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A Measurement of Service

We have heard many definitions for the word cable-tow. In the English Lodges the cable-tow is used only in the first degree and has no symbolic meaning. In contrast, in American Lodges, it is used in all degrees and has many meanings. In the history of initiation the cable-tow was used then as it is used today in Masonic Lodges.

We have also heard of the length and strength of our cable-tow as being measured by our ability to fulfill our obligation, a test of our capacity and of our character. But, we should remember that a cable-tow has two ends. If it binds a man to the fraternity, it also binds that fraternity to each man. The fraternity is to guide, instruct and train as for his effective service to the Craft.

I believe you would describe the word cable-tow as having control, direction and guidance. By control,

It is not meant that Masonry commands by force, but that it shapes us through moral teachings. And by the same method, it gains obedience and gives direction and guidance to us.

For each Mason, the cable-tow reaches as far as his moral principles go and his physical condition will allow. Of that distance each must be his own judge.

Fraternally,

Bob