

Chapter Ten:

A Modern Mason Looks At His Craft

Dr. Leazer continued in A Study Of Freemasonry to explain his third principle of examining the Masonic Lodge which is, "Anti-Masons typically assume that Freemasonry is based on the writings of one person." (p. 13) Under this third point, which is a straw man of Dr. Leazer's own creation, Leazer said:

"Masons have never held that Pike's words in Morals and Dogma must be accepted by any Mason." (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 14)

Would Dr. Leazer please identify an "anti-Masonic" writer who has contended that Masons must believe Morals and Dogma? Rather than dealing with the "real issues", and with the "real concerns" about Freemasonry, Dr. Leazer, once again, creates a non-issue, and decisively answers it.

What "anti-Masons" have said is that Albert Pike is held in high esteem by the Masonic Lodge, and that his influence remains in the Lodge. While we have rejected Robert Morey's thesis that Freemasonry was Christian in origin, there is much in The Origins and Teachings of Freemasonry, which is valuable. Recall that Leazer quotes from Morey's book four times, and more importantly Dr. Lewis appealed to it in his hope that controversy over Masonry could be avoided simply by "changing the Lodge". In chapter five (see pp. 62ff), we showed the absurdity of that idea, partially because it had been tried before and failed.

Yet, even with all of the deficiencies of his book, Morey has shown Albert Pike's influence over the modern Lodge, and concludes:

"We thus arrive at a situation that is not just. Hundreds of Masonic books which attack Christianity and openly teach paganism are published, supported and recommended by high officials, state lodges and supreme councils....

If the leaders of modern Masonry are willing to accommodate all religions except Christianity, then we must agree with the anti-Masons that Masonry has become anti-Christian...

The teaching that Freemasonry began in the ancient pagan mystery cults has even found its way into the Masonic Bible. It permeates hundreds of Masonic books. Most modern Masons believe it because it is endlessly repeated...

For every Masonic writer who says that Freemasonry is not a religion, there are five Masonic writers who claim that it is a pagan religion...While they may disagree as to which pagan religion, they all agree that Christianity is wrong and its teachings must not be allowed in the Lodge.

As we enter the 21st Century, the Fraternity must decide just where it is going. Is it going to become Pike's Aryan religion complete with pagan temples, baptism, confirmation and funeral services?

If Masonry continues to go in the direction it seems to be heading, then Christian Masons must leave the Craft because it has become an occultic pagan religion hostile to Christianity." (The Origins and Teachings Of Freemasonry, pp. 114-116, emphasis added)

Morey knows, as we do, that Masons do not "have to" believe Pike's book. The issue is that they do! They boast of it! They are proud of Pike! Morey demonstrates that Pike is an occultist, and that modern Masonry is greatly dependent upon Morals and Dogma. Why does Leazer selectively quote from his sources?

A Modern Mason Looks At His Craft

In A Study Of Freemasonry, Dr. Leazer also quotes another publication by Macoy Publishers, L. C. Helms' 1981 work entitled, A Modern Mason Examines His Craft: Fact vs. Fiction. Apparently, Dr. Leazer finds Helms a credible source, for he quotes his book six times. The very title of Helms' book fulfills Leazer's commitment to see what modern Masons say about the Lodge.

In an August 12, 1992 letter to Dr. Leazer, I included the following from Helm's Preface:

"Why is there such an emphasis on secrecy in a day-and-age when every aspect of the Craft's ceremonies can be obtained by the curious non-Mason in one hundred different books?" (A Modern Mason Looks At His Craft)

Helms affirms the fact that books are available which accurately reflect what goes on in the Craft. Why Dr. Leazer would ignore that, is a question of some concern to Southern Baptists. Helms' small volume has many references to Albert Mackey and Albert Pike:

1. "'Albert Pike wrote in his monumental work, Morals and Dogma ..." (p. 20)
2. "As Albert Pike so aptly stated..." (p. 26)
3. "Adapted from Mackey's Encyclopedia...Mackey, in compiling his list of landmarks, restricted it to those customs that he felt had gained universal acceptance..." (p. 32)
4. "Albert Pike alludes to one answer to these queries when he discusses 'Tokens' and 'Signs' in his tome Morals and Dogma" (p. 41)
5. "Albert G. Mackey defined 'initiation' in his celebrated Encyclopedia of Freemasonry..." (p. 43)
6. "Mackey further elaborates on this point..." (p. 48)
7. "The principle side degrees, as enumerated by Albert Mackey are..." (p. 53)
8. "...the Scottish Rite did not assume a dominant position until it came under the mentorship of Albert Pike..." (p. 54)
9. "Who have we produced to take the place of Albert Pike, Carl Claudy, Joseph Fort Newton, Roscoe Pound, Robert Freke Gould and Albert Mackey?" (p. 77)

No one coerced "modern Mason" Helms to appreciate, appropriate and accredit the writings of Pike. Yet, he did. This is what Dr. Leazer has to deal with, not with his imagined straw man in which "anti-Masonic" writers contend that Masons are forced to believe Pike. He must deal with the reality that Masons do believe him, and that Masons honor him in the Lodge.

Landmarks In Freemasonry

Leazer quotes Helms' A Modern Mason Examines His Craft in reference to the "landmarks" of Freemasonry. Leazer said:

"Albert Mackey's 25 landmarks of Freemasonry listed in his Encyclopedia of Freemasonry are sometimes cited as the ultimate authority in Masonic activities. Mackey held that the landmarks were essential,

unrepealable boundaries of Freemasonry. However, 14 Grand Lodges have created and adopted their own lists of landmarks, four Grand Lodges accept the 'Old Charges' of Anderson's Constitutions as landmarks, and 13 Grand Lodges have adopted no list of landmarks." (A Study of Freemasonry, p. 14)

For his reference, Dr. Leazer lists pp. 33-36 of Helms' book. Dr. Leazer suggests by this reference that this modern Mason trivializes the idea of Landmarks in his Craft, but in his concluding chapter, Mr. Helms states:

"There is nothing written in Masonic codes and regulations that is etched in stone, save the concepts embodied in the Ancient Landmarks, that cannot be altered."
(A Modern Mason Looks At His Craft, p. 80)

It is not our point to argue whether or not Landmarks in Freemasonry are real. It is our point to demonstrate, once again, that Dr. Leazer selectively quotes from his own sources, few of which are primary documents, and then uses those partial quotations as proof for his argument. That is not a scholarly approach; A Study Of Freemasonry is not a scholarly work. Dr. Lewis and the Administrative Committee of the trustees of the HMB have either been "hoodwinked" by Dr. Leazer, or have willingly cooperated in his apparent effort to "hoodwink" the SBC.

Source Material For Studying Freemasonry

In The SBC and Freemasonry, Volume II, the question of source material about the Masonic Lodge was addressed. In chapter seven, under "Research About Masonry", a number of points were made about the ready availability of reliable materials about the Lodge. Dr. Leazer's own source, A Modern Mason Looks At His Lodge, has just acknowledged that there are hundreds of volumes available that accurately portray the Lodge's teachings and practices.

But, Dr. Leazer, needing to protect the Lodge from the testimony of their own writers, said:

"Masons insist that the only written authorities in Freemasonry are monitors and other books approved and published by the various Grand Lodges or other official bodies." (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 14, emphasis added)

No documentation was given in this "scholarly" study for such an important principle. It is only accepted by "faith" by Dr. Leazer. Dr. Lewis, and the Administrative Committee of the HMB, apparently had enough faith to believe the silent testimony of an unnamed Masonic witness, because no question was raised about this statement in their "line-by-line" review of A Study Of Freemasonry.

In actuality, this statement should have provided an entire Masonic library from which Dr. Leazer could have worked. Unfortunately, rather than following this lead, Dr. Leazer ignored this obvious endorsement of how to "get at" what the Lodge teaches, believes and practices. Why doesn't A Study Of Freemasonry have an appendix which summarizes the official publications and teachings of the 50 Grand Lodges in the United States? Surely their cooperative spirit would have had them supply such for their friend. They supplied other materials, as noted on page 13 in footnote number 37, which states:

"When Walton Hannah's anti-Mason book, Darkness Visible: A Revelation & Interpretation of Freemasonry ... could not be located, a Mason loaned his personal copy."

Why didn't Dr. Leazer ask Masons for books about Freemasonry? The answer seems obvious. A Study Of Freemasonry is an exercise in Dr. Leazer's rejection of "anti-Masons", and has little to do with determining what Masons do believe.

Leazer's statement, "Masons insist that the only written authorities in Freemasonry are monitors and other books approved and published by the various Grand Lodges or other official bodies" (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 14), does lend credibility to our discussion about A Bridge To Light, Clausen's Commentaries on Morals and Dogma, and The Bible in Albert Pike's Morals and Dogma. These are all official publications of a "general society" of Freemasonry. (For a discussion of these volumes see The SBC and Freemasonry, Volume II, chapter four, "Official Masonic Books", pp. 30-45) It does not explain to Southern Baptists why they paid for a study about "anti-Masons", which study itself is biased and false, when they commissioned a study about the Masonic Lodge. It does not explain why books were not reviewed and summarized by Dr. Leazer!! It does not explain why Dr. Lewis and the General Administrative Committee did not express any interest in the contents of such books!

Leazer's Preoccupation With Secondary Sources Continues

Leazer discovers an error in John Ankerberg's book, The Secret Teachings of the Masonic Lodge, and pounces upon it. One wonders who pointed out the error to him, because as has been shown already, Dr. Leazer's attention to detail is such that it is unlikely that he would have discovered it himself.

Ankerberg's error, innocent as it is, is his statement that Dr. Jonathan Blanchard was a "former Sovereign Grand Commander and a 33rd Degree Mason." (A Study Of Freemasonry, pp. 14-15) Leazer quotes another Masonic, secondary source to prove his coup d'etat against Ankerberg. Leazer quotes, Masonic apologist, Art DeHoyos' The Cloud of Prejudice: A Study in Anti-Masonry as proof for his coup. Leazer accepts prima facie DeHoyos' assertion that:

"Blanchard's (Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated) (is) outdated" and is an "exposure of Cerneauism, a 'clandestine' (illegitimate) pseudo-Masonic organization of the 1800's." (A Study of Freemasonry, p. 15)

Apparently, Dr. Leazer did not examine Blanchard's book for himself. He simply accepted DeHoyos' judgement. That is not scholarship, and, that is not good research methodology.

The truth is that Johnathan Blanchard was never a Mason. He never claimed to be. The title page to Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated indicates that The Complete Ritual of the Ancient And Accepted Scottish Rite, Profusely Illustrated has been written by "a Sovereign Grand Commander, 33rd Degree." He is unnamed. The title page then announces that this volume contains "an historical sketch of the order, introduction and critical analysis of each degree". That part of the book is written by "anti-Masonic" expert, President Jonathan Blanchard of Wheaton College. Blanchard's lifetime "anti-slavery" and "anti-Masonic" activities are well documented in Clyde S. Kilby's Minority of One: A Biography of Jonathan Blanchard — Educator, Citizen, Reformer in Midwest America Before and After the Civil War (Eerdmans, 1959).

John Ankerberg simply made the mistake of misreading the title page. A small enough crime, but for Dr. Leazer, lethal. Dr. Leazer, then, is able to ignore everything which Ankerberg says, and is able to support his Masonic friends with his distortion of the magnitude of the error which Ankerberg made.

No question is raised about the accuracy of what Masonic apologist DeHoyos claims. His secondary opinion is accepted as fact without challenge. Once again the truth is other than Dr. Leazer would have us believe. In chapter eight, we demonstrated Dr. Leazer's naivete in accepting without question the testimony of Masonic publications. Some of that discussion will be repeated here.

Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated and A Bridge To Light

DeHoyos argued that Scotch Rite Illustrated is "outdated" and irrelevant to modern Masonry. In The SBC and Freemasonry, Volume I, on page 25, I described the first apartment of the 30th Degree. It is essentially identical to the description from A Bridge To Light. My information came from Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated: The Complete Ritual of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Profusely Illustrated by a Sovereign Grand Commander, 33rd Degree. The two-volume edition which I possess also contains a commentary by President Jonathan Blanchard.

Dr. Leazer's attempt to discredit Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated, quoting a single Masonic source and accepting its dictate as true without any examination of the primary data, is further illustration of the compromised study which he presented to the HMB.

The following facts, listed earlier, clarify the usefulness of Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated:

1. The names of the fourth through the thirty-second degrees given in Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated and A Bridge To Light are identical. They are also identical with the titles of the degrees in Morals and Dogma.
2. With only minor and insignificant differences, Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated, first published in 1867, agrees in profuse detail with A Bridge To Light, published in 1988. What is remarkable is their similarity, not their differences. Remember, Robert Morey's comments about the similarities among Masons.
3. The affirmation of the present publisher of Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated, the Charles T. Pownier Co., that it published this book as a service to the Lodge. The Pownier Co. states: "Order with

confidence from a firm which has continuously served the Craft since 1867." (emphasis added) Remember, also, that Dr. Leazer uses "a Masonic authority" whose work is published by Pownner and Co. and by Ezra A. Cook. (see A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 30)

Why would Dr. Leazer so readily accept the Mason's testimony about Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated and reject its use? Throughout his study, Dr. Leazer demonstrated that all Masons had to do in order to discredit any negative material or information about the Masonic Lodge was to deny its validity. Dr. Leazer instantly accepted their denial, and attacked "anti-Masons" for not accepting the word of the Masons.

Masonic Writers Remind Dr. Leazer Of How Little Official Material Is Available About Lodge

Having thoroughly thrashed John Ankerberg for his mistake, Dr. Leazer concludes the discussion of this third of five principles, which directed his investigation, with the statement:

"Haffner reminds us that 'there is very little that is official or authoritative, and almost all the tens of thousands of books published about masonry [sic] in this country [England] and overseas merely represent the personal views of individual Freemasons.'" (A Study of Freemasonry, p. 15)

Dr. Leazer footnotes Christopher Haffner's book Workman Unashamed: The Testimony of a Christian Mason. If Haffner "reminds us", in a scholarly study, it must be that he reminds us of something which has already been established. That is not so. This is simply a Mason making an unsubstantiated statement which is readily accepted by Dr. Leazer. In reality the fact is "the personal views of (these) individual Freemasons" have a remarkable similarity of thoughts, particularly their anti-Christian bias.

Masonic Ideal

Jim Tresner's Perspectives, Responses & Reflections relies heavily upon Workman Unashamed. Apparently, if Tresner believes something, so will Dr. Leazer. Tresner states:

"Christopher Haffner puts well what many Masons believe to be the Masonic Ideal....

'Now imagine me standing in lodge with my head bowed in prayer between Brother Mohammed Bokhary and Brother Arjun Melwari. To neither of them is the Great Architect of the Universe perceived as the Holy Trinity. To Brother Bokhary He has been revealed as Allah, to Brother Melwari He is probably perceived as Vishnu. Since I believe there is only one God, I am confronted with three possibilities.

They are praying to the devil whilst I am praying to God. They are praying to nothing, as their gods do not exist. They are praying to the same God as I, yet their understanding is partly incomplete (as indeed is mine...I Cor 13:12)

It is without hesitation that I accept the third possibility. (Workman Unashamed, page 39)" (Perspectives, Responses & Reflections, pp. 39-40, emphasis added)

Tresner and Haffner find comfort in these words. These words apparently also explained the Masonic Ideal to Leazer's satisfaction. In chapter seventeen (see p. 262), we will return to the "Masonic Ideal", which is not simply respecting the faith of another; it is embracing the faith of another as being as valid as your own. At its root, this is a rejection of revelation, i.e., it is unreasonable, or not Masonic, to believe that you know the truth and that others do not. This is not compatible with the Christian faith, which claims that it is exclusively and only true.

Also, in chapter seventeen (see pp. 255-257), we will discuss that Masonic toleration of all faiths is based on the lack of confidence in any faith. Haffner's statement in Workman Unashamed is a virtual paraphrase of Pike's Morals and Dogma, quoted by Leazer on page fifty-nine of A Study Of Freemasonry. (see p. 254) **The Masonic Ideal is not compatible with the Christian faith; therefore, Freemasonry is not compatible with the Christian faith!**

No Real Authority in Lodge

Now, Dr. Leazer seems to get confused. Leazer states, "Haffner reminds us that 'there is little that is official, or authoritative'" in Masonry. In this same section, he has already said:

"Masons insist that the only written authorities in Freemasonry are monitors and other books approved and published by the various Grand Lodges or other official bodies." (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 14)

That means there are fifty monitors, possibly at least two books published by each Grand Lodge which are authoritative, and another thirty to forty books published by the other "official bodies" of Freemasonry, which are authoritative. That is no small number of books from which a scholar like Dr. Leazer could find the truth about the Lodge, if he were so disposed. And his source, A Modern Mason has said there are hundreds of authoritative books available. Yet, Leazer made no attempt to analyze the content of these official and authoritative sources.

And, Dr. Leazer has said: "The Lodge tends to follow the lead of the general society..." (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 5) Who is this "general society"? And, if Lodges tend to follow them, where do they lead? Good questions for a scholarly study!! Also, Dr. Leazer has found Masonic writers who, he feels, speak accurately enough that he can use them in a scholarly study. Now, you can't have it both ways. Either there is "little that is official and authoritative", or there are hundreds of volumes. The truth is the latter, but Dr. Leazer, for his own reasons, doesn't want Southern Baptists to know it. Why?

Principle Number Four: Freemasonry Not A Monolithic Organism

Dr. Leazer's fourth principle of interpretation is, "Many writers assume that Freemasonry is a monolithic organism, which can be traced back to a single origin." (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 15)

In this section, Leazer states:

**"Likewise, not all Masons believe the same thing, nor do all Masons around the world hold identical views."
(A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 15)**

This is obfuscation at its worst. In the Old Testament, the concept of "wisdom" was the power to discern the nature of things through their appearance. "Understanding" was the power of discerning the differences of things in their appearances. Dr. Leazer, rejecting both "wisdom" and "understanding", chooses to believe that minor and unimportant differences between the various Grand Lodges in the United States, allows him to ignore the overwhelming similarity of their beliefs and practices.

Transfers From One Grand Lodge Jurisdiction To Another Testify To The Similarities Not Differences Within Masonry

Also, as we indicated in chapter two, a mason from the jurisdiction of one Grand Lodge is accepted into another upon demonstrating that he is in good standing with his previous Lodge. If there were dramatic differences from one Grand Lodge to another, there would have to be an indoctrination in the special, unique and different ideas of the new Grand Lodge. In that there is not any such indoctrination, we must assume that the differences, of which Dr. Leazer makes so much, are minor. Also, the Scottish Rite and York Rite accept Masons as candidates from all of the Caucasian Grand Lodges without requiring supplementary degrees or instruction. This is profound evidence that there is a fundamental similarity from one Grand Lodge to another! There is a fund of information, knowledge and practice, common to all.

Recall again, Morey's affirmation of the similarities between Grand Lodges. Dr. Robert Morey's The Origins and Teachings of Freemasonry states:

"While (Masons) may disagree as to which pagan religion (Masonry comes from), they all agree that Christianity is wrong and its teachings must not be allowed in the Lodge." (The Origins and Teachings Of Freemasonry, p. 115, emphasis added)

Dr. Leazer argues that because there is not universal agreement among Masons, no opinion is possible about the nature of Masonic teaching. The fact is that there is more similarity in Masonic teaching than there is dissimilarity. The similarity is as Dr. Morey states: "While they may disagree as to which pagan religion, they all agree that Christianity is wrong and its teachings must not be allowed in the Lodge." It is possible to "know the truth about the Masonic Lodge". What is impossible is to know that truth by reading the SBC's HMB's A Study Of Freemasonry.

**Leazer Challenges Integrity of "Anti-Mason"
Applying Standard
Not Applied To Masonic Witnesses**

Dr. Leazer quotes Stephen Knight's The Brotherhood: The Secret World of the Freemasons. Leazer quotes:

"He discusses Masonic influence in various areas of English life, especially in the law enforcement and legal professions. He concludes that Freemasonry is not compatible with Christianity." (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 16, footnote 50, emphasis added)

Not to leave such a statement unchallenged, Leazer quotes Haffner's Workman Unashamed to state:

"Knight rejected the Christian faith, became a Sannyasin, and changed his name to Swami Puja Deval in 1983." (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 16, footnote 50)

Why does Leazer attempt to discredit an "anti-Mason", when he accepts at face value all of the statements of Masons? If Leazer insists upon using secondary sources, why does he only in this single instance evaluate the religious beliefs of the author? Are we to conclude that all of the Masonic authors, whom Leazer has such an affinity for and confidence in, are Bible-believing, Christ-honoring, born-again believers in the Lord Jesus Christ? I doubt it!!

**Morey's Christian Foundation of Freemasonry
Quoted By Leazer**

We have already dealt with Robert Morey's theory in detail in chapter five (see pp. 63ff). Suffice it to say, Dr. Morey's theory of the Christian origins of the Masonic Lodge has been refuted. However, Dr. Morey said in a September 5, 1992 letter to this author:

"Given its present occultic teachings, no Christian in good conscience should be a Mason, I was a Southern Baptist...I hope that the Southern Baptists get their house in order so that people like me would feel free to return." (The SBC and Freemasonry, Volume II, p. 12)

In the section on Morey's theory, I concluded:

"There is no question that Christians have been trying to make Masonry acceptable for centuries. There is no question that many Christians, including Christian leaders, have either been blind to or have ignored the occultic origins of the Craft, but Morey does not prove his point. Southern Baptists should not involve themselves in another ill-advised and certainly to be ill-fated, attempt to accomplish what failed before. Southern Baptists simply need to declare the truth about the Lodge and be done with it.

The answer to Dr. Lewis' question, 'Can't we change Freemasonry?', is categorically, 'No!' It has been tried by good and, apparently, godly men. They failed, and so will the SBC."

Principle Number Five: Freemasonry Is A Secret Society

Leazer's fifth principle of investigating Freemasonry is, "It is usually claimed, by many Masons and critics, that Freemasonry is a secret society." (A Study of Freemasonry, p. 17) Leazer then quotes Helms' witty but insignificant statement: "Freemasonry is not a secret society, but a society of secrets." (A Modern Mason Looks At His Craft, p. 1) In doing so, he proves the point. Secrecy is fundamental to the existence of Freemasonry. While Dr. Leazer attempts to ridicule this concept into insignificance (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 17), the SBC passed a resolution in 1992 condemning "secret societies", which would include "societies with secrets."

Secrecy is one of the principle "unchangeable Landmarks" of Freemasonry. In The Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas A.F.&A.M. Revised and Annotated, 1982, secrecy was affirmed as one of the "landmarks of Freemasonry". In Title 1, Chapter 5, Article 18 entitled, "Recognition Criteria of Other Grand Lodges", the Grand Lodge of Texas declared that there are four criteria which limit its recognition of other Grand Lodges; they are: Secrecy; The Symbolism of Operative Masonry; The legend of the Third Degree; The Sacred Book of the Divine Law, Chief among the Three Great Lights of Masonry, indispensably present in the Lodges while at work.

Dr. Leazer may want to treat the secrecy of the Lodge as being silly, but Masons are serious about it. The Grand Lodge of Texas declares that if secrecy is not part of the ritual of another Grand Lodge, then it will withhold recognition of Masons who come from their jurisdiction.

Personal Experience Colors Leazer's Judgment

Dr. Leazer's sympathy with the Masonic Lodge is obvious throughout A Study Of Freemasonry, but nowhere is it more obvious than on page 19, where Leazer stated:

"The committee found that Masons were open to providing information requested." (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 19)

If this is the case, why didn't Dr. Leazer ask for the books, which he and Masons declared as authoritative on page fourteen of his study? Leazer continued:

"In nearly every situation when answers appeared less than complete, it was believed the Mason was not aware of the answer or could not articulate his answer. On only a few occasions was an attempt to be evasive observed." (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 19, emphasis added)

Why wasn't this same charity offered to Ankerberg and Holly, who made minor errors in their publications? Why are Masons treated so charitably by Dr. Leazer, and "anti-Masons" adversarily? Wouldn't it have been helpful, in a scholarly and objective study, to illustrate the efforts at evasion by Masons? It would certainly have indicated the points at which they felt the most vulnerable. Also, illustrations of the occasions where Masons seemed poorly informed, unable to articulate an answer or attempted to evade the truth, would have given Southern Baptists an opportunity to evaluate Dr. Leazer's judgment about how forthcoming Masons were about the Lodge. But, alas, Dr. Leazer's selective sensitivity excuses Masons and accuses "anti-Masons".

Look To The East Published By Ezra A. Cook

It is a legitimate question as to whether Masons are as forthcoming about the matters of the Lodge as Dr. Leazer believes. On page 36 of A Study Of Freemasonry, Leazer gives one Mason's interpretation denying that the Master-Mason degree is a symbol of

resurrection. Dr. Leazer's single source for this authoritative Masonic opinion is Look To The East: A Ritual of the First Three Degrees of Masonry by Ralph P. Lester. This book was published by Ezra A. Cook Publishers, Inc., with a 1975 publication date.

It is noteworthy to recall that on page 15 of A Study Of Freemasonry, Dr. Leazer attempts to discredit Ezra A. Cook as an "anti-Mason." In chapter eight, the history of Ezra A. Cook as an "anti-Mason", and yet now, the proper name of a company which publishes Masonic materials, is reviewed by the Charles T. Powner Co. of Chicago, Illinois. The Powner Co. and Ezra A. Cook are the same company.

The Powner Co. and Ezra A. Cook published Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated which Dr. Leazer also attempted to discredit (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 15), again using the testimony of a single Masonic writer, whose own integrity has been questioned by black Freemasons. (See this volume chapter seven) The Powner Co. and Ezra A. Cook published Look To The East, which Dr. Leazer now quotes.

In the advertisements at the end of Volume II of Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated, the following appears:

"Outstanding Current Masonic Publications—We can supply any Masonic book, anywhere available — Charles T. Powner Co, 7056-58 W. Higgins, Chicago, Illinois 60656."

In the advertisements at the end of Volume I of Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated, the following appears:

"Lester's Look To The East (Revised) — This is a complete Pocket manual of the First Three Degrees of Masonry. It contains neither passwords, grips, nor any other purely esoteric matter. It affords therefore, a thorough and valuable guide to the above Degrees, divested of everything that any member of the Fraternity would object to see in print, or hesitate to carry in his pocket." (no page number, emphasis added)

Dr. Leazer accepts one publication of Powner and Cook, but tries to reject another. Why? A book which Dr. Leazer accepts, Look To the East, is advertised in a book which he rejects, Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated. Curious, isn't it! Also, Leazer accepts as authoritative a book which the publisher's advertisement admits excludes important aspects of the Masonic ritual. Why?

The reader will remember that in chapter eight, we reviewed the Knight Kadosh degree from A Bridge To Light, which stated: "...The esoteric significance must remain as part of our ritual, confided only to faithful breasts." (A Bridge To Light, p. 287) Why would a scholarly study accept the testimony of a book when its publisher advertises it as intentionally incomplete? Dr. Leazer claims:

1. that Masons provided him with "anti-Masonic" materials which he could not find elsewhere (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 13);
2. that there are no secrets of the Masonic Lodge (A Study Of Freemasonry, pp. 17, 31, 70), and
3. that Masons "were open to providing information requested" (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 19).
4. "In nearly every situation when answers appeared less than complete, it was believed the Mason was not aware of the answer or could not articulate his answer." (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 19)

Yet, two of his principle sources for accurate information about the Lodge boast of their giving incomplete information. What criterion did Dr. Leazer use in this scholarly study to avoid the accepting of testimony by Masons which intentionally obscured the truth about the Lodge? What assurances can Dr. Larry Lewis give the SBC, to whom he is accountable, that his agency was not "hoodwinked" by the very organization which it was commissioned to study?

In chapter seventeen (see pp. 263f), we will review Dr. Leazer's admission that Masonic leaders counsel Masons to be cautious about whom they tell the truth about Masonry to. Yet, Dr. Leazer denies that Freemasonry is a secret organization. The truth is that as far as the revelations of Dr. Leazer's study goes, the secrets of the Lodge are safe! The truth is also that Masons have not told Dr. Leazer the truth; they have only given him some facts to distract him from the truth. But, the secrets of the Masonic Lodge are safe, and Southern Baptists don't know it, because Dr. Leazer, Dr. Lewis and the General Administrative Committee didn't know it.

When Dr. Leazer accepted these five premises for his study, which are essentially directed toward "anti-Masons", Jim Tresner's domination of A Study of Freemason was complete.