

What Does Masonry Mean To You? Hilton Kaufman P.M.

In trying to determine what Masonry or Freemasonry means, there are some traditional definitions that use language regarding making good men better and the use of symbols and allegory. This is probably not why many most men join and continue their membership.

Most men when asked why they joined Masonry cannot come up with a good answer. Many join for social reasons or because of a family tradition. One online survey even indicated that the most common reason was to gain esoteric knowledge.

Even though there is a stress that one should not be joining for mercenary motives, probably more than a few join for business contacts or to get ahead at work. Usually those who have this in mind when joining do not attend meetings and other functions to actually make such contacts. Those who are active for other reasons may find such contacts in appendant bodies as well as their lodge.

There is an article by MWB Neal Neddermeyer, PGM Minnesota, in which he states that there are three groups with differing views as to the meaning of Masonry. One looks at it as a social club and a way to have some fun. The second is interested in the philanthropies and community service. The third is seeking Masonic Light. He further says that these three groups are frequently at odds with each other for control of the fraternity.

The United Grand Lodge of England, on its web site in explaining what Freemasonry is, says that for most it is simply an enjoyable hobby. For some members, this hobby includes a study of the philosophical and historical aspects of Masonry. For others it might involve learning and performing the rituals of the fraternity.

All would probably agree that in some way one might become a better man through Masonry. They just might not agree as to what this means or how this is to be achieved. Each member has joined for his own reason and has his own understanding of what Masonry means to him.