

COMPARING AFFILIATED MASONIC ORDERS TO FREEMASONRY

Affiliated Masonic Orders are *like* Freemasonry in that:

1. They are secret societies and are therefore esoteric (hidden/secret) in nature.
2. The exoteric (known/unhidden) side of these orders is their philanthropy; they perform community service and/or charity work.
3. They are universal in nature. Freemasonry believes, "Fatherhood of God, brotherhood of man."
4. They have a requirement of belief in a 'Supreme Being', whether that is Allah, Baal, Jesus, Vishnu, Lucifer, etc.
5. Having Masonic origins, Co-Masonic Orders have a strong resemblance to Freemasonry, either in obvious or not-so-obvious ways.
6. Rituals for the women's and children's orders contain 'watered-down' and 'sugar-coated' versions of the 'morals and dogma', doctrines, beliefs, traditions, practices, customs, structure, symbolism and allegories of Freemasonry.
7. The orders hold false beliefs about Jesus, salvation and how to get to heaven.
8. While the rituals may have vague references to Jesus Christ, He is never mentioned by name within the meeting room. Portions of Scripture referring to Jesus Christ in these rituals are simply left out.
9. It is forbidden to talk of religion and politics in the meeting room.
10. Most ceremonies are not open to the public.
11. They have elaborate initiation rituals that are full of symbolism and allegory.
12. Each order's initiation has a story line or plot that is exemplified (dramatized, acted out) in a fashion similar to a play and with the candidate playing an important role.
13. At least one Mason must be present at every meeting in order for it to be held.
14. Orders may not recruit members.
15. Members must join of their own free will and accord.
16. Potential members must have the recommendation of at least two Masons in good standing.
17. Before initiation, potential members are questioned by an Investigating Committee and must be approved before their petition goes to ballot.
18. They ballot on petitions of potential candidates and being elite, are very selective in choosing their members.
19. Initiates stay in the "Preparation Room" before initiation and are caused to participate in preparatory and religious rites such as circumambulation (an element of sun worship), investiture, divestiture, illumination, entrusting, etc.

20. Members are sworn to secrecy and made to swear many oaths, vows, pledges and obligations.
21. The initiatory oath is administered and taken on a phrase-by-phrase basis, never revealing the oath in its entirety before being sworn to, and is renewed annually.
22. There are many rote lectures and prayers that are memorized and recited by the members and officers and presented to the candidate as 'life lessons'.
23. Initiations are lengthy and contribute to information overload, whereby overwhelming the candidate.
24. Sometimes at the end of the new candidate's initiation, hazing is involved.
25. New members must pass a proficiency to advance.
26. There is a distinct hierarchy within the Order, having both appointed and elected offices. Some officers move up 'through the chairs' to a local presiding position.
27. Officers and members have extravagant names such as Worthy Advisor, Worthy Matron, Master Counselor, Honored Queen, etc.
28. They wear emblems, regalia and jewels that signify their office.
29. Members can work to earn awards and may have honors bestowed upon them.
30. Most Orders have more than one degree; higher, earned or honorary degrees.
31. Upon reaching the age of majority (adulthood, no longer a minor) or upon marriage, members in good standing may go through an elaborate 'coming of age' ceremony and given honorary life-time membership in the Order. Such honorary membership has all the same rights and privileges except for holding office and voting.
32. They have additional ceremonies for rites of passage, memorials, funerals and special occasions.
33. There are local, state and national levels of most adoptive orders that meet periodically for reunions.
34. They charge dues.

Co-Masonic Orders are unlike Freemasonry in that most of the women's orders do not take blood oaths.

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