

Are you a Soldier of the Light?

Yes, of course you are... we all are – at least we said we were going to be true Soldiers of the Light when we became Masters of the Royal Secret. That was not just part of a play; it wasn't just some more of that exciting and inspirational stuff that sounds really good but doesn't actually mean anything in "the real world" that we experience every day. We really meant it!

You and I said that we were going to help those around us become wiser and better, but we also noted, quite practically, that before attempting such a significant undertaking, we would first work on our own education to qualify ourselves – after all, how could we expect to instruct someone else if we haven't first properly prepared ourselves?

When we were talking so earnestly about all this, we agreed that we would attend the meetings of the various Bodies of our Valley. This wasn't just a clever way to build attendance at our meetings and Reunions. Consider the context in which we made this statement - we were talking about educating ourselves by taking advantage of the instruction and the insightful commentary offered in our meetings. We were talking about participating in, or about attending and paying attention to the lessons of our Degrees presented at our Reunions. We were saying that we would avail ourselves of our Valley's regular efforts to help us to qualify ourselves.

It goes further than that. The next thing we said about qualifying ourselves to help others was that we were going to take advantage of the many books that have been written for instruction in the Rite... we said that we were going to read and study them, and we were given a book about the degrees to get started. Some years ago, it was Grand Commander Pike's *Morals and Dogma*, but more recently we have each received a copy of what many have found to be the far more accessible *A Bridge to Light* written by Dr. Rex Hutchens, 33°, G.:C.: This is a great place to begin to study the lessons and meanings of our Degrees.

Within the last couple of years, the Supreme Council has added a major new resource for our use in qualifying ourselves as Soldiers of the Light. The "Master Craftsman Program" is a six-part correspondence course that uses both *A Bridge to Light* and the excellent new *Scottish Rite Ritual – Monitor and Guide* by Illustrious Arturo de Hoyos, 33°, G.:C.: It would be difficult to understand how one could begin a serious attempt to become a true Soldier of the Light in today's Scottish Rite without taking advantage of the Supreme Council's Master Craftsman Program. If you haven't already started, you will learn more on-line about the program and how to enroll at www.scottishrite.org/mastercraftsman.html.

While you are on-line at www.scottishrite.org, also go look at the Scottish Rite Research Society and all the materials you will find there. Not only are there many excellent books for purchase, but as a SRRS member, you will also receive gift, bonus books to help with your education.

Yes, we are all Soldiers of the Light, at various stages of qualification... some at the earliest stage simply as the result of becoming Masters of the Royal Secret and some at more advanced stages from the continuing pursuit of knowledge and wisdom. Where are you?