarchal Branch, wherein is unfolded deeper lessons in **Faith**, a broader scope of labor in the cause of humanity, a richer meaning for **Hope** and **Charity**.

## The First Link in Odd Fellowship

### Friendship



The greatest lesson of **Friendship** is that portrayed by the lesson of Jonathan and David in the book of Samuel, for here you find one who was born of royalty, raised to be a King, an heir to a Kingdom, every want, desire and wish to be his, drawn close in the bonds of a deep faith, love and tenderness, to a shepherd lad of lowly position, through his virtues of courage, judgment, faith and wisdom; a friendship so deeply rooted that Jonathan was prepared to sacrifice not only his rights to a Kingdom, but his own life in defense of his friend.

We find so many elements in friendship—faith, tenderness, love, truth, sympathy, sincerity, unselfishness, confidence, generosity, all of which are freely given; for we do not choose our friends—they are self-elected. The root of all friendship is **Faith**, the first pillar of Patriarchal Odd Fellowship, for without faith the other elements of friendship would vanish as though non-existent, for there would be no bond to cement all the other elements into that firm compact of understanding and trustworthiness.

When friendships are real, they are not fragile—but the solidest things we know. A friend is a person with whom one may be sincere; be one's self, taken at his own values and respected for what we each may be. A friend would not have you other than you are, with all your faults; yet may criticize you in a tender manner, will be truthful, sincere and devoted.

**Friendship** is that higher virtue which destroys envy; releases man from his tendency towards selfishness and isolation, placing him on that higher plane where generous deeds, unselfish purposes, tenderness, sympathy, love and

protection rule his thoughts and actions, uplifting his character and bringing joy and happiness to all with whom he comes in contact. Life is sweet because of the friends we meet; the smiles we share, the clasp of hand; for where would we be if we did not have a friend?

In Odd Fellowship, **Friendship** extends to many cities, states, provinces and lands, assuring you a warm reception in clasp of hand and a welcome such as only a friend can give.

## The Second Link of Odd Fellowship

### Brotherly Love



The central link in the chain of Odd Fellowship was forged by the fires of Friendship. **Love** is one of the basic elements of a true friendship, creating within the individual unselfishness, tenderness, sympathy and understanding. **Brotherly Love** hears the cry of humanity and answers its call. Thought of one's self is pushed aside in answering the call of humanity, in the performance of deeds of goodwill to those less fortunate; assisting in the building of a stronger character; affording the opportunities of education to those who need it; rendering assistance for the physical needs of those less fortunate; uplifting those who are despondent by a cheery word, a smile, a comforting thought and a clasp of hand. Through **Brotherly Love**, unselfish purposes and generous deeds form a bond of unity, creating an estate wherein no man lives unto himself alone.

In **Brotherly Love**, forged by the fires of **Friendship**, wide vistas of opportunity are opened before us—opportunity for service to humanity, to our friends, to society and to God. Those opportunities are ours to grasp and whenever we accomplish one of these opportunities it enlarges the field of our labors and opens up to us new and greater opportunities for our accomplishment. Love gives us the strength and ability to perform these greater responsibilities; to make of our own life a richer meaning; to enrich the principles of our great Order by

acts and deeds and to strengthen the importance of Odd Fellowship by its usefulness.

A component part of **Brotherly Love** is the principle of **Charity**, the third pillar of Patriarchal Odd Fellowship, wherein these lessons in **Charity** are the motive and power which provides the means for creating all of the opportunities for greater responsibilities for the betterment of mankind. Without **Charity**, the journey of life, **Brotherly Love** would have no meaning and acts of humanity would be non-existent, for there would be no thought of welfare of others, but only selfishness and greed.

Our bonds of Unity, **Brotherly Love** and the Pillar of **Charity**, bring richness to our principles and through their acts and deeds show to the world the usefulness of Odd Fellowship.

### The Third Link in Odd Fellowship

#### Truth



The third link of Odd Fellowship — **Truth** — is a natural result of faithfulness to the duties and principles of friendship and love. It is the fundamental element of true moral character.

**Truth** condemns the wrongs, the sins and the falsehoods of society—the culmination of calm investigation by an open mind. **Truth** strengthens character; affects man's speech and actions; creates justice; wins respect from one's neighbor; purifies the soul and blesses all with whom it comes in contact.

**Truth** as taught by Odd Fellowship is derived from the person and life of Jesus of Nazareth, thus presenting to all Odd Fellows, a pattern for a way of life. Following this pattern of the pathway of life required a reverence for God, a trust and belief that He guides and directs our daily walk of life, a realization that our actions, our deeds and our thoughts and speech affect all with whom we come in contact, requiring a striving for perfection in the practices of the principles of **friendship, love and truth**.