

THE SECRECY OF MASONRY

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From: Ron Blaisdell To: mi-masons
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In the ordinary sense of the word, Masonry is NOT a "secret" society! Don't let anyone tell you it is. Secret societies are societies which are secret; that is, which do not acknowledge their existence to the public, or in which men do not acknowledge membership. Everyone knows of the Masonic Fraternity; its members are proud to be known as Masons. There is nothing secret about the membership list; anyone can ascertain from Grand Lodge records and from printed lodge reports who is and who is not a Mason. So there is nothing secret about the organization. It possesses and imparts to its members certain information which Masons are required to hold sacred, and thus "secret" from the profane. It is a society which possesses "secrets," but is not itself secret. The secret organization may be, and often is, at least a potential menace to society; at those times of the world's history when secret societies have done great good, they were a menace to the rotten social organization which brought them forth. In days when the social organization is the best the world has seen, the secret society menaces that which is good, even though its members do not so intend. Thus, the anarchistic societies of the old regime in Russia had only Russia's good at heart, yet their deeds have made the word "anarchy" anathema to all good citizens. "But why have any secrets at all? If you possess knowledge of value and secrets of power, why not give them to the world? Why make a mystery of them?" If we only could give them to the world! Masonry wants to tell her knowledge; she is anxious to bring to all men the message which she has. And so fast as they are fitted for it, she does so. No good man and true need be denied the blessings of Masonic knowledge; he need but to ask to receive. But to give it to those who do not want it, or those who are unfit to receive and use it, would be to cheapen it, to make it of no effect, to injure its power for good among others. The teacher of mathematics is willing and anxious to tell the "secrets" of geometry to any student who wishes to learn. But if a ten-year-old child begs for those "secrets," is the instructor able to convey them? How may a ten-year-old understand that the sum of the squares of the two sides of a right angle triangle is equal to the square of the hypotenuse ? Before he can

comprehend, he must know common arithmetic, and understand square and cube root! With the best will in the world to tell, the teacher cannot, because the child cannot understand. Masonry would like to spread her gentle teachings before all men, but if a man have no love for his fellows in his heart, if he possess not the charitable instinct and the love of God, how shall she make him comprehend what she knows and how she teaches? The "secrets," so called, of Masonry are few in number and valuable only to her membership. A few modes of recognition, a few solemn promises made by each of us to all of us, a few ways of teaching knowledge which was old when the pyramids were built, and you have encompassed most of the Masonry that may not be told. True, the Order has elaborate ceremonies of initiation, teaching, at times with costume and scenic investiture, just as some churches use low lights, incense, and beautiful music to aid in conveying the religious lessons. The methods are kept from profane knowledge not that their spreading before the world would harm Masonry, but would undermine its power for good. Men are men the world over. That which is hidden is sought; that which is forbidden is desired; that which is secret is studied; that which is rare is held valuable. We hunt for gold, not common rock; we scale the high mountains and disdain the hill; one by one the scientists dig out of the great unknown the secrets of nature, only to pass to another when this one is found. Masonry, keeping her teachings for those who seek them; Masonry making it difficult to become of her elect; Masonry, holding herself apart and unostentatious from the world, makes men desire her. What a man desires, that will he have. When he finds that there is one and only one road by which he may win from Masonry those teachings she guards so well, that road will he take. He will be a good man and true, and pay the price of study, application, patient waiting, and don the bonds of fraternity to prove himself fit. And, once he is fit, he becomes the material Masonry wants and she gives him of herself with both hands! As a young Mason you may be much distressed at finding in a book shop a so-called "expose" of the secrets of Masonry, in which there is much that is correct, even if more that is nonsense. But let not your heart be troubled! You can go to any Masonic library and find dozens of them! They have never done any harm, nor can they do harm; and for just the reasons set forth above. Those who are not fit to receive Masonic teachings are neither interested in these so-called "revelations" nor able to understand them. Good Masonic material will never waste time reading them; such want Masonry at its source. Indeed, were it possible that a complete stenographic report be made of any degree, and published in the newspapers the next morning, few would read it, fewer would understand it. For it would not be Masonry, but merely its husk, its shell. The real secrets of Masonry are never told, not even from mouth to ear. For the real secret of Masonry is

spoken to your heart, and from it to the heart of your brother. Never the language made for tongue may speak it; it is uttered only in the language of the eye, in those manifestations of that love which a man has for his friend, which passeth all other loves, even that of a woman.

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As you can see, I am not the first to say that ritual has no bearing on a Man becoming a Mason. Ron Blaisdell, PM Capital of Strict Observance No. 66