

APPROACHING THE PORTAL

General Information Concerning Masonry



*M.:W.:Grand Lodge of
Free and Accepted Masons of Washington*

New Candidate Education Program

WELCOME TO MASONRY

You have been elected to receive the Three Degrees of Masonry. We congratulate you on your acceptance and welcome you as one about to enter our ranks. We hope that you are earnestly seeking the truth our Fraternity has to offer.

You have made an important step, one which we are sure you will value not only now, but for many years to come. Masonry is a unique institution that has been a major part of community life in America for over 250 years. Masonry, or more properly, Freemasonry, is America's largest and oldest Fraternity, and one that continues to be an important part of many men's personal lives and growth. Your decision to enter the ranks of Freemasonry had to be your own, without the undue influence of others. That makes your membership in Masonry one of your own choice, which is significant. Men join Masonry for a variety of reasons, each valid and important.

Millions of men have traveled this path before you, nearly all receiving a benefit from their efforts. A large majority of these men had little knowledge or concept of the Fraternity, or what it could mean to them. For this reason we wish to give you certain thoughts and information which we feel you are entitled to receive before the conferral of the Degrees.

To begin with, you should thoroughly understand that Freemasonry is entirely serious in character. Contrary to what you may have heard, there is no horseplay or frivolity in our Degrees; their primary purpose is to teach, to convey to you knowledge of the principles of our institution. You should, therefore, prepare yourself to approach the Degrees with an open mind, determined to absorb as much as possible, without fear of ridicule or indignity.

WHO ARE THE FREEMASONS?

Masonry is large enough and its membership diversified enough to provide the kind of friendship and sense of community that you have been looking for. Masons are men who have come together with the expectation that each has some unique quality as a human being and that, through becoming Masons, each will improve his own quality of life, and together they can improve the life of their community and their world. The teachings of Masonry are designed to provide a positive influence on our homes, communities, nation, and world. These teachings involve our obligation to practice charity, uphold justice, embody morality, and maintain the faith of our individual religious precepts. This Fraternity encompasses millions of men worldwide, from every walk of life, culture, race, and religion, who all support these same objectives. You are going to become one of many thousands of men in the State of Washington who are Masons.

WHAT IS FREEMASONRY?

What is modern Freemasonry? Masonry, as mentioned before, is many things to many people. Many years ago in England it was defined as "a system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols." It is a course of moral instruction using both allegories and symbols to teach its lessons. The legends and myths of the old stonecutters and Masons, many of them involved in building the great cathedrals of Europe, have been woven into an interesting and effective way to portray moral truths.

In Masonry, the old tools and ways of the craftsmen are used to help dramatically portray those moral truths. For example, the 24-inch gauge and the common gavel: just as the ruler is used

to measure distance, the modern Mason uses it as a reminder to manage one of his most precious resources: time; and, as the gavel is used to shape stones, so it is also the symbol for the necessity of all of us to work to perfect ourselves.

One modern definition is: “Freemasonry is an organized society of men, symbolically applying the principles of operative Masonry and architecture to the science and art of character building.” In other words, Masonry uses ageless methods and lessons to make each of us a better person.

Thus, Masonry:

1. Has a basic philosophy of life that places the individual worth of each man high on its pedestal, and incorporates the great teachings of many ages to provide a way for individual study and thought.
2. Has great respect for religion and promotes toleration and equal esteem for the religious opinions and beliefs of others.
3. Provides a real working plan for making good men even better.
4. Is a social organization.
5. Has many important charitable projects.
6. Has a rich worldwide history.
7. Is a proven way to develop both public speaking and dramatic abilities, and provides an effective avenue for developing leadership.

WHAT DOES FREEMASONRY STAND FOR?

Masonry stands for some important principles and beliefs.

The primary doctrines of Freemasonry are Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. Its principal virtues are Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice. These principles or beliefs cover a broad field, actually supplying the pattern to meet every experience in human life.

In the United States, Masonry is a strong supporter of constitutional government, of quality public education, of the freedom of religion and expression, of the equality of all men and women, of the need for strong moral character, and of meaningful charity.

Masonry, and the organizations that are within the Masonic family, contribute millions of dollars every year to helping those with sight problems or aphasia, physically disabled children, speech & learning disorders, and those with severe burns. Local Lodges work to help their communities and individuals within those communities.

Masonry’s charity is always given without regard to race, sex, creed or national origin.

THE MISSION OF FREEMASONRY

The mission of Freemasonry is to promote a way of life that binds like minded men in a worldwide Brotherhood that transcends all religious, ethnic, cultural, social and educational differences; by teaching the great principles of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth: and, by the outward expression of these, through its fellowship, its compassion, and its concern, to find ways in which to serve God, family, country, neighbors and self.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF FREEMASONRY?

Simply put, the overall purpose of Masonry is to provide a way to help each member become a better person. We do not propose to take a bad man and make him good; rather, our aim is to take the good man and make him better.

We try to place emphasis on the individual man by:

1. Strengthening his character.
2. Improving his moral and spiritual outlook.
3. Broadening his mental horizons.

We try to impress upon the minds of our members the principles of personal responsibility and morality; to give each member an understanding of and feeling for Freemasonry's character; and to have every member put these lessons into practice in his daily life.

We try to build a better world by building better men to work in their own communities. Freemasonry believes in universal peace made possible by reaching its doctrine through the Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God.

WE ARE NOT A SECRET SOCIETY!

A secret society is generally one that wraps itself in a cloak of absolute secrecy. That means no one knows who the members are, where they meet, what they do or what they stand for.

That is not Masonry at all! Masonry may have "secrets," but it is not a secret society. Masonic secrets are few in number, and deal with the general method of initiation, the ways we recognize each other, and very little else. These parts of the ritual, which are called the esoteric side of Masonry, have been handed down by word of mouth for centuries.

Masonry's purposes, ideals, and principles may be learned by anyone who inquires. There are numerous books on these subjects which are available to the public. Masonry often has public notices in the newspapers, and our members are usually numbered among the more prominent citizens in the community.

WE ARE NOT A RELIGION!

Masonry, as an organization, is understanding and tolerant of all religious thoughts.

Masonry has no specific creed, no dogma and no priesthood. There are no requirements as to religious preference in becoming a Mason.

Masonry does ask you to state your belief and trust in a Supreme Being. Nonsectarian Prayers are a common part of all our ceremonies, but are not offered to a specific deity.

Masonic ritual does incorporate lessons and examples from the Bible, but they are given as representative illustrations.

Masonry does not require you to belong to a church, synagogue, or mosque, although many Masons are very active in their religious organizations, and among our members are leaders of many denominations.

Freemasonry accepts your right to belong to any church or religious organization of your choice, or not to belong to one at all, and does not infringe on that right. Neither does Masonry try to be a substitute for your church. Masonry wants to unite men for the purpose of brotherhood, not as an organized religion.

WHAT WE DO NOT DO

Sectarian religion and partisan politics are not discussed in Lodge, and there are very good reasons why. When we meet in a Lodge, we are all on a common level, and are not subject to the classes and distinctions of the outside world. Each Brother is entitled to his own beliefs and may follow his own convictions. Our objective is to unite men, not to divide them. These two subjects can cause honest differences of opinion, which might well cause friction among Brothers. No member running for political office has any right to expect the support of any other member because of Lodge affiliation. This does not mean, however, that matters, which concern themselves with the nature of government or individual freedoms, are not proper concerns of Masons as good citizens.

There will be subjects concerning the Lodge's business that have to be discussed. These discussions should be kept within the bounds of propriety, and everyone should show tolerance for the opinion of the other. Every Master wants harmony in his Lodge, and once a matter has been put to vote in the Lodge and a decision made, the decision should be accepted by all members regardless of how they voted.

Masonry teaches every Mason to be a good citizen and to perform his civic duties. We do not try to keep anyone from expressing his opinion, or from serving his city, county, state or nation in an honorable manner. Anyone who serves in political office should not act politically as a Freemason, nor in the name of Freemasonry, in exercising his rights.

To sum up: As a Mason you will never introduce into the Craft any controversial sectarian or partisan political question; and in your life as a member of the state you will ever be loyal to the demands of good citizenship.

WHAT ARE LODGES?

A Lodge is a group of Masons granted a Charter by the Grand Lodge which has Jurisdiction in their area, in our case the Grand Lodge of Washington. There are specific guidelines set by the Grand Lodge as to how this local Lodge may function and what it can and cannot do. These guidelines are set forth in the *Washington Masonic Code* and the *Standard Work and Freemason's Guide*. The leaders of the Lodge are elected by the Lodge membership each year.

These Lodges meet in buildings commonly called Masonic Centers or Masonic Temples. These places may be used by Masons for regular business meetings, Degrees, social activities, other Masonic groups or even community activities. These buildings are generally prominently marked, and are often recognized as special landmarks in the cities and towns of our state.

THE ORIGIN OF FREEMASONRY

We are not sure at what point in time our Craft was born. Hundreds of people, Masons and non-Masons, have investigated this question, but no conclusive answer has been found, and probably never will be. We do know that the earliest written record of the term "Master Mason" refers to the stonemasons of the Middle Ages. The tools of the stonemason date back, of course, to the earliest periods of history and are lost in the mists of time. This is also true of the geometry and geometric symbols used in the craft of building.

Over the ages Freemasonry, as we now know it, slowly took form. It has evolved into a comprehensive and effective form of Fraternal teaching of basic morals, truths and personal fulfillment. It ranks the development of the individual's reasoning capabilities highly and encourages the questioning mind.

THE TWO TYPES OF FREEMASONRY

There are actually two kinds of Masonry. One we call "*Operative*" and the other "*Speculative*."

Operative Masonry can be traced back to the Middle Ages and beyond. Operative Masons formed groups with Lodge structures similar to ours today. We have officers similar to theirs. Men were admitted only after they had served a number of years of apprenticeship. This is the origin of the first or Entered Apprentice Degree. In Operative Masonry, Masons actually did the physical labor of building.

When the organization became what is called Speculative Masonry, men were accepted into the Craft without being actual builders that is they were spiritual builders. Speculative Masonry adopts the terms and concepts of the actual builders, but substitutes men for stone and mortar, and works toward self-improvement rather than the actual construction of buildings.

“FREE AND ACCEPTED” MASONS

How did the words “Free” and “Accepted” originate?

The ancient craftsmen were very skilled and their craft was considered to be indispensable to the welfare of both church and state. They were the men who built castles and cathedrals. For this reason, they were not placed under the same restrictions as were other workers. They were “free” to do their work, travel, and live their lives in a manner which was in line with their duties. No one could become an Apprentice unless he was free born.

The Masons organized into “guilds,” something akin to a trade union, and individual companies or groups of Masons contracted for specific construction projects. In the England of that time, various crafts (carpenters, distillers, pewterers, ironworkers, etc.) also organized into guilds, but most of the population worked under bond to the owners of the land on which they lived.

The word “Accepted” also goes back to the time of the Operative Mason. During the later years of the Middle Ages, there were few educated outside the monasteries of the church. The “accepted” Mason was originally a man who, in a Lodge operative in origin or still partly so in character, was for all practical purposes of membership accepted as a Mason. From this practice grew in course of time the use of the words “accepted” and “adopted” to indicate a man who had been admitted into the inner fellowship of Symbolic Masons. Candidates were “accepted” into freemasonry no earlier than the mid-seventeenth century. We first meet the phrase “free and accepted” in 1722.

By the late 1600's the demand for the type of architecture that lent itself to the guild type of operation was declining. Architecture itself was changing, and the number of men, as well as the number of operative Lodges, were declining. Increasingly, Masonry adopted the legends and habits of the old operative Lodges for spiritual and moral purposes. As time went on, there became many more “Accepted” members than there were “Operative” members. Sometime in the

eighteenth century the “Accepted Masons” outnumbered the “Operative Masons,” and Masonry became exclusively a speculative organization rather than an operative one.

THE ORIGIN OF GRAND LODGES

In 1717 four Lodges in London met together and decided to form a Grand Lodge, possibly for no other reason than to strengthen and preserve themselves. In 1723 they adopted a Constitution. Their success led to the establishment of still other Grand Lodges. In 1725 some of the Lodges in Ireland formed a Grand Lodge and a similar body was instituted in Scotland in 1736. Moreover, the original Grand Lodge in England did not remain without rivals, and at one time in the eighteenth century three Grand Lodges existed in England in addition to the one organized in 1717. Two of these died out without influencing the history of Masonry in general, but the third had a great part in the spread and popularizing of Masonry throughout the world. It called itself the “Ancient” Grand Lodge. The two surviving Grand Lodges were long and vigorous rivals, but they finally united in 1813 into the present United Grand Lodge of England. Thus, from one of these two Grand Bodies in England, or from those of Ireland or Scotland, all other Grand Lodges in the world today are descended.

Titles of Grand Lodges in the United States also vary. Some Grand Lodges are called A. F. & A. M. which means Ancient Free and Accepted Masons. The most commonly used title, like that used in Washington, is F. & A. M., or Free and Accepted Masons.

Masonry was established in France sometime between 1718 and 1725. The first Lodge in Spain was established in 1728. A Lodge was established in Prague in 1729, in Calcutta in 1728 and in Naples in 1731. Masonry came to Poland in 1734 and Sweden in 1735.

The growth of Freemasonry and its ideals and beliefs came not without opposition. Masons are taught that all men are equal – we meet upon the level. Individual freedom of thought and action, as well as morality and ethics, are the concepts and ideals upon which our order is founded. The teachings are a condemnation of autocratic government, who in turn condemn Freemasonry.

MASONIC HISTORY IN THE UNITED STATES

It was inevitable that Freemasonry should follow the colonists to America and play a most important role in the establishment of the thirteen colonies. Freemasonry was formally recognized for the first time in America with the appointment by the Grand Lodge of England of a Provincial Grand Master in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania in 1730. American Masons worked under foreign Jurisdiction until 1731, when the first American Grand Lodge was established in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

One of the most romantic portions of all Masonic history lies in the story of the part played by Freemasons in the formation of our country. Without exaggeration, we can say that Freemasonry and Masonic thinking contributed most significantly to the founding of this great Republic. Many of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, as well as the drafters of the Constitution, were members of the Fraternity. George Washington was a staunch Freemason. He was the first of fourteen Masonic Presidents and the only one to serve as Worshipful Master of a Lodge and President at the same time. The others after Washington are Monroe, Jackson, Polk, Buchanan, Andrew Johnson, Garfield, McKinley, both Teddy and Franklin D. Roosevelt, Taft, Harding, Truman and Ford – of whom Truman and Andrew Jackson served also as Grand Masters.

In the struggle for independence many well-known patriots, such as Paul Revere, Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock, Marquis de Lafayette and Baron von Steuben were members of the Craft. No doubt Freemasonry was responsible for and shared much of their thinking and opinions. Much has been written about the participation of the Fraternity in the Revolution and the founding of America, and it is an episode of which we can be proud. Ever since that period, Freemasonry has grown and flourished, following closely the growth and expansion of the United States.

THE FIRST WASHINGTON LODGES

It was November 25, 1852, while Oregon was still a territory and Washington had yet to become one, that Olympia Lodge, No. 5 was granted dispensation (official approval to function). This act made it the First Masonic Lodge west of the Rockies and north of the Columbia River.

By July, 1858, there were four Lodges in what is now Washington chartered by the Grand Lodge of Oregon: Olympia, No. 5, Steilacoom, No. 8, Grand Mound, No. 21 (20 miles south of Olympia), and Washington, No. 22 of Vancouver. Grand Mound Lodge now only exists as a “historical Lodge”. At the time these four Lodges were under the Grand Lodge of Oregon, there was a combined total of 113 members.

QUALIFICATIONS OF A PETITIONER

Our Grand Lodge requires that a petitioner must be a man, be at least 18 years of age, be able to read and write, believe in a Supreme Being, and be of good moral character. In addition to these prerequisites, a petitioner must have a favorable attitude toward the Craft, and it is anticipated that his purpose in seeking membership is not influenced by any mercenary or self-serving motive. Each petitioner must be prepared in his heart to be a Mason and he must agree to be a peaceable citizen, loyal to his country and its law.

Each petitioner must have been a resident in the State of Washington for the past six months. The requirement of a half-year’s residency before petitioning a Lodge shall not apply to:

1. A seafaring man whose home is on board ship. He must petition a Lodge situated in a regular port of call for his ship.
2. A person who is and six months next preceding the date of his petition has been in the United States Military.
3. A person otherwise eligible, entering the Armed Services of the United States, he being considered temporarily absent from home.
4. A person who for six months next preceding the date of his petition has been in the armed services and has maintained his continuous abiding place and home within the Grand Jurisdiction, and
5. An actual resident of this Grand Jurisdiction who is in attendance as a student at any College, School, or University.

Each petition must be signed by three Master Masons. The three must either be members of that Lodge or, if the petitioner has recently moved to this area, then by members of a Lodge in the part of the state in which he formerly lived where he is better known. If the petitioner is known by a Mason from another Lodge or Grand Lodge, a Mason who is considered an old family friend, his signature may be added to the other three as a courtesy to him, the petitioner, and his family.

Each Lodge establishes the fees for conferring Degrees and the Lodge’s annual dues and determines how these are to be paid. One of the questions each petitioner is asked is, “Will this be

a financial burden on you or your family?” You may want to consider purchasing a Life Membership in your Lodge when you are entitled to sign the By-Laws and become an enrolled Master Mason.

MASONIC ORGANIZATIONS

You have asked to join the Masonic Lodge, Symbolic Lodge, or Blue Lodge. It is the base of all other organizations that require Masonic affiliation, one or more of which you, or a member of your family, may want to join sometime in the future.

We are not sure where the name *Blue Lodge* originated; one theory is because blue is generally regarded as the color used to characterize friendship. Colors have a large place in the traditions of the Craft. Today it is generally agreed that the American usage is derived from English Freemasonry. We know that the United Grand Lodge of England, in choosing the colors of its clothing was guided mainly by the colors associated with the Noble Orders of the Garter and the Bath. When the Most Noble Order of the Garter was instituted by Edward III in 1348, its color was light blue. Freemasonry’s colors were not derived from ancient symbolism. The clothing of three groups of Degrees is related to mainly three colors; the Craft of symbolic Degrees with blue; the Royal Arch with crimson; and other Degrees with green, white and other colors, including black. Worldwide, in many cultures, blue symbolizes immortality, eternity, fidelity, prudence and goodness. In Freemasonry in particular, blue is symbolic of universal brotherhood and friendship and “*instructs us that in the mind of a Mason, those virtues should be as extensive as the blue arch of Heaven itself.*”

Two of the organizations, the *York Rite* and the *Scottish Rite*, expand on the teachings of the Blue Lodge, or basic Masonry, and further explain its meaning.

The *Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine*, commonly called the *Shrine*, is not formally connected with Masonry, but has as its own requirement the restriction of its membership to Master Masons. This organization is socially oriented, and has as its major project the funding and operation of nearly two-dozen hospitals for crippled and burned children.

The *Order of the Eastern Star*, *White Shrine of Jerusalem* and the *Amaranth* admit both men and women. *Research* Lodges do academic study on Masonry. There are currently two Research Lodges in the State of Washington and membership is open to any Master Mason. The *Masonic Service Association*, whose headquarters is in Burtonsville, MD issues Masonic publications and sponsors visits to patients at our veterans hospitals.

There are several organizations, *DeMolay International*, *International Order of the Rainbow for Girls* and *Job’s Daughters International*, for young people. In addition, the *Mystic Order of Veiled Prophets of the Enchanted Realm (Grotto)*, *Tall Cedars of Lebanon* and many other concordant and appendant Masonic bodies will welcome you and your family as members once you become a Master Mason. All you will need is the time and energy to participate.

WHAT TO EXPECT

First of all, relax.

All of the ceremonies of Masonry are serious and performed in a dignified manner. There is no horseplay, no hazing.

Enter the Lodge with an attitude which will help you appreciate the serious and solemn ceremonies that you will experience.

The Degrees, or teaching lessons, are done in the form of short plays in which you play a part, prompted by a guide. The language is beautiful, and the content both meaningful and interesting.

When you receive each Degree it is suggested that you dress respectfully, as in a business setting. When you arrive at the Lodge for your Degree you will be asked to wait a short time in an outer room while the Lodge prepares to conduct the Degree. A small committee will meet with you formally. You will be asked a series of questions to ascertain your motives and confirm your free choice in joining our Fraternity. You will then be prepared to receive the Degree by temporarily exchanging your street clothes for the plain garment of a candidate.

The Degree itself will be recited to you, always from memory, by a team of Masons. Listen to the content of what is being said. These are spiritual lessons given with great dignity.

You should have no worries about entering a Masonic Lodge. The Degrees are simply lessons and you will be treated as the friend and Brother that you are becoming.

THE PROFICIENCY

As you take each Degree, you will be asked to show that you understand what has been said and portrayed. This step is called demonstrating your “proficiency.” The proficiency is evidence that the candidate is qualified for advancement, just as in the days of operative masonry, when the worker had to show that he was qualified to do more complicated tasks.

In Washington, candidates are asked to memorize a portion of the Degree work and pass an open book written test of the basic elements of Masonry and the Degree work. The tests are simple, but require some study. A coach will be assigned to you to help you learn the material, answer any questions that you may have, and see that you pass smoothly through the process of becoming an informed Mason and an active Lodge member. You are expected to meet with your coach as often as necessary in order to acquire a basic knowledge of Masonry.

A booklet similar to this one will be given to you at the end of each Degree. It will contain an explanation of the Degree and will explain the symbols and actions in each part of the Degree.

You will also be provided with a booklet of questions for the open book test that is required before you advance to the next Degree. When you feel comfortable with the material, notify your coach. The questions are drawn directly from the study material, and will be given to you privately.

In addition, you will be required to memorize a portion of each Degree, so that you will be able to visit other Lodges. It will be written in a brief memory-aid form.

If you so desire, there will be optional material along with a list of voluntary projects for you to participate in that will help you become more comfortable and familiar with your new Lodge and Fraternity. As in all endeavors, you will receive as much from the experience as you put into it.

The candidate should attend all Stated Communications of the Lodge. He should arrive early enough to greet all members before the meeting. When the Master raps and asks the Officers to repair to their stations and places, the candidate will retire to an appropriate place to study. When Lodge is closed, you can assist the Steward and/or participate at refreshment with the Brethren.

When you pass the proficiency, you will be given the next Degree.

YOUR DUTIES AS A MASON

You will become a member of the Fraternity when you have received the three Degrees, proved your proficiency in each of them, and signed the By-Laws of your Lodge. In assuming the obligations of the Degrees and signing the By-Laws, you enter into an agreement with the Lodge, wherein you bind yourself to perform certain duties, and the Lodge binds itself to protect you in certain rights and privileges.

Always your duties will be loyalty to Masonry, faithfulness to your superior officers, and obedience to Masonic laws. These are fundamental conditions of membership.

As a Mason, you will be expected to be a contributing member of a Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction. If you move to another state or nation, you may want to become a dual member of a Lodge in a Grand Jurisdiction located there. Every Mason is expected to pay his annual Lodge dues promptly and in this Grand Jurisdiction, on or before December 31 for the year to come.

While a Lodge is not an organized charity, it does support a number of charitable activities. It will be your duty to lend a helping hand to a Brother Mason in his sickness or distress as well as to aid a Mason's widow or orphaned children. But it also teaches love and charity for all mankind, so all mankind has a claim upon your benevolence. This claim is limited only by your own financial circumstance and your perception of your ability to be of assistance.

If you are present at your Lodge when a ballot is taken on a petition for the Degrees, you must vote. Voting on a petition for membership is not a right or privilege to be exercised at your choice, but an obligation and a duty. This is only another way of saying that the responsibility for deciding who shall be Masons rests on every member.

You may be summoned by the Worshipful Master to attend a meeting of your Lodge for some special purpose or to discharge some duty required of you as a Mason, and unless circumstances at the time make it impossible, it will be your duty to obey.

A Lodge differs from any other organization in many fundamental respects; duties and obligations may not be laid down or taken up at pleasure, and membership is not a mere gesture of honor or an idle privilege. A member may not stand aside until an opportunity occurs to secure something from it for his own selfish purpose, nor may he evade his responsibilities by shifting his burdens to more willing shoulders. The Mystic Tie that binds him to his fellows holds him fast.

When among strangers you will have certain means of recognition by which to prove yourself to another Mason and to prove him to you, to enable you to establish Fraternal Relations with men whom you might never have met. To know what wherever you go in the world and whatever your financial or social position, you will find ready to extend to you the hand of fellowship is one of the greatest of all the privileges of membership.

YOUR REWARDS AS A MASON

If you go through the Degrees, receive the work, decide that Freemasonry is a fine institution and then do nothing about the teachings presented to you, then you are wasting our time as well as your time and money. If you recognize the opportunity which is yours, take the various doctrines and truths presented to you, study them, analyze them, contemplate their meanings, and apply them to your own life, then your investment of time and money will be richly rewarded.

Do not adopt a double standard of conduct, whereby you apply Freemasonry to a part of your life, but feel that it doesn't apply to other phases. The thoughtful Freemason will apply the

teaching of our institution to each and every phase of his life, and we sincerely hope that you will see fit to follow such a practice. This great opportunity for self-improvement is one that you should grasp to such an extent that the principles of Freemasonry will eventually spread through every facet of your life; when you do you will have allowed Freemasonry to become one of the greatest of your person experiences.

On taking the Third Degree, you will be a member of your Lodge, and you will be eligible for any office in it. You have a right to attend any meeting of your own Lodge once you are a Master Mason. Visiting other Lodges, however, is a privilege in this, or any, Jurisdiction. Infrequently a Lodge may wish to restrict attendance at a meeting to its own members, excluding visitors because its members want to discuss something privately. For that reason, no Mason has an absolute right to attend any Lodge meeting at any time or place. A visitor is always a guest and every guest must be sensitive to the needs of his host.

These statements are not exhaustive. We have just touched on the fringe of a great theme, but it is our hope, with such light as may have been given you, that you will go forward with a livelier understanding of what Masonry will mean to you and also of what you mean to Masonry.



BROTHERHOOD

*Oh come ye all, each one of you
In brotherhood unite.
All Masons we; a bond to share
Of all that is upright.
'Tis truth we seek, we are as one
Upon the level meet
No dogma have, one God a must
And heaven next replete.*

*A brotherhood of man we serve
A fatherhood of God.
The "Golden Rule," a way of life
We lack a false façade.
No matter what our stations be
If high, or low – between,
Through brotherhood in Masonry
So much there is to glean*



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