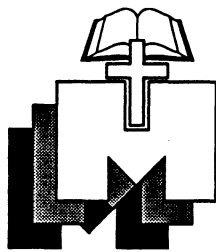


**The Southern Baptist Convention
and Freemasonry: Volume III**

by
James L. Holly, M.D.

A Critique of:
A Study Of Freemasonry
and
"A Report On Freemasonry"



Mission and Ministry to Men, Inc.

*"Helping Men Establish Courageousness in Convictions and Consistency
in Commitments Based on the Commandments of Jesus Christ."*
Proverbs 22:17-21

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Letter To Dr. Lewis

On January 6, 1994, I faxed the following letter to Dr. Larry Lewis concerning The SBC and Freemasonry, Volume III:

"Since December 13, 1993, I have worked night and day writing a response to A Study Of Freemasonry. I have finished 235 pages, and anticipate it will take another 100 pages to complete the critique. This manuscript will be typeset and ready for the printer by January 31, 1994. A copy of the manuscript will be sent to the trustees and staff of the HMB prior to the April board meeting. My purpose in writing this critique is to give the SBC an opportunity to test the proposition that A Study Of Freemasonry and 'A Report On Freemasonry' are such that a person can legitimately say of them, 'the HMB has provided the SBC, as well as the public at large, with a 'Study of Freemasonry' which is both fair and accurate and has yet to be seriously challenged.'

As I discussed this project with my Associate Pastor at lunch yesterday, a thought came to mind, which I believe may be from the Lord. It was, 'If my purpose is that the truth be known and that the truth be acknowledged, would it not be better to work in concert with Dr. Lewis than in opposition to him?' My answer was, 'Yes, it would!' My associate pastor's counsel was the same.

Therefore, Dr. Lewis, I am sending you the Preface and the fourteenth chapter of The SBC and Freemasonry, Volume III: A Critique of A Study Of Freemasonry. Those who have read it believe that, like the first thirteen chapters, this material gives definitive evidence of the inadequacy of Dr. Leazer's study and of the HMB's report to the Convention.

Dr. Lewis, my question for you is, knowing if nothing is done, that ten thousand copies of this critique are going to be printed, and five thousand copies are going to be sent to Southern Baptist leaders, can we work together to resolve the dilemma in which we find ourselves?

As I complete the preparation of this manuscript, I will await your response. I believe there is a redemptive alternative to a public confrontation. God bless you, as you consider joining hands to deal with this problem.

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

As this manuscript goes to the printer, Dr. Lewis has chosen not to respond to my letter.

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A Critique of:
A Study Of Freemasonry
and
"A Report On Freemasonry"
including
A Response to Dr. William Gordon's
Critique of
The SBC and Freemasonry, Volume I
and
A Cumulative Index To All Three Volumes

Dedication

This Book Is Lovingly Dedicated To My Son,
Richmond Everett Holly

It Is My Prayer
That He Will Continue To Grow In
The Grace And Knowledge Of Jesus Christ

and

That He Will Take His God-ordained Place
In The Body Of Christ,
As One Who
Understands Truth,
Perceives Error,
Stands For Righteousness
and
Loves His Fellow Believers
Enough To Say, "Thus Saith The Lord".

God Bless You, My Son
I Commend To You A Joyous and Glorious Life
Lived in The Will Of God,
Loving The Word Of God,
Delighting In The Ways Of God

Preface

This volume is a critique of the seventy-five page Home Mission Board (HMB) staff document, A Study Of Freemasonry, and the six-page HMB trustee report and recommendation to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), "A Report On Freemasonry". Appendix A is my May, 1993 summation of the effort to have the SBC take a stand on Freemasonry. Appendix B contains a response to the HMB Interfaith Witness Department's (IFW) critique of The SBC and Freemasonry, Volume I.

An appellate court does not re-examine the evidence in a case. The only concern of an appeals court is the trial record. At the appeals level, new evidence is not introduced. The only examination is of the performance of the judge, jury and attorneys who participated in the reference case.

The Southern Baptist Convention and Freemasonry, Volume III: A Critique of A Study Of Freemasonry and of "A Report On Freemasonry" is not a re-examination of the Masonic Lodge or an introduction of new material about the Lodge, except as that material is required to point out the deficiencies of A Study Of Freemasonry and "A Report On Freemasonry". In the analogy of the appeals court, this volume is an examination of the performance of the participants in the SBC's study of Freemasonry.

In this analogy, Dr. Larry Lewis, President of the HMB, functioned like the judge. He established the limits for the study, and, like the judge in a court, he was to provide the commitment and driving force for an objective, scholarly study.

The Trustees of the HMB are elected by the SBC to oversee the management of the HMB. In this study, they functioned like the jury, evaluating evidence, and arriving at a conclusion. But, the trustees were not required to be passive. If a juror believes the right questions are not being asked, he can move to ask those questions. If a juror believes that pertinent evidence is not being produced, he can ask the judge to provide that evidence. Therefore, the jury can be held accountable for dereliction of their duty, as can the judge and the attorneys.

Dr. Gary Leazer, director of the IFW while writing A Study Of Freemasonry, functioned like the prosecuting attorney. He was to "make the case" by selecting the evidence which was to be presented to the court, after extensively researching the issues in the case. More importantly, he also would "put the spin" on the



evidence, which he did present. He above all can be and should be held accountable for his fiduciary responsibility to his client, the men and women of the SBC.

The SBC and Freemasonry, Volume III has been written to encourage the SBC to decide whether Dr. Lewis, Dr. Leazer and the trustees performed their job well or poorly.

The ultimate responsibility of the appellate court is to sustain or overturn the lower court's decision. Ultimately, the SBC, as the court of final appeal, must decide if these men and women did their job. If the appeals court determines that the jury ignored evidence and made the wrong decision, the appellate judges can overturn the verdict of the lower court. If the appeals court determines that the judge did not provide an objective and impartial environment in which to evaluate the facts, the lower court's opinion can be set aside, and the case remanded for retrial. If the appeals court determines that the attorney did not present proper evidence in the case, or if the court determines that the attorney's representation was incompetent, the appeals court can reverse the lower court.

The SBC will have to determine if Dr. Lewis, Dr. Leazer and the trustees of the HMB did their job such that their decision should stand. The purpose of this volume is to facilitate that decision. The Convention will have to decide whether "to send the case back" to the HMB or not.

Anti-Mason or Pro-Truth?

Throughout this study, those who believe that the Masonic Lodge is incompatible with Christianity are referred to as "anti-Masons". This term was first used by Dr. Leazer in his August, 1992 letter to a non-Southern Baptist. He used it multiple times in his August, 1993 keynote address to the Southeast Masonic Conference.

To those who believe that truth is important, regardless who it offends, the term "anti-Mason" is offensive. Just as secular humanists attempt to ridicule the pro-life movement by calling it anti-abortionist, Dr. Leazer and Freemasons attempted to cast opponents of the Lodge in a negative light by calling them "anti-Masons". Yet, lacking a better shorthand term, "anti-Mason" is used throughout this study. The fact is, however, that every man or woman, who desires that the truth be told about Freemasonry, is pro-truth. Every man and woman who opposes the Masonic Lodge wishes for men and women in Freemasonry to be set free and liberated by the truth, rather than being condemned.



I Could Have Known And I Chose Not To Know

Albert Speer is no one's hero. He was the Chief Architect of the Third Reich and then the Munitions Minister for Adolph Hitler. Yet, this non-hero acted heroically at one pivotal point in his life. At Nuremberg, Albert Speer pled guilty to all charges. His attorneys told him that if he did that, he would be executed. Speer's response, poignantly related in Memoirs of Albert Speer, was: "I must plead guilty, for I am guilty not only of what I am charged; I am guilty of everything, for I could have known and I chose not to know."

Many Southern Baptist ministers have said in the past two years, "Well, I don't know anything about Masonry!" Unfortunately, as a leader in the Christian community, like Speer in the Nazi Regime, such self-imposed ignorance does not relieve one of guilt; it only convicts one of everything. It is time for the SBC, its leaders and its pastors to open their eyes, and to see the spiritual concentration camps which the enemy has constructed in our midst. It is time for us to stop wondering at the stench of the burning souls of men and women enslaved by evil. It is time for us to be responsible, for we shall be accountable.

Jim Tresner and Gary Leazer

In Section 2 of A Study Of Freemasonry, entitled "Introduction To Freemasonry", Dr. Leazer quotes Jim Tresner's Perspectives, Responses & Reflections six times. Jim Tresner is the editor of The Oklahoma Mason, and the director of the Masonic Leadership Institute in Guthrie, Oklahoma. In a January 17, 1993 letter, Dr. Leazer revealed that he had Tresner "review A Study Of Freemasonry" before the trustees saw it, and Dr. Leazer accepted suggestions for changes in the final document made by Tresner.

In his address to the Southeast Masonic Conference, Dr. Leazer claims that Jim Tresner is the "most knowledgeable and articulate Masonic writer today." Repeatedly, evidence is found of Tresner's influence in the development of A Study Of Freemasonry. The day the manuscript of The SBC and Freemasonry, Volume III was completed, this author obtained a copy of Tresner's paper. It was possible to add to the manuscript several comments about Tresner's influence upon Leazer. However, it is impossible to re-write this critique and indicate how overwhelmingly the evidence is that Jim Tresner gave Gary Leazer his "education in Masonry", and that most, if not all, of Leazer's conclusions were

either dictated by or approved by Tresner. Anyone doubting this needs only read both documents.

HMB trustees would do well to examine HMB telephone records of calls between Dr. Leazer and Jim Tresner. Correspondence, meetings, electronic communications through modems or faxes, and other contacts would further demonstrate Jim Tresner's involvement in the formulation of A Study Of Freemasonry. As will be shown in chapter twenty, even Dr. Lewis' "A Report On Freemasonry" was indirectly influenced by Tresner, because of Lewis' reliance upon Leazer's research and conclusions which were dependent upon Tresner's research, writings, counsel, ideas and Masonic sympathies.

In Dr. Lewis' October 28, 1993 letter to me, which he released to the press, he said: "I absolutely reject and personally resent your charges that the documents were developed under supervision of Masons...". The facts of Leazer's relationship with Tresner, and of Leazer's sympathies with the Masonic Lodge will prove to Dr. Lewis that even though he "rejects and resents" it; it is nonetheless a fact, that Masons contributed substantively, significantly and surreptitiously to the HMB's study of Freemasonry.

The Masonic Ideal

Jim Tresner defines the "Masonic Ideal", which most clearly reveals the incompatibility of Christianity and Freemasonry. In chapter ten (see pp. 146ff), we review Tresner's affirmation of Christopher Haffner's expression of the "Masonic Ideal". In chapter seventeen (see p. 262), we prove that the true Mason does not simply respect the faith of others; the true Mason embraces the faiths of all others as equally valid with his own. Fundamentally and foundationally, this is the incompatibility of Christianity and Freemasonry.

In his book, Spiritual Depression, Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones addresses many causes of ineffectiveness by Christians in today's society; he calls this ineffectiveness, "spiritual depression". In chapter three, entitled, "Men as Trees, Walking", Dr. Lloyd-Jones describes the ineptitude of the faith of those who are imbued with the idea that it doesn't make any difference what you believe, as long as you believe something; he said:

"...These people generally object to clear-cut definitions; they dislike clarity and certainty. The more vague and indefinite your religion, the more

comfortable it is. There is nothing so uncomfortable as clear-cut biblical truths that demand decisions. These people therefore say: 'You are being too precise, you are being too legalistic...No, no, I do not like this I believe in Christianity, but you are being too rigid and too narrow in your conceptions.'

...they never fully accept the teaching and the authority of the Scriptures. They accept certain biblical ideas, but there are other ideas and philosophies which they desire to bring with them from the old life. They refuse to accept (Scripture) authoritatively in every respect, in preaching and living, in doctrine and world outlook. 'Circumstances are changed', they say, 'and life is not what it used to be. We are now living in the twentieth century'.

...almost invariably its victims are not interested in doctrine....It is one thing to look at pictures and to be interested in words and shades of meaning. That does not disturb, that does not focus attention on sin, nor call for decision. We can sit back and enjoy that; but doctrine speaks to us and insists upon a decision." (Spiritual Depression, pp. 44-45)

Without any thought of Freemasonry, in a study of why Christians are depressed and ineffective, Dr. Lloyd-Jones defined the fundamental difficulty for the Christian who tries to be a Mason, i.e, Christianity claims that it alone is the true faith, while Freemasonry claims all faiths are equally valid. He has pointed out why the "Masonic Ideal" is so appealing to the natural man, and so reprehensible to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, i.e, the natural man wants to control his own life, and the Gospel of Christ requires man's surrender to God. Both of these are achieved in Masonry by rejecting the reliability and the certainty of Gospel truth. He has also pointed to the reason why Southern Baptists should declare unequivocally that Freemasonry is not compatible with the Christian faith and with Southern Baptist doctrine, i.e., Southern Baptist doctrine is dependent upon the Bible alone, while the true Mason embraces no truth which claims exclusive validity and recognizes no one Volume Of Sacred Law (see pp. 223ff) as superior to another.



The "Masonic Ideal" not only maintains this position organizationally, it also inculcates this "tolerance based upon doubt" into the individual. It is not only in Lodge meetings that this ideal is maintained, but the individual Mason is encouraged and trained to maintain this gnostic universalism and ecumenism throughout his life. The very spirit of Masonry is to breed complacency about Truth, and to spread indifference to the Gospel's claim that every man must be "born again." This is not compatible with the Christian faith and with Southern Baptist doctrine.

**Read Chapters Fourteen, Seventeen, Twenty,
and, Then, Two**

If you are not inclined to invest the time to read this entire volume, I challenge you to read chapters fourteen, seventeen, twenty, and, then, two. If at that time you can remain passive about A Study Of Freemasonry, I have failed, and the loss will be the Kingdom's. My prayer is that Southern Baptists everywhere will demand that the truth be told about A Study Of Freemasonry and "A Report On Freemasonry". My prayer is that we will send a clarion call to the world, that Southern Baptists serve the Lord God Almighty, as revealed in and through the Person of Jesus Christ, and that Southern Baptists will have nothing to do with religious syncretism, compromise or occultism.

God bless you as you read this volume; God bless you as you determine, under God's leadership, what your personal response must be.

In Christ's love and service,

James L. Holly, M.D.
Proverbs 22:17-21
January, 1994

Acknowledgments

Tragically, it is impossible to publicly acknowledge everyone who has contributed significantly to this volume. The potential for Masons retaliating against church-staff members and/or pastors of local Southern Baptist churches makes it necessary to thank God silently for some of those who have spent hours and hours critiquing, editing and offering invaluable counsel for the production of this third, and hopefully final, volume of The SBC and Freemasonry.

Yet, there are those who can be thanked, and who should be thanked publicly. While it may sound redundant to repeat, as I have in each of the publications which Mission and Ministry to Men has produced, my wife, Carolyn Bellue Holly, has given unselfishly of her time in editing, critiquing and offering suggestions for additions or modifications to this document. Her understanding spirit in my constant absence from the family circle since this project began December 13, 1993 until the final manuscript was completed January 14, 1994, contributed greatly to my having the energy and endurance to complete this document. Her contribution, not only to this volume, but to my life is worthy of the highest and most fulsome praise. I thank God for her; I thank her for her commitment to God and to me.

John Concienne, once again, has committed his nights and weekends to the type-setting of this document. His steadfastness has encouraged me that the task could be finished in the time allotted. His willingness to endure, seemingly endless alterations, has been greatly appreciated.

Mrs. Kenneth Leigh (Margaret) Parker has contributed her time and literary expertise to the editing of this document, as have Mr. Brad Salyer, Dr. Dave Carpenter, Mr. Ray Reid and numerous others who cannot be mentioned. Reverend Mick Oxley, President of In His Grip ministry has read and commented on this entire manuscript. His personal experience as a Mason and his life-commitment to rescuing Masons from the occult have been invaluable in keeping this effort on track. Mr. Larry Kunk, President of Ephesians 5:11, Inc., has unselfishly shared with me several primary Masonic documents from his extensive library.

Perhaps the most significant contribution to the conceptualization of this project has come from Reverend Russell Kaemmerling of Dallas, Texas. Russell has faithfully read and critiqued this

manuscript, offering insightful and challenging suggestions for making the document more useful. He also provided the copy of Hassell's History Of The Church Of God, which provided evidence that early Baptists were not indifferent to the evil of Freemasonry. (see chapter nineteen, pp. 287ff) I thank God for Russell's friendship, and for his contribution to my life, as well as to this volume.

It is unnecessary to remind the reader that the expressing of gratitude to each of these in no way makes them responsible for any remaining deficiencies of this volume. Those remain the responsibility of the author alone. Yet, it is necessary to assure the reader that the usefulness and the effectiveness of this critique would have suffered immeasurably by the absence of the contribution of anyone of these named, and of at least a dozen others who have gone unnamed.

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