

Modernizing Freemasonry

The thought is sometimes voiced that we, as a fraternity in the 21st century, must modernize Freemasonry...to 'keep up with the times', to 'adjust our compass', if you will. If any importance can be attached to such statements, it must be that Masonry perhaps has not been properly interpreted or understood. The why and how of Masonry is perhaps confusing to the extent that the modernization plan is also a confusing issue.

Masonry is a way of existence, a way to conduct your life. What can I do to change conditions? Surely, I can't do anything about the fundamentals of life, breathing, walking or sleeping. I cannot improve upon the rays of the sun, nor can I do anything about finding a substitute for water. In all the fundamental elements of life I cannot think of any plan that could modernize them. And so, I must accept Masonry as it is...the history, traditions, its principles and purposes. I must judge its worth by what it has meant to humanity and to society, but more importantly to me.

The only possible change I can influence is the way that I apply Masonry to my life. What Masonry offers to the Mason of today is as necessary and worthwhile as it was to the Masons of a hundred years ago. What its philosophy is worth today, it was worth a century ago. What part of it can I eliminate without losing something of truly lasting value? What can I put back into it that will make it a more progressive system? The modernization of Masonry must take place within the individual Mason. There are no restrictions. There is some understanding that I can gain today which I failed to see yesterday.

Here is my hope...that all Masons, through the faithful performance of their duties as members of the Craft, through a more careful study and understanding of our Institution, find a new appreciation, rather than to generalize on the vague and indefinite plan of 'Modernizing Freemasonry'. Each of us must ardently seek and find what this fraternity of friends and brothers means to us. Trust in your Craft enough to admire it, study it, and perfect it. Apply its teachings....go ahead, improve yourself in Masonry...it's what you came here to do.



Living Stones - Masonic Thoughts for Today's Mason

Douglas M. Messimer, LEO

Fraternal Lodge No.53

9-20