

Bah Humbug!

Bah Humbug! Who do you think of when hearing that? Many of you will remember them as those immortal words uttered by Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens 1843 story "A Christmas Carol". Our man Ebenezer was giving his opinion of Christmas, Brotherly Love, Relief, and pretty much anything to do with relating to others. Despite his grim attitude, there were those who cared and wanted better for him and through their efforts, were eventually able to enlighten him to the Truth of the joy and brotherhood of this season.

How did this come about? He was visited by three spirits; the Spirit of Christmas Past, the Spirit of Christmas Present, and the Spirit of Christmas Future. The first was a spirit of happiness, youth, and new beginnings. The second showed him the present reality, a man now, no longer a youth, learning and plying his trade. The final spirit took him on a tour of a grim and uncertain future, trying to teach Ebenezer of his own mortality. Now think of our own three Masonic Degrees. Can you see the parallels?

Hopefully we too can find, have found, some amount of enlightenment after going through our degrees. It may not be as profound and rapid as the change that came to Mr. Scrooge, but then, we are not a short story, to be dealt with within an hour. We are still works in progress, there is always hope, but it takes work on our part.

"What come you here to do?" "To learn ..." I'm stopping right there as I think this is the first and most important part of the answer. No one can teach or change us. The knowledge can come from others, but the understanding and the change must come to us from within ourselves, from our own desire to do so. Do you remember the question that you were asked when you entered the Lodge for the first time? "Do you make this request of your own freewill and accord?" Meaningful change can only happen when you are the one who wants it to happen. Find the deeper lessons of our three degrees, just like Ebenezer Scrooge's three Spirits of Christmas, they can lead you to a more enlightened life if you dare to follow their lead.

Some Masons feel there should be less obvious Christian references in our Craft and others feel that there should be more, and I don't care which camp you are in just now. Considering the season, I will end with a quote from the same story. Merry Christmas, and as Tiny Tim said "God bless us every one."

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