



Southern California
Evangelistic Jurisdiction
CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

DEPARTMENT OF
EVANGELISM



DOCTRINE OF
FREEMASONRY

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Freemasonry

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I. HISTORY AND ORGANIZATION OF THE LODGE

As an organization, Freemasonry began in A.D. 1717; however, Negro Freemasonry started in the United States during the year 1775, in Boston, when the degrees of Masonry were conferred upon Prince Hall, who was an ordained minister and 14 other Black men in a military lodge in the English Army. It is alleged that Prince Hall was born in Barbados, British West Indies and came to Boston and later became leader of the "free" Negroes.

The Term Freemason

The term **Freemason**, according to Masonic sources, predates the organizational origins of the lodge, in which **(1) Masons worked in free stone, which could be carved, and hence were called "freestone masons," later shortened to "freemasons;" (2) They were free men, not serfs meaning a member of a servile feudal class bound to the soil and subject to the will of his lord; (3) They were free to move from place to place as they desired; (4) They were given the freedom of the towns or localities in which they worked; and (5) They were free of the rules and regulations that were usually imposed on members of guilds.**

Freemasons" were referred to as being "**operative**," because they worked at their specific trades such as *builders, stone masons, and architects* engaged in construction work. Gradually these "operatives" were joined by others who were not of their crafts, but because they were interested in the background and teachings of the operative fraternity, they were considered to be "accepted" masons.

Freemasonry in the United States consists of the *three basic degrees of the Blue Lodge: Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason*. The expression "**Blue Lodge**" is usually explained by one of two theories. One is that "operative masons" considered the blue sky to be symbolic of the purity of God, which in turn reminded them to work harder to keep pure their own lives.

The other theory is that shortly after "speculative Masonry" came into existence, the color blue was substituted for white as the official color for the first Grand Lodge of England. This was done presumably because *blue was the color of the Order of the Garter*, of which a number of Masonic leaders were members.

Beyond the Blue Lodge, the Master Mason may choose one of two paths to follow (*or neither*): **the Scottish Rite, which has 30 degrees, and the American Rite (often called the York Rite), which has 10 degrees**. The first three degrees of the Blue Lodge are the only essential degrees through which all Masons must pass. All other degrees are optional.

The York Rite

The York Rite, or American Rite Masonry, has 10 degrees beyond the Blue Lodge, divided into three categories. Degrees 4-7 comprise the "**Chapter**." They are the "**Capitular Degrees**." In numerical order, they are called **Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master, and Royal Arch Mason**. The second grouping, called the "**Council**," is comprised of degrees 8-10. These are called **Royal Master, Select Master, and Super Excellent Master**. The third grouping is called the "**Commandery**" and is comprised of the **Order of Red Cross, Order of Knights of Malta, and finally Order of Knights Templar**, which is the highest degree.

The Scottish Rite

The degree structure of Scottish Rite Masonry is built around four groupings. The **Lodge of Perfection** has 11 degrees (4-14), commonly called the "**Ineffable Degrees.**" The **Council of Princes of Jerusalem** has two degrees (15-16), called the "**Historical Grades.**" The **Chapter of Rose Croix** has two degrees (17-18), called the "**Philosophical Grades.**" The **Consistory** has the last 14 degrees (19-32), called the "**Traditional and Chivalric Grades.**" **The Thirty-Third (33rd) Degree is the "Official Grade" and is strictly honorary.** Having earned the 32nd degree, the Mason who wants to become "elite" and has the money and honor necessary to be admitted can become a Shriner, which is a side order of Masonry.

Side Orders of Masonry

The **Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine** is the most visible of all side orders of Masonry. Members of the Shrine are very visible in parades, wearing their uniforms topped by the fez (*head covering with a tassel*). They are heavily involved in charitable activities, thus creating a favorable image of Shriners in particular and Masons in general.

Other side orders of Masonry are the **Tall Cedars in Lebanon of the United States of America, Knights of the Red Cross of Constantitie,** and **Acacia Fraternity.** Affiliated female organizations include the **Order of the Eastern Star, White Shrine of Jerusalem, Order of Amaranth, Daughters of the Nile,** and **Daughters of Mokanna.** Youth Organizations are **Order of the Builders, Order of Demolay, Order of Job's Daughters,** and **Order of the Rainbow.**

Authority in the Lodge

The lodge, whether local or state Grand Lodge, is not democratically governed. Rather, rule is autocratic. **The Worshipful Master of a local lodge, for example, has supreme and total control.** The bylaws of the local lodge do set minimum standards of conduct but usually are so worded as to place all authority in the hands of the elected leader.

II. IS THE LODGE A RELIGION?

Webster defines "**religion**" as that which (1) **expresses the service and adoration of God-or a god-in forms of worship;** (2) **has a system of faith and worship;** (3) **professes and practices religious beliefs, collective religious observances, or rites;** (4) **demonstrates a devotion of fidelity;** or (5) **expresses the awareness and conviction of the existence of a supreme being thereby arousing reverence, love, gratitude, and the will to obey and serve.** Every lodge is a temple of religion; and its teachings are instruction in religion.

Lodge Teachings about God

The first question asked of the candidate for lodge membership as he enters the Entered Apprentice Degree, the first step of the three-step "Blue Lodge," **is if he believes in God. If he says no, he is disqualified from membership.** However, the lodge does not want the candidate to identify who he considers God to be, **because the lodge has its own identification of God as the "Supreme Architect of the Universe," or the "Supreme Grand Master," or the "Nameless One of a Hundred Names."** In other words, Masonry doesn't care what the individual believes about God as long as the member admits to some belief in a supreme being.

Lodge teachings about Eternal Reward

Masonic teachings promise eternal life as a reward for a moral life in this world. As the Entered Apprentice is presented for membership in the lodge, he is given a lambskin apron and is told *by the lambskin; therefore, the Mason is reminded of that purity of life and conduct which is essential to his gaining admission to the Celestial Lodge above, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides.* This creed says simply, **be good and you'll go to heaven.** Live a morally upright life, and God, whoever He is, will receive you on the other side.

As Christians, we know there is no salvation without Jesus, because He is the center of the Christian faith, in which eternal life is the free gift of God's grace. It cannot be earned nor given as an award for righteous living. **"Therefore, if Masonry teaches a man's good works can fit him for heaven, this makes believing on Jesus as personal Savior merely optional"**. The Masonic Lodge has created its own theology and belief system separate and apart from that of Christianity.

Lodge teachings about Moral Living

Every Masonic lodge contains three indispensable pieces of furniture that are referred to as the "**three great lights of Masonry**." They are the **Square**, the **Compass**, and the **Sacred Book**. The *Square* is what a carpenter uses to measure right angles and to mark wood in order to cut a perfect line to match an adjoining piece of wood. The *Compass* is an instrument used by draftsmen and builders to inscribe a circle. **Together Square and Compass symbolize the necessity of a Mason keeping his life "in square" and circumscribed in his relationships with others, especially with brother Masons.**

"The *Sacred Book* is that volume recognized as being holy. It can be the **Bible**, the **Torah**, the **Qur'an**, or **any other such book**. Another symbol that helps define the Masonic theology is the **Ashlar**. *Ashlar is stone as it is taken from the quarry. Rough and jagged, it is to remind the Mason of his imperfect nature.* **The gavel reminds him that as it chips away by pounding the rough and jagged edges of the ashlar, so he also is to remove the imperfections of his personality and life-style.**

Masonry teaches that humanity is not originally sinful, just imperfect. If a person works faithfully at keeping the principles and teachings of the lodge, then he will be ushered into the "Grand Lodge Above," where the "Supreme Architect of the Universe" presides. This is the religion of universalism, which denies the necessity of needing a Savior from sin. Therefore Jesus is unnecessary in the teaching of the lodge.

Why the Secrecy if Masonry Is the Universal Religion?

Usually, a mason especially those claiming Christianity retreats into a shell of secrecy when confronted with the teachings of the lodge and those of Christianity. Why? **Because secrecy so dominates the lodge, in which the candidate for membership, before he knows what he is getting into, must take his oath under the most severe penalties. He must promise to "always conceal and never reveal" the secrets of Masonry.** *He binds himself to this promise under the penalty of "having my throat cut across, my tongue torn out from its roots, and my body buried in the rough sands of the sea".* A contradiction exists within the lodge. **It claims to have a purer truth than any of the religions, yet its "truth" is steadfastly kept secret.**

Oaths and Secrecy in the Lodge

The lodge asks its members to take an oath every step of the way, in which the Royal Arch Degree requires the candidate to swear, **"I will assist a Companion Royal Arch Mason when I see him engaged in any difficulty, and will espouse his cause so far as to extricate him from the same, whether he be right or wrong"**.

Another lodge oath requires members to always conceal and never reveal what goes on in the lodge. The problem come not so much with the oath but that those who terminate membership in the lodge often receive recriminations in their job, station in life, position in a company, etc. Some were not intimidated by the lodge and made a clean break. Many others, however, were and are intimidated from completely removing ("demitting") themselves from lodge membership.

So, why does Masonry stress the importance of secrecy? **(1) The element of secrecy attracts men and makes them feel important; (2) Secrecy provides a stabilizing influence-something important enough to be secret must be defended at all costs; and (3) By means of secrecy, Masonry can hide its religious nature and secure converts who would not otherwise join.**

Many people do not realize that the secrecy allows for all sorts of discrimination-for example, against those who have a physical defect like a *missing finger, an amputated limb, one eye, etc., as well as against those who are of the wrong nationality/race, the wrong social standing, or the wrong anything else.* A single member may drop the "black ball" of rejection into the box, thereby ending any possibility of a candidate being accepted.

So, if what the lodge has to offer is so good, so righteous, so admirable, so important even for eternal life, then why the veil of secrecy? The whole world ought to be invited in, for to exclude any would be to exclude them from eternal life in heaven the "Grand Lodge" above. Instead, the doors are open only to some. The oath changes a general commitment into a binding agreement, with God as witness and judge.

III. SALVATION IN THE LODGE

For most of the 20th century many Masons have been willing to admit that the lodge is religious, and some would even say it is a religion. The lodge has a theology as fully developed as any recognized religion in comparison to Christianity. It is a theology that teaches very specific things about the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the immortality of the human soul.

The Lodge's Theology of God

The Christian God is the Triune God, the Holy Trinity. That means that there are three persons-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit-yet one God, one Lord. The lodges teach a different understanding of God. *To every Mason, there is a God; One, Supreme, Infinite in Goodness, Wisdom, Foresight, Justice, and Benevolence; Creator, Disposer, and Preserver of all things.*

The "**Great Architect of the Universe**" is one of the names used publicly by Masons to identify their god. This name is a new creation of the lodge and was carefully chosen so as not to use any name for God found in the Holy Bible or any religious book. It and a few other names like the "**Nameless One of a Hundred Names**" are used publicly.

The most secret Masonic word for God, however, is never spoken out loud. As the candidate is raised into the Master Mason Degree, he is told to assume the "**five points of fellowship**" (*toe to toe, knee to knee, chest to chest, cheek to cheek, and mouth to ear*). Then the most sacred Masonic word is whispered: **Mah-Ha-Bone**. This is God's name, he is told, and must never be spoken out loud, never revealed, and always concealed.

17 PRIMARY ERRORS OF MASONRY

FREEMASONRY TEACHES

1. Its deity, the 'Great Architect of the Universe,' can be worshiped by all men, whether they be Buddhists, Christians, Muslims, or Hindus, without controversy.⁷
2. A clue to the true identity of the Masonic Deity is given in the seventeenth degree of the Scottish Rite, or The Knights of the East and West. After the candidates have completed the initiation they are given the secret password, "Jubulum," and the Sacred Word, "Abaddon."
3. The Freemasonry ritual, in the lower degrees, is concerned with the recovery of a lost word, presumed to be the name of God. It was supposedly lost through the murder of the architect, Hiram Abiff, during the building of Solomon's Temple. This quest is completed during the ritual of the Royal Arch Degree. It is here the secret name of the deity of Masonry is revealed. That name is jahbulon. "Jab" is the short form of the Hebrew name of God, "Yahweh," or "Jehovah." "Bul" is wondering of the name Ba'al. "On" is the term used in the Babylonian mysteries to call upon the deity "Osiris."
4. They don't acknowledge the unique Godhood of Jesus Christ,² that He died for our sins,³ or that He rose from the dead.⁴
5. The name of God is associated with pagan fertility gods such as Ba' al.
6. Members must swear oaths (on a Bible, in the name of God) that involve mutilation and murder of human beings.
7. Its members are linked in solemn, spiritual bondage to one another, irrespective of individual members' creeds.⁷
8. Its "valuable" truths must be bound under the most serious of secret oaths and be available only to a very few.
9. Members should address their leaders with titles like 'Worshipful Master,' and kneel before them.⁸

THE BIBLE TEACHES

1. Only through Jesus Christ can God be worshiped (John 14:6, 1 Timothy 2:5, 1 John 2:22, 23).
2. Revelation 9:11 teaches, "They [the demons and workers from hell] had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is *Abaddon*" (emphasis added). One must ask, "How could any true Christian dare to take that evil name as a sacred word?"
3. What is presented, as the god of Masonry is a three-headed monster very remote from the Christian Trinity? Anyone who would dare to pronounce its name in any ritual of worship is committing great blasphemy
4. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is truly God Almighty come in the flesh who died for our sins and rose again (John 1:1-14; Colossians 1:15; 2:9; 1 Corinthians 15:4).
5. The Bible affirms the absolute holiness, separateness, and majesty of God's name (Exodus 20:2-7; Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 8:1; 29:2).
6. The New Testament forbids the taking of oaths (Matthew 5:34-37; James 5:12). The Bible forbids taking God's name in vain and committing murder (Exodus 20:7, 13).
7. The Bible forbids Christians from being "unequally yoked" with unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14-17; Revelation 18:1-4).
8. The Bible does not allow for such secrecy (Matthew 10:26-27; John 18:20; Acts 26:26).
9. The Bible commands us to call no one master save Jesus (Matthew 6:24; 23:8-10) and to worship none save God (Matthew 4:10; Revelation 22:8, 9).

10. Members must be loyal and give their time, emotions, and spiritual energy to Masonry. They must contribute financially.

11. Members are required to bow before the altars of strange gods. The higher order of the "Mystic Shrine," also requires a blood oath of submission sworn to the Islamic deity, Allah: ". . . and may Allah, the god of Arab, Moslem and Mohammedan, the God Of Our Fathers, support me to the entire fulfillment of the same, Amen, Amen, Amen."⁹

12. The Holy Bible as the Word of God is no better or worse than any other holy book.

13. Man can be saved by his own labors without faith in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross.¹¹

14. Members don't need to be worried about the dangers of an everlasting hell.²²

15. A Christian Mason is forbidden to witness Jesus Christ to his fellow Lodge members who are unsaved.¹³

16. The improvement of the natural man will, in turn, bring spiritual power.

17. Freemasonry presents a perverse form of communion that claims it is the chief [Masonic] symbol of man's ultimate redemption and regeneration. "The fraternal supper" is "of bread which nourishes, and of wine which refreshes and exhilarates, symbolical of the time which is to come, when all mankind shall be one great harmonious brotherhood... And thus, in the bread we eat, and in the wine we drink tonight may enter into and form part of us the identical particles of matter that once formed parts of the material bodies called Moses, Confucius, Plato, Socrates or Jesus of Nazareth. In the truest sense, we eat and drink the bodies of the dead; and cannot say that there is a single atom of our blood or body, the ownership of which some other soul might not dispute with us."⁴

10. Freemasonry absorbs the loyalties, time, emotional and spiritual resources, and finances of Masons away from the God-ordained tasks of the church, such as overseas missions, evangelism, and taking care of the poor to the glory of Jesus' name. (See Matthew 6:1-3; 28:19; Luke 6:38; 9:62; Ephesians 5:15-16; James.1: 27.)

11. This reveals the true nature of the Masonic god of the "Mystic Shrine." The Bible prohibits the believer from bowing down to *any* other gods. It is primary among the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-5).

12. The Bible says it is truly the inspired Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16; Matthew 5:18; 1 Peter 1:25; Psalm 119:89; 12:6, 7; 19:7, 8).

13. The Bible teaches that a person can only be saved by grace, through faith in Christ (Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8, 9).

14. The Bible is insistent and urgent in its warnings concerning the dangers of damnation (Matthew 13:49-50; 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

15. Jesus commands His church to preach the gospel to everyone (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15).

16. The Bible teaches just the opposite (see 1 Corinthians 2:14; Colossians 2:8). Thus, Freemasonry perverts biblical truth by incorrectly guiding men by bad interpretation of vital spiritual terms (2 Peter 3:16).

17. The Bible clearly describes communion as a symbolic act done in remembrance of Christ's death on Calvary for our ransom. Jesus said, "'Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.' And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.' Likewise also the cup after supper saying, 'This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you'" (Luke 22:17-20). Nowhere did Jesus mention Moses Confucius, Plato, or Socrates.

IV. HOW TO WITNESS TO A LODGE MEMBER

Education is the key concerning the differences and beliefs between the lodge and Christianity. Convincing lodge members and candidates to "come out and be separate" from the lodge is possible; many people have done so. The task, however, can be difficult.

Therefore, here are some tips to keep in mind when talking with a lodge member. First, secrecy will keep in-depth discussions from happening. It is a barrier that one must accept. Only the Holy Spirit can overcome this wall. Depend on Him to work through you and your words.

Second, when people are instructed into the lodge, they often are unable to recognize that lodge teachings contradict Christian teachings because they know too little about Christianity. At the same time, the meaning of the lodge (*as, for example, symbolized by the Lambskin Apron*) seems so pure and simple. The person may contend that the lodge in no way interferes with his church life; in fact, he may claim that it helps it. This attitude usually means that the door is closed to any further discussion. Don't try to beat down the door; pray for the Lord to do it.

Third, after taking the oath, **paying the dues, and enjoying the fraternal atmosphere**, the person will not be likely to admit to an error in judgment. To do so would take genuine repentance and humility-and human nature is not inclined to either. Most people become defensive instead.

Four, **the pressure applied by fellow lodge members is often intense**. The consequences of leaving the lodge may be life long. Therefore, careful planning and thought needs to precede our witness to a lodge member. We need to **"take it to the Lord in prayer."** We should be specific in such prayers, remembering the person by name, and asking the Lord for a specific action. At the same time, avoid the more common mistakes when witnessing to a lodge member:

- **Don't make statements that are not true or not factual.**
- **Don't say things in such a stern, dogmatic way that it tends to end discussion.**
- **Don't begin with the statement "My church says it is wrong to join the lodge."**
- **Don't argue to the point of anger or with a raised voice of impatience.**

The ultimate goal, that of changing a lodge member to a former lodge member, is achieved only by the working of the Holy Spirit; He alone can change people's hearts. He does this when we use words that point to our sins and our forgiveness in Jesus. Nowhere else will people hear the Good News of salvation, of the redeeming work of Christ, other than from a Christian source.

Even if the lodge member claims to be a Christian, he still needs to hear the message of salvation. Simple words, not sermons, about the cross of Jesus are the most important words anyone could hear-professing Christians included!

We all need love and acceptance and look forward to receiving it from one another. Jesus loves us, even though we have sinned. We, too, need to love one another, even when we all have sinned. If we can and do, then long-lasting relationships will result based on the blood of Christ, our Savior from all sin.

This will deeply impress lodge members, especially those who are watching one of their own dissociate himself from them, and may be just the factor keeping any recriminations from happening as a result of becoming an ex-lodge member.