

What is Freemasonry?

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What is Freemasonry? Well, Freemasonry is a men's fraternal organization that historically was thought to take in good men, and, by using allegorical teachings based on ancient stone masonry, teach those good men to improve their overall moral character.

Freemasonry, historically, brought in men of exceptional character, often times from different socioeconomic backgrounds, where they could hold civil conversations, and thus better educate themselves. Men could hear different perspectives, different moralities, and different social views within the confines of a Masonic lodge, producing members that in theory, were more empathetic and more well-rounded thinkers.

Freemasonry to me, in theory, is exactly what it is supposed to be.

Freemasonry has given me access to some of the greatest thinkers, and best friends, I could have ever found, and would have never otherwise found. Freemasonry, to me, has been a blessing in finding brothers, that are always willing to give me support and good counsel whenever I've found myself in need of assistance. To me, that is the greatest of all Masonic charities.

Institutional Freemasonry, however, has evolved into almost the exact opposite of what it is intended to be. Men, often times lacking in moral character, drive, or willingness to improve, have been invited to join the Masonic ranks. Men of ill character have consistently repelled good potential members, and instead, have risen to the ranks of Masonic leadership.

Any successful business endeavor has a mission statement. I believe the mission statement of the Masonic Fraternity should be as follows: *Offering men a system of self-improvement, thereby serving their communities and improving society as a whole.*

Institutional Freemasonry does not have a mission statement, so, in reality, it is a ship without a course. We are soliciting membership, soliciting money, buying buildings and bicycles, but we do not have an ultimate goal, or purpose. Most functioning lodges have made their sole purpose survival. Ironically, with declining membership, and the lack of interest in education, lodges have to invent reasons to exist! Backpack programs, bicycle programs, pancake breakfasts, widow's nights, veteran appreciation dinners... these were meant to be the byproduct of strong lodges, not the main focus.

Freemasonry to me, is an ideal, and personal journey, no longer supported by the Masonic institution.

I have chosen to adopt what I believe should be our Masonic mission statement. I have learned to accept, that I will never find Masonic light within the walls of the typical Masonic temple.

I am an important ingredient for the survival of Freemasonry. Long after our lodges are defunct, and the Grand Lodges are bankrupted, there will still be a few men looking at improving themselves. Improving the way they think, improving the way they manage their time, and for me, improving the way I temper my vices.

I like to think, that I, being a very flawed individual, can serve as an inspiration to other flawed persons looking to make themselves just a little better. I am not alone. Masonry needs gentleman like me, to attract other gentleman like me, so that we may grow down to the optimal size.