

Freemasons

by Sebastian R. Fama

The Catholic Church and Freemasonry have been at odds for centuries. Eight popes have condemned it. Most Christian denominations have condemned it as well. Christianity and Freemasonry hold contrary beliefs. Consequently, Catholics are forbidden to join the Lodge in the strongest of terms. The Church's position is expressed in its "*Declaration on Masonic Associations*." It states in part: "Therefore the Church's negative judgment in regard to Masonic associations remains unchanged, since their principles have always been considered irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Church, and therefore membership in them remains forbidden. The faithful who enroll in Masonic associations are in a state of grave sin and may not receive Holy Communion."

Despite the Church's rejection of Freemasonry, Catholics are told that joining the Lodge will not compromise their faith. This is patently false. Freemasonry is itself a religion. To quote the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*: "Freemasonry displays all the elements of religion, and as such it becomes a rival to the religion of the Gospel. It includes temples and altars, prayers, a moral code, worship, vestments, feast days, the promise of reward and punishment in the afterlife, a hierarchy, and initiative and burial rites" (vol. 6, page 137).

Masons claim that they are forbidden to even discuss religion. One might be inclined to believe that such a rule exists for the sake of keeping religion out of the Lodge. But it actually serves to keep Masons from challenging the unorthodox teachings of Freemasonry. Much of what is taught to Masons is of a religious nature. One could only challenge it from a religious standpoint. But Masons are not allowed to discuss their religion. As a result, their teachings are never questioned. This, of course, creates a problem. The longer someone is exposed to an ideology, the more likely it is that they will accept it. Thus, the danger of a Christian compromising his faith in Jesus, while a Mason, is very real.

Masonic authorities, such as Albert Mackey, Albert Pike and Henry Coil, all admit that Freemasonry is a religion:

In Albert G. Mackey's "*Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*," you will find the following: "The religion of Masonry is cosmopolitan, universal..." (volume 1, page 301).

Henry Wilson Coil writes: "Many Freemasons make this flight [to heaven] with no other guarantee of a safe landing than their belief in the religion of Freemasonry" (*A Comprehensive View of Freemasonry* page 186).

"*Morals and Dogma*" has been called "the most profound Masonic work written in the U.S." In it, Albert Pike proclaims: "Every Masonic Lodge is a temple of religion and its teachings are instructions in religion" (page 213). And, "Masonry...is the universal, eternal, immutable religion" (page 219).

One of the religious principles taught by Freemasonry that is unacceptable to Christians is the idea that all religions are the same (Indifferentism). At the front of a Masons Bible there is an article titled "*The Great Light in Masonry*" written by Joseph F. Newton. It states: "For Masonry knows what so many forget, that **religions are many, but religion is one**... Therefore it [Masonry] invites to its altar men of all faiths, knowing that if they use different names for the nameless one of a hundred names, **they are yet praying to the one God and Father of all**." But Masonic writings reject the God of the Bible.

Albert Pike writes: "If our conceptions of God are those of the ignorant, narrow minded, and vindictive Israelite...we feel that it is an affront and an indignity to [God]" (*Morals and Dogma* page 223).

Coil refers to the biblical God as "a partisan tribal God" and implies that such a God-concept is far inferior to the "God of Masonry" (*Coils Masonic Encyclopedia* page 516).

If men of all faiths worship the same God, why denounce the God of the Bible? Maybe what the Lodge really means to say is that men of all faiths will worship one god once they have been hoodwinked into embracing the so

called "god of Masonry." Of course, this would be a violation of the first Commandment, "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3).

Those outside of Masonry are said to be in "darkness." Through Masonry one is supposedly brought to "light." Light, among other things, refers to "truth and wisdom" (*The Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* by Albert Mackey, Volume 1, page 446). However, Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would lead the apostles into all truth (John 16:13). He also told them to preach it to the world (Mark 16:15), not to keep it secret.

In the higher degrees of the Scottish Rite, "light" consists of a Mason being exposed to Pagan beliefs and practices. "For example, he is introduced to the Egyptian deities Osiris, Isis, Horus, and Amun; to the Scandinavian deities Odin, Freya and Thor; to Hindu, Greek and Persian deities and to Jewish Kabbalism [i.e. occultism]..." (*A Study of Freemasonry*, Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1993).

The ritual for the 30th degree of the Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, is the most problematic for Catholics. During the ritual candidates are told, "And, finally, keep aloof from uniting yourself with any sectional, political, or sectarian religious organization whose principles can in any way bias your mind or judgment, or in the slightest degree trammel with obligations and the vows you have just made." The Catholic Church forbids membership in Masonic associations. Certainly, this would tend to "bias your mind or judgment," or "trammel with the obligations and the vows you have just made" (*Christianity and American Freemasonry* by William J Whalen, page 92). To honor his oath, a Catholic Mason would have to leave his Church.

After the oath is taken, the candidate is shown a papal tiara (the pope's ceremonial headdress). He is then told the following: "This represents the tiara of the cruel and cowardly Pontiff, who sacrificed to his ambition, the illustrious order of those Knights Templar of whom we are the true successors. A crown of gold and precious stones ill befits the humble head of one who pretends to be the successor, the Vicar, of Jesus of Nazareth. It is therefore the crown of an impostor, and it is in the name of him who said, 'Neither be ye called masters' that we trample it under our feet." The candidates are then invited to trample on the papal tiara. All do so while brandishing daggers and shouting "Down with imposture" (*Christianity and American Freemasonry* by William J Whalen, page 92).

Upon achieving each degree, Masons must promise to keep the secrets of the Lodge under pain of the most hideous tortures. For example, upon receiving his first degree a Mason swears "in the presence of Almighty God" to keep the secrets of Masonry, binding himself "under no less penalty than that of having my throat cut across, my tongue torn out by its roots, and my body buried in the rough sands of the sea." The taking of such oaths is always wrong for a Christian. If he means what he says, he is guilty of serious sin. If he does not, he is taking the Lord's name in vain in violation of the second commandment (Exodus 20:7).

Many Masons join the Lodge for social reasons. They are unaware of or do not care about the religious aspects of Freemasonry. However, by virtue of their membership they lend support to the promotion of Masonic principals, and as previously noted they run the risk of unconsciously adopting some of those principals. For Catholics, there is also the ban on receiving communion. That in itself is tragic. Remember that Jesus said you must drink His blood and eat His flesh or you have no life in you (John 6:53). Freemasonry denies you that life.

And so, we find that any Catholic who becomes a Mason cannot help but compromise his faith. He violates it if he joins, because the Church forbids it. He violates it when he takes his first oath, because he disobeys the second Commandment. He violates it if he accepts the god of Freemasonry, because he disobeys the first Commandment. He violates it if he swears an oath against the pope, because he rejects the Vicar of Christ. Is it really possible that Masonic authorities are unaware of this?

To their credit, Masons are responsible for many works of charity. They operate homes for elderly Masons and their wives, as well as several children's hospitals that offer free medical care for those in need. For this they should be commended. But charity does not excuse deception and idolatry. Charity can and should be practiced apart from such acts.