

ARE YOU CONSIDERING BECOMING A MASON?

As published by the Masonic Renewal Committee of North America

Freemasonry is the oldest, largest Fraternity in the world. It's members have included Kings, Presidents, Prime Ministers, Statesmen, Generals, Admirals, Supreme Court Chief Justices, corporate CEOs, opera stars, movie stars, and probably, your next door neighbor.

And Masonry is always ready to welcome good men in the Fraternity. It's ready to welcome YOU, if in your heart you can answer "yes" to a few questions.

Do you believe that there is such a thing as honor, and that a man has a responsibility to act with honor in everything he does?

Masons teach that principle. We believe that a life not founded on honor is hollow and empty -- that a man who acts without honor is less than a man.

Do you believe in God?

No atheist can be a Mason. Masons do not care what your individual faith is -- that is question between you and your God -- but we do require that a that a man believe in a Supreme Being.

Are you willing to allow others the same right to their own beliefs that you insist on yourself?

Masonry insists on toleration -- on the right of each person to think for himself in religious, social and political matters.

Do you believe that you have a responsibility to leave the world a better place than you found it?

Masonry teaches that each man has a duty not only to himself but to others. We must do what we can to make the world a better place. Whether that means cleaning up the environment, working on civic projects, or helping children to work or read or see -- the world should be a better place because we have passed through it.

Do you believe that it is not only more blessed to give than to receive, it's also more fun?

Masons are involved with the problems and needs of others because we know it gives each of us a good feeling -- unlike any other -- to help. Much of our help is given anonymously. We're not after gratitude, we're more than rewarded by that feeling which comes from knowing we have helped another person overcome some adversity, so that their life can go on.

Are you willing to give help to your Brothers when they need it, and to accept their help when you need it?

Masonry is mutual help. Not just financial help (although that's there, too) but help in the sense of being there when needed, giving support, lending a sympathetic ear.

Do you feel that there's something more to life than financial success?

Masons know that self-development is more precious than money in the bank or social position or political power. Those things often accompany self-development, but they are no substitute for it. Masons work at building their lives and character, just as a carpenter works a building a house.

Do you believe that a person should strive to be a good citizen and the we have a moral duty to be true to the country in which we live?

Masons believe that a country is strong as long as freedom, equality, and the opportunity for human development is afforded to all. A Mason is true to his government and its ideals. He supports its laws and authority when both are just and equitably applied. We uphold and maintain the principles of good government, and oppose every influence that would divide it in a degrading manner.

Do you agree that man should show compassion for others, that goodness of heart is among the most important of human values?

Masons do. We believe in a certain reverence for living things, a tenderness toward people who suffer. A loving kindness for our fellow man, and a desire to do right because it is right. Masonry teaches that although all men are fallible and capable of much wrong, when they discover the goodness of heart, they have found the true essence of virtue. Masonry helps men see their potential for deep goodness and virtue.

Do you believe that men should strive to live a brotherly life?

Masons see brotherhood as a form of wisdom, a sort of bond that holds men together -- a private friendship that tells us we owe it to each other to be just in our dealings and to refuse to speak evil of each other. Masons believe a man should maintain an attitude of good will, and promote unity and harmony in his relations with one another, his family, and his community. Masons call this way of

believing in the **Brotherhood of Man**. It really means that every Mason makes it his duty to follow the golden rule. This is why Masonry has been called one of the greatest forces for good in the world.

IF YOU ANSWERED "YES", YOU SHOULD CONSIDER BECOMING A MASON.

Freemasonry offers much to its members -- the opportunity to grow, the chance to make a difference, to build a better world for our children. It offers the chance to be with and work with men who have the same values and ideals -- men who have answered "YES" to these questions.

Among millions of Masons, not one was lawfully invited to apply for membership. Our code of conduct prevents it. Thus, no faithful Mason can invite you. A Mason can obtain a Petition for the Degrees of Masonry for you, but you must ask for it - and for good reason.

You must first ask yourself if you're suitably prepared to enter the "gentle craft of Masonry" . . . to become a brother in the world's most exclusive fraternal order. Few men are intellectually or spiritually prepared to understand or appreciate even the more apparent meanings of Masonry.

Do you reflect on the nature of man's existence and your obligations to God, your family, and yourself?

If such ethical and moral questions hold little interest for you, then you will gain little benefit from the teachings of the Craft. But if you seek a more meaningful quality of life - and the spirit of charity and good fellowship which flow from it - then Freemasonry has much to offer.

We want you to know what we believe, how we act, and what we do... then, should you become a Mason, to be proud to be our Brother and to participate in our work. Only those who desire membership because of their favorable impression of us should seek a petition.

The importance of improvement, setting an example, and shouldering responsibility for the future are our Masonic goals. And where will it all end? In brotherhood. What we build today will endure. That is our hope and our faith.

-Stanley F. Maxwell