What is Freemasonry?

In 17th and 18th Century England, Masons defined their fraternity as “a system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols.” Today we might define it as “an organized society of men synthetically applying the principles of operative masonry and architecture to the science and art of character building.” What Freemasonry teaches is not at all secret. It teaches its members to be better men. However, based upon tradition, Freemasons keep this knowledge through ritual, much of which is secret.

What is Freemasonry’s Purpose?

 Basically, Masonry tries to build a better world by making “better men out of good men” by strengthening their character, improving their moral and spiritual outlook and broadening their mental horizons. The principles of character building that Masonry instills are the same as those of other fraternal organizations. Masonry offers its members an opportunity to give back to their communities. How to put these lessons into practice in daily life is left up to Freemasons. Freemasons believe in universal peace made possible by teaching its doctrine through the Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God.

How did Freemasonry Originate?

Medieval stonemasons were highly skilled craftsmen urgently needed at the various building projects in different countries. Inside the church and state, the guild of stonemasons became known as “Free Masons.” The evolution of the stonemasons’ lodge is a fascinating story. The first Masonic lodge was established in London in 1717. Other Grand Lodges took their charter from this and other early Grand Lodges. Today, there are Grand Lodges in most of the countries in the world and in each of the United States.

During the mid-18th century, the Grand Lodge of England began to introduce many innovations in their ritual which attracted many members, especially those who had originated from the trades. A council was created splitting the craft into two Grand Lodges. The original lodge was titled the “Moderns,” while those who harkened to the traditions of the old lodge were called the “Ancients.” The Ancients were willing to accept many non-masons as members of their masonic lodge. They also kept secret their methods of building and used passwords and other means to identify themselves to each other as members of the craft. Eventually they gave appointments and journeymen social instruction. With the growth of the cities, the Renaissance, the Reformation and Counter Reformation, and the decline in demand for great building projects, the special privileges of stonemasons as traveling craftsmen disappeared. As a result, they began to take in non-masons as patrons. This led, in the 17th century, to large numbers of members of other professions and trades such as physicians, lawyers, bankers, merchants, and farmers. This practice grew, and the stonemasons’ lodges likely transformed into the speculative lodges we know today.

Is Masonry a Secret Society?

As we said, what we teach is not secret. How we teach it is. In addition, we try to keep secret our modes of communication, so those who are not initiated to our fraternity will not learn our secrets. We do ask, however, that each prospective member state that he believes in and trusts in a supreme being. Masonry is not a religion, nor is it designed to substitute for or replace religion in its members’ lives. We do not ask members to agree with the Church of Christ or any other religion. Masonry does not demand that its members attend any place of worship. We do not advocate any particular political belief or any political beliefs at all. Masonry is not a political organization.

Can An Atheist Become A Mason?

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Can Political Beliefs Prevent a Man from becoming a Mason?

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How do Masons Behave in Lodge?

Inside a Masonic lodge, all men are equal and work on a common level toward the same purposes. The classes of members and distinctions of outer world do not intrude there. In fact, only two subjects are banned from discussion in Masonry. These are religion and politics.

Though Masons arepolitical, they are also religious. Masons believe in a Supreme Being and the Fatherhood of God. Masons are different from most men in that they do not discriminate against the beliefs of others. Masonic lodges welcome men and women of all faiths. Masons believe in universal peace made possible by teaching its doctrine through the Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God.

What is a Grand Lodge?

The structure of modern speculative Freemasonry as we know it today came into being with the formation of the first Grand Lodge in London in 1717. Other Grand Lodges took their charter from this and other early Grand Lodges. Today, there are Grand Lodges in most of the countries in the world and in each of the United States.

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