

"... Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error"

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RELIGION OF THE LODGE

Prof. John E. Dahlin, Editor

When the subject of Secretism is dealt with, the question is often raised: Is Masonry and other Secret Societies a religion? The average Mason will answer: No. A mis-informed Mason once wrote, "The lodge and the church occupy two wholly different spheres, and things that are not alike cannot be compared. The church is of the Lord from heaven, the lodge is of human origin. The church ministers primarily to the soul, the lodge to the body." It would be well if that statement were true, but it is completely erroneous. If the lodge were merely a fraternal organization seeking to benefit its members and limiting its activities to the non-religious areas of life, then the matter might be viewed in a different light altogether. While there still would be many objections to the lodge, if it left religion out, the opposition would find a different line of argument. The purpose of this article is to present factually that there is a very definite religious aspect to Secretism. The most authoritative spokesman of the lodge points out again and again that the lodge has a religious base. The words of Paul to the Athenians fit very well when applied to the Masonic Lodge, "Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious" (Acts 17:22).

To become a Mason one must be-

lieve in the existence of a supreme being. Furthermore, Masonry has its "Worshipful Master," its "High Priest," its set forms of prayer, its moral and religious symbols and teachings, its belief in immortality and reward in the world to come, its Scripture readings and its altars. It seems to me one must be either naive or ill-informed not to recognize the lodge as a religious institution. In the well known manual of the lodge (Masonic Ritualist) p. 46, A. G. Mackey, a recognized authority in Masonry says: "As Masons we are taught never to begin any important undertaking without first invoking the blessing and protection of deity, and this is because Masonry is a religious institution." There is hardly any need for a lengthy discussion whether Masonry is a religion or not; the main point of concern ought to be, if it is a religion, what kind of religion is it? I shall try to point out where Masonry and other Secret Orders are at odds with Christianity which is the only true religion.

Our concern in this matter is not to criticise the lodge as a fraternal organization, that is, if it had limited itself to functions which are non-religious. Unquestionably the lodge is rendering meritorious service to its members despite certain objectionable features within its frame-

work. But the chief disappointment to many of us is that the lodge moves so freely into the religious realm. Again, we may quote Dr. Mackay, the greatest authority in Masonry, as he discusses the right of Masonry to be called a religious institution. He says, "I contend without a sort of hesitation that Masonry is, in every sense of the word except one, and that is least philosophical, an eminently religious institution—that it is indebted solely to the religious element which it contains for its continued existence, and that without this religious element it would scarcely be worthy of cultivation by the wise and good. Masonry is then, a religious institution; and on this ground mainly, if not alone, should the religious Mason defend it" (Encyclopedia of Free Masonry, pp. 640-641). Masonry claims to be the essence of all religions. Masons who have a very limited understanding of the complex matters in the lodge, often say, nevertheless, "If I live up to the teachings of the lodge, I have just as good a chance to get to heaven as any church-member." Indeed, this is a full confession that Masonry is a religion even though its devotees are shockingly ignorant of the way to heaven.

THE RELIGION OF THE LODGE IS FALSE

The lodge is not synonymous with Christianity, neither is there any justification for correlating any of its activities with the Christian religion. Christianity is distinct and completely separated from other systems. It is at variance with the lodge even though the latter may insist that it rests on a religious base. Masonry and the rest of the Secret Societies belong, not in the company of Christians, rather such organizations be-

long down in the market-place alongside Buddhism, Brahmanism, and Mohammedianism. Christianity stands apart from and above all Secret Societies. The origin of Masonry, e.g., is not in the realm of Christianity. Some of the ablest researchers among the Masons trace its religious tenets back to the religions of ancient India, and the mysteries of pagan Egypt and ancient Rome. See Free Masonry and the Ancient God's, by J. S. M. Ward, p. 341. Moreover, the capable interpreter of Masonry, A. T. C. Pierson says in his *Teachings, Origins, and Early History of Masonry* that "Masonic religion comes from Orient and has reference to the primitive religion whose first occupation was the worship of the sun" (p. 34). Many other references could be provided regarding the origin of the lodge and its religious character. Actually Masonry claims to be the essence of all religions. It is naturalistic rather than supernaturalistic and revelatory. In contrast, the God of Christianity is the God of the Bible. In Masonry the religious concept of God is so broad that there is room for the Christian, the Jew, the Mohammedan, the Buddhist and the Confucian, and the worshipping of deity under every form. (See Masonic Monitor, T.S. Webb, p. 85). It is perfectly clear that the principle of the Universal Fatherhood of God is wholly embraced by the Masons and the rest of the Secret Societies. This makes the lodge completely false as to its religious claims. Only those who have received Christ have the right to be called the sons of God (Jn. 1:12). The God of the Masons is not the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but rather, He is regarded in the nebulous terminology "The Grand Architect of the Uni-

verse." The one true God cannot be confessed, honored, worshipped, believed in, or prayed to, apart from Jesus Christ. (Jn. 3:18, 36; Acts 4:12). Spokesmen of the lodge pass over altogether this fundamental truth of the Scriptures. It is therefore proper, I believe, to regard the lodge as false because its religious claims are contradictory to God's revelation.

THE LODGE OMITTS THE NAME OF CHRIST

Whatever the lodge may assert regarding the name of God, we have not discovered any prominent spokesmen for it who manifests a willingness to lift up the name of Jesus Christ for proper recognition. This conspicuous silence regarding the name of Jesus Christ is an unjustifiable omission. In Col. 1:18 Paul makes the centrality of the Lord Jesus a matter of supreme importance: "That in all things He might have the pre-eminence." And tragically those Scripture passages used in the rituals of the lodge are emptied of Jesus Christ. In the beautiful passage, namely, 1 Pet. 2:3-5, the name of Christ is removed from its ritual. And in 2 Thess. 3:6 and 3:12, Christ's name is also omitted. Dr. Mackey says, "some slight, but necessary, modifications have been made in these Scriptures." What is the omission? Obviously in the first passage it is the phrase *through Jesus Christ*. In the "Masonic ritualist" there are 28 prayers, and not one of them is offered in the name of Jesus Christ. The leading spokesman for Masonry calls this "a slight modification." Indeed Masonry confesses a god, but it does not confess the Lord Jesus Christ. The position of the lodge is also contradictory to John 12:6, "No man cometh to the

Father but by Me." Masonry is deficient when it is confronted with I John 4:3, "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." Truly from the Scriptures we are exhorted to give our full obedience to Jesus Christ. This is a matter with which a Christian needs to be concerned if he contemplates joining a Secret Society. The lodge has the audacity to mutilate the Scriptures in order to eliminate the name of the Lord. A well known former Masonic Chaplain said, "As Chaplain in the Masonic Lodge I offered the prayers of the lodge and heard others offered, but never one in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" (The Christian and Secret Societies, p.14). Let us remember the lodge takes this position despite the clear declaration of the Scriptures as e.g., "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). Regardless of the good which the lodge claims it does, it is not an exaggeration, however, to assert, that it does the gravest injustice to the deeply engraven name of Jesus Christ by the deliberate omission of that name in the standard ritual used.

THE LODGE A RELIGION OF GOOD WORKS

The core of the Christian doctrine is salvation by grace, not grace plus good works, or the combination of both. The lodge boldly teaches salvation by works and character. Speaking for Masonry, William A. Hammond says: "Masonry inculcates

faith in immortality as indispensable to moral living and urges its members to qualify for eternal life by the practice of those qualities—integrity, fellowship, and service—which may be reasonably expected to constitute the felicity of a future life” (What Masonry Means, p. 175). As one reads the literature of the lodge it becomes clear that its leading writers teach that a person works out his own salvation by a diligent application of the teachings and instructions of the lodge, and as a result of these good works men will, one day stand before the Great Architect fully acceptable. This is completely at variance with the Scripture, as e.g., “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:8-9). Salvation by character is deeply imbedded in the teachings of the Secret Orders. The lodge therefore functions as an institution which

promotes good works, and it is believed these will take men to a happy eternal destiny. The lodge is not in agreement with Christianity with regard to works. The Christian religion teaches clearly that we are saved through faith, and good works logically follow when men become born-again believers. The lodge makes no such distinctions, rather its literature and rituals point overwhelmingly to the emphasis on salvation through character and good works. The lodge seeks to rob Christianity of its distinctiveness of being the only true religion. Masonry and other Secret Orders recognize the gods of all religions. We conclude by saying the lodge has the element of religion within its system, but it ought never to be correlated with the Christian religion. In practice the lodge becomes the rival of the church, and to a large number of its members, the order represents their only religion.

APOLOGY FOR OMISSION

The article, “Standing and Withstanding” by Rev. Don Howard, printed in the *DISCERNER*, Vol. IV, No. 12 was taken from the *NORTH STAR BAPTIST* of Nov., 1964. We are sorry.

NEW EDITION: *Prophetic Truth for Today*, Paperback by Prof. John E. Dahlin, \$1.95. In twenty-three messages the author seeks the unveiling of End-Time events based on Bible Prophecy. One message is on: Delusions of the Latter-Days.

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(Continued on page 15)

MAJOR DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE CONTRADICTED BY SECRET SOCIETIES

Rev. Lyle P. Murphy,
Superintendent of the Messianic Witness
of Kansas City, Mo., a mission to the Jews.

Secret societies, and by this we mean ultra-exclusive bodies of any form¹ from the Klu Klux Klan to campus socialities in the Greek letter fraternities and sororities, are found to be at cross-purposes with the tenor of the entire Word of God. The very term "secret society" implies a conscious effort to organize and sustain a social unit not unlike that of Biblical Babel, the epitome of civilization without God. In every age, the secret society has attempted to foster a man-or-dained self-sufficiency as defined by a social code. On these terms, it goes without saying that the society will be a gathering of the few and many or most men will be unacceptable to the society by reason of physical, racial or social stigmas, or worse, by failure to accord the society the place of social or intellectual prominence it claims for itself. The Bible everywhere inveighs against such an artificial social unit "For in Him we live and move, and have our being;" (Acts 17:27a).

The secret society is a distinctive organism by reason of the oath-taking that follows election to the order. A ritual best adapted to a darkened chamber, the initiate, perhaps at the point of a sword, repeats an oath calculated to weld the impressionable candidate to the society. Dr. J. Theodore Mueller of Concordia Seminary says of oaths:

"An oath sworn by men is a most solemn appeal to God to confirm the truth of their words with the express implication of His punishment in case they fail to speak the truth."²

Since the secret society is not divinely sanctioned or directed it is a serious matter to bind oneself by calling upon God to exact or inflict the penalty specified in the oath. Dr. Mueller adds:

Hence the words of our divine Lord: "Swear not at all" (Matt. 5:34) are directed against all false, blasphemous and frivolous swearing as also all swearing in uncertain things. The fact that Christ in Matt. 5:33-37 warned his hearers against the frivolous and sinful swearing of the Jews at his time, is indicated by the special modifiers "by heaven", "by Jerusalem", "by the head" as also by the command: "Thou shalt not forswear (swear falsely; commit perjury) thyself (vs. 33).³

The corollary to oath-taking is that the initiate relinquishes the right to approve or disapprove the actions of his new associates. Moral rectitude then can only be determined in light of the code of the society and its rulers. This has the force of submerging the personality—the part of man that is made in the image of God—to the society.

The Bible usually occupies a special place in the ritual of the secret society, in most cases as an instrument to make the initiating oath binding hence more awesome. It is axiomatic that the mere presence of the Bible in lodge or chapter proceedings lends an aura of the supernatural enhancing the idea that this body has both *Lux et Veritas*. (Light and Truth). A powerful apologetic for the "things done in darkness", the

Bible is paraded, decorated, kissed and revered but seldom read. For the most part the Bible is a closed book but some secret rituals do involve the use of Scripture. This invariably is a usage marked by quotation of isolated passages and rarely takes the form of exposition or systematic study. It may also involve the practice of embellishing Biblical incidents through a continuing revelation somehow vouchsafed to the secret society. Several well known secret bodies play upon Old Testament history adding incidents and characters of which the Bible knows nothing. It is but a short step then to reinterpret Scripture as "veiled allegory" giving wide sweep to unscriptural cabalistic and mystic teachings. Of course the society is the only repository for this truth and the outside world, or the "profane" to use secret society terminology, are hopelessly incapable of unwrapping these deeper veins of wisdom.

An infinitely more serious heresy arises in wresting Scripture to sanction ungodly activity. As pointed out above, secret societies are always prejudicial to the interests of the ineligible or the unqualified and in some cases, alleged Biblical teachings have been used to vent wrath on the profane. Bible teaching on any subject is usually so plain that the wresting of Scripture is unforgiveable and obviously satanic in origin.

Secret societies can and do make use of other so called "holy books" alleging that such writings as the Koran, the Zend Avesta and other scriptures are sacred and contain truth. This is a denial of the Bible as The Scripture, the only book bearing the stamp of divine inspiration.

The practice of according other religions parity with Biblical faith is

in keeping with the general theological tenets of secret societies. In the doctrine of God for instance, nearly every organization has its All-Seeing Eye, its Ineffable Deity or some allegiance to a Higher Being or Principle. "God" is simply the Judeo-Christian name for this being and He can just as well be identified with Allah or Manitou or anything else from any source said to be higher than man. The earnest lodge member might rise to object at this point with the rejoinder that the lodge requires every member to affirm his belief in God on admittance to the society and to maintain that belief to hold membership. This blow for theism simply tells us that demons are eligible for membership since "they believe and tremble" (Jas. 2:19). The tenet requiring a belief, without careful specification of the nature and object of that belief, is another vestige of the "easy believism" of our day. The same easy belief that characterizes the driving force of ecumenism and denominational merger in the liberal protestant world, will pass the test for lodge membership. That both liberal protestantism and the secret society are thoroughly compatible is evidenced by the large number of liberal clergymen who carry lodge credentials.

The secret society also does a great deal to promote the modern day idea of a good natured paternalistic God that might be fondly referred to as "the man upstairs". In contradistinction the Bible leads us to describe God as Spirit, Infinite, and perfect, the source, support and end of all things. This very definition might be emblazoned on the walls of the chapter house but it would only be a touchstone of respectability without a parallel teach-

ing or admonition to order the life in accordance with the divine will.

With a society based on easy believism, it is not surprising that nearly every secret society totally neglects the person and work of Jesus Christ. If mentioned at all, the Savior would not be identified as Very God but simply as a man. The preaching of the cross has always been an offense and a rock of stumbling, how then to fit it into the dogma of a secret society? Once more, recourse is made to the liberal concept of Jesus (not Christ), the Great Teacher. This involves a Christology that accepts the One who suffers the little children but never mentions the One who drove the money-changers from the Temple, nor ever makes mention of His atoning sacrifice. Of course it is better for the secret society if Christ be left out altogether. The role of the Savior as the divider of men looms too large to be ignored. By so much, the secret society conforms itself to the spirit of antichrist.

The neglect of the heart of Biblical redemption does not extend to its principal symbol. Wide use is made of the cross in conventional and other forms and has a cultic significance to its wearers. In its practical use it is a good badge for the lodge officer serving as priest or chaplain and gives the society the quasi-religious tone it needs.

For all the misuse of God, the Savior and the Bible, it is in the realms of the doctrine of Man, Sin and Salvation that the clandestine organization most clearly contradicts the entire corpus of scriptural truth. To form a secret society is to allege the innate superiority of one man over another and to hold as self-evident that the lodge is composed of the

best men to be found. It may well be that the organization requires fair fame of its candidates but again this implies the elect have the basic ingredients for salvation by character and the lodge will do the rest. Imagine if you will, a secret society affirming the Biblical truth, "How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?" (Job 15:16)!

Why then do men join secret societies? First of all, Americans are the proverbial joiners of anything and everything anyone takes time to form. In addition the mystery surrounding an association which no member may discuss whets the appetite for belonging. Some men never lose the childish desire for dressing up in special regalia and most men delight in wearing an insignia ring or pin.

Secret society members find the greatest use for membership lies in buying and selling to others in the same fraternal order. It is a widely recognized trade advantage to wear the same lodge pin as your customers although the existence of this commercial alliance is usually denied by secret societies.

Probably very few men have ever joined a secret society because they felt it offered the salvation they need. However, every society has a small number of men who dote upon secret studies of the occult. The societies constituted for social, racial or political ends have no need for such deeper mysteries but the societies that are truly occult, that is, those who claim interest in mystic studies, offer the seeker something not offered elsewhere. Esoteric lodges, to give them their technical name, usually provide libraries equipped to probe the mysteries of the ages including such basic theo-

logical issues as the nature of God, the destiny of man, and the origin of the universe. No recourse is made to the Word of God which answers these questions plainly but by the use of cabalistic numbers, letters and symbols the initiate can delve to his heart's content. Such methods are patently unscriptural and suggest a close connection with satanic black arts. Strangely enough the Esoteric lodges are those best known for their work in the perfectability of man.

In order to carry out this idea of the perfectability of man, the secret society is often identified with charitable and philanthropic causes. The society's elect give freely of time, money and effort as good works mete for salvation by character. In this way the lodge member stores up credit with the Supreme Being against the day when mankind is weighed in the balance scales of justice. Such teaching has no room for the Christ of Calvary and no need for a Savior. This is Unitarian Universalism pure and simple.

Considering the doctrinal contradictions thus far discussed, it is not surprising that Biblical Ecclesiology (the doctrine of the Church) and the secret society, are wholly incompatible. The divinely ordained societies, the family and the church, should encompass the needed social expression for every man. By so much the secret society probably contravenes family rights but it certainly usurps the right of the church. (By the church we mean the visible manifestation of the greater society, the Body of Christ.) The Biblically sound church is rightfully the dissemination point for truth and moral teaching and the place where men are to gather to glorify God. The secret society arrogates to itself the role

of arbiter of truth, contradicting the revelation of God and steals the time, money and talents that belong to the church. Anyone who has ever done church visitation can testify to the great number of men and women who are too busy with lodge activities to come to a house of worship. As to the large number of born again believers who maintain active participation in secret societies, it suffices to say that the church can only suffer by such a divided allegiance. It should be noted that encouragement to hold church membership may be written large in the teachings of the secret society but it will be silent, perforce, on the necessity of giving the local church first claim on the individual's time, talents and financial means.

The Eschatology or doctrine of last things as propounded by the secret society is an absorbing study in itself. Most such organizations have doctrinal tenets relating to the end of life and ritualistic burial rites are one of the fringe benefits of membership. Since salvation is by character and the lodge member is to be judged on the basis of works, death is usually looked upon as a pleasant voyage into paradise with the assurance that membership in the society will be the passport into joy unspeakable. The writer vividly recalls his own secret society days and the lecture on death as the commencement of that trip to a distant land "from whence no traveler returns." This presentation was illustrated by a color slide of an open grave with a spade in a mound of fresh earth. As initiates we were admonished to remember this common destiny and to help our departed lodge brothers on in this great venture by bearing their remains to

the final resting place in the manner the ritual prescribes. This seemed to be a reasonable service to perform in aiding the union of the world with God as the secret society teaches. This again is Universalism, a direct denial of the Scriptural warnings of Judgment to come (Rom. 2:3,4). Perhaps at this point the Christian lodge member is in most serious opposition to his own blood-bought position. We are responsible to warn men of their jeopardy in neglecting so great a salvation and moreover to warn them of the swift and terrible punishment that befalls those who die in their sins. A silent assent to ritual and dogma that holds out a false assurance of salvation for all is criminal. On the other side of the coin, men need to know that Heaven is the home of God and the special residence of those who know and trust Him. To aspire to an eternity with God requires that you enter by the only means open to us, that is as heirs and fellow-heirs with Christ. No secret society affirms this truth.

It is doubtful if anything is ever said by any secret society about the person and work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment to come, a ministry that cuts across the very heart of the secret society. The oath-bound initiate then stands in the unenviable position of ignoring or refusing the whole counsel of God, and choosing a "Babylonish garment" of worldly respectability and social acceptance.

In his ministry to believers, the

Holy Spirit as the Guide into all truth, is willing to point out the pros and cons of oath bound membership to the seeking saint. To be sure, the secret society is in the realm of questionable things, at best, and a careful analysis of the issue is indicated. First of all, the secret society is not of or for Christ. Many good things are alleged for the lodge but never once has the claim been made that the so and so society is trying to reach men with the saving Gospel. Secondly, Christ is not glorified in such a society. Since the society is nothing more than a fair show in the flesh how can the Son of God be honored in it? Thirdly and most decisive of all, could Christ be in it Himself? It is doubtful if the lowly born carpenter's son from the wicked city of Nazareth, rejected by the established religious circles of His day and then executed with two criminals, would be accepted by any secret society. And the sponsoring member who added the notation—He is the Son of God—would only jeopardize his own future in the organization.

In summary the evidence seems to indicate that a secret society membership is a snare to the unwary. The visible portion of the oath bound societies is such that there is nothing that squares with the Bible, hence the secret portions, like the seven-eighths of the submerged iceberg, suggests even more of a departure from the revelation of God. More of this will be known "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ . . ." (Rom. 2:16).

1-The Knights of Columbus does not seem to fit the mold of the secret society and is best considered an arm or agency of the Roman Catholic Church.

2-Baker's Dictionary of Theology (Everett F. Harrison, ed.) 1960. *Oath*. P. 382.

3-Ibid.

Note: Rev. Lyle P. Murphy was born in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, but was educated in the United States. He is a graduate of Calvary Bible College with the BA in Pastoral Studies and has completed most of the residence work for the MA in Ancient History at Indiana University. Before his conversion he was a member of three secret societies and held office in one of them. He is married and has two children.

WHAT ABOUT THE MASONS?

*Does Freemasonry serve as a helpful arm of the church,
or is it a dangerous and tumorous growth? By David Baxter.*

Freemasonry is historically and by its nature non-Christian. Though its teachings are as fatal to Protestants as to Catholicism, it is not openly hostile to Protestantism. However, it is obviously anti-Catholic. This attitude is embarrassing to those Protestants who have encouraged Freemasonry but now want better relations with Catholics, who will not tolerate the lodge in any of its arts, parts, or joints. Actually, the only valid reason for some Protestants to to have allowed Masonry to fasten upon their church bodies in the first first place was the common ground they found with it against the Church of Rome.

Other than this, Protestantism has no more in common with Masonry than with any other cryptic religion or secret cult. The evangelical faith is not a mystery or pagan religion.

Masonry is not a part of Protestantism, although much of its growth is attributable to many Protestant groups having given it access to their members from whom Masons were recruited. Thereafter, Christian-Masons have divided their allegiance between God and the Masonic religion. They are trying to serve two masters. There is no question about it. Masonry is a distinct religion of its own. Dr. Albert G. Mackey, one of its greatest authorities, wrote in his *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, a Masonic "holy book":

"I contend without any sort of hesitation that Masonry is, in every sense of the word except one, and that its least philosophical, an eminently religious institution—that it is indebted solely to the religious ele-

ment which it contains for its origin and continued existence, and that without this religious element it would scarcely be worthy of cultivation by the wise and good."

After giving Webster's definition of religion, Dr. Mackey remarks: "Look at its ancient landmarks, its sublime ceremonies, its profound symbols and allegories—all inculcating religious doctrine, commanding religious observance and teaching religious truth, and who can deny that it is eminently a religious institution? . . . Masonry, then, is indeed a religious institution; and on this ground mainly, if not alone, should the religious Mason defend it."

Again, he says:

"If Masonry were simply a Christian institution, the Jew and the Moslem, the Brahman and the Buddhist, could not conscientiously partake of its illumination, but its universality is its boast. In its language citizens of every nation may converse. At its altar men of all religions may kneel. To its creed disciples of every faith may subscribe."

Like Universalism and Theosophy the lodge is thus a composite religion. It manages to superimpose its teachings on its members who are adherents of other religions, much like the religious syncretism of II Kings 17:24-41. It is all things to all religions to accomplish its universalism. It has a Bible on its altar in nominally Christian lands, the Koran in Moslem ones and so on. It will readily glean prayers from the Bible like I Peter 2:5, but omitting Christ's name from this passage, as it does

any Scripture it uses in its ritual where His name appears. By thus tampering with the very Word of God, Masonry avoids giving offense to those who believe in its religion but may be non-Christian or anti-Christian.

The Masonic plan of salvation differs mightily from that of any Christian teaching. Beginning with its God concept, a composit deity customarily called J.B.O. (Jehovah, Baal and Osiris), necessary to a composite religion, the Masonic idea proceeds to salvation as a reward for Masonry's notion of a pious and virtuous life.

In a burial service, the Worshipful Master demonstrates this in saying: ". . . and in Thy favor, may we be received into Thine everlasting kingdom, to enjoy . . . with the souls of our departed friends, the just reward of a pious and virtuous life. Amen."

A king of eternal security lodge theology is evident in another burial prayer: "Death makes us to know that, born as we are into one great brotherhood, no circumstance or chance or achievement shall serve to separate us in eternity." Of course this is not at all Christian brotherhood nor the Christian essential that to be saved one must be "born again, of water and the spirit."

"The definitions of Freemasonry have been numerous, but they all unite in declaring it to be a system of morality by the practice of which its members may advance their spiritual interest by the theological ladder from the lodge on earth to the lodge in heaven."

So says Oliver's *Historical Landmarks of Freemasonry*. There is an obvious difference between this and Jesus' solemn admonition that, "No man cometh unto the Father but by

me."

However, that the Masonic moral standard supposed to result in one's climbing the ladder to Heaven—whatever his faith—is quite exclusive, after all, is seen in the oath which affirms that:

"I will not have illicit carnal intercourse with a Master Mason's wife, mother, sister or daughter. I knowing them to be such; nor suffer it to be done by others if in my power to prevent it."

Here there is no condemnation of adultery itself but only of a Mason whinnying after a lodge brother's females. He could neigh toward a non-Mason's women folk or perhaps a fellow Mason's wife if he *doesn't know her to be such*. A friend and I took such an oath several years ago in joining a national order patterned after Freemasonry, as many lodges are. We withdrew when too much time and money were taken from our church works and the heathenish ritual around a mounted animal's head reminded us constantly of the Bible's warning not to be "unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

CONVERSION BY DEGREES

One is often converted to the Masonic religion by imperceptible degrees, starting in adolescence. when the quasi-Masonic groups such as the De Molay and Job's Daughters move in. High school youngsters often find it popular to join them—and sometimes, where Masonry is entrenched, unpopular not to. This goes for people seeking business, social or political advancement in Masonic-dominated areas, too. The social works of the youth groups are highly publicized, but not their being recruiting centers for later Freemasonry. Thus, unwary parents, even of Christian doctrinal belief, may approve of their

sons and daughters getting into this social swim, while Masonic parents will naturally favor the De Molay, Job's Daughters, Eastern Star and the like.

In entering Masonry itself the Entered Apprentice starts his moral-virtuous march to Heaven by swearing to, "always hail, ever conceal and never reveal" any of the "secret arts, parts or joints of the hidden mysteries of ancient Freemasonry." And he agrees to the penalty of "having my throat cut across, my tongue torn out by its roots and buried in the rough sands of the sea," if he ever spills the beans. To this he piously adds, "So help me God." Christianity, of course, has no "secret arts, parts or joints" but is an open proclamation of the gospel.

Each rung of the ladder involves more oath-taking, with heavier penalties, such as the Royal Arch, where one swears that:

"I will aid and assist a companion Royal Arch Mason, when engaged in any difficulty; and espouse his cause so far as to extricate him from the same, if in my power, whether he be right or wrong." He also declares: "A companion Royal Arch Mason's secret, given me in charge as such, and I knowing them to be such, shall remain as secure and inviolate in my breast as in his own, without exception."

Many resent being told the truth about doubtful organizations for various reasons, including their social, political or economic prestige, or maybe because a change of conscience could jeopardize their insurance—one of the enticing features of the lodges. So it's a bold Protestant editor, business man, labor leader or clergyman who will brave the secret society thunder to take a firm stand

in dividing them from Christianity.

One of my grandfathers, the Rev. Jacob Cost, a German Reformed minister, was such a man. My other grandfather was an ardent Mason—and while a grand and good soul, he did spend most of his leisure at the Masonic temple while I remember seeing him in the Methodist church of which he was a nominal member but once—at my father's funeral.

That's often the case. Many a Christian can tell of the adamant resistance of lodge members to embracing Christian truth or giving more time and attention to their churches of which they have become once-in-a-great-while members. Secret society addicts have a way of saying that they do not really need any church if they live up to their lodge precepts, which they regard as a passport to Heaven—if there is one, they often add. They already have a religion, either within Christianity or outside of and considered superior to it. Even in death, adherence to the lodge is testified to by lodge burial.

Other leading Protestants with the courage to "come out from among them" and oppose secret order membership for Christians have included the late Dr. Charles G. Finney, president of Oberlin College, Dr. Robert Morris, past Grand Master of Kentucky Masonry, Rev. Wendell Lovelless, an ex-Masonic chaplain, Rev. J. G. Stearns, Edmond Ronayne, past Master of Keystone Lodge in Chicago, Dr. W. Hoote, the famed Richard Carlisle of England and myriad others, who came to renounce their lodge oaths as unChristian.

These men developed their convictions as they saw lodge teachings and liturgies carried out in practice. Along with some major Lutheran

synods, the Salvation Army, Christian Reformed, Quakers, Holiness groups, the Eastern Orthodox and other Easterns who could see lodges using Christianity but never Christianity using lodges, they condemned secret societies.

MASON VS. MASON

Most of them have questioned the civic morality of Masonry, citing legal cases where Masons may have to testify against others they have sworn to help get out of trouble without exception, judges trying lodge brothers, officers obliged to arrest clandestine companions, etc. One of them asks: "Can Masons be thoroughly relied upon to witness against Masons, having taken such an oath? Obviously, if they were sincere when they took the oath and regard it as binding, they cannot. And if the lodge oath was taken lightly, may not the oath in court be insincerely taken also?"

And most of them say lodge benevolence is confined to members and their families, with few exceptions. Most recipients of lodge benevolence have paid their way in advance and could get the same service from commercial insurance companies if they paid their premiums.

UNITARIAN

A booklet by Elijah A. Coil issued by the American Unitarian Association has troubled some conservative Protestants who saw nothing wrong with Freemasonry. Here Masons are invited to quit churches holding to the evangelical dogmas and affiliate with liberal ones having practically the same character—works salvation as the lodges. The same result is sometimes obtained, though, by Masonic clergymen in conservative churches who ignore or water down basic Christian doctrines in order to

accommodate church member lodge brothers.

In adding his witness, President John Quincy Adams declared:

"If the candidate has been educated to a sincere and heartfelt reverence for a religion and the Bible, if he exercises his reason, he knows that all the tales of Jachin and Boaz, of Solomon's temple, of Hiram Abiff, and Jubela, Jubelo and Jubulum, are impostures—poisons poured into the perennial fountain of truth—traditions exactly resembling those reprobated by Jesus Christ, as making the Word of God of none effect."

But Masonry's mysteries are not so secret. In his book *Christianity and American Freemasonry*, William Whalen tells of a rabbi friend of his who spent long evenings deciphering the King Solomon code book for his Blue Lodge initiation—only to find that he could have bought the ritual in plain English at a book store near the Masonic temple. It isn't hard for anyone to get hold of books supposedly advertised for Masons only and sold to the public. Expecting several million men to keep a chest of secrets is rather comical on the face of it.

HOW OLD?

Masonry's antiquity pretends to date from Solomon's Temple (the Encyclopedia Britannica says it is no older than 1717 A.D.). Yet it is claimed that Noah and Enoch were Masons. The Temple was built around 1000 B.C., a long time after Noah or Enoch. And the Christian may well raise his eyebrows when Masons claim Zechariah, John the Baptist, John the Apostle and others. When high ranking ones like a beloved uncle of mine, a Templar commander, have asserted that Jesus Himself was a member of their secret

order. one is reminded of the Savior's own words that, "In secret I have said nothing."

For years, Masonry has parasitically depended for its growth on nutrition from the Protestant body. How much longer the church will allow Masonry to eat away at its soul, how much longer the church will ignore the divided allegiance of some of its membership, I do not know.

But when church members neglect

the church for the lodge, the thing becomes downright expensive, intolerable even for the lodge's best Protestant friends.

The simple fact is that, like other mystic cults and pagan creeds, the lodge cannot be integrated into Christianity or in any way made a part of it or useful to it. By its nature it is a slow but malignant tumor on any Christian body and will in due time have to be removed.

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Catalog Listings — continued from page 5

4. CHRIST OR THE LODGE. This is a report of a special Committee on Secret Societies, presented at the ninth General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, June, 1942. Their Committee on Christian Education published it in its series of "Tracts for Today". Among many questions answered, it answers the question, "Is Reliable Information Available? (To the outsider). 25 pages, 25c.
5. FATHERHOOD OF GOD AND BROTHERHOOD OF MAN (Is It True?), by Rev. George A. Brown. This idea is a basis for many secret societies. Rev. Brown answers this question, and shows how this teaching is related to the lodges. 40 pages, 15c.
6. A THREE-FOLD INDICTMENT OF SECRET ORDERS, With special reference to Masonry and Odd-Fellowship, by Adam Murrman. 35 pages, 15c.
7. WHAT MAKES YOU A MASON? by William Meyer. This question is quite thoroughly answered. 40 pages, 10c.
8. FREEMASONRY AND CHRISTIANITY, by Dr. Alva J. McClain, President of Grace Theological Seminary. (A Sermon). This author discusses the conflicts between Freemasonry and Christianity. A neat 30 page booklet, 10c.
9. THE ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR, by William Meyer. He compares what the Secret Order requires with what God's Word says. A 24 page tract, 6c.
10. MASONRY, The First Three Degrees . . . Blue Lodge Oaths . . . "Illinois Work". 20 pages, 5c.
11. THE LODGE IN THE LIGHT OF THE SCRIPTURES. Thomas A. Maxwell, evangelist. a tract, 5c.
12. EMINENT WITNESSES AGAINST SECRETISM, by Thomas M. Slater, D.D. The quotes are taken from many prominent Ministers and Statesmen. A 12 page tract, 5c.

(Concluded from page 16).

the claim that every man is his own saviour and no one else. The blood-curdling oaths the neophytes have to utter on the first night of initiation ought to open the eyes of any Christian to the godless character of the whole system. Sometimes we have to be patient for the true believer in Jesus Christ to get his eyes opened and there are many who can testify to the leading of the Lord in this area.

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PERTINENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

By Pastor "Mac" (Rev. R. F. McInay—Founder of the radio program called Spiritual Clinic)

QUESTION . . . *Do you believe that it is wrong for a Christian to go into something like Freemasonry? Is it not true that many Baptists in the south belong to the Masons?*

ANSWER Yes, I understand that many Baptists in the south belong to the Masons, but the authority for all children of God is the Word of God. It is true, there is a talk of God, the great Architect of the Universe, and the Bible is among the symbols of the craft, but it is not generally known that this "God" is not the God of the Bible. It is a composite deity, or trinity, fashioned of Jehovah, Baal (the abomination of the Zidonians), and Osiris or On, a god of Egypt. I understand that the great secret of Masonry is the "divine" name, which it takes three initiates to pronounce.

It is true that "Jesus," is recognized, but only as one of a list of great benefactors of the human race, along with Buddha, Vishnu, Baldu, Osiris, Adonis, etc, etc. A niche in their pantheon has always been offered by the world to "Jesus," but unfortunately for them Christ claims the universal throne. This is something that the true child of God has to face . . . "My glory will I not give to another." (Isa. 42:8) Then in Acts 4:12 we read: "There is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved."

The Bible lies amongst their symbols, but one of the foundation tenets of the craft is that "no effort must be made to change the belief of any person." So in the Masonic charge we read, "Masonry encourages each man to be steadfast in the faith his heart loves the best." In this system, Unitarians, Hindus, nominal Christians, Jews, Moslems, Theosophists, live happily side by side.

Masonry jealously guards that which is the basis of all human religion—the denial of atonement by the blood of Christ, and

(Continued on page 15)