

SHOULD A CHRISTIAN BE A MASON?

Many people, including some Christians, view Freemasonry as nothing more than a good social organization. Some people even believe that Freemasonry is a Christian organization, because Masons have the Bible in their Lodges, and belief in God is a requirement for membership. To the men at the lower levels of Masonry, the organization may seem to them to be just that. It is well known that many good people are Masons. The Masons are also known for many good deeds. The question is, what do those in positions of authority in Masonry have to say about it? Is Freemasonry compatible with Christianity?

On pages 16-17 of the book *The Secret Teachings of the Masonic Lodge* by John Ankerberg and John Weldon, we learn the following. The authors sent a letter to each of the fifty Grand Lodges in America, addressing the Grand Master at each one. They asked the following question, "As an official Masonic leader, which books and authors do you recommend as being authoritative on the subject of Freemasonry?"

Twenty-five of the Grand Lodges in the United States responded. A response of fifty percent is sufficiently high to suggest that the responses of the other states would not have varied significantly. In other words, we may assume that these responses are normative for U.S. Masonry as a whole. Remember, for each state, no higher jurisdictional authority than its Grand Lodge exists.

Although other books are mentioned, for this chapter I have limited myself only to the books that I own myself.

Out of the 50 percent of the Grand Lodges that responded, 32 percent named Albert G. Mackey's *Revised Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* as an authoritative work on Masonry. Also out of the 50 percent of the Grand Lodges that responded, 16 percent named *Morals and Dogma* by Albert Pike as an authoritative work on Masonry. The book *Secret Teachings of the Masonic Lodge* by John Ankerberg and John Weldon states the following, "Albert Pike should also be listed among leading Masonic authorities."

Sovereign Grand Commander, C. Fred Kleinknecht, relates the following about this Masonic scholar (Pike) in The House of the Temple of the Supreme Council (a text extolling the headquarters of the Supreme Council, 33d Degree): "Albert Pike remains an inspiration for Masons everywhere. His great book *Morals and Dogma* endures as the most complete exposition of the Scottish Rite philosophy. He will always be remembered and revered as the Master Builder of the Scottish Rite."

Because of the Grand Commander's lofty estimate, when considering the meaning of the higher degrees of the Scottish Rite, we often include what Albert Pike wrote. Masons cannot claim that Pike was only teaching his "own opinions".

The quotes from Masonry in this study will be from the following:

Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, New and Revised Edition, 1966, by Albert Pike (Grand Commander 1859-1891)

Encyclopedia of Freemasonry by Albert Mackey and Charles McClenachan; Revised Edition by Edward Hawkins and William Hughan, 1927, 2 Volumes (Albert G. Mackey, 33rd degree Worshipful Grand Master)

Most people in Masonry probably do not know what they are involved in. The reason why they do not know is because they are purposely deceived

Morals and Dogma by Albert Pike

page 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 should 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."(PDF pg. 819)

pages 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 them who are unworthy or unable to receive it, or would pervert it." (PDF pg. 104-105)

This clearly shows that those in the lower levels of Masonry do not know what they are involved in. I would like to point out that false explanations or interpretations and intentionally misleading someone is nothing more than lying! The Bible tells us that lying is something that God hates (Proverbs 6:16-17).

Many people believe that Masonry is not a religion. Yet when we look to the authorities in Masonry, we find that Masonry is a religion and a system of worship that is filled with secrecy.

Albert Mackey quotes four definitions of religion by Webster's dictionary, and then states the following:

Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, Revised Edition, Vol.2 page 618:

"Now, it is plain that, in either of the first three senses in which we may take the word religion (and they do not vary materially differ from each other), Masonry may rightfully claim to be called a religious institution." (PDF pg. 615)

If Albert Mackey says Masonry may rightfully claim to be called a religious institution, on what basis would you disagree with him?

Morals and Dogma page 210: "Masonry is the legitimate successor- from the earliest times the custodian and depository of the great philosophical and religious truths, unknown to the world at large..." (PDF pg. 210)

Who possesses "religious truths" other than religions?

page 219: "Masonry labors to improve the social order by enlightening men's minds, warming their hearts with the love of good, inspiring them with the great principle of human fraternity, and requiring of its disciples that their language and actions shall conform to that principle, that they shall enlighten each other, control their passions abhor vice, and pity the vicious man as one afflicted with a deplorable malady. It is the universal, eternal, immutable religion, such as God planted in the heart of universal humanity. No creed has ever been long-lived that has not been built upon this foundation." (PDF pg. 219)

Does Masonry assert that it seeks a universal, eternal, immutable religion?

Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, Revised Edition, Vol.2 page 675:

"The Entered Apprentice begins his Masonic career by learning the duty of secrecy and silence. Hence it is appropriate that in the degree which is the consummation of initiation, in which the whole cycle of Masonic science is completed, the abstruse machinery of symbolism should be employed to impress the important virtues on the mind of the neophyte. The same principles of secrecy and silence existed in all the ancient mysteries and systems of worship." (PDF pg. 674)

Isn't Masonry identifying itself with ancient systems of worship? And adopting a duty secrecy and silence for themselves?

Since we have established that Masonry authorities consider Freemasonry to be a religion, involved with secrecy the next question is, how does this religion compare to Christianity? The following Scripture is provided to show a contrast between Masonry and the teachings of the Bible.

John 18:20: "Jesus answered him, 'I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues, and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and I spoke nothing in secret.'"

Luke 8:16-17: "Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but he puts it on a lamp stand, in order that those who come in may see the light. For nothing is hidden that shall not become evident, nor {anything} secret that shall not be known and come to light."

Whether or not secrecy in Masonry differs from the teachings of the Bible may seem trivial. What about more important issues? How does Masonry view Christianity? How does Masonry view the Bible? How does Masonry view God? How does Masonry view Jesus? On what basis are we saved, according to Masonry? The following answers and contrasts between Masonry and Christianity may surprise you.

How does Masonry view Christianity?

Masonry makes no claims to being a Christian organization.

Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, Revised Edition, Vol.1: pages 148-149:

"The interpretation of the symbols of Freemasonry from a Christian point of view is a theory adopted by some of the most distinguished Masonic writers of England and this country, but one which I think does not belong to the ancient system. Hutchinson, and after him Oliver — profoundly philosophical as are the Masonic speculations of both — have, I am constrained to believe, fallen into a great error in calling the Master Mason's Degree a Christian institution.....If Masonry were simply a Christian institution, the Jew and the Moslem, the Brahman and the Buddhist, could not conscientiously partake of its illumination." (PDF pg. 160-161)

Morals and Dogma page 105:

"The teachers, even of Christianity, are in general, the most ignorant of the true meaning of what they teach. There is no book of which, so little is known as the Bible. To most who read it, it is as incomprehensible as the Sohar." (PDF pg. 105)

In actuality, there is more evidence for, and study on, the Bible than on any other book in the world. The Bible does tell us why someone such as Albert Pike could not understand the Bible (see 1 Corinthians 2:14-16 and 1:18).

How does Masonry view the Bible?

Morals and Dogma page 11:

"The Bible is an indispensable part of the furniture of a Christian Lodge, only because it is the sacred book of the Christian religion. The Hebrew Pentateuch in a Hebrew Lodge, and the Koran in a Mohammedan one, belong on the altar; and one of these, and the square and compass, properly understood, are the Great Lights by which a Mason must walk and work." (PDF pg.11)

"The obligation of the candidate is always to be taken on the sacred book or books of his religion, that he may deem it more solemn and binding; and therefore, it was asked of what religion you were. We have no other concern with your religious creed." (PDF pg.11)

Here we learn that in Freemasonry, the Bible is no more than a piece of furniture and no greater than the Koran or other religious books. It is only used for the candidate to take an oath for Masonry. In contrast the Bible claims to be more than a piece of furniture.

2 Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;"

Isaiah 40:8: "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."

The Bible also warns the Christian about taking such oaths.

James 5:12: "But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your yes be yes, and your no, no; so that you may not fall under judgment."

Morals and Dogma page 744:

"The Bible, with all the allegories it contains, expresses, in an incomplete and veiled manner only, the religious science of the Hebrews. The doctrine of Moses and the prophets, identical at bottom with that of the ancient Egyptians, also had its outward meaning and veils. The Hebrew books were written only to recall to memory the traditions; and they were written in Symbols unintelligible to the Profane."
(PDF pg. 744-745)

We can glean the following from Albert Pike's statement; his claims were that:

The Bible is written in an incomplete and veiled manner.

The doctrine of Moses is identical at its base with that of the ancient Egyptians.

The Hebrew books (the Old Testament) were written only to recall to memory the traditions.

Let's view these three points in contrast with the Bible.

The Bible is written in an incomplete and veiled manner.

Acts 20:27: "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.

"The Apostle Paul claims he declared the whole purpose of God. How would one then view this as incomplete?

The doctrine of Moses is identical at its base with that of the ancient Egyptians.

It is through Moses that we received the Ten Commandments. We are told in these commandments in Deuteronomy 5:7 and Exodus 20:3 that God says, "You shall have no other gods before Me". The ancient Egyptians did not worship the God of the Bible. So how can one view the doctrine of Moses as identical at its base with that of the ancient Egyptians?

The Hebrew books (the Old Testament) were written only to recall to memory the traditions.

Jesus would seem to disagree with this statement by Albert Pike.

John 5:39-40 says, "You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life."

During the period when Jesus made this statement, the available scriptures consisted solely of the Hebrew texts that constitute the Old Testament. Certainly, Jesus did not think they were written only to recall traditions. In Mark Chapter 7, Jesus condemned the Pharisees for following traditions while neglecting the commandment of God.

How does Masonry view God?

Morals and Dogma page 226:

"Masonry, around whose alters the Christian, the Hebrew, the Moslem, the Brahmin, the followers of Confucius and Zoroaster, can assemble as brethren and unite in prayer to the one God who is above all the Baalim" (PDF pg. 226)

For the Christian there are two problems with this statement.

Baalim is not the God of the Bible.

The Christian cannot assemble as "brethren" with the Moslem, followers of Confucius, and so forth.

Baalim is not the God of the Bible.

Baal is a variation of the word Baalim. This word and its variation appears about seventy-five times in the Old Testament. In every case it is referring to a false deity. Following is one example of how it is used. Judges 2:11 (KJV): "**And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim...**"

The American Peoples Encyclopedia, 1959, Vol.2, pages 897-898 have the following to say about the baalim. "The baalim were rather local deities each of whom gave fertility to his district and thus became an object of worship. The Israelites found the cult everywhere when they entered Canaan and naturally adopted it calling Yahweh their baal. As the baalim were gods of fertility, the rites of the baal worship degenerated into sensuality and thus the Yahweh cult was corrupted. The prophets denounced it and to the later Jews the name was so offensive that they substituted bosheth, 'shame', for it. The term **Beelzebub** was derived from it."

(Yahweh is translated as "Jehovah", which is a name for God. Beelzebub is a name for Satan, as used in Luke 11:18.)

The Christian cannot assemble as "brethren" with the Moslem, followers of Confucius, and so forth.

From a Biblical perspective a brother is a fellow Christian. This is shown in the fact that Paul spoke of false brethren in 2 Corinthians 11:26 and Galatians 2:4. Paul also referred to a so-called brother in 1 Corinthians 5:11.

In the following Scripture we can see that Jesus took the same view of a brother. Matthew 12:49-50: "And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, 'Behold, My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother.'"

We find the same view of a brother from the writer of Hebrews.

Hebrews 2:10-11: "For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren."

It should be easy to see that from a Biblical perspective the Christian is not a brother to the Moslem, followers of Confucius, and so forth. Paul sums up the reason the Christian cannot "assemble as brethren and unite in prayer" with the non-believer in the following passage:

2 Corinthians 6:14-17: "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, 'I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,' says the Lord."

How does Masonry view Jesus?

Morals and Dogma page 525:

"It (Masonry) reverences all the great reformers. It sees Moses, the Law-giver of the Jews, in Confucius and Zoroaster, in Jesus of Nazareth, and in the Arabian Iconoclast, Great teachers of Morality, and Eminent Reformers, if no more: and allows every brother of the Order to assign to each such higher and even Divine Character as his creed and Truth require." (PDF pg. 525)

The problem with putting Jesus as just another in the list of "Great teachers of Morality, and Eminent Reformers" is that Jesus Himself claimed to be much more. He claimed to be the only way to Heaven. None of the others mentioned are God in the flesh or the Redeemer of mankind. John 14:6" "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.'" (See also John 1:1 and 14, and 3:16.)

On what basis are we saved, according to Masonry?

Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, Revised Edition, Vol.1 page 269: (PDF pg. 284)

"The lecture of the Third Degree begins by declaring that the recipient was induced to seek that sublime degree 'that he might perfect himself in Masonry, so as to travel into foreign countries, and work and receive wages as a Master Mason.'

"Thousands have often heard this ritualistic expression at the opening and closing of a Master's Lodge, without dreaming for a moment of its hidden and spiritual meaning, or, if they think of any meaning at all, they content themselves by interpreting it as referring to the actual travels of the Masons, after the completion of the Temple, into the surrounding countries in search of employment, whose wages were to be the gold and silver which they could earn by the exercise of their skill in the operative art.

"But the true symbolic meaning of the foreign country into which the Master Mason travels in search of wages is far different.

"The symbolism of this life terminates with the Master Degree. The completion of that degree is the lesson of death and the resurrection to a future life, where the TRUE WORD, or Divine Truth, not given in this, is to be received as the reward of a life worthily spent in its search. in the reception of that TRUTH can be imparted only in that better land. "Heaven, the future life, the higher state of existence after death, is the foreign country in which the Master Mason is to enter, and there he is to receive his wages in the reception of the TRUTH which can be imparted only in that better land." (End Quote)

The following is what can be gleaned from this statement.

The Mason is to work to perfect himself in Masonry so as to receive a reward in heaven.

The reward given is Divine Truth.

He receives this Divine Truth because of his life worthily spent in search of it.

Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, Revised Edition, Vol.2 page 805 (PDF pg. 809)

"The higher idea of truth which pervades the whole Masonic system, and which is symbolized by the Word, is that which is properly expressed to a knowledge of God. "There was an Egyptian goddess named, Thm, or Thme, integritas, Justice and Truth. This one of the three great Masonic principles is represented among the Egyptians by an ostrich feather; and the judicial officer was also thus represented, 'because that bird, unlike others, has all its feathers equal.' Horapollo. The Hebrew word, ion, signifies an ostrich, as also a council; and the word, Rnne, is interpreted, poetically, an ostrich, and also a song of joy, or of praise; hence, 'the happy souls thus ornamented, under the inspection of the lords of the heart's joy, gathered fruits from celestial trees.' In the judgment in Amenti, the soul advances toward the goddess Thme, who wears on her head the ostrich feather. In the scale, Anubis and Horus weigh the actions of the deceased. On one side is the ostrich feather, and on the other the vase containing the heart. Should the weight of the heart be greater than the feather, the soul is entitled to be received into the celestial courts. The forty-two judges, with heads ornamented with ostrich feathers, sit aloft to pronounce judgment. (See Book of the Dead.)"

The following can be gleaned from this statement:

The actions or deeds of the deceased are measured.
These actions determine the weight of the heart.

Ultimately these actions determine if the soul of the deceased is entitled to enter into the celestial courts.

The Board of General Activities, Grand Lodge, F. &A.M., New York, 1928, copyrighted a Bible with Masonic helps of which I have a copy. On page 5 under the title "The Masonic Belief" the fourth statement of faith reads, "**Character determines destiny.**"

Out of these three statements by the Masons we can conclude the following. The Mason must work to perfect himself. If by his actions he is found worthy, he is entitled to enter heaven to receive his reward of divine truth. As summed up by the Masons, his character determines his destiny.

Jesus said we can receive the truth now (John 8:32). We don't have to wait until judgment day. The real problem is that all of our good deeds put together are like a filthy rag to the Lord (Isaiah 64:6). If you keep the whole law and stumble one time you are guilty of all (James 2:10 and Galatians 3:10) One mistake is enough to send you to Hell (Matthew 5:22). No one goes to Heaven because of good deeds. The only way anyone goes to Heaven is by faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:16). To try to go to Heaven based on good deeds is to try to earn your way to Heaven.

Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast."

You cannot earn a gift; if you earn it, then it will no longer be a gift!

Romans 3:20: "...because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin."

Galatians 3:3: "Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?"

Even our good deeds after coming to Jesus have nothing to do with our salvation. We do good deeds because we love him (John 14:15).

Galatians 2:21: "I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

1 Corinthians 15:17: ".and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins."

John 6:28-29: "They said therefore to Him, 'What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?' Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.'"

This is the only work that you can do for your salvation.

Obviously, the Masonic religion is not compatible with Christianity, taking a Biblical standpoint. But it does not end there — from a Mason's view you cannot truly obey Masonic law and believe Christianity is true. Christianity claims that Jesus is the only way of salvation for mankind (Acts 4:12). This does not agree with other religions.

Compare this to Albert Pike's statement on page **167 of Morals and Dogma**: "No man truly obeys the Masonic law who merely tolerates those whose religious opinions are opposed to his own. Every man's opinions are his own private property, and the rights of all men to maintain each his own are perfectly equal. Merely to tolerate, to bear with an opposing opinion, is to assume it to be heretical: and assert the right to persecute, if we would; and claim our toleration of it as a merit." (PDF pg. 167)

The Christian is told to contend for the faith (Jude 1:3). "Contend" means to strive in debate or argue. Such an argument is to be done with gentleness and reverence (1 Peter 3:15).

(Are Masons bad? Are Masons evil?)

I would like to end this topic by reminding you that there are many good people, even Christians, who are Masons. The Masons are known for many good deeds that are admirable. Keep in mind that a large percentage of Masons probably have no idea of the actual teachings of the Masonic belief. They do not know either because they have not researched Masonry, or because the beginning levels are purposely designed to be deceptive. If you are a Christian and a Mason, I encourage you to research this for yourself. Consider carefully Masonry in the light of the quotes from Masonic authorities and Scripture provided in this study.

The question you must answer for yourself is, "should a Christian be a Mason?"