

## So you want to be a Mason?

By Bro Eric Kay

2018



Looking into becoming a Mason? It is not a responsibility to be taken lightly. It looks cool from the outside, but one of Freemasonry's best kept secrets is...it's even cooler on the inside. You see, Masons don't recruit. We suggest, we encourage, we might even boldly enquire, but we don't set up a booth and take any guy off the street. It's not just a matter of filling out an application, paying some dues, and Poof! you're a Mason. For one thing, you have to come well recommended. In other words, you have to have a good reputation among other men first.

Freemasonry is the oldest and largest fraternity in the world. Its public roots are over 300 years ago; older than our country. Ben Franklin, George Washington, Mozart, John Wayne, and Harry Houdini were all members (to mention a few). But here's the thing, I know that when I see a man sporting a sign or symbol of Freemasonry, he is my Brother. I can count on him to help me if needed, and visa versa. That's a big responsibility, a lot of trust. I can tell my children that if they ever need something and they see a man with one of those symbols, they can count on him too. Think about that.

Masonry also takes a lot of time, at least at first. It's a weird ceremony you have to go through (but no goats!) where you're blindfolded. Everything has a deeper meaning and is in the ceremony for a reason. And you have an obligation to memorize and recite back in the lodge, in front of the old guys. There's pressure.

But once you are a Master Mason, that entire old world opens up to you. Hundreds of years of history, spanning the entire world, with its roots as far back as King Solomon's Temple. A global Brotherhood of like minded men. A set of allegorical ceremonies that the aforementioned famous Masons went through hundreds of years ago too. I live in rural Wyoming, and I once had a conversation with a Mason from Ontario, Canada, while we were standing in the gift shop of a chapel in Rosslyn, Scotland!

Just so it's clear up front, Freemasonry is NOT a religion. I like to look at it as more of a religiously based philosophy. We see God as an architect, and ourselves as rough quarried stone that needs refining. It is through Freemasonry that good men become better men.

Now, the whole 300 year old global fraternity thing is pretty cool, but the work takes place in your local lodge, in your community. All of these things can happen to

you when you become a Mason, but it's that old 2-3 story building downtown that makes it happen. The gentlemen who welcome you as you become a Master Mason will, most assuredly, be from all walks of life. Age, color, creed, nationality, political leanings, mean little to Brothers who "meet on the level" as equals in a lodge. That, in and of itself, is a powerful notion too.

So ask around, look for the Square and Compasses of a Freemason (like the one at the top of this article) and introduce yourself. Ask around in your own family! I bet you have a father, grandfather, or certainly some uncles who are members. Look up your local lodge in the phonebook or on the Internet. It's not a mystery or a secret! Freemasonry has a saying, that "2 B 1, ask 1" or in other words, you have to ask to become a member, but hopefully what I've written here will help you know what questions to ask.