

Why Do you Want the 33rd Degree?



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As I look upon the sparsely populated room that should be filled to near capacity with able-bodied, willing workers, I begin to wonder; where are the men who would be Masons who would embellish the Scottish Rite? Where are those Sublime Princes who would give their all to be elevated? Where are those Men who would hold up their heads high and answer proudly to the address of Grand Inspector General?

Are they here? Were they ever? What drives a man to want to posse that tri-banded golden symbol worn on his left ring finger? Why does he strive so hard to attain that crown with the golden leafed clusters surrounding it? What prompts a man to push so hard to obtain this lofty goal?

It has often been said that all men are Masons — it is just that some don't know it. I think that is true and yet, there are some Masons that don't know the meaning, or rather the true meaning of what it means to be a Mason. Many men join Masonry for many different reasons; some want the sense of brotherhood; some want to feel that they belong to a group with a fraternal bond; some think that it is a social organization that does nothing but promote parties and good times. And while Masonry can be all of these things, it is actually so much more. It is an organization that teaches us values and responsibility, not just to ourselves but to others all around us. Its teachings help us to understand ourselves and our place in this miraculous puzzle that we call life and how each part interacts with each other part to bring us together as a whole being.

In the Scottish Rite, or University of Freemasonry, we endeavor to become more enlightened in the development of our beings and that should, in turn, help us to

develop ourselves into stronger, more productive members of our society. We should be learning how to give more of ourselves to aid and assist those who are less fortunate than we are. But it seems that we do not seem to realize our duties, most especially to our country and our neighbors, as we espouse in our obligation.

As each of you reads this message, I want you to think about what it means to you to be a 33rd Degree Mason. Think about what it means to you to be a 33rd degree Mason. Think about what you do to show others that you hold the highest degree. Do you give freely of your time and your resources to help others? Do you do your utmost to let others know that you stand behind them to boost them up when their spirit is low? Can you say that you are the wall that they can lean on when they feel that their back is up against one! Or are you content to be able to wear that ring and that crown and just say “Look at me—I’m a 33rd.” Is that what satisfies you? Because, if that is the extent of your satisfaction then you my friend, are desperately in need of enlightenment. For to be a TRUE 33rd Degree Mason, you need to elevate yourself to the height of that degree that you professed to have earned.