

Religions in America: The Masonic Lodge

Who are the Masons?

Where do Masons live: Masons are spread throughout all of the U.S. and are also in many European countries.

How many people are Mason in the U.S.? ???

How long have the Masons been around? The Grand Lodge in England began in 1717. Masons say they actually began before written history.

Masons are well known for: fraternity (brotherly connections), doing work for charity, Masonic funerals, secret handshakes.

Names of some Mason groups: The “Blue Lodge” is the mainstream lodge in the U.S., and each state has its own Grand Lodge. Related groups are masons of the Scottish Rite, York Rite, Order of DeMolay, Desoms, and Job's Daughters.

What do Masons call themselves? Are they a religion?

“Freemasonry is not a religion, nor is it a substitute for religion. Its essential qualification opens it to men of many religions and it expects them to continue to follow their own faith. It does not allow religion to be discussed at its meetings.” (From a pamphlet published by the United Grand Lodge of England in 1984.)

What does that say about Freemasonry and religion?

“We urge men not to neglect their spiritual development and to be faithful in the practice of their religion. As the Grand Lodge of England wrote in ‘Freemasonry and Religion’, ‘Freemasonry is far from indifferent to religion. Without interfering in religious practice, it expects each member to follow his own faith, and to place above all other duties his duty to God by whatever name He is known.’ Masonry itself makes only a simple religious demand on a man--he must believe that he has an immortal soul and he must believe in God. No atheist can be a Mason.” (Dr. Jim Tresner, 33rd degree)

Do Masons say you must believe in God? Do Masons care what god you worship?

“Is Faith relevant? Does it guide men to think, or rule men to follow? We are not only Christians, or Jews, or Moslems, or Hindus, or Pagans, although we may each feel a strong reverence to the faith of our choice and proclaim it before the world. Freemasonry admonishes us to seek the Truth which underlies the doctrines of our faith. It reminds us that no institution has the right to proclaim

that it knows the Truth, and that all others are wrong. No creed should dictate that it is right and all others are wrong; therefore everyone must change to conform to its belief system. Freemasonry teaches us to always guard against the arrogance of belief, but hold fast to the moral path which underlies our own belief system. Masonry clearly teaches that we are our institutions; and, even in organizations of faith, those institutions should exist to better serve our understanding of the spiritual nature within us. Masonry's charge that we have freedom of choice in our belief systems is an essential to freedom in the world.” (Robert G. Davis, President of a Grand Lodge)

This says there are three things that influence our faith; our church, masonry, and ourselves. Masonry says which one is most important? Which is least important? What does the Bible say (read John 6:67-69)?

Three Important Goals

Masons have three goals for how they live their life. Are they good goals? What does the Bible say about each one?

Brotherly Love: That we should all love, respect and support each other, regardless of our race, income, or anything. James 2:8-9

Relief: We should help those who are in trouble, to sympathize and give help. James 2:15-17

Truth: We should be good and honest with everyone. John 14:6

Masons Do Believe Something

Masons say they are not a religion. They say they don't teach about God, they only say there is an all-powerful God. But they do teach about God and our relationship with Him. These quotes are from the “Iowa Monitor” printed in 1953.

Masons receive a lambskin apron which is supposed to be a symbol of purity. This is what the “Iowa Monitor” says about it.

“The lamb has in all ages been deemed an emblem of innocence. He, therefore, who wears the Lambskin as a badge of Freemasonry is thereby continually reminded of that **purity of life and conduct which is essentially necessary to gaining admission into the Celestial Lodge above**, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides.”

Another part says something similar. Masonry uses many symbols. Each symbol means something for the Mason. One emblem (symbol) is a “Sword Pointing at a Naked Heart.” This is what the Iowa Monitor says that means.

“The Sword Pointing at a Naked Heart demonstrates that justice will sooner or later overtake us. And that although our thoughts, words and actions may be hidden from the eye of man, yet that All-Seeing Eye...pervades the inmost recesses of the human heart and will reward us according to our merits.”

The Masons say we get to heaven how?

What does the Bible say about how we get to heaven? Ephesians 2:8-10

Hiram Abif

One more thing about what Masons believe. When a person becomes a Master Mason, he goes through a drama about Hiram Abif. Hiram Abif was supposed to be the Grand Master Mason in charge of building King Solomon's temple (according to masonry, not the Bible).

In the drama, the new Master Mason plays Hiram. During the drama, he dies and then is raised back to life. Remember, Masonry uses lots of symbolism. This “dying and rising” means the new Master Mason died in his old life and is raised alive again in the Masonic Lodge. What does that sound like (Romans 6:3-4)?

Joseph Fort Newton wrote a book titled, The Builders, A Story and Study of Freemasonry. In that book, he says, “How many Masons fail to grasp the master truth of the Master Degree! And yet the candidate is not altogether to blame, since the historical lecture does not even mention it, much less expound it. ... Immortality is a present reality into which the candidate is symbolically initiated; a fact to be realized here and now. If our ritual does not convey this truth, it behooves us to see that it does, first by laying hold of the truth ourselves, and second by so shaping our ceremony, or at least by so explaining it, as to make the truth unmistakable. Manifestly, if we are immortal at all, we are immortal now, and to know that fact is the one great human experience.”

Which is true? Baptism or the symbol of Hiram Abif? One must be true and one must be false.

Christian Response to the Masons

Masons are very good at working for the community and for people in need. But they do it for the wrong reason. They teach that good works will make you pure and get you into heaven.

Many Masons probably don't even recognize that the Lodge teaches these things. We need to help them realize their salvation is only in Jesus Christ, not in good works or mysteries that the Lodge teaches them.