

Article of Faith 11 Secret Societies

- Article of Faith #11 – Secret Societies
 - We know, from experience, that no good can result to the church from any secret organization; therefore, we declare non-fellowship with those who participate or engage in secret organizations of any kind.

- 1. Christianity is open and public, but the secret orders deal in darkness and secrecy. The Bible always presents discipleship in the church as “walking in light” because Jesus is “the Light”, and scripture also universally condemns darkness and secrecy. Therefore, an order that promotes secrecy is unbiblical and clearly their actions are unsavory, otherwise the secret orders would have no prohibition about exposing their actions and customs to public view.
 - John 18:20-21 – *“20) Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. 21) Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.”*
 - John 3:19-21 – *“19) And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20) For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. 21) But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”*
 - Good always seeks the light, and evil always seeks the darkness to conceal its wicked deeds; if there is nothing wrong with what you are doing, then you should have no problem telling the world or inviting them to see; secrecy always conceals something that you do not want to be revealed in the light; secrecy is always unbiblical.
 - Evil deeds are customarily performed in dark and secret places
 - Ps. 74:20 – *“Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.”*
 - Eph. 5:11-13 – *“11) And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 12) For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. 13) But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.”*
 - 2 Cor. 6:14 – *“Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?”*
 - Luke 11:33 – *“No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.”*
 - Matt. 5:14-16
 - Mark 4:21-22 – *“21) And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? 22) For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.”*

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2. The church is commanded to remove fellowship from “works of darkness”, so therefore the church cannot openly accept members who deal in secrecy and darkness
 - Eph. 5:7-13 – “7) *Be not ye therefore partakers with them. 8) For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light...* 11) *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 12) For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. 13) But all things that are reprovèd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.”*

3. Freemasonry is the most prominent secret order in America, so we will use Masonry as our example for the biblical problems with secret orders. These are nine major Christian objections to and biblical differences between Christianity and Freemasonry, taken from “*Be Ready to Answer: Apologetics for the Common Man, Revised & Updated Edition*”, by Elder Michael Gowens.
 - i. Christianity is exclusive, but Masonry is eclectic.
 - Jesus declared that He is the only way to the Father (John 14:6), and His church is the only appointed “*pillar and ground of the truth*” (1 Tim. 3:15). However, Masonry claims to be the “custodian and depository since Enoch of the great philosophical and religious truths unknown to the world at large”.
 - Masonry attempts to claim the position of the church as the custodian of religious truth in the world, in contradiction to God’s appointment of the church as the custodian of God’s truth.

 - ii. Masonry is a religion.
 - The places where Masons meet are called “temples”. In the middle of the temple is an altar with the Bible, the Quran, and other religious books. Every lodge meeting is opened and closed by prayer. Religious songs are sung. Officers in the lodge have titles such as “Worshipful Master”, “Deacon”, “Excellent High Priest”, “Past General Grand High Priest”, to “the Supreme Architect of the Universe”. It is taught that when one dies, Masons then receive entrance into “the Supreme Lodge above”, equivalent to the Christian’s view of heaven. Masons also baptize infants and bury the dead.
 - Masonry is a religion that accepts and welcomes all manner of creeds, whereas the church only accepts baptized believers into its fellowship.
 - Paul severely condemned and even cursed those who would bring another gospel (Gal. 1:6-9), and Masonry attempt to supersede the church as the religion of its members and must be rejected as an authentic religion.

 - iii. Masonry equates the Quran with the Bible.
 - The word of God claims exclusive authority over any other religious book ever written because the scriptures were inspired by God Himself (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
 - However, Freemasonry equates the Quran as holding the same authority to its members as the Bible, with both being good moral teachings which should be accepted and followed.
 - The believers of the church are bound to follow the word of God alone and exclusively, and the Quran must be rejected as having any authority or validity for the church or for the child of God.

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3. These are nine major Christian objections to and biblical differences between Christianity and Freemasonry, taken from *“Be Ready to Answer: Apologetics for the Common Man, Revised & Updated Edition”*, by Elder Michael Gowens. (continued)
- iv. Masons are not permitted to pray publicly “in the name of Jesus Christ”.
 - Mason deliberately avoid the mention of the name of Jesus Christ, particularly those references identifying Him as the Son of God.
 - Masonic literature removes the phrase “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” from 1 Peter 2:5, 2 Thess. 3:6,12, and Rev. 22:19, in order to not offend any members.
 - Believers are commanded to pray in the name of Jesus Christ (John 14:13) and to do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus (Col. 3:17). Furthermore, there is “no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Jesus Christ is only name and only way (John 14:6) for salvation.
 - v. Freemasonry teaches salvation by works.
 - Masonry teaches that one gains admission to “the Supreme Lodge above” by his own efforts and works. By good deeds, the Freemason climbs the stairway to heaven, earning the right of membership by human effort.
 - The Bible declares salvation is by grace alone, not by any works of righteousness that men have done (Eph. 2:5,8-9, 2 Tim. 1:9, Titus 3:5, Rom. 9:11,11:5-6).
 - vi. Masonry is esoteric, but Christianity is open and public.
 - Masonry is cloaked in darkness and secrecy, but Christianity is characterized by light and openness.
 - See #1 and #2 above for applicable verse references
 - vii. Masonry is a gender-specific religion.
 - Only males are allowed to participate in lodge activities or to be received into membership as a Mason.
 - However, the church is inclusive to all genders, ethnicities, and social statuses that profess a belief in Jesus Christ – *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”* (Gal. 3:28)
 - viii. Masonic legends and practices have an uncomfortable connection to the occult and pagan religions.
 - Gowens (pg. 319) “The word “occult” simply means “hidden” or “mystery”. The Secret Doctrine, the “mysteries”, the secret names, the legend of Enoch, the blood oaths, the handshake grips, the tokens, and many of the markings and symbols (like the square and compass) have direct parallels in occult religions.”
 - Gowens (pg. 320) “The connection between masonry and paganism (or Eastern Mysticism) is never more clearly seen than in the blood oaths which Masons swear. If a Mason reveals the mysteries of the Lodge, he has signed his own death warrant. Though Jesus said, “Swear not at all”, Masons take death oaths, pledging their willingness to have “the throat cut across and the tongue torn out, to have the heart and vitals torn out and made food for beasts and birds, to have

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- viii. Masonic legends and practices have an uncomfortable connection to the occult and pagan religions. (continued)
 - Gowens (pg. 320, cont'd) “...the body cut in two and the bowels burned to ashes, to have the top of the skull smitten off and exposed to the burning rays of the noon day sun”, if they are unfaithful to the Lodge. This kind of antichristian oath by which the Mason swears himself to secrecy is paganism in its most unabashed and diabolical form.”
 - ix. Masonry’s ethical standards are carefully qualified.
 - Gowens (pg. 320) “For instance, the Bible says, “Thou shalt not commit adultery”. Masonry qualifies the Biblical injunction by saying, “Thou shalt not commit adultery with the wife or concubine of the fellow Lodge member”. The qualification Masonry puts on the seventh commandment has frightening implications.”
 - o Conclusion
 - Gowens (pg. 321) “The tension between Christianity and the Lodge is not peripheral or incidental. Christians may have no fellowship with the Lodge because Lodge members refuse to acknowledge the Lordship (i.e. absolute authority) of Jesus Christ. Christianity involves unqualified allegiance to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ and his word, the Bible. Masons, however, pledge allegiance, first and foremost, to Masonry and their fellow Lodge members. How can a person be both true to the Lord and his church and true to the Lodge at the same time? How can two walk together except they be agreed (Amos 3:3)? Obviously, they cannot. And they should not. Second Corinthians 6:14-18 urges believers in Christ to “Be not unequally yoked 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 portion hath he that believeth with an infidel, and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” The answer to each question, obviously, is “none”.”