

COLOR

“God made the beauty of life in color.”

The Ritual gives a complete explanation of the symbolic meanings of the five colors used in our Order. To appreciate these meanings and know why the important colors were selected by the founder, a short resume on colors is given. Compare them with the Ritual work and find the symbolic answer.

In the construction of works of art, color is of great importance. If there is no color, there could be no light. We are told that color is symbolical and for the purpose of expressing some simple state, mood or emotion.

Color emblems held an important part in early religious ceremonies, color was used in the early churches and some churches use colors which interpret and illustrate hidden meanings. Color teaches and symbolizes the beauty of life. God gave to Moses five mystic colors: gold, blue, purple, scarlet and white. [White - Exodus 28]

These five colors were used until the sixteenth century, then combination colors crept in. The Roman Catholic Church used the Roman sequences: white, red, green, violet and black.

Robert Morris selected five beautiful symbolic colors for our Order: blue, yellow, white, green and red.

His selection of the first color is blue, a challenge to the others for beauty and attention, and one of the mystic colors given by God to Moses. Read carefully the reference on blue—Ex. 39 :22; 25 :4—and you will note this color suggests nothing but the purest thoughts to give further light to the lesson taught at the blue point.

Blue was used by the early Christians and was an emblem of divine intelligence, mentality and eternal. Psychologists state that the color blue is dignified, sad or serene. It is called a “feeling tone,” created by the color which is mobile and expressive as man’s individual emotional nature. Blue quiets and relaxes the emotion.

Research in ancient times portrays blue as a symbol of universal friendship and benevolence, because it is the color of the canopy of the heavens which embraces and covers the entire globe. The Jews used blue in the robe of the high priest’s ephod, the ribbon for his breast plate, and the plate of the miter was blue.

The Hebrew tekelet (color blue), signified perfection. Blue held a high position in the Gentile nations of antiquity. To the Druids, blue was a symbol of truth and fidelity. The Hindus assert their God, Vishnu, was represented by a celestial blue, thus indicating that wisdom emanating from God was to be symbolized by the color blue.

The Chinese, in their mystical philosophy, represented blue as a symbol of diety. The medieval Christians esteemed blue as the emblem of perfect perfection, hope and fidelity.

Yellow or gold denotes sincerity, affection and glory. From this early explanation of color compared with the symbolic interpretations of our Ritual, you can readily see why Robert Morris thought of and selected another mystic color.

Glory, action and constancy, symbolizing sincere affection, are shown by Ruth in the yellow point.

The Bible interpretation of yellow is: all that is divine, precious and pure. What could be more precious than the golden sunrays to grow the golden grain producing sustenance in abundance, symbolization of the growing of the heart from within, making friends, sowing seeds, awaiting the harvest.

White is termed a color, yet it really is not—it is the absence of hue, the condition of reflecting all rays of light, and absorbing none. Early history tells us that white was used for the Lenten season. The Chinese used white as a badge of mourning, the Catholics as a badge of purity and peace. In religious observances of the Hebrews, white was the color of one of the curtains of the tabernacle, and according to Josephus, it was a symbol of the element of the earth, and denoting “to purify.” Among the Gentile nations the same reverence was observed. The Egyptians chanted their hymns in white robes.

The Druids clothed their initiates who had arrived at the ultimate degree of perfection in white, and in all mysteries of certain nations of antiquity, the same custom of color white was observed.

White is sacred to Masonry in the Apron and Gloves, symbolizing innocence and purity, and is consecrated to Esther in the white point. Biblical reference is the white horse, white cloud, white throne, white raiment. Read the Scripture and apply to the lesson of white, and you have the answer why the color was chosen to represent the third point. Green was considered a sacred color in the early ages. It represented life and nature in its strength of disrobing in the fall. In the season lives God’s hidden plan of resurrection and life everlasting. It represents immortality and hope.

Red was a Trinity color. It symbolized blood, passion, fire, hatred, cruelty and sacrifice; later it was known and recognized as a cord of love. Early history relates the Roman flag of battle was red, symbolizing war and strength as well as bravery.

The Chinese used red for the marriage service symbolizing passion, love, fervency, ardor, zeal and fire, which was the symbol of regeneration and purification of souls.

The Hebrews used red or scarlet as one of the veils of the tabernacle, in which Josephus refers to it as an emblem of the element of fire. It was one of the colors used in the ephod of the high priest, in the girdle, and in the breastplate. In the middle ages, the knights who engaged in the war of the Crusades wore a red cross, symbolizing their willingness to undergo martyrdom for the sake of religion and the priests of the Roman Church still wear red vestments when they officiate at festivities of those saints who were martyred.

Red was one of the three colors in the old English lectures termed “the colors of Masonry,” and was selected because it designated royalty and a Temple veil, although in those early days it had represented fire, hatred, blood and cruelty, yet blood contains the life principle and when inculcated with the teachings of the other four lessons of our star and infused with the cup of hospitality and love, it becomes a stimulus for those who follow the teachings of the Master of mankind and then it becomes the cord of love.