

What is the Purpose of the Masonic Fraternity Now and In the Future?

It is fundamental to human nature to flock together in groups. For protection, for teamwork and strength in numbers, for education and for a natural phenomenon of essential social interaction. When a baby is born it needs to be routinely held or the infant will die. The science behind this has never truly been discovered. There is something inherent in all people from the moment they first see the light of the world; they require touch. As we get older this becomes less of a physical need and more of a mental one. Of course, man has physical needs, this is an obvious aspect of life, to procreate, but we can also get similar benefits from mental stimulation as well. Our lodges act as social and intellectual incubators.

Freemasonry notwithstanding has adhered to these traits since its inception and will continue to set an example of unity in future ages. We need our ideas and thoughts to be absorbed, discussed and nurtured. The majority of us do not always get that mental benefit from our family or place of work. Perhaps if we are an author, a Vlogger or someone of stature who has a platform and thus listened too we will have a larger group of people positively reinforcing our ideas. For the most part a lodge can fulfill a much needed human necessity, often overlooked, that of social interaction.

We may not all realize it, but our fundamental primary purpose as Masons is to make new Masons. As we make new Masons, and pass along such esoteric knowledge that will give our society of friends a discussion point of commonality, we interact on a somewhat spiritual level. One that only we share. Yet, the secondary purpose may vary between Brothers opinions. Although most of the answers to this question can be grouped into one encompassing purpose: meaning.

There must be more to life? Work, family, knowledge, our materialistic goods, our hobbies and pastimes. We all sought to to pass through a door of knowledge and to realize that that feeling, of 'there must be more', was right all along. Many of us are lucky to find it in Masonry. But, I believe it's a gather of minds being bound to a unique ritual that unifies us and gives us a platform of equality that allows us to share our voice and acknowledge one another.

The ritual is a leveled proving ground for each new Brother Mason to be nurtured. First through our proficiency, as a test of character and dedication, then perhaps as an officer going through the chairs. One day, maybe that Brother will speak in a meeting or at an educational evening. But that Brother will get to speak, be agreed with or corrected by his peers and thus have a voice. The ritual gives us that initial bout of confidence which is a foundation for the future. Say these words.. exactly as they are written and with emphasis. These are the same words spoken for centuries, but add your own emphasis as you may choose or in a way that you saw someone before you unveil. These repeated words are just the beginning of a long journey of discourse. The ritual give us the building blocks of confidence among our peers to speak up.

In the beginning, I was terrified to speak openly in lodge. Shortly after becoming a Master Mason, I was appointed Senior Steward and had my short couple of lines to deliver in the seclusion of the preparation room. Yet, my palms would sweat, I wasn't breathing enough air and I would feel slightly hotter in my tuxedo than a few minutes before. Slowly I began to get used to speaking in this role, then as Marshall which was also slightly hidden. But, once I became Senior Deacon I was to deliver a monologue of a vast stairwell of proportion. There was no hiding, I needed to get over this slight fear. But, as the years rolled along, and I continued into the elected offices, I began to enjoy the excitement of speaking in lodge. The ritual allowed me to give a slice of knowledge to the newly initiated and gave me a bit of stature for my opinion to be considered.

We as Masons are able to cradle knowledge, nurture it and then pass it along. Usually better or more refined than before. We almost obsessively strive to learn and we learn from one another. Listening to our diverse points of voice and allowing our own to be absorbed and critiqued. Even this paper is a chance to have one's voice heard among your Brothers. A level ground to allow all of us to be challenged and acknowledged in a way we unknowingly yearn. Then a chosen one will be herald as an elevator of the craft. His paper shared, nodded at and debated.

Just like every human child that needs to be held or it will die. We as adults have a need of intellectual social interaction. That bringing together of minds to help us be content that we have touched brains. A consistent mental stimulation between peoples allowing us to feel meaning and feel we gave meaning to others. A pulpit for so many of us to lift an idea, a thought or share something we have discovered from history.

The purpose of the Masonic Fraternity is to give us an incubator for men with ideas to be challenged. Now and in the future, as human beings, we need to be cradled in thought. Free to express new thoughts and our lodges give us a place to test them. Off shoots of this incubation allow brothers to have the beginnings of special social skills, leadership skills and a fundamental understanding of public speaking. To interact in a way that we feel we can be heard, listened to and contemplated. And thus rewarded, not with monies, but with the pride that we did our bit for the Craft and to have our name recorded.

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