

DISCOURSE

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“What has Masonry become?”

My Dear Brothers

Forty generations ago, we started as stonemasons that possessed a certain knowledge of the building trade unknown to others, we taught our trade by word of mouth through an apprenticeship program. During this period of time, the clergy and a few royals were the only ones that had the ability to be scholars, you can begin to see how important these stonemasons were, and the magnitude of the secrets of their trade was to them. These trades were of such great importance that these individuals unlike the common people were allowed to move about the different kingdoms practicing their trades.

This is the first lesson, which teaches that Masonry is about having possession of knowledge and the application of that knowledge in order to create and improve men's lives. The secret was that of self-improvement through education and learning of a trade that would benefit the individual, his family and the community in which he put his trade into practice.

Move this a few centuries forward to approximately twenty-five generations, to our humble beginnings in 1717, as Speculative Masons. Again, you will see our Fraternity as we know it today going through a process whereby men of letter, of science, of military, of politics, of business and many other of the Enlightenment Era joined Freemasonry because of the value they found by their practice of Tolerance, not only of religion but of politics.

In a place where religions were oppressed and politics were of only one source that of the Autocracy, where the average man had no input, Freemasonry offered a different change of pace. It allowed discussions and freedom of expression, it tolerated different views, different ideas, it provided the mechanism where these learned men could vent their ideas based on the lessons taught them by the principles of this institution. Again, you can see people with knowledge applying it to improve oneself before going out and improving the lives of their fellowmen.

You can see this in people like Newton, Voltaire, Mozart, Lafayette, Franklin, and Washington. Men like Garibaldi, Bolivar, Juarez, and Marti and many more the world over, setting men free not only from the oppression of the body but that of the mind as well. They taught us to think, to act and most importantly, they taught us to improve ourselves as they had done themselves by applying the principles taught in our Fraternity of Liberty, Equality and Brotherhood. Principles so very strange to men of that era that very few understood what they meant and yet they were practiced every day by members of this Noble and Ancient Craft.

These members of our Craft did more, they emulated every worthy deed, they applied the lessons taught by our symbols, and they improved themselves by applying those lessons to every aspect of their life to prepare them for a leadership position in their communities, states and country.

Today, the Craft has a real disconnect with the mysteries and lessons that have been imparted for over two centuries. They have become clichés we use as part of the ritual, never looking beyond the words. Speech today is lost on the majority of our fellowmen because no one is ever held accountable for their words, speech and writing.

There was a time when men lived and died by the words, speech and writing. A time when the word was chosen very carefully in order to deliver the proper message, to learn, to teach and to inspire their Brethren and fellowmen. By today's standard, this is seldom heard or seen even in the political arena by those that seek to lead us.

Therefore, it begs to ask. What has Masonry become? Is Masonry a club where we fulfill our need to be social? Is Masonry an institution for those seeking titles and self-importance? Is Masonry an irrelevant organization? Think about these questions, ask them of yourself, and see where you place yourself and the Fraternity.

I have, to me Masonry is none of that or at least for those reasons. Yes, the Masonic Lodge is a place where men can gather and be social, at the same time we can learn the lessons taught in it. Such as the lessons of self-improvement, community, charity, being a good loyal citizen, and a servant to your God.

Where leadership regardless of station still considers BROTHER the highest title that can be bestowed on a member. Where serving in the top office makes you the servant of the Craft and not the other way around.

Where Masonry is made a relevant organization by the members' involvement in their family, community, places of worship and country.

We need to get back to the basics of Freemasonry, start looking into its mysteries and lessons, make them the focus of our meetings, and promote the mystique that has attracted so many men over the ages. To learn the lessons taught in it so we can go abroad in the world to teach them by precept and example. We owe that much to our predecessors.

Respectfully and Fraternaly Submitted, I remain your most humble servant

Jorge L. Aladro
Deputy Grand Master

If you would like to receive, these newsletters make request at email below if you would like to forward to your list of friends you have my permission and thank you in advance.

“My Brothers, the newsletters are intended to be thought provoking, to get you to think creatively, to get you thinking what if?, to dare you to improve yourself and your Lodge.”

Note: If you would, like to have any of these presentations made at your Lodge or District Associations feel free to call.