

Motion: In the future not to allow Freemasons or those connected to it through an affiliated group, or any other secret society, membership in Lakeland First Baptist Church.

In 1992-93, a committee was assigned by the SBC to study Freemasonry and report to the Convention their findings. Their findings made clear the incompatibility of Freemasonry and Christianity. **There were eight major concerns that the Southern Baptist Convention expressed about the teachings and practices of Freemasonry:**

- Freemasonry uses offensive, non-biblical, and blasphemous terms relating to God.
- Freemasonry insists on the use of “bloody oaths” or obligations, which are strictly forbidden by the Bible (cf. Matt. 5:34-37 and James 5:12).
- Freemasonry urges that occultic and/or pagan readings be used and that their teachings be appropriated in interpreting such concepts as the Trinity.
- Freemasonry includes the Bible as part of the “furniture of the lodge,” but only as an equal with non-Christian symbols and writings.
- Freemasonry misuses the term “light” to refer to moral “reformation” as a means to salvation.
- Freemasonry teaches that salvation may be attained by “good works” and not through faith in Christ alone.
- Freemasonry advocates in many of its writings the non-biblical teachings of universalism.
- In some of its lodges, Freemasonry discriminates against non-whites.

While it is clear that some Christians, moral persons, and outstanding government leaders have been and are members of the Freemasonic movement, several points of the lodge’s teachings are non-biblical and non-Christian. While Freemasonry encourages and supports charitable activities, it contains both multireligious and inclusivistic teachings that are not Christian. **“Masonry is pagan, unscriptural, and in conflict with basic Christian beliefs”** (The Southern Baptist Convention, June 1993).

I. Freemasonry is Incompatible with Christianity

Masonry’s claim is that it takes “a good man and makes him better.” But the Bible says there is none good, no not one (Romans 3). Such a teaching as “makes a good man better” implies the ability of human works to make a man acceptable for entry into the Celestial Lodge. This is a works-based plan of salvation that does not admit the moral depravity of man, the inability of man to save himself, and excludes the necessity of Jesus Christ as the One Mediator for our salvation and the One Mediator for our prayers to have access to the Father by His blood.

Lambskin Apron and Celestial Lodge

A Mason is given his apron at the Entered Apprentice degree. At that time, he is told that the apron is “the badge of a mason” and “...who wears the Lambskin [apron] as a badge of Masonry is continually reminded of that purity of life and conduct which is necessary to obtain admittance into the Celestial Lodge above” (Ohio Monitor, pp. 11-12).

As Christians, we know that it is through Jesus, not “purity of life and conduct,” we are saved and go to Heaven. “Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, except through Me,” (John 14:6). In contrast to Freemasonry’s teaching, the Bible says “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast,” (Ephesians 2: 8-9).

As a reference to heaven, the implication made throughout the mason’s philosophical pilgrimage is that through masonry, good moral conduct, and keeping one’s obligations, a man may earn entry to the Celestial Lodge above:

The implication that salvation may be attained by one’s good works, implicit in the statement found in some Masonic writing that “Masonry is continually reminded of that purity of life and conduct which is necessary to obtain admittance into the Celestial Lodge above where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides.” Even though many Masons understand that the “purity of life and conduct” can only be achieved through faith in Jesus Christ, others may be led to believe they can earn salvation by living a pure life with good conduct.

[<https://www.namb.net/apologetics/resource/freemasonry-overview/>].

Oaths

The Commandment of Jesus Christ is broken by Freemasons:

(Matthew 5: 33-37) "Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. [literally from the Evil One].

Bloody oath (implying murder if obligation violated/NAME of God taken in vain if not carried out)

"Thou shalt not murder..."

"Thou shalt not take the NAME of the LORD thy God in vain" (if not intended to carry out)

Perfect soul trap: In the first degree of Blue Lodge masonry, the hooded initiate says that he has "long been in darkness." One who has Christ has the Light of the world. The removal of the initiate's hood later in the ceremony does not bring light. Instead, the initiate is blinded to the truth of his own moral depravity and lost estate wherein he is unable by any works of his own to enter heaven. There is no discussion or mention of the possibility of hell as his destination apart from Jesus Christ. In addition, by the peer pressure exerted through the recognition of the membership's faces (past and present) the new, often young, initiate has been trapped by his oath and his new understanding of the power of the influence of the craft.

The Pagan Associations of Raising of Hiram Abiff and the "Dry Baptism" of the Master Mason Degree

The raising of the candidate in the third degree, Master Mason, preserves and perpetuates ancient fertility cult Rituals. The cults of Dionysus, Mithra, Baal, Adonis, Attis, Demeter, Persephone, Aphrodite, Isis, Osiris—all have elements of winter/death and spring/resurrection, of dying and rising. The connection of King Hiram (a Phoenician and worshipper of Baal, with Hiram Abiff (half Phoenician, son of an Israelite widow) to a dying and rising motif does bring Baalism fertility cult to mind. See the myth, *Baal descends to the Netherworld*. Due to the keen interest of masons in things Egyptian, parallels to the Hiram Abiff play may also be seen in the myth of Osiris.

A dying-and-rising, death-rebirth, or resurrection deity is a religious motif in which a god or goddess dies and is resurrected. Examples of gods who die and later return to life are most often cited from the religions of the ancient Near East, and traditions influenced by them include Biblical and Greco-Roman mythology and by extension Christianity. The concept of a dying-and-rising god was first proposed in comparative mythology by James Frazer's seminal *The Golden Bough* (1890). Frazer associated the motif with fertility rites surrounding the yearly cycle of vegetation. Frazer cited the examples of Osiris, Tammuz, Adonis and Attis, Dionysus and Jesus. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dying-and-rising_deity

Henry C. Clausen, Sovereign Grand Commander "In my book, *Emergence of the mystical*, I correlate our Scottish Rite mission and modern science. And I show that they are compatible companions. Throughout all history there have been examples of extraordinary purposes of the mind. These have included and been repeated in different forms, metaphors, that derive from what we know as wisdom of the ancients. The powers forces and energies can be discovered if we search deeply enough. They were to be found in all parts of the world, such as the mysteries of Isis and Osiris in Egypt, the Mithraic mysteries of the Persians, the Orphic and Bacchic and later Eleusinian mysteries of Greece, the mysteries of Samothrace and Chaldea, the mysteries of India, the druidical mysteries, the Gothic and Scandinavian mysteries, and others." [from *Esoteric Freemasonry Explained by the 33° Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council*, Henry C. Clausen, video clip].

The "brother mason" is counted as "Raised" from this day after ritually being killed, buried and raised to "living perpendicular.

Lost word... Lost name of God

From the first bloody oath the name of God is taken in vain until the recovery of the lost word/NAME when the name of God is blasphemed. During the third degree the candidate is told that there is a lost word. He is given a substitute word for the time being. In the higher degrees of both Royal Arch and Scottish Rite Freemasonry, the lost word is revealed to be the name of God. The repetition of three syllables, one from God's name, one from Baal, and one referencing the sun god of Egypt—are used in this ritual as the lost name of God.

- 1) This three syllable "name" is Blasphemy of the Lord's holy name. To join the Lord's name to Baal is the worst kind of blasphemy.
- 2) There is thus a link between the first three degrees of Blue lodge and the quest for the lost word/name in the upper degrees of Royal Arch and Scottish rite.
- 3) There is throughout Freemasonry an approach known as religious syncretism, the leveling and equating of the chief gods of ancient systems. It is abhorrent to equate the LORD with any god of the ancient pagan religions.
- 4) The three syllable "word" used in Freemasonry as the lost name of God combines the name of the true God, the name of Baal (a god connected with Satan), and the god of the sun from ancient Egypt. This combines the holy name of God to ancient fertility cult and solar cult.

The Absence of Hell

Many Masonic writings can be interpreted as endorsing universalism. Pike wrote, "It is the fine dream of the greatest of the Poets, that Hell, become useless, is to be closed at length, by the aggrandizement of Heaven; that the problem of Evil is to receive its final solution, and Good alone, necessary and triumphant, is to reign in Eternity. Even more prominent in Freemasonry is the false teaching of inclusivism, the belief that followers of non-Christian religions will also be saved. Freemasonry holds out the promise of salvation to all worthy Masons regardless of the deity they worship. The Muslim or Hindu member of the lodge is on the same spiritual level as the believer in Jesus Christ. According to Hutchens, "Masonry is tolerant, even supportive, of the most diverse religious beliefs." Pike likewise argued that no religion can claim to have exclusivity to the truth, nor can any religion claim to be superior to another. Toleration, holding that every other man has the same right to his opinion and faith that we have to ours; liberality; holding that as no human being can with certainty say, in the clash and conflict of hostile faiths and creeds, what is truth, or that he is surely in possession of it, so everyone should feel that it is quite possible that another equally honest and sincere with himself, and yet holding the contrary opinion, may himself be in possession of the truth, and that whatever one firmly and conscientiously believes, is truth, to him." Inclusivism denies the teaching of the New Testament that only those who place their faith in Jesus Christ will be saved. The following passages teach this biblical truth: John 3:36: "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him." John 14:6: "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" Acts 4:12: "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." First Corinthians 3:11: "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ." First Timothy 2:5: "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." First John 5:12: "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." <https://www.namb.net/apologetics/resource/freemasonry-overview/>

Violations of Commandments of the Moral Law

Freemasonry's doctrines, oaths, rituals, beliefs, ceremonies, passwords, and practices result in breaking five of the Ten Commandments: Commandments # 1, 2, 3, 6, and 9 (Exodus 20:1-17).

- 1) No other gods... (Rituals connected to pagan beliefs, ornaments, images, costumes)
- 2) No idols... (Temples and lodges filled with use of the pentagram, astrology, sphynx, serpents, etc.)
- 3) Thou shalt not take the Name of the LORD thy God in vain... (oaths, blasphemy)
- 6) Thou shalt not murder.... (Implication of oaths)
- 9) Thou shalt not bear false witness.... (Implication of oaths)

Violations of the Command of Christ and His Apostles:

Oaths: "Swear not.... Yes be yes and your no be no... anything beyond these is of the Evil One.

"But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation" (James 5:12).

Believers are not to be bound to Unbelievers:

There are thousands of Freemasons not of Christian faith. Some are Muslims, some Jews, some Hindus, and even some Satanists (Allister Crowley, Gerald Gardner, etc.). The mason is bound by cable tie in the first degree to all other masons, whether they are Christian or not. This bond is sealed with an oath in the name of God.

The Apostle Paul wrote, in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18:

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

In Galatians 5:1, Paul wrote, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." While his discourse focused on the Law, Paul would be shocked that Christian would want to be joined in fellowship with unbelievers.

II. Freemasonry is Incompatible with Church Membership

Since the Lodge is a center of idolatry, taking of the name of God in bloody oaths that are vain and empty of actual fulfillment, blasphemy of the name of God, rites connected to ancient pagan religion, a place where a false gospel blinds the minds of many of the adherents, and has served as the incubator for the rise of the occult over the last two centuries—no child of the one true God who serves the Lord Jesus Christ should try to cling to the Lodge and to Christ's church. This is the same blindness that afflicted those Israelites who tried to worship both God and Baal (Jah-Bul-On).

It was claimed by Henry Clausen, a past Sovereign Grand Commander of the Scottish Rite:

"Masonry has found the keys to esoteric knowledge. And, therefore, it is the direct, true descendant and the survivor of the ancient mysteries. We pursue, preserve, and teach the ancient wisdom and esoteric knowledge. That is why our house of the temple is replete and resplendent with artistic ornaments and priceless symbols. They reflect our mission to instruct men in the real science of being, and to lead them up the stairway to perfection, to the realization of the true brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God."

Violation of the ten Commandments of God and the clear New Testament commands of Christ and His apostles puts one in danger when it comes to the Lord's Supper.

There is a clear danger for the local church in having a secret society within its membership. To think otherwise is naïve. The SBC could not act in such a way as to compel individual churches to act on their report, for: 1) they have no power over autonomous churches, and 2) many of the churches were compromised by leadership in Lodge membership. However, SBC churches do not allow Mormons or Jehovah Witnesses to be members or any other cultic group whose doctrine is false and whose teaching leads lost souls astray. Given the material here presented, Freemasonry should not be an exception to this.