

November Questions and Answers

Franklin Church of Christ
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PM Worship

Introduction:

In this lesson, we will devote our time to two questions. Both of which came from the same person and both of which have to do with the same topic.

“Can a Christian be a member of a Masonic Lodge? Why do some think this is a non-issue?”

I must begin by saying that I realize this question may be inflammatory to some. For all I know there may be some present tonight who are members of this congregation and also members of a local Masonic Lodge. For all I know there may have already been some heated discussions regarding this topic between brethren and hard feelings already raised. However, even though that may be the case, I believe this is a question that ought to be answered and ought to be answered publicly. I ask everyone, no matter your opinion on this question, to please listen carefully. If, by the time I am done, you do not agree with me, please, let's get together and study this further.

Discussion:

- I. Allow me to begin by explaining what I am not going to do and what I am going to do.
 - A. *I am not going to discuss the sinister accusations against the Masons.* I was absolutely amazed when I decided to do an internet search regarding Freemasonry. I found sites that ranged from extremely supportive to extremely opposed. I found sites claiming that Masonry is no more than a group of men wanting to help one another be nice and do good deeds. I also found sites accusing the Masons of everything from Presidential assassination to Satanism to political conspiracy for world domination. Frankly, many of the accusations I found to be laughable. Some were perhaps not so laughable. But those accusations are not the real issue.
 - B. *I am not going to argue over whether or not Freemasonry is a religion or just a religious institution.* As I have examined writings for and against Masonry, the debate often centers on whether or not Masonry is a competing religion. The opponents of Masonry claim that it is. The supporters of Masonry claim it is just a secular organization that is religious. Frankly, this whole argument is wrangling over words. **I Timothy 6:4** demonstrated that we ought to steer clear of these kinds of arguments. Therefore, I plan to stay away from this argument.
 - C. *I am not going to discuss who have been Masons, whether they have been good or bad men.* Those who oppose Masons like to delineate all the Masons they can find who have done bad things, including murder, theft and conspiracy. Those who support Masonry are quick to point out all the good people who have been Masons, including preachers, politicians and even founding fathers of our nation. These arguments prove nothing for either side.
 - D. *I am not going to make a great deal of noise claiming that most Masons have no idea what Masonry is all about.* Albert Pike, a Grand Commander of Masonry, by the authority of the Supreme Council of the Thirty-third Degree, for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States wrote a huge work entitled **Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry**. In this work, Pike made some assertions about Masonry which its opponents have used widely and which its supporters have had to do double back flips to get out of. One of which can be found on pp. 104-105.

Masonry, like all the Religions, all the Mysteries, Hermeticism and Alchemy, *conceals* its secrets from all except the Adepts and Sages, or the Elect, and uses false explanations and misinterpretations of its symbols to mislead those who deserve only to be misled; to conceal the Truth, which it calls Light, from them, and to draw them away from it. Truth is not for those who are unworthy or unable to receive it, or would pervert it. ... So Masonry jealously conceals its secrets, and intentionally leads conceited interpreters astray.

Another of which can be found on p. 819.

The Blue Degrees are but the outer court or portico of the Temple. Part of the symbols are displayed there to the Initiate, but he is intentionally misled by false interpretations. It is not intended that he shall understand them; but it is intended that he shall imagine he understands them. Their true explication is reserved for the Adepts, the Princes of Masonry. The whole body of the Royal and Sacerdotal Art was hidden so carefully, centuries since, in the High Degrees, as that it is even yet impossible to solve many of the enigmas which they contain. It is well enough

for the mass of those called Mason, to imagine that all is contained in the Blue Degrees; and whoso attempts to undeceive them will labor in vain, and without any true reward violate his obligations as an Adept.

The Blue Degrees are the first three degrees of Masonry—Entered Apprentice, Fellow-Craft and Master Mason. The “mass of those called Mason” never get beyond these degrees—as indicated by Pike. While I certainly believe that anyone who is in Masonry needs to deal honestly with these quotes, I also recognize that most who defend Masonry have figured out ways to deny them. Of course, they may believe the statements and be lying as the statements say they should and will. But how can I, a non-Mason, unravel what is the truth in that case? I cannot. But we will not spend our time with these statements, because we do not have to. We can answer our question by looking within the confines of the Blue Degrees, by considering what a Christian must agree to and state to be accepted even within these lower degrees.

E. *I am going to provide four aspects of Masonry that demonstrate a Christian cannot be involved in Masonry.* I will do this by quoting from the **Tennessee Craftsman or Masonic Textbook**¹, used by lodges here in Tennessee and considered authoritative. I will have one quote from the **Kentucky Monitor**. I will use two quotes from www.masonicinfo.com, a website defending Masonry. Finally, I will use one quote from the FAQ website for the Tennessee Grand Lodge.

II. Four aspects of Masonry that demonstrate a Christian cannot be involved in Masonry.

A. *The Institution and Brotherhood that is Masonry.*

1. “Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. Although its origin is covered with darkness and its history is, to a great extent, obscure, yet we can confidently assert that it is the most ancient society in the world. Its principles are based on pure morality; its doctrines those of patriotism and brotherly love; its sentiments those of exalted benevolence. All that is good and kind and charitable it encourages, and all that is vicious and cruel and oppressive it reprobates.
“The forms and ceremonies of this Institution have come down to us through a succession of ages, and are all designed to impress upon the mind wise and serious truths, and to make men wiser, better and therefore happier.
“Masonry possesses great and invaluable privileges, and in order to secure those privileges to worthy men alone, voluntary pledges of *Fidelity* are required of each of its initiates” (**Tennessee Craftsman**, pp 8-9).
2. “A lodge is an assemblage of Masons, duly congregated, having the Holy Bible, Square, and Compasses, and a Charter or Warrant authorizing them to work” (**TC**, p 18).
3. “There is no Symbolic Light in the North, because King Solomon’s Temple, of which every Lodge is a representation ...” (**TC**, p 25).
4. “So to commemorate the work of creation King Solomon’s Temple was seven years in building, and in the seventh year was completed and dedicated to the worship of GOD” (**TC**, p 48).
5. “Mountains and other high places were almost always considered holy, and peculiarly appropriate for religious purposes. We have abundant evidence in Scripture that the Jews were accustomed to worship on the tops of the highest hills, as it was believed that sacrifices offered from these elevated places were most acceptable to the Deity.
“It is not improbable that our ancient brethren, before they had more convenient places of meeting, held their Lodges on hills, or in valleys, or in retired groves” (**TC**, p 20).
6. “CHARGE AT CLOSING
“Brethren: We are now about to quit this sacred retreat of friendship and virtue, to mix again with the world. Whilst busied in its concerns, let us not forget that around this sacred altar we have repeatedly promised to relieve, protect, and vindicate each other. Let us, therefore, be diligent, prudent, and circumspect in our respective callings, that by liberal benevolence and diffusive charity we may discover to the world the happy effects of this ancient and honorable Institution” (**TC**, pp 3-4).
7. “On this principle [Brotherly Love] Masonry unites men of every country, sect and opinion, and is conducive to true friendship among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance” (**TC**, p 30).
8. “No institution was ever established on nobler principles, nor were ever more excellent rules and maxims laid down, than are inculcated in the several Masonic Lectures” (**TC**, p 35).

¹ **Tennessee Craftsman or Masonic Textbook**, 14th Edition, 1963.

9. Having heard what the Tennessee Masons have to say about the institution and brotherhood which is Masonry, how could any Christian be a part of such an organization? This is an organization which claims to be separate from the world, claiming a set apart status as does Christ's church. Masons are supposed to behave properly, not so people can learn to glorify God, but so people can see how great the Masonic organization is. While Masonry wants its members to maintain their membership in their respective churches, it also claims to be an organization greater than any of their churches—including Christ's church. Considering **Hebrews 12:22-24**, how can we who have come to such a church, also go to an organization that claims superiority over Christ's body? We cannot.
- B. *The God of Masonry.*
1. "THE CANDIDATE'S ASSENT IS REQUIRED TO THE FOLLOWING DECLARATIONS:
"Do you seriously declare upon your honor, that you believe in a Supreme Being to whom all men are accountable?
"Answer. I do" (**TC**, p 6).
 2. "PRAYERS AT OPENING
"Great Architect of the Universe, in Thy name we have assembled and in Thy name we desire to proceed in all our doings. Grant that the sublime principles of Freemasonry may so subdue every discordant passion within us; so harmonize and enrich our hearts with Thine own love and goodness; that the Lodge at this time may humbly reflect that order and beauty which reign forever before Thy throne. Amen" (**TC**, p 1).
 3. "On this principle [Brotherly Love] Masonry unites men of every country, sect and opinion, and is conducive to true friendship among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance" (**TC**, p 30).
 4. "Masonic detractors claim that the God of Freemasonry is GAOTU. These initials are simply an acronym for 'Grand Architect of the Universe' (sometimes in the past referred to in the more ancient term of Grand Artificer). Again, because Freemasonry specifies no particular religious belief but encourages its members to follow the beliefs of their own religion, prayers in lodge may refer to the Grand Architect of the Universe. Members are free to mentally insert the name they wish in its stead...We do not discuss individual's religious beliefs on this site but merely point out that if a Mason believes that every prayer should be addressed to Jesus, Mary, Allah, or in some other way as represented by his religion, he is free to do so. The Grand Architect of the Universe is God and to claim that Masons somehow worship someone or something else is obfuscation at best and a heinous lie at worst" (www.masonicinfo.com).
 5. "The term 'Great Architect of the Universe' (or 'Grand Architect of the Universe') is used to permit a more generic worship to the Supreme Being of all present. All Masons understand this concept and when prayers are offered in their lodge, they understand that regardless of the person speaking the words or the manner of prayer of others present, the prayer is addressed to **their** Supreme Being" (www.masonicinfo.com).
 6. The god of Masonry, is not, as they claim, God. He is a made up deity that is somehow supposed to represent deity for men from "every country, sect and opinion." Muslim, Hindu and Christian are supposedly able to gather and pray to the same God, inserting any name they may choose. But notice carefully it is only inserting a name. The assertion of Masonry is that the deity is the same no matter which name one personally inserts. Additionally, the assertion of Masons in the prayers with which they open their meetings is that they are meeting in the name of this made up god and everything they do is done in the name of this god. Keep in mind, when Aaron molded the golden calf he said to the Israelites, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt" (**Exodus 32:4**)! Just because Aaron said it was the same god as Jehovah, did not make it so. Just because Masons claim their god is the same god as Jehovah, does not make it so.
 7. Further, lest anyone claim that in their particular lodge, everyone is "Christian" and so they all have the proper understanding of Jehovah God, keep in mind Ancient Landmark #8 of the **Tennessee Craftsman**: "8: That when a man becomes a Mason, he not only acquires membership in the particular Lodge that admits him, but, in a general sense, he becomes one of the whole Masonic family."
 8. **Ephesians 4:6** says there is "one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." How can a Christian who is submitting to this one God and Father claim to

do something in the name of a made-up god who supposedly embodies everyone's concept of deity? We cannot.

C. *The Redeemer and Salvation in Masonry.*

1. Lecture to the new Entered Apprentice: "You have this night commenced the great task, which in your future Masonic life should never be discontinued, that of erecting in your heart a temple for the indwelling of God. May each new duty which you learn and perform, and each new virtue which you practice become living stones in that spiritual, moral, and Masonic temple of your life" (*TC*, pp 13-14).
2. "The Lambskin [apron] is an emblem of innocence, and is esteemed the peculiar badge of a Mason" (*TC*, p 10).
3. "This apron, my brother, is symbolic of that spotless white robe of purity in which all must be clothed who enter the blissful abode of the blest...If you wear it without soil or blemish, you will be received at the pearly gates of heaven and there be presented with the pure white robe of righteousness, which will glisten in brightness, increasing in glory even unto the perfect day" (*TC*, pp 60-61).
4. Following the ceremony in which the candidate for Master Mason represented Hiram Abiff in a dramatic retelling of the Masonic legend of Hiram Abiff, the new Master Mason is told:
"Then let us imitate the good man, whom you have this evening represented, in his virtuous and amiable conduct; in his unfeigned piety to God; in his inflexible fidelity to his trust; that we may welcome the grim tyrant Death, and receive him as a kind messenger sent from our Supreme Grand Master, to translate us from this imperfect to that all-perfect, glorious, and celestial Lodge above, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides" (*TC*, p 102).
5. "All antiquity solved the enigma of the existence of evil by supposing the existence of a Principle of Evil, of demons, fallen angels, an Ahriman, a Typhon, a Siva, a Loki, or a Satan, that, first falling themselves, and plunged into misery and darkness, tempted man to his fall and brought sin into the world. All believed in a future life, to be attained by purification and trials; in a state or successive states of reward and punishment; and in a Mediator or Redeemer, by whom the Evil Principle was to be overcome and the Supreme Deity reconciled to His creatures. The belief was general that He was to be born of a virgin and suffer a painful death. The Hindus called him Krishna; the Chinese, Kiountse; the Persians, Sosiosch; the Chaldeans, Dhovanai; the Egyptians, Horus; Plato, Love; the Scandinavians, Balder; the Christians, Jesus; Masons, Hiram" (*Kentucky Monitor*, "The Spirit of Masonry", 13th edition, 1921, pp xiv-xv).
6. A Mason can be saved by being a good Mason. When a man starts his journey in Masonry, he is told that he has then started to make himself a dwelling place of God. If this man was a Christian, why did he not start making himself that when he was baptized into Christ (**Galatians 3:26-29**)? If the man is not a Christian, then starting his Masonic journey has not done anything to help him be the temple of God. Finally, knowing that the Bible says there is only one Lord (**Ephesians 4:5**) and only one in whose name we can be saved, Jesus Christ (**Acts 4:12**), how can a Christian be a part of an organization that claims Hiram Abiff is the redeemer for Masons and following in his footsteps saves? Hope is offered to a Mason through wearing his apron, the peculiar badge of a Mason, with purity? What about the Mason who is not a Christian? What about the Christian who is not a Mason? How can a Christian be a part of an organization that offers hope of salvation to those who have no hope, just because they are Masons (**Ephesians 4:4**)? A Christian cannot be a Mason.

D. *The Scripture of Masonry.*

1. "The Holy Bible is given us as the rule and guide of our faith and practice ..." (*TC*, p 10).
2. "The *Holy Bible* points out the path which leads to happiness, and is dedicated to God, because it is the inestimable gift of God to man ..." (*TC*, p 23).
3. "The *Holy Writings*, that great light of Masonry, will guide you to all truth; it will direct your paths to the temple of happiness, and point out to you the whole duty of man" (*TC*, p 117).
4. "41. Are Holy Bibles displayed in the Lodge Hall?
"Yes. In the United States this is usually the Holy Bible, but in other countries it is the book of the predominant religion. When a person becomes a Mason, the book of his faith is used in the ritual" (www.kornet.org/fam/gl-qfa.htm; FAQ used for Tennessee Masons Grand Lodge, prepared by Vision 2013 Committee with Bob Demott, Grand Historian).
5. "No institution was ever established on nobler principles, nor were ever more excellent rules and maxims laid down, than are inculcated in the several Masonic Lectures. They are all derived from the sacred volume which you have been taught to regard as the inestimable gift of God to man, and as the rule and guide of your faith and practice" (*TC*, p 35).
6. The following is stated at a funeral service for a Mason conducted by Masons:

“Let us resolve to maintain, with greater sincerity, the dignified character of our profession, and study the precepts of our order, which is founded upon the great moral principles set forth in the sacred volume, which we receive as the rule and guide of our faith and practice, and to which every person may look for comfort and consolation in the hour of affliction” (**TC**, p 181).

7. “The great principles of moral truth and moral government which are unfolded in this and the preceding degrees originated in the Divine Mind...These principles were breathed into the ear of Adam...They were delivered by the Almighty himself to Moses amidst the awful thunders and vivid flashes of Sinai, and they are constantly whispered in our ears in a still, small voice, and in language all may comprehend” (**TC**, p 103).
8. “Almighty God, we thank Thee that amid all the labor and turmoil, the perplexity and the apparent confusion of life, Thou has not left us to wander unguided and alone, but hast set up ancient landmarks to guide us in Thy ways. Thou hast given us the Great Light to illuminate our path” (**TC**, p 179).
9. “The following are given as the landmarks, in the proper sense of that term, and as it is admitted that they have always been in force, that they involve essential principles, are unchangeable, unless the form and essence of the Institution be altered; they are properly designated ‘*The Ancient Landmarks of Masonry*’” (**TC**, p190). This statement is followed by 15 statements that are to govern the lives of every Mason. We referred to #8 earlier in this lesson.
10. How can a Christian be a part of an organization that pays homage to the Bible as a holy book among holy books? While telling Christians that Masonry is based on the sacred volume we receive causes us to look toward the Bible, the same thing said to the Muslim Mason, causes him to look to the Koran. These books do not say the same thing. Which one is really the basis for Masonry? Or is it some other book? Or is it some conglomeration of books and religious ideals through history trying to combine the world religions into one? If Masonry is based on the Bible, then why does it look like Masonry and why doesn't it look like the church we see instituted in the Bible? Finally, when we see all that the Masons say about what guides them into truth, we find out that everything they say about the Bible is just a smokescreen. They believe they are continuing to receive revelation from God as He whispers in their ears. Additionally, they add to whatever sacred book they might use with their “Ancient Landmarks,” which supposedly guides them in God's ways. All this conglomeration of sacred books, continuing revelation and Landmarks are supposedly the rule and guide of their faith, but the Bible says there is only one faith (**Ephesians 4:5**). The Bible says that God's word is truth (**John 17:17**), not the conglomeration of what everyone in the world believes is from God. How can a Christian be a part of this? We cannot.

III. Our second question: “Why do some think this is a non-issue?”

- A. This is not a Bible question. I cannot go to the Bible and explain why every individual who believes this is a non-issue feels that way. I can make some educated guesses.
 1. I can guess that some think it is a non-issue because all they know about Masonry is that some really nice men are Masons. They also see that Masons are involved in a lot of charity work. Since that is all they see, they view the whole discussion as a non-issue.
 2. I can guess that others think it is a non-issue because they have attempted to sort it all out. However, they found so much contradictory information that they gave up in utter confusion and decided to leave the issue up to others or to people's personal conscience.
 3. I can guess that some think it is a non-issue because they have believed the smokescreens put forth by those who would defend Masonry.
 4. I can guess that some think it is a non-issue because they have heard some of the outlandish claims against Masonry and, thinking that those claims are absurd, all claims against Masonry must be absurd.
 5. I can guess that some think it is a non-issue because they have succumbed to the religious tolerance of the world that says we should not stand up and separate ourselves from that which is false.
 6. Finally, I can guess that some think it is a non-issue because they simply prefer not to think about any issues that might upset other people.
- B. I can say this. Masonry is not a non-issue. I do not have to believe all the bad press Masonry has received from its opponents to realize that Christians cannot be members of the Masonic

Lodge. In order to be a member of the Lodge, Christians are supposed to accept and believe teachings which are in absolute discordance with Christianity as revealed in the Bible. In the same way that a Christian cannot be a Mormon, a Jehovah's Witness or a member of the American Atheists, a Christian cannot be a Mason.

- C. I am not saying that Masons are bad men wholly wrapped up in evil or that Masonry is a diabolical and sinister organization. I am simply saying that the principles of Masonry's universal approach to the church, God, Jesus and the Bible is fundamentally opposed to Christianity as revealed in the New Testament.

Conclusion:

I certainly hope this lesson has been helpful. As I said earlier, if you do not agree with me, let's get together and study further. If I am speaking to any Masons this evening, please, accept the command of the Lord in **II Corinthians 6:14-18**, come out from among them and be separate. There is no greater institution than the Lord's body. There is no God but Jehovah God. There is no Lord and Redeemer other than Jesus Christ. There is no truth other than God's word. Be content with what God has given us and do not seek after manmade fraternal religious organizations.