

Island Freemasonry

ISLAND FREEMASONRY, THE FINAL BASTION OF THE OBSERVANT LODGE

By John Bizzak, Ph.D.

Reviewed by Bro. Jason F. Hicks

This book is a call to action within the fraternity. Dr. Bizzack's book looks at the reason we have gotten to where we are today within masonry and how the observance lodge will save masonry as we know it.

First, the book discusses how we have gotten to the point we are at today. The book covers that masonry has had five rapid expansions through its history: the colonial era, the civil war, the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, world war II, and the 1990's. These periods greatly grew the fraternity but the fraternity was not equipped to offer the educational and philosophical instruction that was needed and this allowed the fraternity to go off course.

Next, he argues that the traditional observance lodges are the key to getting the fraternity back on track with how we should be structured. The focuses of an observance lodge are: a focus on guarding the west gate, being proficient in masonic ritual and law, a commitment to advance brethren through the degrees by mutual and genuine effort, the selection and advancement of officers should be by merit alone, dressing your best for lodge, a lodge must offer quality assemblies and be willing to pay for them, the return of a sense of awe to our ceremonies, and masonic education at every meeting.

Blizzack's argument is that we have gotten off course as a fraternity and the only way to get back on course is to adopt the principles of an observance lodge and to steer a course in that direction. I believe his approach is right and it's what we must do moving forward.