

SECTION THREE:

The Masonic Lodge and the Southern Baptist Convention

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Section III: The Masonic Lodge and Southern Baptists

A Southern Baptist Sunday School Board VIEWpoll projected the following statistics concerning the S.B.C. and Freemasons:

14% of Southern Baptist Pastors are or have been
Masonic Lodge members

13% of Directors of Missions are or have been Masonic
Lodge members

18% of Church Deacon Chairman are or have been Masonic
Lodge Members

A Masonic Lodge spokesman told reporters at the Southern Baptist Convention the 1.3 Million Southern Baptists are members of the Masonic Lodge.

this problem is bigger than they do perhaps ever imagined

*"I bet these figures
are grossly understated"*



Origin of Motion for Study of Freemasonry

Document #1. -- p. 4

First correspondence received by Dr. Holly concerning Freemasonry dated March 4, 1992 -- questions raised about Royal Ambassadors initiation rites being similar to Masonic Rites.

Document #2 -- pp. 5-7

First letter written by Dr. Holly concerning Freemasonry dated March 10, 1992 -- Dr. LaNoue was interim pastor of Calvary Baptist Church and Texas state director of R.A.s. Copies of the R. A. ceremonies are included on pp. 8-10.

Document #3 -- pp. 11-12

Letter dated March 10, 1992 to sixty S.B.C. leaders

Document #4 -- pp. 13-17

Letter dated March 19, 1992 to Dr. LaNoue responding to Brotherhood Commission's response to charges that R.A. ceremonies were Masonic in origin.

Document #5 -- pp. 18-21

A copy of the Brotherhood Commission's report responding to Ed Decker's book, What You Need To Know About Masons.

Document #6 -- p. 22

A copy of the March 19, 1992 letter to leaders in the Convention about the Brotherhood Commission's report

Document #7 -- p. 23

A copy of March 23, 1992 letter to leaders in the Convention asking them to contact Dr. Lewis.

Document #8 -- pp. 24-25

A copy of my March 23, 1992 letter to Dr. Larry Lewis

Document #9 -- pp. 26-27

A copy of March 27, 1992 letter to Reverend Johnny Jackson about his reported comments concerning those who want a study of Freemasonry

Document #10 -- pp. 28-30

A copy of my April 10, 1992 letter to all Home Mission Board Trustees about the Masonic Issue -- this contains an important quote from an African pastor about why the S.B.C. does not experience revival.

Document #11 -- p. 31

A copy of Dr. Larry Lewis' April 23, 1992 letter to me stating it is time for the S.B.C. to take a stand on Freemasonry.

Document #12 -- pp. 32-33

A copy of my May 14, 1992 letter to the president of the Brotherhood Commission.

Document #13 -- pp. 34-35

A copy of the cover letter which was sent with the five thousand copies of booklet on Freemasonry which was mailed to leaders in the S.B.C.

Document #14 -- pp. 36-42

Baptist Press Release of May 15, 1992 concerning mailing of five thousand booklets to the leaders of the S.B.C.

Document #15 -- p. 43

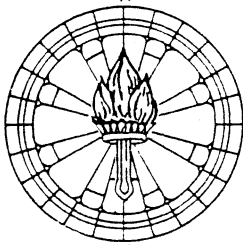
May 19, 1992 article from Fort Worth Star Telegram on the proposed motion to study Freemasonry

Document #16 -- p. 44

May 20, 1992 article from Dallas Morning News on the proposed motion to study Freemasonry

Document #17 -- p. 45

May 28, 1992 editorial from Louisiana Baptist Messenger concerning the proposed study of Freemasonry



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

"Shining as lights in the world ... Holding forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:15,16)

3-4-92

Rodney A. Moore
Associate Pastor

Dr. Holly,

Thank you for living out Phillipians 2:3-4. God continues to peel the veneer from my life as well as the world in which we live. Our eyes must be fixed on Jesus the "Author and finisher of our faith". I'm thankful for "Tuesdays on 1st street"; God's Word is so rich! I am writing to ask you to review the enclosures and your counsel concerning these R.A. initiations. I'm very disturbed by the fact that 40-45% of S.B.C. pastors are masons and that the Brotherhood is encouraging similar initiations for young Baptist boys. Is this a training for initiation in the "Lodge"! Help!!! Salvation does not seem to be the central theme of the R.A.'s! I phoned the Brotherhood division in Memphis to try to locate Jeyloy Bishop (the 1st Nat. Dir. of R.A.'s) He is Prof. Emeritus at Wayland (76 yrs. old). I spoke with him at his home and he is a mason. Why do the Catholics and Assemblies of God not allow a member to be a mason, yet as Baptists we seem to promote it! I look forward to your counsel.

for His glory;

Rodney

PROV. 4: 23-27

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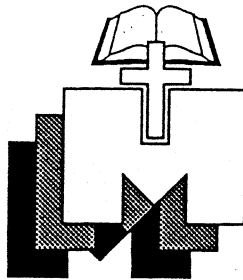
"Building a dream that will endure"

P.S. I thought I have sent copies of the initiations to Joe and Mikey also.

James L. Holly, M.D.
President

Dave Carpenter, D.D.S.
Vice President

Carolyn A. Holly
Secretary



Jack Liles
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March 10, 1992

Dr. John LaNoue
P. O. Box 151231
Arlington, Texas 76015

Dear Brother John:

Enclosed please find several pages which are copied from Ceremonies, a publication of the Brotherhood Commission of the S.B.C. for Royal Ambassadors. The Associate Pastor of a Southern Baptist Church in our area sent these to me and ask my opinion about them. He had already called Ivyloy Bishop, the first national director of R.A.'s, who admitted that he, his father and his grandfather were Freemasons. The minister asked me the question, "Why do Catholics, Assemblies of God and Lutherans not allow a member to be a mason, yet as Baptists we seem to promote it?"

Brother John, I should have tumbled to this before now, but it is obvious now that the Brotherhood Commission was probably named by a mason. They speak of the "Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man." I wonder if that occultic origin is why the organization continues to have so little effective Christian influence among God's people.

It is incredible to me that any Southern Baptist publication would argue for secrecy. On page 26 of the above referenced work it states:

"It is suggested that this initiation service be known only to you, a few selected leaders, parents, and those boys who have been initiated."

Incredible!! When have the things of God ever been secretly exercised? The ceremonies manual continues:

"The candidate is led to the door of the room in which he is to take the ritual. The director gives the secret knocks which are: two quick raps, pause, then two more

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quick knocks. The counselor answers with the same knock, opens the door, asks who the candidate is, if he will keep the secret, do the work, and bear the responsibilities of a Royal Ambassador...".

Brother John, each of the initiations for Lads, Crusaders or Pioneers is copied almost directly from the occultism of the masonic lodge. Godless and damnable!! I can't believe that we would be a party to such a thing. I have the masonic books which show the exact parallels. This is no idle speculation on my part.

Brother John, if we allow such things as this to stand, we are sick unto death. We can't play footsy with the world and with satan and pretend that we want to be men of God. My heart is broken over the thought of how many marriages, how many Christian lives and how many churches have been destroyed because of the leaven which the Brotherhood Commission and the R.A.'s have mixed into Southern Baptist life with this flirtation with the occult. My heart is broken also because we do not have men who are spiritually sensitive enough to stand up and say, "Enough! Enough! Is my Father's Kingdom to be associated with Belial!!"

Brother John, I do not intend to go on the warpath with the Brotherhood Commission. I would very much like to have my material used by them. I already know of the limited possibility of that happening because of the stands which I have taken in the past. I have a strong public stand against masonry. The men of that occultic brotherhood are as mean and as vindictive as the devil himself. They have threatened my life, tried to ruin my medical practice and have successfully prevented me from exercising my ministry gifts in churches where I have been a member.

I believe that God has called me to a different mission at this time than exposing the masons and their infiltration into the minds of children of Southern Baptists. But, surely God will raise up someone who will expose this evil, release Southern Baptists men from their bondage and see revival come to men and churches.

I will pray for you as you decide how you will respond to this material. I continue to appreciate your heart and spirit. I look forward to seeing you again soon.

In Christ's love and service,

Larry Holly, M.D.
Proverbs 22:17-21
Enclosure

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CC: A confidential, not for distribution, copy of this material and this letter have been sent to:

Dr. Jimmy Draper
Reverend Jerry Kidwell
Reverend Craig Whittaker
Dr. Morris Chapman
Reverend Mike Walker
Dr. Sandy Sandlin
Dr. Paige Patterson
Reverend Rodney Moore
Reverend Terry Long
Reverend Bob Nix
Reverend Charles Burchett

Initiation Ceremonies



DUBBING BY THE SWORDS

(For Crusaders)

Cast:

Royal Ambassador director
Two Crusader counselors
New RA members (who have completed all membership requirements)

Items Needed:

- Five white candles
- One red candle
- Six candle holders
- Royal Ambassador flag
- Table
- Two swords (can be made out of wood)

Room Arrangement:

Lay flag on table like a table cloth. Place the five white candles in holders evenly around the shield. Place the single red candle in holder in the center of the shield. Light the red candle prior to the beginning of the service. When the service begins, dim lights. Crusader counselors stand on each side of the table facing the audience. All boys and counselors are in RA uniform. RA director is at the podium. RAs are standing in front of the table, facing the table.

Service:

RA DIRECTOR: You have come to be a part in the service of our Lord as a Royal Ambassador. You have completed all requirements for becoming a member of the (name of chapter) Royal Ambassador Chapter. As I say each part of the Royal Ambassador Pledge and we light each candle, we ask you to answer "I will do my best."

There are five steps to the Royal Ambassador Pledge. The five white candles represent these five steps. The single red candle in the center represents Jesus Christ. This light is always lit. We are to make this light shine in our lives to everyone, everywhere.
(One of the Crusader counselors lights one of the white candles.)

RA DIRECTOR: We have lit the light of a follower, for as a Royal Ambassador, I will do my best to become a well-informed, responsible follower of Christ.

ROYAL AMBASSADORS: I will do my best.
(The other Crusader counselor lights the second white candle.)

RA DIRECTOR: We have lit the light of concern, for as a Royal Ambassador, I will do my best to have a Christlike concern for all people.

ROYAL AMBASSADORS: I will do my best.
(The first counselor lights the third candle.)

RA DIRECTOR: We have lit the light as a learner, for as a Royal Ambassador, I will do my best to learn how the message of Christ is carried around the world.

ROYAL AMBASSADORS: I will do my best.
(The second counselor lights the fourth candle.)

RA DIRECTOR: We have lit the light as a worker, for as a Royal Ambassador, I will do my best to work with others in sharing Christ.

ROYAL AMBASSADORS: I will do my best.
(The first counselor lights the fifth and final candle.)

RA DIRECTOR: We have lit the light of cleanliness, for as a Royal Ambassador, I will do my best to keep myself clean and healthy in mind and body.

ROYAL AMBASSADORS: I will do my best.

RA DIRECTOR: As each light was lit and the light became more brilliant, so it will be with your life as you pledge as a Royal Ambassador to live up to the five parts of the pledge. As a Crusader Royal Ambassador, you are to let the light of Christ shine in you and before men, so they may see His good works and glorify God. Our challenge is found in the Royal Ambassador Motto. Let's now say it together: We are Ambassadors for Christ. (All new members kneel on right knees. Counselors dub each boy on right shoulder with the wooden sword at cue from RA director.)

RA DIRECTOR: We dub you (boy's name) as a follower



and servant for Christ as a Royal Ambassador.
(Repeat Royal Ambassador director's part for each new member. After all names are called and boys are dubbed, turn on the lights. Have the boys stand at the front facing the audience. Ask the parents of these boys to join

their sons at the front. Present membership pin, RA membership patch, chevron, and advancement manual to the parents. Commission the parents as helpers in instructing and leading their sons in the adventure of Royal Ambassadors. Close in prayer of dedication.)

THE INITIATION DOOR

(For Lads, Crusaders, or Pioneers)

Note to the Counselor:

This initiation can be used with Lads, Crusaders, and Pioneers. It is to be used with boys only after they have completed their appropriate membership requirements. Four people are needed to put on the initiation. It is recommended that it take place in the regular chapter room. The initiation should be repeated for each candidate.

INITIATION

Candidate is blindfolded, right shoe and coat are removed, and left sleeve is rolled up slightly.

ONE: (Leads candidate by left arm to door and knocks twice, sharply.)

TWO: (Knocks once from within.)

ONE: (Knocks once.)

TWO: Who comes here? (He shouts opening the door. Raps candidate on left shoulder.)

ONE: Mr. (candidate's name), a weary traveler along life's highway, seeking entrance and companionship along his journey up the straight and narrow path.

TWO: Mr. (candidate's name), is it of your free will and desire that you be allowed to enter into our midst?

CANDIDATE: Yes, it is.

TWO: Have you the key with which to enter?

ONE: He has it not, but I give it for him. (Steps forward and clasps Two's hand and saying in a low voice) Share the light of the world.

TWO: Wait until I return. I shall inform our counselor (if Lad or Crusader) or president (if Pioneer) of your wish. (Walks briskly to front of room and makes his address.) There is a weary traveler outside our gate, seeking entrance.

COUNSELOR OR PRESIDENT: Has he the key?

TWO: He has it now. There is one of us who gave it to him.

COUNSELOR OR PRESIDENT: Let him be escorted in.

TWO: (Returns to door) You have permission to enter.

ONE: (Slowly leads candidate in and around the room three times. Counselor or president raps gavel or strikes bell once as candidate approaches each post.)

THREE: (Reads Romans 12:1 as he passes.)

COUNSELOR OR PRESIDENT: (Reads Romans 12:2 as he passes.)

FOUR: (Reads Matthew 10:39 as he passes.)

TWO: (Reads Luke 14:23 as he passes.)

(On second and third trips around the room, each post rereads his Scripture as the candidate passes the respective posts.)

ONE: (On second trip, stops at No.4 and knocks at the door.)

FOUR: (Raps candidate twice on left shoulder while asking) Who comes here?

ONE: Mr. (candidate's name), a weary traveler seeking guidance and companionship on his journey.

FOUR: Mr. (candidate's name), is this your desire?

CANDIDATE: It is.

FOUR: The Royal Ambassador Motto states the basic principle of the Royal Ambassador program. It calls on us to represent Christ in every area of our lives. It points out that we are to live for Christ and help share Him with the world. This is the foundation of world missions. God has no other means of telling the world about His Son except through us as we represent Christ. This motto helps all Royal Ambassadors carry out the principles that Christ has set for us. The Royal Ambassador Motto is "We are Ambassadors for Christ." Mr. (candidate's name), will you be loyal to this motto?

CANDIDATE: I will.

ONE: (Continues trip around room, stops at Three on third trip, and knocks as before.)

THREE: (Raps candidate once asking) Who comes here?

ONE: Mr. (candidate's name), a weary traveler seeking guidance and companionship on his journey.

THREE: Mr. (candidate's name), the motto "Share the Light of the World" is taken from John 3:12 which says, "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." As an ambassador, do you accept the responsibility of sharing the light with the world?

CANDIDATE: I do.

ONE: (Leads candidate to counselor or president and has him kneel on right knee in front of a Bible.)

COUNSELOR OR PRESIDENT: The Royal Ambassador Pledge emphasizes the basic purposes of the Royal Ambassador program. If you agree to willingly subscribe to this pledge, please repeat it after me.

As a Royal Ambassador I will do my best:
To become a well-informed, responsible follower of Christ; (pause)
To have a Christlike concern for all people; (pause)
To learn how the message of Christ is carried around the world; (pause)

To work with others in sharing Christ; (pause) and
To keep myself clean and healthy in mind and body.
(pause)
(Candidate repeats after each phrase.)

COUNSELOR OR PRESIDENT: To seal this pledge you will place your right hand on the Bible.
(One holds Bible)

COUNSELOR OR PRESIDENT: Remove the blindfold so that (candidate's name) can see the Bible. This is the key which opens the door to our fellowship so that we may work together in being Ambassadors for Christ.

I hold in my hand the membership pin. This shield stands for faith and indicates that the life and teachings of Jesus Christ guide the wearer in his daily life. Do you promise to share the light of the world as you wear this membership pin?

CANDIDATE: I do.

ONE: (Fastens pin on Candidate.)

COUNSELOR OR PRESIDENT: Members, join with me in extending (candidate's name) the handclasp of welcome into our midst. (Everyone welcomes candidate.)

THE BISHOP INITIATION

(For Pioneers)

Note to the Counselor:

It is suggested that this initiation service be known only to you, a few selected leaders, parents, and those boys who have been initiated. This initiation is a reprint of an emphasis incorporated in Royal Ambassadors some years ago by Ivyloy Bishop, the first national director of the Royal Ambassador program.

PREPARATION

One of the greatest assets to the effectiveness of the initiation will be adequate preparation. If possible, several rooms should be available for the service. A church basement with several rooms is ideal. One room is needed for the waiting candidates while others are being initiated. A second room or hall is needed for the preparation of candidates. From there each candidate will be led into a larger room for the main service. These plans may easily be adjusted to fit the space you have available.

WHO SHOULD BE INITIATED?

Boys who have completed their membership requirements for Pioneers are eligible for initiation.

INITIATION

1. The candidate is taken by the director into a room to prepare him for the service. His coat is taken off, his sleeves are rolled up, and he is told this is done to teach him that Royal Ambassadors are workers and not shirkers. Then the candidate is securely blindfolded.

2. The candidate is led to the door of the room in which he is to take the ritual. The director gives the secret knocks which are: two quick raps, pause, then two more quick knocks. The counselor answers with the same knock, opens the door, asks who the candidate is, if he will keep the secrets, do the work, and bear the responsibilities of a Royal Ambassador. After the candidate answers, "Yes," he is admitted.

3. Just after he enters, he is halted and told that before every undertaking in his life he should pray. He is told that he is now going on a journey that represents life and that he must pray for guidance. The counselor, or someone else, leads a short prayer.

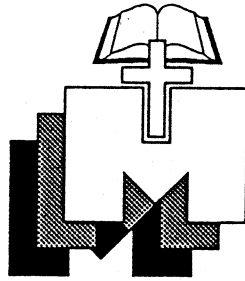
4. The candidate is now given a heavy sack which he is to carry on his back. A gunnysack filled with bricks, rocks, or several heavy objects, the weight of which is adjusted to the size of the boy, is ideal. It should be about all he can carry to symbolize a real burden.

5. Carrying the burden, the candidate is led two or three

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March 10, 1992

Personal and Confidential
Reverend Charles Burchett
509 West Main
Kirbyville, Texas 75956

Dear Charles:

Enclosed you will find a copy of a letter which I have written to the Interim Pastor of our church who is with Baptist Men of the B.G.C.T., Dr. John LaNoue. This letter is not for distribution. Also, enclosed is a copy of several pages from a publication by the Brotherhood Commission.

My concern is this: We are seeing pockets of revival around America and even a few Southern Baptist churches are beginning to experience the first signs of true revival. Yet, if we, the leadership of the S.B.C., are not committed to the purity of God's ways, we will not see revival in our day.

It is possible for the S.B.C. to prosper and not have revival. It is possible to have increasing numbers and increasing resources and not see spiritual renewal. How I, and I am sure you, long for Southern Baptists to experience the wonder of a move of the Holy Spirit. The requirement is our commitment to His ways.

However, it is just things like the material which is enclosed that will prevent us from experiencing all that God has for us. **Either we are committed to God's ways or we just want Him to bless us in our ways.** He will not do the latter and the former is a requirement before we see the hand of God upon our Convention again. Either we purge ourselves, so that we can be "vessels meet for the Master's use" or God moves on to someone else and we only become another footnote in the history of the church. What a grief it will be for us at the Judgment Seat of Christ if we substitute success for

the S.B.C. for faithfulness to God and His Word. We have fought effectively for the inerrancy of the Word of God; I pray we have an equal heart to fight for the faithful practicing of that Word.

God bless you, Charles, as we decide. I love you and know that you love God. I pray that we will all do the righteous and Godly thing.

In Christ's love and service,

Larry Holly, M.D.
Proverbs 22:17-21

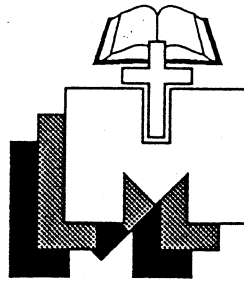
Enclosure

C: Dr. John LaNoue

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March 19, 1992

Dr. John LaNoue
P. O. Box 151231
Arlington, Texas 76015

Dear Brother John:

Yesterday's mail brought the Brotherhood Commission's response to Ed Decker's accusations about the Masonic influence in Southern Baptist life and in the Royal Ambassadors. I would first like to comment about Ed Decker's book:

1. I met Mr. Decker about five years ago. He told me at that time that he was writing a book about Masonry. He knew of my investigation of the Lodge and of my concern about its influence in Southern Baptist life. At that time, Mr. Decker asked if I would read his manuscript before its publication for accuracy in regard to the facts of Freemasonry and its influence in Southern Baptist life. I agreed to do that, but he never sent me the manuscript. I have not yet seen a copy of his book.
2. Several things about Mr. Decker's book concern me:
 - a. First, I resent his reference to Dr. Jimmy Draper as being a Freemason. I have a copy of Dr. Draper's July 17, 1984 letter to the Estelle Lodge No 582, A.F. & A.M. in Euless, Texas withdrawing from the Lodge. While I would like Dr. Draper's letter to have been stronger in condemning the occultism of Freemasonry, it is clear that before Mr. Decker ever began writing his book, Dr. Draper was not a Freemason.
 - b. Secondly, as I will state in a moment, there is no question in anyone's mind, who is willing to examine the facts and who does not have an

organizational interest in the R.A.'s, that the R.A. ceremonies in question came directly from the Masonic Lodge. Yet, for Mr. Decker to suggest that the R.A. program wishes to initiate children into or prepare them for membership in the Lodge is ludicrous.

There is absolutely no excuse for these ceremonies to be in any Southern Baptist publication. For them to have been removed two years ago is laudatory; for them to have been there to begin with is damnable. For the Brotherhood Commission to attempt to defend them through sophistry is to ignore the benefit that the Bible clearly indicates comes from the children confessing the sins of the forefathers. Jeremiah and other prophets established that the children should confess the sins of their forefathers, not try to defend or excuse them. This prevented God's people from convoluted attempts to excuse or to explain the wrong conduct of previous generations. The wrong conduct of parents and/or former leaders was to be disowned. Then the people were ready to go on without the encumbrance of the errors of the past. Why the Brotherhood Commission does not do that is difficult to understand.

Now to the response of the Brotherhood Commission to Mr. Decker's book. Why are we always "circling the wagons"? Why can't we just freely admit that these ceremonies are a problem? Why do we feel that we must embrace the errors of the past?

The major problem with Masonic influence in the S.B.C. has nothing to do with R.A.'s. It has everything to do with the thousands of pastors and the tens of thousands of deacons and the hundreds of thousands of laymen in Southern Baptist Churches who are Masons. Recently, I preached in a church with a large number of Masons; I said:

"If you have ever bowed your knee at an altar other than that which is constructed by the Lord Jesus Christ, then whatever else you are you are not a Christian. Many of you listen to the Name of Jesus Christ and God blasphemed and profaned everyday without raising your voice in protest. Yet, if someone spoke a word against an organization of which you are a member you would rise up and strike them. You tell me then who your Lord is!"

The pastor's response was, "You said many things that have needed to be said and that I am unable to say."

The ceremonies in the R.A. reference book are obviously Masonic in origin. Look at the evidence:

1. In the Entered Apprentice degree the candidate is prepared with a blindfold, his left foot is bare, his left breast and arm naked. In the Initiation Door of the Royal Ambassador's "the candidate is blindfolded, right shoe and coat are removed and left sleeve is rolled up slightly."

The coincidence is too great to be credible. A Mason wrote this and men who were spiritually insensitive to the occultic origins and implications perpetuated it. Admit it and go on. Try to cover it up and you will make it an issue for years to come.

2. Furthermore in the Entered Apprentice degree, the candidate is asked, "Who comes there?" He answers, "A poor blind candidate...". In the Initiation Door, he is told to answer, "a weary traveler along life's highway, seeking entrance...".
3. Again the Entered Apprentice is asked, "Is it of his own free will and accord he makes this request?" The Initiation Door has the candidate respond to the question, "...is it of your free will and desire that you be allowed to enter into our midst?" The candidate then is to respond, "Yes, it is."
4. The Masons have their "secret word" which is not so secret anymore. It is MAH HAW BONE, a rough transliteration of a Hebrew word which means "What man this...". The Initiation Door has its "secret word" which is "Share the light of the world."

While I am sure the writers of this material, imagining that the Masonic Lodge is a Christian organization and that the light of the Lodge is Jesus Christ, would affirm that the light of the world is Jesus Christ, the ambiguity of "light" in this New Age is too great to leave to the imagination of a child.

5. Remember the Masonic Secret word can only be repeated in a low whisper on the "five points of fellowship" -- toe to toe, thigh to thigh, breast to breast, cheek to cheek and mouth to ear. The "secret word" of the Initiation Door is given to the candidate "in a low voice with both hands clasped" with those of the one giving the word. The fact of the requirement for physical contact in order to receive the "secret word" and the whispered tone are

proof of the common origin of these elements of the two ceremonies.

6. In the Entered Apprentice degree the candidate is led blindfolded around the Lodge three times. In the Initiation Door the candidate is led around the room three times.

There are many other similarities between the R.A. ceremony and the Masonic Lodge which are equally obvious. These all reveal the Masonic origins of the R.A. ritual. But, at last, the Name of Jesus Christ is introduced into the R.A. ritual. And, at last, it is clear that the organization has as its purpose the training of young men to be disciples of Christ. The problem is that the leaven of Freemasonry which has been so obviously introduced into the life of the young believer is far more seductive than the Gospel.

It is possible to do the same analysis of the Bishop Initiation. Only it is far more obviously Masonic in origin than even the Initiation Door. But, the subtlety of the Dubbing of the Swords ceremony, which apparently has been retained in the R.A. book, is such that only one who is totally aware of the evil of Freemasonry would be able to understand.

Brother John, once again Southern Baptists are given an opportunity to repent and rectify the errors of the past. Once again we choose to reject the messenger because of errors on his part and we miss the potential blessing of purging ourselves. As I have been re-memorizing John 15, I am impressed with the need to purge ourselves, lest God be required to purge us Himself. His purging of the unfruitful servant is not to be taken lightly.

Southern Baptists have thousands of churches that baptize no one and have millions of members who have never led one person to Christ in their entire life. Most of these unproductive churches are smaller and most of them are dominated by Freemasons. Southern Baptists may have to face the reality that we have become the unfruitful servant and God may be preparing to cast us out to wither and to be gathered and to be burned. Would not the first step of our purging of ourselves not be that we disowned the sins of the past? Would that first step not be that we acknowledge the wickedness and evil of an organization whose altar Bible states:

"For Masonry knows, what so many forget, that religions are many, but Religion is one...Therefore, it 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; knowing, also that while they read different volumes, they are in fact reading the same vast Book of the Faith of Man as revealed in the struggle and sorrow of the race in its quest of God. So that, great and nobles as the Bible is, **Masonry sees it as a symbol of that eternal Book of the Will of God.....What Homer was to the Greeks, what the Koran is to the Arabs, that, and much more, the grand old Bible is to us.....like everything else in Masonry, the Bible, so rich in symbolism, is itself a symbol -- that is, a part taken for the whole. It is a sovereign symbol of the Book of Faith, the Will of God as man has learned it in the midst of the year -- that perpetual revelation of himself which God is making mankind in every land and every age.** Thus, by the very honor which Masonry pays to the Bible, it teaches us to revere every book of faith in which men find help for today and hope for the morrow, joining hands with the man of Islam as he takes oath on the Koran, and with the Hindu as he makes covenant with God upon the book that he loves best." (emphasis added)

Who of you working for the Brotherhood Commission or Baptist Men, Brother John, wishes to face the judgment of God with such a statement as this as your credo?

Proverbs 29:1 points out the consequences of continually ignoring God's warnings. Southern Baptists have been given a warning by Ed Decker's book. Even if it is mixed with error, even if his research is inadequate, even if he makes mistakes, let us not miss the opportunity which we have to purge ourselves to the glory of God and to the good of Baptists. We are so practiced at rationalizing away God's warnings, let us not do it again.

In Christ's love and service,

Larry Holly, M.D.
Proverbs 22:17-21

Enclosure

CC: Dr. Jimmy Draper
Reverend Craig Whittaker
Reverend Mike Walker
Dr. Paige Patterson
Reverend Terry Long
Reverend Charles Burchett

Reverend Jerry Kidwell
Dr. Morris Chapman
Dr. Sandy Sandlin
Reverend Rodney Moore
Reverend Bob Nix

A BROTHERHOOD COMMISSION REPORT
ON THE BOOK

*WHAT YOU NEED
TO KNOW ABOUT MASONS*

March 10, 1992

I. ANALYSIS

A. Summary of Book

The book *What You Need To Know About Masons*, by Ed Decker, published by Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, Oregon, is a fictional account of a young pastor who becomes a Mason. The fictional pastor changes his mind about his fraternal decision after seeing Southern Baptist Royal Ambassador ceremonies, which he feels resemble his fraternal initiation, and experiencing an interruptive funeral. After a store burning, dog shooting, and church split, the author leads the reader to believe that Freemasonry is a cult and members should be purged from the church. The fictional "novel" is presented and advertised as factual non-fiction. The stated purpose of this book is to expose Freemasonry as a cult but in making his argument the author suggests that the Royal Ambassador program is preparing boys for the Masonic fraternal organization (page 122), binding boys to occult principles (page 139), and that RA ceremonies are "from the mind of the devil himself" (page 142). The book is a self-serving publication in that the author's own ministry and booklets become the "factual" tools used to support the "fictional" purge. The author states in his Foreword that he is writing with authenticity and scholarship (page 7) but throughout the book uses fictional suggestion, and innuendo to make his points. He makes a call for personal action from the reader (page 8), however, the only address given is of the Brotherhood Commission, SBC (page 120).

B. Use of Brotherhood Materials

The terms Lad, Crusader, Pioneer, Royal Ambassadors, and Brotherhood Commission are used throughout the "fictional" account. The RA Pledge (pages 126-127), and RA Motto (page 121) are quoted in their entirety. Four ceremonies are referenced: Climbing the Mountain (p. 121), The Dubbing by the Swords (pages 122-123), Initiation Door (pages 123-128), and Bishop Initiation (pages 130; 135-138). While the Initiation Door and Bishop ceremonies were removed from the 1990 reprint, the other ceremonies are still included in the current book.

Eighty-two lines of 105 from the Initiation Door ceremony are quoted. A Masonic ritual is woven purposely into the Door Ceremony (pages 124-126) making it difficult to distinguish between the two.

The author omits the parts of the Bishop Initiation that refer to missions education (pages 136-138). In the Bishop Initiation, half of the ceremony is not quoted. The 62 lines quoted are accurate, but out of missions education context.

He describes RA Week as a time boys and adults eat, meet, display and recognize

Warfare Project
Legal

32, 156

work, but omits the missions education intent of RA Week (pages 118-119).

C. Major Points and Response (summarized)

1. Decker says each step of Royal Ambassador Advancement is filled with Masonic ritual, terminology, and metaphor (page 121).

The current Royal Ambassador Advancement was written and revised in 1987 and has no Masonic influence. It is Bible based, and centers on leading boys to Jesus Christ and developing missions lifestyles.

a. The *RA Ceremonies* manual is referred to as a "ritual book." The term ritual is used to describe Masonic ceremonies (page 120).

The *RA Ceremonies* book never refers to itself as a ritual book. Eighty four percent of the publication contains dramas, RA Week ideas, planning helps, and recognition services.

b. Decker states that the term "light of the world" used in the ceremonies is really referring to the "light of the Lodge or Freemasonry." (p. 126)

Royal Ambassador use of the phrase "Light of the World" is Biblically based (John 8:12) and always refers to Jesus Christ or how He is seen through the Christian boy in missions action and Christlike concern.

c. Decker mentions that the term "Brotherhood" is used in Masonry. This term is used when saying the Operative Masons believe in the brotherhood of man. (p. 74)

The term "Brotherhood" is sometimes used to describe the Brotherhood Commission, SBC. It is a shortened version of "The Baptist Brotherhood Of The South," a 1926 name change from the original name "Laymen's Missionary Movement." The term was originally used to describe a men's missions support unit in the local church.

2. The RA Ceremonies manual is called by Decker the "official Southern Baptist Ceremonies manual"(p. 129) and the "Brotherhood Manual."(p. 135)

Southern Baptists have no official ceremonies manual. RA Ceremonies is an optional supplementary idea book for leaders and is not required.

3. Decker portrays RAs with the devil. It is stated that RA ceremonies could not have been created by the mind the Christ but come "from the mind of the devil himself." (p. 142)

Our ceremonies are created and designed to recognize and reinforce commitment to Jesus Christ through the thoughts expressed in 2 Cor. 5:20 that "We are ambassadors for Christ."

4. Decker connects RAs with Masonry because of the "rituals" performed. He says RA ceremonies require the same form of "solemn obligation" as the Masons. RAs and Masons are compared by Decker based on the words, obligation, and "secrecy" used in the manual. (pages 139;143-144).

Oaths have never been required for membership in the Royal Ambassador program. There are no "secrets" in the RA program. The two ceremonies quoted most often were removed from RA materials in 1990 before the Decker book was copyrighted in 1992.

5. Decker suggests the Southern Baptist Convention is influenced by Freemasons by stating in his novel that the elected president of the National Convention in Dallas, Dr. James Draper, was a Mason. (page 82)

The Southern Baptist Convention is controlled by Messengers elected and sent from the local Baptist church to the annual meeting.

6. Decker relates in his book that the rituals by themselves are not harmful (pages 129-130). He suggests that if a boy went through the RA ceremony and later petitioned a Masonic order he would feel a "familiar spirit." He would then make a connection between RAs and Masons. (page 144)

Royal Ambassadors is a club-type organization designed lead boys to Christ and encourage participation in missions. The pledge, mottos, advancement system, ceremonies and other aspects including terminology are used because of their boy appeal . They are not designed to encourage fraternalism.

II. RESEARCH AND FACTS

A. History of Ceremonies in Question

The *Royal Ambassador Ceremonies* Book was originally compiled by Tim Fields in the mid 1970's. He states that no Masonic material was used in the compilation of the book. He stated the intent of the publication was not to bring boys into Freemasonry.

Climbing the Mountain was written by Frank Black. He attributes the source to his Scouting background with no Freemasonry connection.

Dubbing of the Swords was written by state RA director Bob Davidson and was used as a welcome for new RAs. It was written without Masonic intent or influence.

The Initiation Door was written by Fred Abel. No one other than the *Ceremony* book's compiler (Tim Fields) was familiar with the ceremony and indicated it was seldom, if ever, used.

The Bishop Initiation was attributed to J. Ivyloy Bishop. Bishop said that he did not write the ceremony and that it existed before he became involved in the Royal Ambassador program. He states that the Royal Ambassador program was never intended to draw boys into the Masonic organization. He also states that RAs had never been a fraternal order. The initiation was written by a man named Bowlin. While the original stated it was secret, in actuality, it was not because it was freely distributed through state Brotherhood offices.

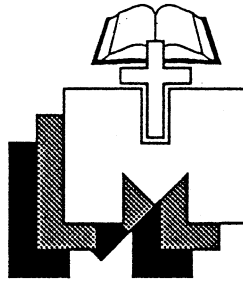
None of the people interviewed with connections to the *RA Ceremonies* book said they had ever had any complaint or knew of any RA connection with Freemasonry. Ivyloy Bishop said the only complaint was about the "secret" aspect of the original initiation. This terminology and initiation was dropped from the program in the 1960s. The original initiation was updated and revised without the secret terminology and publicly printed in the 1970's idea book. It was removed from the current book in 1990.

B. Correspondence Concerning Masons

The Brotherhood Commission, SBC has only been contacted two or three times in the past ten years about ceremonies being similar to those used by the Masons. The last documented contact was a response to a telephone call made by Clarence Collier (Oct. 2, 1991), Montana Brotherhood Dept. concerning the RA ceremonies. Earlier there was a California call about an Ed Decker interview on the radio. To our knowledge, Ed Decker has never tried to contact anyone in the Royal Ambassador work group at the Brotherhood Commission, nor anyone on the state or national level about this issue.

C. Current Program Facts

1. The purpose of Royal Ambassadors is to involve boys in missions.
2. No oaths or any type of swearing are required for RA membership or in any ceremonies.
3. The RA program is a club-like organization not a fraternal order.
4. RAs has no connection with any fraternal organization.
5. There are no secrets in the RA program.
6. The terminology in RAs has no ulterior motives other than missions education.
7. The current *RA Ceremonies* manual does not contain the Door or Bishop initiation.
8. The RA editors and national director of Royal Ambassadors have no involvement in Freemasonry.
9. No single, specific, initiation is required for membership in the Royal Ambassador program.
10. The *RA Ceremonies* manual is not required for conducting a Royal Ambassador program and is offered as an idea supplement only.



James L. Holly, M.D.
President

Dave Carpenter, D.D.S.
Vice President

Carolyn A. Holly
Secretary

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Mission and Ministry to Men, Inc.

550 N. 10th Street ■ Beaumont, TX 77702 ■ (409) 835-0314

March 19, 1992

Reverend Charles Burchett
509 West Main
Kirbyville, Texas 75956

Dear Charles:

Enclosed you will find a copy of the Brotherhood Commission's respond to Ed Decker's book, What You Need To Know About Masonry. Also, enclosed is a copy of my letter to Dr. John LaNoue about this issue.

It is only past time for **Southern** Baptists to stop "stone walling" with God. The false prophets of Israel counseled to "stone wall"; unfortunately, they only had untempered mortar and the walls fell down upon them. Could we not repent before the stone walls of our own imagination fall down upon the ruins of what we could have been for God if we had responded in brokenness and repentance?

God bless you, Charles, as you respond according to God's leadership.

In Christ's love and service,

Larry Holly, M.D.
Proverbs 22:17-21

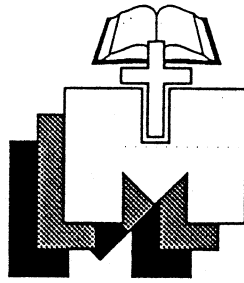
Enclosures

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James L. Holly, M.D.
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March 23, 1992

Reverend Mike Walker
2234 Kaliste Saloom Road
Lafayette, Louisiana 70508

Dear Mike:

It seems that this is now the time of the Lord to deal with the issue of Freemasonry in Southern Baptist life. Enclosed you will find two news items from a recent Baptist Standard, a copy of my letter to the trustee chairman at the Home Mission Board and a copy of my letter to Dr. Larry Lewis.

If enough concerned Southern Baptists would approach the Home Mission Board, asking them to release the "secret" document produced in 1985 about masonry and asking them to make a statement about the incompatibility of masonry and Christianity, we might see revival come to Southern Baptists. As long as we coddle occultism, we cannot expect the blessing of God. With thousands of churches that baptize no one and millions of Southern Baptists who do not share their faith productively, we desperately need revival.

Please pray and write Dr. Lewis and Reverend Jackson. Please pray and write the Brotherhood Commission. Let us once and for all be done with the lodge and Baptists.

In Christ's love and service,

Larry Holly, M.D.
Proverbs 22:17-21

Enclosures

p. 23

March 23, 1992

Dr. Larry Lewis
President, Home Mission Board
Southern Baptist Convention
1350 Spring Street NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30367

Dear Dr. Lewis:

Enclosed is a copy of my letter to the chairman of the board of trustees of the Home Mission Board. Also, enclosed are copies of my correspondence with Texas Baptist Men about the R.A. ceremonies which copy the masonic lodge.

You will remember our attempt to deal with this issue in 1985. You will also remember that the Home Mission Board refused to release two-thirds of the report which it prepared in response to the resolution in Dallas. I hope that the time has come in which we may deal with this critical issue.

As I mention to Reverend Jackson, many of our small, unproductive Baptist churches are dominated by masons. If we ever hope to win America for Christ we must begin by cleansing our own house.

I realize the fear which facing the wrath of the masons creates in Southern Baptists. But, if we are to be valiant for the Lord, we must be willing to incur the wrath of the devil and of those who have been deceived by him.

Dr. Lewis, I pray that we can now move ahead to expose one of the best kept secrets in Southern Baptists life and that is the occult, devilish and damnable nature of freemasonry.

God bless you, as you pray through this matter. I have asked the Lord to give you the spirit of Elijah in facing the prophets of Baal on your personal Mount Carmel.

In Christ's love and service,

Larry Holly, M.D.
Proverbs 22:17-21

Enclosures

CC: Reverend Johnny Jackson
Dr. Jimmy Draper
Reverend Jerry Kidwell
Dr. Morris Chapman
Dr. Sandy Sandlin
Reverend Rodney Moore
Reverend Bob Nix
Reverend Charles Burchett
Reverend Craig Whittaker
Reverend Mike Walker
Dr. Paige Patterson
Reverend Terry Long

March 27, 1992

Reverend Johnny Jackson
1717 North Mississippi
Little Rock, Arkansas 72207

Dear Brother Jackson:

Several days ago I wrote you. Unfortunately, I sent that letter to your son in Alaska. In my letter to you, I said: The Baptist Standard carried a brief story on the Home Mission Board of Trustees' decision concerning Freemasonry. I was confused by the quote attributed to you which stated, "We feel like no agency has a right to pass judgment on personal behavior choices like this." In the same Standard a letter to the editor (copy enclosed) speaking of homosexuality, stated:

"What paranoia moves Baptists to condemn and to pass self-righteous judgment upon a small, despised portion of our society? How do Baptists justify the sin of condemning those whose sexual preference differs from the majority?...Our forebears used the Bible to excuse slavery. It's no surprise if modern religious bigots misuse the scriptures to justify their intolerance of gays and lesbians...".

It is my strong suspicion that you and I would agree in our disagreement with this letter. In that context please understand my disagreement with your decision about the impropriety of the Home Mission Board and/or any Baptist agency objecting to the occultism of Freemasonry.

In 1985 a resolution was introduced to the convention concerning Freemasonry. I served on that resolution committee and I introduced that resolution. It was co-authored by Reverend Charles Burchett of Kirbyville, Texas. Dr. Larry Lewis, then president of Hannibal College, was the chairman of that resolutions committee.

The resolution was referred to the Interfaith Witness Department of the Home Mission Board. A report was prepared of which only one-third was released. Even the trustees of the Home Mission Board were denied access to the other twelve pages of the study. This is not surprising when you discover that the former president of the Home Mission Board is a Thirty-second degree Scottish Rite Mason.

Brother Jackson, this issue will not go away and it cannot be excused as the individual right of Southern Baptists. Many denominations, many of them less Biblically based than Southern Baptists, know of the irreconcilable differences between the Lodge and Christ. I would appeal to you to reopen this investigation. Release the full report prepared by the Home Mission Board in 1985. Don't worry about controversy, worry only about faithfulness to the Lord.

Enclosed is my correspondence with Texas Baptist Men about the Brotherhood Commission, R.A.s and Freemasonry. I believe that if you will read this correspondence carefully, you will begin to understand how desperate the need is for us to deal with the masonic issue. We have thousands of small churches that baptize no one. We have millions of Southern Baptists who have never led anyone to Christ. Many of these small unproductive churches -- really un-reproductive churches -- are dominated by Freemasons. If the Home Mission Board is committed to revival in America, it will do well to start with the cleansing of the church.

God bless you as you seek the Lord in this matter.

In Christ's love and service,

Larry Holly, M.D.
Proverbs 22:17-21

Enclosures

P. S. I have also enclosed two brochures which explain the ministry in which I am involved.

CC: Dr. Larry Lewis
Reverend Jerry Kidwell
Dr. Morris Chapman
Dr. Sandy Sandlin
Reverend Rodney Moore
Reverend Bob Nix
Reverend Charles Burchett

Dr. Jimmy Draper
Reverend Craig Whittaker
Reverend Mike Walker
Dr. Paige Patterson
Reverend Terry Long

April 10, 1992

To: Board of Trustees
Home Mission Board
Southern Baptist Convention

Re: Resolution on Freemasonry

Dear Brothers and Sisters-in-Christ:

Enclosed is a copy of a paper which is being published in booklet form to be distributed to pastors and laymen in the Southern Baptist Convention. You, as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Home Mission Board, have an opportunity to influence our Convention to take a stand which should have been taken years ago.

Without a doubt each of us wants revival among Southern Baptists and revival in America. One of the chief hindrances to that is the toleration of Freemasonry in Southern Baptist life. Two weeks ago an African pastor, led to the Lord by a Southern Baptist missionary, who weekly ministers to twenty-eight thousand, spoke in Houston, Texas. He was asked, "What is the hindrance to revival in America and particularly among Southern Baptists?" Without any prompting, he said:

"There are three things which hinder revival in America: First, there is **rebellion**. Everything in the American church is individualistic. Everyone decides what they are going to do and what they are going to obey. There is no understanding of submission and authority. Second, there is no understanding of the **supernatural**. There is no understanding of the spiritual warfare going on in the heavenlies. Third, these two are manifested by the **toleration of Freemasonry** in the church."

Coupled with the recent revelations about Masonic ceremonies being copied in Royal Ambassador initiations, this statement should call each of us to take a stand for Christ in opposing the Masonic Lodge.

(over)

How each of our hearts sound together for the glory of Holy Spirit empowered, Christ-honoring, life-changing revival to sweep America. It may happen. It can happen. We can be a part of that happening.

Or, it can be business as usual. We can continue to plan programs and develop strategies to overcome the lethargy of Southern Baptists. We can continue to vie for the time and treasure of God's people with all of the other influences in the world. We can continue to follow Madison Avenue techniques. But, we don't have to settle for business as usual.

God is giving us an opportunity as Southern Baptists not to be passed over by His movement in these days. We can begin to bring down the "high minded things which have exalted themselves against the knowledge of God." We can see revival in our day.

Please prayerfully read the enclosed paper. It may be boring and tedious to you, but I assure you the issue is at the very heart of the program statement of the Board over which you watch for Southern Baptists. **Please prayerfully recommend to the Southern Baptist Convention that we take the first step toward revival,** one of only many needed steps, but a first step, and that is to declare Freemasonry incompatible with the message of the Bible and incompatible with the ministry of the church. No board or agency in the S.B.C. is more ideally positioned at this time to encourage Southern Baptists to take this stand, than you, the Trustees of the Home Mission Board.

I, and many others, are praying for you. With Asa in II Chronicles each of us states, "Ought ye not to know...". "Ought each of us not to know" that the Kingdom is given to Jesus Christ forever. No thing and no one which exalts itself above Jesus Christ will survive. No thing and no one who ignores those who have so exalted themselves will survive.

God bless you, as you act for the Lord, according to the Truth of the Word of God, according to the facts of Freemasonry, and according to your own conscience.

In Christ's love and service,

Larry Holly, M.D.
Proverbs 22:17-21

Enclosure

In Christ's love and service,

Larry Holly, M.D.
Proverbs 22:17-21

CC: Reverend Johnny Jackson
Dr. Larry Lewis

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HOME MISSION BOARD, SBC
Christ for Our Nation

April 23, 1992

Dr. James L. Holly
550 N. 10th Street
Beaumont, Texas 77702

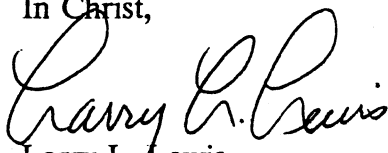
Dear Larry:

Thank you for your letter and for the material you sent relating to the issue of Freemasonry. I have read it, studied it, and found it to be very informative.

I personally feel it is time for the Southern Baptist Convention to face the issue of Freemasonry and determine by vote of the Convention itself what action should be taken. The Board of Directors of the Home Mission Board felt it was too great an issue for one single agency of the Convention to address. We did not feel it was appropriate for us to speak for the Convention in this matter.

Larry, I want to thank you again for sharing this information. I am praying the Lord will lead all of us as we seek to know and do His will regarding this controversial issue.

In Christ,


Larry L. Lewis

r

c: Ron Phillips
Jimmy Draper
Morris Chapman
Paige Patterson
Johnny Jackson

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Larry L. Lewis, President, Home Mission Board
1350 Spring Street NW • Atlanta, Georgia 30367-5601 • (404) 898-7701 • Fax: (404) 898-7228

A Southern Baptist Convention agency supported by the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering

May 14, 1992

Dr. Jim Williams
1548 Poplar Avenue
Memphis, Tennessee 38104

Dear Brother Jim:

Enclosed are copies of materials which have been distributed to men in the convention about Freemasonry; they are:

1. A copy of the cover letter which will accompany a booklet which I have prepared on Freemasonry. Five thousand of these are being mailed tomorrow. You will receive one of those.
2. A copy of a letter which I received from the Associate pastor of First Baptist Silsbee. This letter started all of the correspondence on the Masonry issue.
3. A copy of a letter to me from the pastor of First Baptist Silsbee about the men's conference which we had at their church May 8-10, 1992
4. A copy of a Baptist press release about Freemasonry and the Home Mission Board.
5. A copy of a letter to the editor in the Baptist Standard about homosexuality.
6. A copy of my letter to Rev. Johnny Jackson, chairman of the trustees of the Home Mission Board.
7. A copy of my letter to Dr. Larry Lewis about the Home Mission Board's stand on the Masonic question.
8. A copy of my March 24, 1992 letter to sixty leaders in the S.B.C. about Freemasonry.
9. A copy of the Initiation Ceremonies from the Brotherhood Commission's publication.
10. A copy of my March 10, 1992 letter to Dr. John LaNoue about the Ceremonies material.
11. A copy of my March 10 letter to the mailing list at the bottom of John LaNoue's letter.
12. A copy of the Brotherhood Commission's Report about Ed Decker's book.
13. A copy of my March 19, 1992 letter to Dr.

LaNoue in response to number 12. This is the most important letter for you to read.

14. A copy of my March 29, 1992 letter to Dr. LaNoue about the Brotherhood Commission.
15. A copy of my April 10, 1992 letter to the trustees of the Home Mission Board.
16. A copy of an article from the Tennessean.
17. A copy of my letter to the past president's of the convention about Freemasonry.
18. A copy of the booklet that is being mailed to you in a bound edition. The preface and the conclusions are important aspects of this material.
19. **A copy of a letter from Dr. Peter Wagner to the Home Mission Board.** (This is not for distribution or for publication.)

Brother Jim, all that I am asking the Convention to do is to appoint a committee to study this issue. That committee will then make a recommendation for action to the 1993 Convention. It is not my intention that it would be said that men who are Freemasons cannot be members of Southern Baptist churches. That is a decision for each church to make. It is my desire that the Convention recommend that such men not be involved in the pastorate and in lay leadership.

I have also enclosed copies of two brochures which describe the ministry in which I am involved. God is giving revival everywhere we go. You will remember Ned Matthews. We were at his church May 1-3. God brought revival.

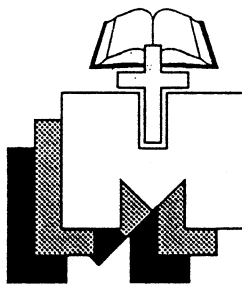
I would be happy to discuss the Freemasonry issue with you if you desire. I would especially be happy to discuss what God is doing in men's ministry across our convention through Mission and Mission to Men, Inc.

In Christ's love and service,

Larry Holly, M.D.
Proverbs 22:17-21

Enclosures

James L. Holly, M.D.
President
Dave Carpenter, D.D.S.
Vice President
Carolyn A. Holly
Secretary



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Director
Brad Salyer
Director
Buck Reid, M.D.
Director

Mission and Ministry to Men, Inc.

550 N. 10th Street ■ Beaumont, TX 77702 ■ (409) 835-0314

Spring, 1992

Dear Brother-in-Christ:

Thirteen years ago a movement to restore the Southern Baptist Convention to its historical roots began. The nature of the Word of God as the inerrant, eternal, immutable, universal Revelation of God is the focus of that movement. Southern Baptists have affirmed and re-affirmed their conviction concerning the nature of Bible. Yet, there remains among Southern Baptists a group of men who have pledged their allegiance to an organization which trivializes and denigrates the Bible.

That organization is Freemasonry. The enclosed booklet addresses the conflicts which exist between the Masonic Lodge and the Faith of Jesus Christ. Many issues establish that being a Mason is incompatible with being a faithful Christian or a Southern Baptist. Yet, the most damnable attitude, and the most obviously anti-Christ position of the Masonic Lodge is the contempt in which the Bible is held. The following quotation from the Masonic Altar Bible reveals this contempt (See page 35 of the enclosed booklet):

"For Masonry knows, what so many forget, that religions are many, but Religion is one ... Therefore, it 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; knowing, also that while they read different volumes, they are in fact reading the same vast Book of the Faith of Man as revealed in the struggle and sorrow of the race in its quest of God. So that, great and noble as the Bible is, Masonry sees it as a symbol of that eternal Book of the Will of God. ... What Homer was to the Greeks, what the Koran is to the Arabs, that, and much more, the grand old Bible is to us. ... like everything else in Masonry, the Bible, so rich in symbolism, is itself a symbol — that is, a part taken for the whole. It is a sovereign symbol of the Book of Faith, the Will of God as man has learned it in the midst of the year — that perpetual revelation of himself which God is making mankind in every land and every age. Thus, by the very honor which Masonry pays to the Bible, it teaches us to revere every book of faith in which men find help for today and hope for the morrow, joining hands with the man of Islam as he takes oath on the Koran, and with the Hindu as he makes covenant with God upon the book that he loves best." (emphasis added)

Who among Southern Baptists, even liberal Southern Baptists, would accept such a view of Scripture? Many denominations some less committed to the Word of God than Southern Baptists either refuse membership and/or leadership to Freemasons.

The enclosed brochure establishes beyond doubt the anti-Christian nature of the Masonic Lodge. Please distribute this material to your circle of influence. **Please support a motion to be introduced at the Southern Baptist Convention in June of 1992 to have the President of the Convention appoint an ad hoc committee to study the Masonic Lodge and to report back to the Convention in 1993 with a recommendation for action by the Convention.**

Revival only awaits Southern Baptists demonstrating to God how absolutely serious they are about being His people. The unshackling of the Southern Baptist Convention from any fellowship with the occultism of the Masonic Lodge by the Convention's declaring of Freemasonry to be incompatible with Christianity and with the ministry and mission of Southern Baptist churches would be a major step in that direction.

God bless you as you read this material and as you prepare to take your stand with the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Christ's love and service,

Pastor Charles Burchett
First Baptist Church
Kirbyville, Texas

Larry Holly, M.D., President
Mission and Ministry to Men, Inc.
Proverbs 22:17-21

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Texas Baptist urging SBC

to take stand on Freemasonry

By Art Toalston & David Winfrey

NASHVILLE (BP)--A call for the Southern Baptist Convention to take a stand against membership in Masonic lodges is being mailed to some 5,000 SBC leaders by a Texas physician.

The May 14 mailing by James "Larry" Holly of Beaumont, Texas, urges SBC leaders to support a motion to be made during the June 9-11 SBC meeting in Indianapolis that the convention president appoint "an ad hoc committee to study the Masonic Lodge and to report back to the Convention in 1993 with a recommendation for action by the Convention."

The mailing includes a 58-page booklet in which Holly sets forth an array of arguments contending Freemasonry is a religion antagonistic to Christianity and of pagan and, ultimately, satanic origin. Masonic lodges in the United States have some 3.5 million members, according to the 1992 Encyclopedia Americana.

Holly was a trustee of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board from 1983-91. He is a family practice physician in Beaumont, with an M.D. degree from the University of Texas Medical School at San Antonio. He also leads Mission and Ministry to Men, an independent ministry for weekend Bible/discipleship conferences for men in local churches.

Holly said his materials were mailed to the top executive and all trustees of each SBC agency and commission, the top executive and president of each state Baptist convention, directors of missions of Baptist associations across the SBC, every Southern

Baptist pastor in Indiana and some 1,500 people on his ministry mailing list.

An additional 5,000 copies of the materials will be distributed during the SBC in Indianapolis, Holly said.

Two SBC agency leaders already have publicly stated support for a committee to explore Freemasonry.

Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board, told Baptist Press, "I personally feel our convention should act on it one way or another. It's going to plague us forever until there's some kind of closure to it."

James T. Draper Jr., president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, told the Indiana Baptist newspaper in April, "... we are going to have to appoint a task force or assign it to someone and say, 'Don't come back and tell us you are not going to do it.'" He said Freemasonry is a sensitive and complex issue but one the SBC should "honestly" examine.

Draper acknowledged he became a Mason as a pastor in the late 1960s and was lodge chaplain for a year. He said he became inactive when he moved but continued paying dues to lodges in communities where he was a minister. He said he resigned his membership after a Christian who had researched Masonry confronted him with some of its teachings.

In his resignation letter, Draper wrote, "I simply must make clear in my own life that my sole and supreme allegiance is to my Lord Jesus Christ and no vow must be seen as competing in any way with my love for and commitment to Him."

Another SBC leader, James Williams, president of the Brotherhood Commission, said

Brotherhood leaders hope any inquiry into Freemasonry will not be divisive "to our beloved convention. We are praying that the issue will not further distract the SBC from its uppermost issue. -- reaching men, women, boys and girls with the glorious gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ."

Holly said he hopes to be among the members of the ad hoc committee if approved by SBC messengers in Indianapolis. His booklet lists several actions he hopes the SBC would recommend to local churches, including prohibitions against Masons serving as pastors, deacons or in other positions of church leadership and counseling new converts against membership in a lodge or its affiliated organizations, Eastern Star, a women's organization, Rainbow Girls and, for boys, DeMoley.

On two previous occasions the issue of Freemasonry has come before the convention. A motion was made last year in Atlanta for a scriptural investigation of Freemasonry by the Home Mission Board's interfaith witness department. The agency's board of directors voted in March to return the motion to the convention, asking instead that messengers to the annual meeting address the issue.

HMB President Larry Lewis said directors voted against a Freemasonry study because the interfaith witness department studies religions, not Masonry, which is not considered a religion but a fraternal organization according to current HMB definition.

One HMB director, J. Walter Carpenter, Houston attorney and conservative newsletter editor, said in a letter to state Baptist newspapers HMB directors are "not resisting" a Freemasonry study but feel the convention should instruct the board if it is to commit "resources that have not been anticipated and budgeted."

In 1985, Holly co-sponsored a four-page resolution declaring Masonry a "spiritually devastating and ungodly brotherhood of satanic darkness." It was referred to the Home Mission Board, which authorized an interfaith witness department study. The board later adopted a stance that Freemasonry is not within its assigned responsibility, which was approved by the convention during its 1986 annual meeting.

Freemasonry is a volatile issue, Holly acknowledged in a letter to current SBC President Morris Chapman and five previous SBC presidents. "My desire is not to start a war with the Masonic Lodge," he wrote, but explained: "It is to provide support for thousands of pastors and for thousands of SBC churches which are dying at the hands of the Masonic Lodge and which presently are powerless to do anything about it. The intent of my effort is to have the Convention take a stand, and then for each individual church to apply that stand ... as they are led to by the Lord."

Masonry, however, has its defenders among Southern Baptists. Walter Brookshire, 69-year-old retired Southern Baptist pastor and 32nd degree Mason in Madisonville, Tenn., wrote a letter to the editor to the Baptist and Reflector, Tennessee's Baptist paper, bemoaning attacks on Masonry.

Brookshire said he is proud to be in an organization that includes the likes of Norman Vincent Peale. "It improves men who want to be improved," Brookshire said. "Every Mason is told there will be nothing incompatible with his civil or religious duties or those higher or nobler duties which he holds to God, his country, his neighbor, his family or himself. I've found that to be true."

Contrary to critics who claim Masonry is a form of universalism and good-works religion, Brookshire said, "I've been taught the other way. I've been taught, 'You go to

our church and you be a responsible citizen.'"

Georgia Green of Crossville, Tenn., also wrote a letter to the paper, stating, "I was raised in a Masonic Home. They took me in at 7 and a half years old. They clothed me, gave me shelter, fed me, took care of my medical needs, sent me to school. We had devotions every night and we said grace at every meal. I was there for ten years. ... I am a born-again Christian and thank God every day for the Masons and how I was raised."

Masons also sponsor 22 Shriners Hospitals for children across the country, 19 of which specialize in orthopedic surgery and 3 in burn injuries, according to Jennifer Hamilton, public relations director for the hospital in Greenville, S.C. Masons have budgeted \$307 million for their hospital work this year, she said. According to the 1992 Encyclopedia Americana, Masons also sponsor a number of senior citizens' homes, eye foundations and blood banks.

Still, at least three denominations have adopted stances against membership in Masonic Lodges, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the Assemblies of God and the Presbyterian Church in America. One of the Lutheran church's documents about Freemasonry states that it equates Jesus with other gods, thus violating the First Commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Holly wrote in a cover letter to his mailing, "The unshackling of the Southern Baptist Convention from any fellowship with the occultism of the Masonic Lodge ... would be a major step" toward revival in SBC churches.

"Members of the lodge are involved in an organization that worships Lucifer," Holly told Baptist Press. "They don't believe they are, but they are." In his booklet, Holly

devotes several pages to matching widely used Masonic writings with Scripture toward his claim "En Soph," as Masonry often refers to a supreme being, actually is Lucifer. Initiates into the 30th degree of Masonry's Scottish Rite, Holly notes, drink from a human skull in a "profane" communion-like ceremony. Holly charges the name of Jesus is absent in Masonic rituals and, "There is no place for (Christian belief in) atonement, grace, faith and mercy" in Freemasonry.

"We have been valiant to point out the sins of the liberals," Holly said. "Largely, Masonry is a sin of the conservatives among us. Most liberals would be embarrassed and ashamed to do the silly, yet damnable, things which the men and women of the lodge do."

"We're not saying that individual Masons are wicked, godless, anti-Christian people," Holly said. "We're saying the spirit of the lodge they serve is wicked, godless, anti-Christian."

But Masons control many of the SBC's 38,000-plus churches and often are "initiators of rebellion in the local church," Holly charged in his mailing. "They will not submit to the pastor's authority -- unless he is their personal friend and they choose to do so and/or unless he agrees with them. They generally are not spiritually minded men and they cannot be Spirit-filled while they maintain the alliance with En Soph in the Lodge."

"Most Masons," Draper said, "are not knowledgeable of what they are participating in and they don't take seriously what the lodge officially says. To them it's fraternal ... and it's a strong bond that ties the fellows together." Masons are on the defensive because they feel "personally attacked." Instead, Draper said, the focus should be the Masonic system and what it teaches -- and encouraging Masons to discover for themselves what Masonry teaches about God, Jesus Christ and salvation.

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Also contributing to this story were Joni Hammigan of the Indiana Baptist, Charles Willis of (BP)'s Sunday School Board bureau and Mike Day of the Brotherhood Commission.

Physician to ask Baptists to examine Masonry

BY JIM JONES
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

A Beaumont physician, calling Freemasonry a "spiritually devastating and ungodly brotherhood of satanic darkness," will ask the Southern Baptist Convention next month to determine whether the denomination should oppose church members joining Masonic lodges.

Dr. Larry Holly's call for a year-long study of Masonry was endorsed by three fundamentalist leaders: the Rev. Paige Patterson of Dallas; the Rev. Larry Lewis, president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta; and the Rev. James Draper, president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn. Draper is an ex-Mason.

"Evangelicals have had long-standing concerns about Masonry," said Patterson, president of Criswell College in Dallas, who in June will assume the same post at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. "Some see it as a quasi-religion and some say Christians should never belong to secret societies."

Holly began his campaign by mailing to 5,000 Baptist pastors and church executives copies of his 58-page booklet that calls Masonry antagonistic to the tenets of Christianity. He said he expects to propose his motion at the Southern Baptist Convention in Indianapolis on June 9-11.

Its chance of passage is clouded because many Baptist pastors and church members count themselves among Masonry's 3.5 million U.S. members. But the motion is likely to stir controversy: Many Baptists have praised the fraternal group's support of children's hospitals, orphanages and other charitable institutions.

"It's a ridiculous thing being promoted by some fanatic fundamentalists," Abner McCall, 76, a former Baylor University president and chancellor, said of Holly's proposal.

McCall, a former Texas Supreme Court justice and an active Mason, dismissed assertions by critics that Freemasonry is a quasi-religion, saying that the only religious requirement for membership is belief in a supreme being. He said he was reared in Fort Worth's Masonic Home for homeless children and attended Baylor Law School on a Masonic scholarship.

Draper, a former Southern Baptist Convention president, told Baptist Press, a denominational news service, that he was a Mason in the late 1960s and served as a lodge chaplain for a year. He said he resigned after being given information by a fellow Christian who had researched Masonry.

"I simply must make clear in my own life that my sole and supreme allegiance is to my Lord Jesus Christ and no vow must be seen as competing in any way with my love for and commitment to him," Draper was quoted as saying.

Elaborate oaths are a mark of Freemasonry.

Aside from the Roman Catholic Church, Holly said, Freemasonry is also discouraged by such Protestant denominations as the Assemblies of God, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the Presbyterian Church in America, a more conservative body than the mainline Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The 1990 *Catholic Almanac* said the church ruled that Catholics involved in Masonic operations "are in serious sin and cannot approach Holy Communion."



James Draper: Once served as a Masonic lodge chaplain

Holly, a former Baptist Sunday School Board member, proposed a resolution at the 1985 national convention condemning Masonry. The resolution was referred to the Home Mission Board, but the agency declined to take action, saying study of Masonry was not its responsibility.

Since then, fundamentalists have gained control of the denomination, the largest Protestant body in the United States. But some Baptist moderates still predicted that Holly's anti-Masonic move would prove as unsuccessful as his 1985 attempt.

"I don't think the Masons have anything to fear from the fundamentalists," said Mike Bishop, a Baylor vice president. "It's just another tangent dreamed up to go off on. I just hope they don't spend Southern Baptist funds on another witch hunt."

Baptist to seek study of Masonry

He says it conflicts with Christianity; Masons denounce allegation

By Daniel Cattau

Religion Editor of The Dallas Morning News

A Beaumont physician plans to ask the Southern Baptist Convention next month to thoroughly study Masonic philosophy, which he contends is "incompatible with Christianity."

Dr. Larry Holly, who in 1985 co-sponsored a resolution against the fraternal organization, said Tuesday that he wants to see a special committee formed this year to study Masonic teachings and what he views as the disruptive influence that Masons have on individual congregations.

In the 1985 resolution, which was not adopted, Masonry was called a "spiritually devastating and ungodly brotherhood of satanic darkness."

Dr. Holly has said that Jesus' name is absent from Masonic rituals and that the organization leaves no place for the Christian belief in "atonement, grace, faith and mercy."

He said Tuesday that Masons think "no faith is unique" and that all faiths, including non-Christian ones, "are equally valid."

"The spirit of Freemasonry is contrary to the Christian faith," he said. "The object of the Masonic lodge is the opposite of the object of the Christian church."

Reacting to Dr. Holly's comments, Dr. James H. Stewart Jr., superintendent of the Masonic Home and School of Texas in Fort Worth said, "I've been a Mason for 35 years, and that's the most ridiculous thing I've

"Masonry is not a religion. It's a fraternity. I am a Southern Baptist and a Mason, and I see no conflict between the two."

— William Scarborough,
Park Cities
Baptist Church

ever heard in my life."

Dr. Stewart, who is a Methodist, said his father was simultaneously a Southern Baptist deacon and a Mason for 50 years.

He noted that Masons are engaged in many charitable activities, including supporting children's hospitals.

"Masonry is not a religion," Dr. Stewart said. "It's a fraternity."

Dr. William E. Scarborough, who belongs to Park Cities Baptist Church, said, "I am a Southern Baptist and a Mason, and I see no conflict between the two."

Dr. Holly mailed a 64-page booklet on Masonic writings and ceremonies to about 5,000 church leaders. He said he plans to distribute 5,000 copies of his booklet at the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting June 9-11 in Indianapolis.

If the proposal to study Masonry is passed, Dr. Holly hopes that by 1993 the Southern Baptist Conven-

tion will take a strong stance against having Masons as pastors, deacons and Sunday school teachers.

Dr. Holly said his proposal to study Freemasonry has the support of some leading Southern Baptists, including Dr. Paige Patterson, departing president of Criswell College in Dallas; Dr. Jimmy Draper, president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn. (and a former Mason); and the Rev. Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board.

Mr. Lewis told the Baptist Press: "I personally feel our convention should act on it one way or another. It's going to plague us forever until there's some kind of closure to it."

Dr. Draper and Dr. Patterson were not available for comment Tuesday.

Some observers of the convention say that the Mason issue, though potentially divisive, probably would be defused by the study.

"Given the state of mind right now, they will probably go ahead and study it," said Herb Hollinger, editor of the Baptist Press, the Southern Baptist news service, in Nashville, Tenn. "It defuses the issue for a while."

He said significant numbers of Southern Baptists, including some in leadership positions, are Masons.

A recent Sunday School Board poll showed that 14 percent of pastors are or have been Masons, as were 13 percent of directors of missions and 18 percent of church deacon chairmen.

Freemasonry issue figures to be one to watch at SBC

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Add Freemasonry to the list of possibly volatile issues at the upcoming Southern Baptist Convention.

In a mailing to some 5,000 persons, physician and former Southern Baptist Sunday School Board trustee James "Larry" Holly of Beaumont, Texas, has called on the Southern Baptist Convention to take a stand against Masonic lodge membership.

In his mailing, Holly urges support of a motion to name an ad hoc committee to study the Masonic Lodge and report recommendations for action back to the 1993 convention. The motion continues a recent focus on the Freemasonry issue and has the support of at least two SBC agency leaders.

Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis and BSSB President Jimmy Draper agree the convention should act on the Freemasonry issue one way or the other. Draper noted he became a Mason in the 1960s but resigned his membership after a Christian who had researched Masonry confronted him with some of its teachings.

The Freemasonry issue has come before the convention on two previous occasions.

In 1985, Holly co-sponsored a resolution that was referred to the Home Mission Board. The board later adopted a statement that Freemasonry is not within its assigned responsibilities. Last year, another motion was made for a scriptural investigation of Freemasonry by the board. In March, board trustees voted to return the motion to the convention and ask messengers to address the issue.

That is exactly what Holly seeks to do. His May 14 mailing went to the top executive and all trustees of each convention agency, the top executive and president of each state convention, every Southern Baptist pastor in Indiana and more than 1,500 other persons. It includes a 58-page booklet in which Holly contends Freemasonry is a religion antagonistic to Christianity and of pagan and, ultimately, satanic origin. Masonic lodges in the United States have some 3.5 million members.

"My desire is not to start a war with the Masonic Lodge, ..." Holly wrote to SBC President Morris Chapman. "The intent is to have the Convention take a stand, and then for each individual church to apply that stand ... as they are led to by the Lord."

At least three other denominations in the United States already have adopted stances against membership in Masonic Lodges — the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the Assemblies of God and the Presbyterian Church in America.

Meanwhile, a recent BSSB poll gives a glimpse of Southern Baptist sentiment and involvement in Freemasonry. The poll asked four questions on masonry to 1,400 pastors, ministers of education, directors of missions, deacon chairs and church clerks.

Results show 14 percent of the pastors, 13 percent of directors of missions and 18 percent of deacon chairs are or have been Masonic lodge members.

Respondents were asked if it was important for the SBC to have an official statement on Freemasonry. Overall, 45 percent of the pastors, 61 percent of the directors of missions and 34 percent of the deacon chairs said it was not very important. Another 37 percent of the pastors, 26 percent of the directors of missions and 34 percent of deacon chairs cited it as very important, important or somewhat important.

Meanwhile, 27 percent of the pastors, 16 percent of directors of missions and 21 percent of deacon chairs said they see "major conflict" between the tenets of Freemasonry and Christianity. Another 22 percent of the pastors, 35 percent of the directors of missions and 12 percent of the deacon chairs cited "minor conflict." Another 18 percent of the pastors, 21 percent of the directors of missions and 20 percent of deacon chairs said they saw no conflict.

Also, more than 70 percent of persons in each category said Freemasonry had never caused a problem in their church or association, while 5 percent or less of respondents in each category said it had.