

Where Does the Masonic Ritual Conflict with the Bible? – Part 3

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The Masonic Lodge teaches that salvation and residence in the “Celestial Lodge Above” may be gained by Masons doing good works. Is this biblical?

By many different symbols Masonry teaches a doctrine of “works salvation” – that by personal merit and works of righteousness, the Masonic initiate will become worthy of salvation and eternal life. The candidate is told again and again that God will be gracious and reward those who build their character and do good deeds.

For example, the symbol of the “Sword Pointing to a Naked Heart” is said to “pointedly remind us that God will reward us according to what we do in this life.”¹ In a similar fashion, the All-Seeing Eye, which symbolizes God, “pervades the inmost recesses of the human Heart, and will reward us according to our merits.”²

The white apron or lambskin is “a symbol of Innocence, Purity, and Honor.”³ This is because, “The Lamb has in all ages been deemed an emblem of innocence. The lambskin is therefore to remind you of that purity of life and conduct which is so *essentially necessary* to your gaining admission to the Celestial Lodge above, where the Supreme Architect of the universe presides.”⁴ This same teaching is found in the *Holman Edition of the Holy Bible* that is published for Masons.⁵ Mackey states of the apron: “The pure, unspotted lambskin apron is, then, in Masonry, symbolic of that perfection of body and purity of mind which are essential qualifications in all who would participate in its sacred mysteries.”⁶

The compass, the sprig of acacia, the scythe, and other symbols are all said to symbolize the immortality of the soul.⁷ All of this is why Jack Harris concluded:

In all the rituals that I taught for eleven years, Masonry did teach how to get to heaven. They taught it with the apron that I wore, by my purity, life and conduct. They taught it in the Hiram Abiff legend of the third degree [symbolizing] the immortality of the soul. Through all their writings they say they are teaching the immortality of the soul to the Mason. But the Word of God tells me that the only way to have immortal life is through

¹ Allen E. Roberts, *The Craft and Its Symbols: Opening the Door to Masonic Symbolism* (Richmond, VA, Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply, 1974), p. 76.

² George Simmons and Robert Macoy, *Standard Masonic Monitor of the Degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason* (Richmond, VA, Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply, 1984), p. 111, cf. Malcolm C. Duncan, *Masonic Ritual and Monitor* (New York, David McKay Co., nd), p. 129.

³ Roberts, *Craft*, p. 31.

⁴ Simmons and Macoy, *Standard Masonic Monitor*, p. 29, emphasis added.

⁵ C. Duncan, *Masonic Ritual and Monitor* (New York, David McKay Co., nd), p. 4.

⁶ Albert G. Mackey, *The Symbolism of Freemasonry: Illustrating and Explaining Its Science and Philosophy, Its Legends, Myths, and Symbols* (Chicago, IL, Charles T. Powner Co., 1975), p. 135.

⁷ Roberts, *Craft*, p. 62; Duncan, *Masonic Ritual*, pp. 130-131.

the Person of Jesus Christ. Never at any Masonic ritual did they point out that Jesus is the way of salvation.⁸

This is why Albert Pike says, “We must have faith in ourselves...”⁹ And this is why the charge to the Master Mason at his raising states, “Let all the energies of our souls and the perfection of our minds be employed in attaining the approbation of the Grand Master on high, so that when we come to die... we gain the favor of a speedy entrance to the Grand Lodge on high, where the G. A. of T. U. forever presides, and where, seated at his right hand, he may be pleased to pronounce us upright men and Masons, fitly prepared [for heaven].”¹⁰

If you were to hear all of this in the Lodge, wouldn't you think that Freemasonry is clearly teaching that *you* can go to the “Celestial Lodge Above” if you live a pure and honest life? Isn't that “works” salvation? And if you're a Christian, when the Lodge teaches a man that by his good life and by his good deeds God will admit him into heaven, isn't that contrary to your Christian teaching?

In conclusion, there is absolutely no doubt that Masonry teaches that a Mason will inherit eternal life by his conduct and his personal merit. Masonry thus teaches a system of salvation by personal merit and good works. This concept of salvation is one which the Bible calls “another gospel.” It is so contrary to God's way of salvation that Scripture places it under a divine curse (Gal. 1:6-8).

The following Scriptures give the biblical position on how a man gains eternal life:

To the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness (Rom. 4:5).

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 (Eph. 2:8-9).

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life (1 John 5:11-12).

All of these verses in the Bible teach that salvation is a gift of God. Salvation comes solely by the grace [unmerited favor] of God, not by anything we can do to earn God's favor or by personal righteousness. By being a part of the Lodge, a Christian Mason is supporting “another gospel,” a false system of salvation that lies to people about how they may be saved.

If you are a true believer in Jesus Christ, realizing this shouldn't you obey the biblical admonition in 2 Corinthians 6:17: “Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord”?

If a Mason has sworn allegiance to the Lodge, should he break his oaths?

God tells us to “have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret” (Eph. 5:11-12).

⁸ Transcript, The John Ankerberg show, “The Masonic Lodge: What Goes on Behind Closed Doors?” (Guests: Jack Harris, William Mankin, Dr. Walter Martin, Paul Pantzer), Chattanooga, TN, The John Ankerberg Evangelistic Association, 1986, p. 35.

⁹ Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry* (Charleston, SC, The Supreme Council of the 33rd Degree for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States, 1906), p. 30.

¹⁰ Simmons and Macoy, *Standard Masonic Monitor*, p. 125.

But once a person is already a Mason, what should he do if he realizes that Masonry is wrong and sinful? What can someone do who has already taken the oath “for all time”?¹¹ Is that person bound to keep his oath? Here is what the Bible advises you to do:

If a person swears thoughtlessly with his lips to do evil or to do good, in whatever manner a man may speak thoughtlessly with an oath, and it is hidden from him, and then he comes to know it, he will be guilty in one of these. So it shall be when he becomes guilty in one of these, that he shall confess that in which he has sinned. He shall also bring his guilt offering to the Lord for his sin which he has committed.... So the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin which he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him (Lev. 5:4-6, 10).

The Bible tells every person that if he swears an oath, if the implications are hidden from him, when he understands the implication and finds himself guilty of offending God’s moral law, then he is guilty, and is to confess that he has sinned and to repent.

In the Old Testament a person was to go to the priest and confess that he had sinned and offer a sacrifice for atonement. Today, a Christian is to come to his High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, who has died on the cross for his sin; he is to acknowledge that he is guilty of swearing wrongly and repent of his oath, ask for forgiveness, and acknowledge that he will obey God in following the truth. The Bible says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

It is the duty of every Christian to break and renounce any evil oath that binds him to disobeying God. By taking the Masonic oaths, a person swears to uphold Masonry and all its teachings (whether he knows all of them or not). Swearing to uphold all that is included in the Masonic oaths is sinful, unscriptural, and should not be a part of the Christian’s life for the following reasons:

1) They make a Christian man swear by God to doctrines which God has pronounced false and sinful. For example, Masonry teaches the false doctrine of “the Fatherhood of God,” whereas Jesus taught that only to those who receive Him, who believe in His name, “He [gives] the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).

2) The Christian man swears to accept and promote the Masonic lie that Jesus is just one of many equally revered prophets in the world. He does this when agreeing that all religions can lead a man to God. But the Bible records Jesus’ true words: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6).

3) The Christian swears that he is approaching the Lodge while in spiritual ignorance and moral darkness, when the Bible says Christians are children of light and are indwelt by the Light of the world. The Bible says, “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord” (Eph. 5:8).

4) The Christian falsely swears that the God of the Bible is equally present in all religions. But the Bible says, “I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me” (Isa. 44:6).

5) By swearing the Masonic oath, Christians are perpetuating a false gospel to other Lodge members who look only to the gospel of Masonry to get them to heaven. But the Bible says, “But

¹¹ Alphonse Cerza, *Let There Be Light: A Study in Anti Masonry* (Silver Spring, MD, The Masonic Service Association, 1983), p. 53.

even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!” (Gal. 1:8).

The Scripture warns:

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk with them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people. Therefore come out from them and be separate,” says the Lord. “Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you” (2 Cor. 6:14-17).

It is clearly the Christian’s duty to break and renounce any evil oath that binds him in sin: “Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them” (Eph. 5:11). Every Christian Lodge member should renounce his Masonic oath and confess it as a sin to his Lord. The Lord promises to forgive each one who will do so. (“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins...” 1 John 1:9.) In this way the Christian will stop adding his influence to the sins of the Lodge whose false religion results in the damnation of so many souls (John 3:18,36; 8:24; 12:48, cf. 3:6-8).

Conclusion

In his encyclopedia, Coil confesses that if the idea that Masonry alone will get one to heaven is “a false hope,” then Masonry should abandon that hope “and devote its attention to activities where it is sure of its ground and its authority.”¹² But where is Masonry’s authority?

Only the revealed Word of God, the Bible, can tell us the truth about God, about Jesus Christ, about ourselves, about salvation, and about life after death. Since Masonry denies God’s Word on these subjects, how can it logically claim to be true? (“No lie is of the truth,” 1 John 2:21.) But if Masonry is not true, how can you as a Mason continue to promote what is not true?

The bottom line for the Mason who is not a Christian is this: If Masonry is true, then he should follow Masonry and promote its teachings. But if Masonry rejects and opposes the truth – if it denies God and His Word, if it denies God’s Son, if it denies God’s plan of salvation, and if it offers men a false hope – then the Mason must leave Masonry and instead follow the truth of God.

Does the Mason who is not a Christian really desire to take the chance that he will discover that Masonry was not God’s truth after it is too late? Or is he now willing to make an investigation of this matter?¹³

Jesus taught, “I am the way, and the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6); and “This is eternal life: that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent” (John 17:3). The Bible further teaches, ‘And there is

¹² Henry Wilson Coil, *Coil’s Masonic Encyclopedia* (New York, Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply, 1961), p. 512.

¹³ See C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (MacMillan); Henry M. Morris, *Many Infallible Proofs* (Master Books), and Os Guinness, *In Two Minds* (InterVarsity).

salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

What of the Christian Mason? The Christian Mason also must decide. In our books *The Facts on the Masonic Lodge* and *The Secret Teachings of the Masonic Lodge* we have proven beyond any doubt whatsoever that Masonry is opposed to the one true God, it is opposed to the teachings of the Bible, it is opposed to the person and work of Jesus Christ, it is opposed to salvation by grace, and it is opposed to every major Christian doctrine. How then can a Christian possibly join in, live by, and promote the teachings of Masonry?

Jesus Himself warned, “Beware of the false prophets.... Not everyone who says to Me; ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.... Everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall” (Matt. 7:15, 21, 26-27).

Christian Masons must decide today whether they will remain Masons and deny their Lord, Jesus Christ, or whether they will do the will of their Father in heaven and leave Masonry. Centuries ago the prophet Elijah challenged the people of God who had forsaken the true God and fallen into the grievous sin of idolatry He warned them, “How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him” (1 Kings 18:21).

This question remains true for Christian Masons today. If the Lord is God, then follow *Him*. Do not maintain the hypocrisy of claiming to be a Christian while living your life in an organization that denies everything Christian. Either follow God or follow Masonry. Either live as a Christian or live as a Mason. Jesus Himself warned: “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me” (Matt. 15:7-8).

Finally, many pastors, elders, and deacons have no problem with accepting Masons as Christians and granting them positions of teaching and leadership in the local church. We urge such persons to reexamine this practice. Why? Because Masons are sworn to uphold the beliefs and practices of Masonry, which are contrary to Christianity.¹⁴ How can such men be put in positions of leadership and authority when the Bible says, for example, “Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere.... They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons” (1 Tim. 3:8-10).

¹⁴ e.g., Educational and Historical Commission of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, *Leaves from Georgia Masonry* (Educational and Historical Commission of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, 1947), pp. 74-75.