

Chapter Fourteen:

Scottish Rite Freemasonry — 26th Degree

Reflective of his design of A Study Of Freemasonry, and of his preoccupation with “anti-Masons”, Dr. Leazer begins Section 9, entitled, “Jesus Christ”, with the words:

“Masonry critics repeatedly say that ‘a Mason is not allowed to pray to or testify of Jesus in the Lodge. A Christian Mason cannot even share the joy of Jesus with a ‘brother Mason’ in the Lodge.’” (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 46)

Dr. Leazer’s method and analysis is dictated by his aggressive desire to contradict “anti-Masons”. At no point in this study does Dr. Leazer assert anything about the Lodge. He simply reacts to the positions of “anti-Masons” and endorses the words and positions of his Masonic counselors. Unfortunately, his reaction is always negative, regardless of the facts.

Jesus Christ and The Masonic Lodge

In this section, Dr. Leazer quotes a few Masonic sources which indicate a sentimental feeling for the name, Jesus Christ. What he does not deal with is the fundamental spirit and nature of Freemasonry which accepts Jesus Christ as one of the “avatars”, as one of the redeemers of mankind, but sees in Him nothing unique, unusual or special. (For further discussion of this concept see The SBC and Freemasonry, Volume II, chapters eight)

Dr. Leazer never has anything good to say about anyone whom he would categorize as an “anti-Mason”. In A Study Of Freemasonry, he quotes John Ankerberg and John Weldon’s statement: “Pike asserted that Jesus was only ‘a great teacher of morality’ — but no more”. (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 48) Leazer seems to ridicule Ankerberg’s and Weldon’s research by saying:

“They refer to page 525 of Pike’s Morals and Dogma. The quote actually states...” (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 48)

The implication is that Ankerberg and Weldon misquoted Pike, or selectively quote him, or quoted him out of context. Leazer then gives the following quote from Morals and Dogma:

"It [Freemasonry] sees in Moses, the Lawgiver of the Jews, in Confucius and Zoroaster, in Jesus of Nazareth, and in the Arabian Iconoclast, Great Teachers of Morality, and Eminent Reformers, if no more: and allows every brother of the Order to assign to each such higher and even Divine Character as his Creed and Truth require." (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 48)

Leazer's implication that Ankerberg and Weldon have misrepresented what Pike said is proved wrong by an examination of Morals and Dogma. One of the quotes mentioned above, which Leazer uses to show the "Christian nature" of Scottish Rite Freemasonry, is from an unpublished manuscript, which Leazer identifies as "Ritual of the 19th Degree to the 30th Degree of the Scottish Rite (no publisher or date), p. 82".

A Study Of Freemasonry then quotes a long passage "from the 26th Degree of the Scottish Rite:" to prove the Christian nature of the Scottish Rite:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made through Him; in Him Life was, and the Life was the Light of mankind. The true Light, which lighted every man that cometh into the world. And the Word became incarnate, and dwelt in man and they beheld His glory, a glory as of the Only-born of the Father.' Thus said the Ancient Christian Masons; and they said also: 'There are Three that bear record in Heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these Three are One...'

When the morning was come, all the Chief Priests and Elders took council against Jesus, to put Him to death. And when Pilate would have appealed to the people to release Him, the priests incited the people, so that they shouted, 'Crucify Him, Crucify Him.'" (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 48, emphasis added)

The Scottish Rite says, "Thus said the Ancient Christian Masons", not "Thus saith the Word of God"! Has Dr. Leazer already told Southern Baptists too much? Perhaps, the key to the true understanding of this quotation is contained in its being attributed to a Mason, rather than to a man of God under the inspiration of

the Holy Spirit. This quote from the 26th degree comes directly and verbatim from page eighty-six of Jim Tresner's Perspectives, Responses & Reflections.

The Twenty-Sixth Degree From Morals and Dogma

The 26th Degree of Scottish Rite Freemasonry is entitled, "Prince Of Mercy". Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated has exactly the same title for this degree. It is in this degree that the Mason receives baptism by the Scottish Rite. Leazer suggested that Ankerberg and Weldon gave only a part of Pike's statement in Morals and Dogma, could it be that Dr. Leazer has done the same thing?

Since Dr. Leazer's lengthy quote above is from the 26th Degree of the Scottish Rite, and since Ankerberg and Weldon's quote, to which Dr. Leazer objected, is from the 26th Degree, perhaps the confusion would be cleared up by a detailed examination of that degree.

It will be seen that the Scottish Rite declares that the lengthy biblical quote in the 26th Degree is actually given in order to demonstrate that the life of Jesus Christ parallels that of the legend of the Master Mason degree, the legend of Hiram Abiff. In actuality, the quote is to show, the Scottish Rite will reveal, that both were put to death by the wickedness of the priests of organized religion. Dr. Leazer and his supervisors need to explain to the SBC why they did not reveal this to the Convention, or they need to explain why their research was so inadequate as not to know this fact. Jim Tresner certainly did not comment on this.

Jesus Christ May Be Only The Logos Of Plato

In the lecture of the 26th Degree of the Scottish Rite in Morals and Dogma, Pike states:

"While you were veiled in darkness, you heard repeated by the Voice of the Great Past its most ancient doctrines. None has the right to object, if the Christian Mason sees foreshadowed in Chrishna and Sosiosch, in Mithras and Osiris, the Divine Word that, as he believes, became man, and died upon the cross to redeem a fallen race. Nor can he (the Christian) object if others see reproduced, in the Word of the beloved Disciple, that was in the beginning with God, and that was God, and by Whom everything was made, only the Logos of Plato, and the Word or Uttered Thought or first Emanation of Light, or the

Perfect Reason of the Great, Silent, Supreme, Uncreated Deity, believed in and adored by all." (Morals and Dogma, p. 524, emphasis added)

This is blasphemous. Any Mason who finds in Chrishna and Sosiosch the foreshadowing of Jesus Christ is demonized! If the Christian Mason wishes to ascribe to the 26th Degree a Christian interpretation, Pike declares that he must allow others to interpret this Degree in a purely philosophical manner. Who among Southern Baptists wishes to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ having joined covenant with those who would call Jesus Christ the "Logos of Plato"? Why would a Christian apologist such as Dr. Leazer not warn Southern Baptists of this abomination?

It is instructive that Pike said, "as he (the 'Christian' Mason) believes," not "as we believe". Certainly this would have been a good time for Pike to declare his Christian sympathies. Yet, he did not.

Masonry, Not Christianity, Is The Great Truth?

The lecture of the 26th Degree continues:

"We do not undervalue the importance of any Truth...We do not tell the Hebrew that the Messiah whom he expects was born in Bethlehem nearly two thousand years ago...And as little do we tell the sincere Christian that Jesus of Nazareth was but a man like us, or His history but the unreal revival of an older legend...Masonry, of no one age, belongs to all time; of no one religion, it finds its great truths in all...Thus Masonry disbelieves no truth, and teaches unbelief in no creed..." (pp. 524-525, emphasis added)

Pike's words of tolerance sound pious, until one understands their meaning. **The man who accepts all as truth denies any truth.** If all religions are true, then no religion is true. As Edward Gibbon said in The Decline And Fall of The Roman Empire:

"To the people all religions were equally true; to the philosophers all religions were equally false, and to the politicians all religions were equally useful."

This is not unlike the Masonic concept.

Recall Dr. Leazer's speech to the Southeast Masonic Conference in August of 1993, in which he said some object to the "Masonic Mission which transcends all faiths". Here Pike, as Leazer, affirms

that Freemasonry has truth that overarches all religions. The condescending attitude toward revealed religion does not speak well of Masonry; it speaks of the incompatibility of the Lodge with Christianity. It may seem cosmopolitan and tolerant to say, "We do not undervalue the importance of any Truth", but in reality it undermines all Truth. In the Masonic lexicon, no Truth is Truth, except Masonic truth. In chapter seventeen, we will discuss at length the Masonic concept of truth.

Masonic Cynicism Undercuts Capacity To Know Truth

The lecture of the 26th Degree in Morals and Dogma continues:

"Masonry is a worship; but one in which all civilized men can unite; for it does not undertake to explain or dogmatically to settle those great mysteries, that are above the feeble comprehension of our human intellect..." (p. 526)

Pike denies man's capacity to know about eternal life and about the true nature of God. The only truth which Pike accepts is that of rationalism. He rejects revelation, relegating it to "those great mysteries, that are above the feeble comprehension of our human intellect." The Apostle Paul declared that eye has not seen nor has the mind of man conceived of what God has in store for His children. Yet, the same Apostle affirms that God has revealed the same to men through God, the Holy Spirit. (See I Corinthians 2) Who is right, Pike or Paul? Dr. Leazer's study should have helped Southern Baptists to understand the tension between the doctrines of both.

Salvation Is The Goal Of Masonic Virtue

Pike continued in Morals and Dogma with the lecture of the 26th Degree in which the question is asked, "What, then, is the one great lesson of this Degree (the 26th)?" The answer is then given:

"That to that state and realm of Light and Truth and Perfection, which is absolutely certain, all the good men on earth are tending; and if there is a law from whose operation none are exempt, which inevitably conveys their bodies to darkness and to dust, there is another not less certain nor less powerful, which

conducts their spirits to that state of Happiness and Splendor and Perfection, the bosom of their Father and their God....

Let every Mason then obey the voice that calls him thither. Let us seek the things that are above, and be not content with a world that must shortly perish, and which we must speedily quit, while we neglect to prepare for that in which we are invited to dwell forever..." (p. 538)

Pike admits that all men are dying, i.e., "a law from whose operation none are exempt." But, he also argues that all good men — and in the Masonic doctrine all men are good by their nature — will be "saved," i.e., "conduct(ed) ... to that state of happiness and splendor and perfection." That is universalism, and that is heresy.

The Masonic plan of salvation is that of virtue, earned by the effort of man. Salvation is that to which "all good men on earth are tending". Yet, the Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ speaking, declared, "There is none good but God." Repeatedly, the Word of God declares the depravity of man. Man cannot save himself, the Bible says. But, the Mason, in the 26th Degree, is taught to become his own salvation.

Masonic Baptism Revealed In The 26th Degree

The lecture of the 26th Degree then asks the question, "What are the symbols of the purification necessary to make us perfect Masons?" To which Pike gives the following answer:

"Lavation with pure water, or baptism; because to cleanse the body is emblematical of purifying the soul; and because it conduces to the bodily health, and virtue is the health of the soul, as sin and vice are its malady and sickness..." (p. 538, emphasis added)

Masonic baptism! That is blasphemous! Every Scottish Rite Mason who claims Christ as Savior should be on his face in repentance of this abomination. Why didn't Dr. Leazer tell us that the window dressing of Bible quotations in the 26th Degree, which he illustrated in A Study Of Freemasonry, were just that, window dressing? Why didn't Dr. Leazer tell us about the Masonic baptism? Why did Dr. Leazer just follow the instruction of Jim Tresner without asking difficult questions to find the truth about Masonry?

Masonic Communion Revealed In The 26th Degree

The lecture of the 26th Degree in Morals and Dogma continues and it only gets worse. This "fraternity" which has no "plan of salvation", asks the question, "What is to us the chief symbol of man's ultimate redemption and regeneration?" To which, Albert Pike gives the following answer:

"The fraternal supper, of bread which nourishes, and of wine which refreshes and exhilarates, symbolical of the time which is to come, when all mankind shall be one great harmonious brotherhood.....And thus, in the bread we eat, and in the wine we drink to-night may enter into and form part of us the identical particles of matter that once formed parts of the material bodies called Moses, Confucius, Plato, Socrates, or Jesus of Nazareth. In the truest sense, we eat and drink the bodies of the dead; and cannot say that there is a single atom of our blood or body, the ownership of which some other soul might not dispute with us." (Morals and Dogma, p. 539, emphasis added)

Redemption comes from having incorporated into your body molecules which once were in another of the world's great "avatars." This is a subtle form of the doctrine of reincarnation, which Masonic scholars will say has always been the true Masonic teaching. (See The Meaning Of Masonry by Wilmshurst; also see The SBC and Freemasonry, Volume II, pp. 99-104 for a discussion of reincarnation and the Masonic Lodge) That is blasphemy.

Pike said, "the material bodies called Moses, Confucius, Plato, Socrates or Jesus of Nazareth." This suggests Gnostic dualism. Commonly, one would say "the material bodies of ...". Also, Pike always refers to Jesus Christ as Jesus of Nazareth. Why?

Pike Denies Resurrection Of Christ and Therefore His Deity

Jesus Christ was bodily, physically resurrected from the dead. No atom of His body is available for inclusion in the body of a man today. In Romans 10:9-10, Paul declares that belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a requirement of salvation, because Romans 1:4 declares that the resurrection was the endorsement of the Deity

of Christ. Pike subtly undermines the Deity of Christ, by suggesting that the particles of His body are available for incorporation into the bodies of men today. This denies the physical resurrection of Christ, and therefore denies the Deity of Christ.

Strange Variation Of Transubstantiation

This is a strange variation of the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation; the "body of Christ and others" is ingested, making them physically a part of the initiate. It is grotesque to suggest that men and women eat the bodies of the dead. Jesus Christ used the metaphor of "eating my flesh and drinking my blood" as a spiritual lesson of partaking of His Life, of His Character, of His Nature, not of His atoms or molecules. If any illusions about the religious and demonic nature of Masonry remained, this should dispel them.

Pike's statement, "there is (not) a single atom of our blood or body, the ownership of which some other soul might not dispute with us," is a subtle denial of the possibility of a physical resurrection of the body. How could the body be resurrected, if your body is a collage of the bodies of others? What Pike excludes is the sovereignty and power of God Almighty!

Christians Copied The Mystery Religions' Initiation Rites

The 26th Degree lecture continues; Pike said:

"In the early days of Christianity, there was an initiation like those of the pagans. Persons were admitted on special conditions only. To arrive at a complete knowledge of the doctrine, they had to pass three degrees of instruction." (Morals and Dogma, p. 541)

In the 10th Degree of the Scottish Rite, the Elu of the Fifteen by name, which is the same name in Morals and Dogma, A Bridge To Light and Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated, the following is stated:

"But Masonry teaches, and has preserved in their purity, the cardinal tenets of the old primitive faith, which underlie and are the foundation of all religions. All that ever existed have had a basis of truth; and all have overlaid that truth with errors....Masonry is the universal morality which is suitable to the

inhabitants of every clime, to the man of every creed..."
(Morals and Dogma, p. 161, emphasis added; also
quoted in A Bridge to Light, pp. 67-68)

Masonry "underlies and (is) the foundation of all religions",
Pike and A Bridge To Light declare. Robert Morey said that
Masonry was Christian in its origins. Pike implies that Chris-
tianity was Masonic in its origins.

Christianity Dependent Upon Mysteries For Doctrine

Pike proceeds to demonstrate the dependency of the Christian
faith upon the Ancient Mystery religions for its doctrines. He said:

"The most ancient Trinitarian doctrine on record is that
of the Brahmins....

The Persians received from the Indians the doctrine of
the three principles....

The Trinity of the Hindus became among the Ethiopi-
ans and Abyssians Neph-Amon, Phtha, and Neith..."
(p. 550)

Every Christian doctrine, given by God through revelation, is
trivialized by Pike, through the inference that every Christian
doctrine was only learned from other religions.

God As The Creator Is Denied By Pike

God revealed through Jeremiah (See Chapters 31 and 33) that if
He is not the Creator, then He cannot be the Redeemer. This was
the basis of Satan's "long war against God" in establishing evolu-
tion as the foundational doctrine of secular humanism. This is the
concept of worldview, which was discussed and developed in
chapter nine (see pp. 128-130). This is the fundamental reason why
Freemasonry and Christianity are incompatible: they have differ-
ent and irreconcilable worldviews.

The Masonic worldview is revealed in the 26th Degree of the
Scottish Rite of Freemasonry. Morals and Dogma states:

"The universal belief of the Orient was, that the Su-
preme Being did not Himself create either the earth or
man. The fragment which commences the Book of
Genesis, consisting of the first chapter and the three
first verses of the second, assigns the creation or rather

the formation or modelling of the world from matter already existing in confusion, not to IHUH, but to the ALHIM, well known as Subordinate Deities, Forces, or Manifestations, among the Phœnicians." (Morals and Dogma, p. 568)

Pike consigns the truth of the Word of God to myth. Genesis, the foundation book of the Bible, was a "fragment", declares Pike. Pike consigns the God of Creation to a secondary role as one of the "Subordinate Deities".

Universalism Is The Secret Doctrine Of Masonry

At the conclusion of the lecture of the 26th degree, Pike summarizes the beliefs of many different people:

"While all these faiths assert their claims to the exclusive possession of the Truth, Masonry inculcates its old doctrine, and not more:....That God is One; that His Thought uttered in His Word, created the Universe, and preserves it by those Eternal Laws which are the expression of that Thought: that the Soul of Man, breathed into him by God, is immortal as His Thoughts are; that he is free to do evil or to choose good, responsible for his acts and punishable for his sins: that all evil and wrong and suffering are but temporary, the discords of one great Harmony, and that in His good time they will lead by infinite modulations to the great, harmonic final chord and cadence of Truth, Love, Peace and Happiness, that will ring forever and ever under the Arches of Heaven, among all the Stars and Worlds, and in all souls of men and Angels." (Morals and Dogma, pp. 576-577, emphasis added)

Universalism was never more clearly stated. No one will perish in eternal flames of Hell. How could they; for elsewhere Pike denies the existence of the Devil? No one will perish because God will ultimately deliver all men into "that state of Happiness and Splendor and Perfection, the bosom of their Father and their God." That is a Masonic lie and that is not compatible with biblical Christianity.

Here, in Pike's concluding comment on universalism, he declares that every man will be saved in the end. Because in the end, God will "in His good time...lead by infinite modulations to the

great, harmonic final chord and cadence of Truth, Love, Peace and Happiness." That is not biblical and that is not Christian; that is not compatible with Christianity.

How does Dr. Leazer's quote from the 26th Degree of the Scottish Rite ritual stand up now as a testimony to the Christian sympathies of the Masonic Lodge? Why would he attempt to conceal the real intent of the 26th Degree? Did Dr. Leazer even study the 26th Degree? If he were not going to quote from it, it would not be necessary for him to know anything about it. But, once he determined to employ the 26th Degree in his thesis of the compatibility of Freemasonry and Christianity, as a scholar, he was obligated to look at the entire degree! Unfortunately, he appears only to have looked at as much of it as his friend Jim Tresner told him about. His friend did not serve Dr. Leazer well. Dr. Leazer did not serve Dr. Lewis well. Dr. Lewis did not serve the trustees well. The trustees did not serve the Convention well. The Convention is not serving the Kingdom well, until A Study of Freemasonry is renounced, removed from circulation and replaced with the truth.

A Bridge To Light and The Twenty-Sixth Degree

Dr. Leazer started the study of Freemasonry with the premise that he was going to give modern Freemasons the opportunity to answer the charges brought against them. In reality, A Study Of Freemasonry seems to have been Dr. Leazer allowing the Masonic Lodge to speak to these issues through him. Because Dr. Leazer has questioned the use of Morals and Dogma, although we now find him quoting from it himself, we will examine A Bridge To Light to see if any of the offensive doctrines of Morals and Dogma have been eliminated in this modernization of Pike's work.

A Bridge To Light repeats Pike's assertion that Christianity had initiation ceremonies in the first century:

"The Mysteries studied thus far have not addressed Christianity. History informs us that the early Christians also disseminated their great truths through initiation in stages or degrees." (A Bridge To Light, p. 228)

The cynical attitude toward biblical revelation which this statement makes is offensive to any believer and repeats Pike's assertion that the Christian faith adopted many of the teachings of the Ancient Mystery religions.

Christian Terms In 26th Degree Not Intended To Support The Christian Faith

A Bridge To Light's discussion of the 26th Degree puts into perspective the biblical words and phrases which are used in this degree:

"This historical parallel is not intended to suggest those not of the Christian faith should exclude themselves from this degree, for its purpose is to teach the universality of many of the doctrines and beliefs of Christianity. The Christian can only have his faith strengthened by knowledge of the ancient wisdom contained in Christianity." (A Bridge To Light, p. 229, emphasis added)

The 26th Degree is not intended, A Bridge To Light declares, to suggest any unique truth in Christianity, but only to demonstrate that the revelations of Christianity were borrowed from the Mystery religions. Jews and Moslems are not to be offended because the ideas in the 26th Degree are not to be taken as a presentation of truth, but only of ideas which men have held.

A Bridge To Light states that the lessons of this degree are: "The trinity of Deity belongs to no single religion. The truths of Masonry are contained within the religions of the world." (A Bridge To Light, p. 228) Yet, Dr. Leazer quotes the 26th Degree in A Study Of Freemasonry as evidence of the "Christian" character of the Lodge. (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 48) Why would Dr. Leazer present such a deceitful statement? To imply that the use of Christian words in the 26th Degree is evidence of the sympathy of the Scottish Rite with Christianity is a lie.

Dr. Leazer could have known that simply by reading the section of Morals and Dogma from which he quoted in A Study Of Freemasonry, and / or, by reading the section on the 26th Degree in A Bridge To Light. Why didn't he? Why didn't he do a sound job of research? Why didn't he tell Southern Baptists the truth about Freemasonry?

"The Trinity Of Deity Belongs To No One Religion"

A Bridge To Light continues to relate the "play" of the 26th Degree:

"Having gained entrance to the Chapter, the candidate is led around the room nine times. With each circuit

he is instructed on the deities of other religions. Each instruction emphasizes the nature of Deity and the concept of the Trinity within those religions." (A Bridge To Light, p. 230)

"The Hebrew Kabalists tell us that Ainsoph is the Supreme Who has three heads in one..." (A Bridge To Light, p. 231)

There is nothing unique about the Christian faith, the 26th Degree states; every "truth" which Christianity teaches was taught before by one of the Mystery Religions. The "mystery" of the Trinity is only a reflection of the universal understanding of God, Pike says.

In reality, Pike and Masons misunderstand. They take the Christian Trinity to be another example of the polytheism of the pagans. In Morals and Dogma Pike said, "...whether the Holy Ghost is of the same substance with the Father, or only of a similar substance..." is a question beyond the comprehension of man. (Morals and Dogma, p. 530) What Christian Mason wishes to affirm the heresy of the Lodge?

Masonic Secret Doctrine: Resurrection

In reality, the long section from the 26th Degree quoted by Dr. Leazer in A Study Of Freemasonry is not intended to reinforce the Christian nature of the Lodge! Its purpose is to contrast the Master Mason legend of Hiram Abiff with the life of Jesus Christ. A Bridge To Light continues its discussion of the 26th Degree stating:

"Having been sufficiently assured of the candidate's sincerity and character, the doctrine that is presumed to have been that which was divulged in the last degree of the Christian Mysteries is presented: the belief in the resurrection.

Parallels are drawn between the slaying of Hiram and the death of Jesus. The malignant priests, wishing to silence Jesus, incited the populace to demand the execution of the friend and benefactor of mankind; in the story of Hiram the first assassin, who struck on the throat, is representative of the priests and the rule he used represents the priesthood." (A Bridge To Light, p. 231)

It is the priest who condemned Hiram. The first assassin who struck Hiram was "representative of the priests." The long quote from the 26th Degree which Leazer gave, addressed that the priests condemned Jesus. A Bridge To Light states that in the 26th Degree, "Parallels are drawn between the slaying of Hiram and the death of Jesus."

The Evil Institutions Which Make Good Men Bad

Here it is again! The Secret Doctrine: resurrection!! The 26th Degree states:

"Having been sufficiently assured of the candidate's sincerity and character, the doctrine...of...the resurrection (is presented.)" (A Bridge To Light, p. 231)

The blasphemy of the Masons contrasting the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ with that of the Master-Mason-degree myth of Hiram Abiff is unconscionable to the Christian. How can a Christian see the Lord Jesus desecrated like that, and still submit to Masonic baptism and communion? How could Dr. Leazer be duped by Masons into believing that the Masons were quoting "an Ancient Christian Mason" to affirm Jesus Christ rather than simply using "biblical words" to dupe "Christian" Masons?

In addition, do not miss the implication that it is sectarian faith, ruled by priests, which is the enemy of the souls of men. Recall the previous quotes from Pike and A Bridge To Light in the 30th Degree of Scottish Rite Masonry:

1. Which speaks of those "notions of childhood" which were imposed upon the mind of man. (A Bridge To Light, p. 284; see chapter eight, p. 110)
2. Which purports to free men "from the religious forms imposed upon (them) by superstition at a period of (their) life when (they) were incapable of discerning truth from falsehood." (Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated, Volume II, p. 264, see chapter eight, p. 111)
3. Which declares that evil institutions make good men bad. A Bridge to Light declares:

"...The heart of man craves only justice and love. Men are good. Evil institutions alone have made them bad; and it is the duty of Masonry and of

every Knight to aid in leading them back to the truth." (A Bridge To Light, p. 292, emphasis added)

Protestants must take little comfort in the fact that it is Roman Catholicism which is the subject of this attack by Masonry. In this instance, all Christians, Protestant and Catholic, must stand together against this attack upon revealed religion and the institution of the church. Christianity and the church, which Jesus Christ founded, are the evil institutions which Masonry hates.

The Bible declares that men are not good; they are depraved. Masonry cannot make good men better for there are no good men! Jesus Christ, Alone, can take bad, depraved men, give them a new heart and make them desire to be good. That truth is one of the evil institutions which Pike and Masonry would argue the priests who killed Jesus and Hiram have imposed upon mankind.

Christianity Came From Masonry?

A Bridge To Light continues to examine the 26th Degree:

"Additional instruction on the symbolism of the first three degrees in Masonry associates Christian doctrine with Masonry..." (A Bridge To Light, p. 232)

Robert Morey said that Masonry came from Christianity; A Bridge To Light confirms Pike's contention, Christianity came from Masonry. (See pp. 210-211) A Bridge To Light continues:

"The instruction on the Trinity and the parallels between the symbolism of Christ and Hiram prepare the candidate for the obligation...." (A Bridge To Light, p. 232)

Here it is again. The 26th Degree is not to endorse Christianity; it is only to show that the death-burial-resurrection motif of Hiram Abiff is repeated in the life of Jesus Christ. Gary Leazer asked us to accept Master Mason Ralph P. Lester's denial of the Master Mason degree being symbolic of resurrection. (A Study Of Freemasonry, pp. 35-36) Yet, a book which Leazer possessed (A Bridge To Light), and which he promoted, clearly declares that the legend of the Third Degree, the legend of Hiram Abiff, is parallel to the symbolism of the life of Christ. What does this mean, Dr. Leazer? Why didn't you tell Southern Baptists what it means? Why won't you tell Southern Baptists what it means?

The Masonic Mission: Universalism

A Bridge To Light addresses the Masonic Mission:

"The universality of Masonry, its mission to unite all men under virtue, and the truths it teaches demand that each man be accepted for himself and not because of an accident of birth which caused him to be Moslem, Jew or Christian. The truths of Masonry are contained within the religions of the world. Whatever faith a man has, these truths may be embraced by him while he practices his own religion." (A Bridge To Light, p. 232)

Recall, Dr. Leazer's discussion of the Masonic Mission in his address to the Southeast Masonic Conference in August of 1993. Is the providence of God, an accident of birth? Are men Christians, Jews and Moslems because of a freak of nature? Or, is the sovereign hand of God involved in the birth and life of every man. Masonry everywhere trivializes the faith of a man's youth. Here Masonry says that a man's religion is no different than the genetics of his height or his hair color! A man's religion is an accident of his birth. The Bible says, "Not so!"

A Bridge To Light Confirms Masonic Baptism

Now, A Bridge To Light repeats Pike's revelation of Masonic baptism; it states:

"The final symbolic actions serve as marks, or tokens, of the solemn covenants entered into by the newly raised Prince of Mercy with the Masonic fraternity, the Deity and truth. After water is poured on the candidate's head as a symbol of the soul's purification, a Tau cross is marked upon his forehead with perfumed oil. The Tau cross has long been an important symbol to the ancients; the Hebrews recognized it as a sign of salvation." (A Bridge to Light, p. 232)

The Mason must have no illusion; he is not joining a club. He is entering into a covenant, a blood covenant, with men who deny Christ. What Christian Mason would submit to baptism at the hands of a Scottish Rite Mason? The covenant into which the candidate enters is with "The Deity". Is that the God of the Bible or the god of the Lodge? Who would allow a sign to be placed on

his forehead. What does a Tau cross look like? It is certainly not a Christian symbol. It is probably not the "mark of the beast" of the Revelation, but who would want to risk such?

The Tau Cross

Mackey's Revised Encyclopedia of Freemasonry states that the Tau Cross is "a cross of three limbs, so called because it presents the figure of the Greek letter Tau." (Volume II, p. 1013) In a longer article on "Tau", Mackey's states:

"This tau, tau cross, or tau mark, was of very universal use as a sacred symbol among the ancients...the Hebrews recognized it as a sign of salvation; according to the Talmudists, the symbol was much older than the time of Ezekiel, for they say that when Moses anointed Aaron as the High Priest, he marked his forehead with this sign...Dr. Clarke says...that the tau cross was a monogram of Thoth, 'the symbolical or mystical name of Hidden Wisdom among the ancient Egyptians...It is in this sense, as a symbol of salvation from death and of eternal life, that it has been adopted into the Masonic system, and presents itself, especially under its triple combination, as a badge of Royal Arch Masonry.'" (pp. 1012-1013, emphasis added)

Strange stuff for an organization which is not a religion, has no plan of salvation, and knows nothing for which it can be held accountable!!

Louisiana Grand Lodge Masonic Booklet

The concept of baptism is not restricted to Morals and Dogma and A Bridge To Light. In 1978, the Committee on Masonic Education of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana published a booklet entitled, Your Search For Masonic Light: Preparation. The Louisiana Grand Lodge copied this material, with permission, from the Grand Lodge of New York. It states:

"...remember that it is among friends you go, and that the first question they asked you was of your belief in a common Father...Go clean in body, as you would go clean to a christening or a baptism. Nor resent this instruction here; there is intended no insinuation that you are not always clean. But go made clean expressly

for this ceremony; though you have but just come from the bath for the evening, go once more and bathe with the thought that you are preparing now for a great step, that the water which laves your body is also, symbolically, cleansing your mind and heart." (p.3)

The Freemason cleanses himself by the lustration of a bath. Christian baptism is demonstrative of a reality which has already taken place. Masonic baptism is preparatory for what is going to happen.

Christian baptism is an act of surrender, whereby one man submits himself to immersion by another. It is in this way that man declares his trust in God, even as Christ declared His trust in the Father's power and providence to raise Him from the dead. Masonic baptism is an act of the power of a man over his own destiny. As in all religious acts of the Mason, there is no surrender; there is no submission. Masonry is the religion of humanism; it is the religion with man at the center, while tipping the hat to all gods.

The Covenant Meal Of The 26th Degree of Scottish Rite Masonry

A Bridge To Light now describes a communion meal which is consumed:

"The candidate, along with the other brethren, partakes of bread and wine...a mark of the covenant among the brethren and with God. It should remind us of the brotherhood of every Mason in the world and that reliance on God's loving kindness exalts the soul." (A Bridge To Light, p. 233)

No Christian should be a part of a covenant brotherhood of anything but that founded upon the blood of Jesus Christ. No Christian ought to be a part of the Masonic Lodge, of the Scottish Rite, of the York Rite, of the Shriners or of any Masonic body. They are not compatible with Christianity!

Christianity One of the Mystery Religions?

The doctrine of the Masonic Lodge is revealed in the 26th Degree for A Bridge To Light states:

"Couched within a catechism are the nine Great Truths of Masonry. As the 26th Degree closes the series of degrees that illustrate the Mysteries, these Truths appropriately summarize the teachings from the 23rd through the 26th Degrees." (A Bridge To Light, p. 235, emphasis added)

The 26th Degree "closes the series of degrees (the 23th through the 26th) that illustrate the Mysteries." This means that Christianity, which is the principle subject of the 26th Degree is identified by A Bridge To Light as a Mystery religion. Christianity is nothing more than another of the ancient mystery religions, says A Bridge To Light. It is an appendage to the Scottish Rite degrees.

There is nothing in the 26th Degree of the Scottish Rite to give comfort to a Christian Freemason. Why didn't Dr. Leazer read A Bridge To Light? If he did read it, why didn't he warn Southern Baptists about Masonic baptism and communion?

Conclusions Of Section 9: Jesus Christ

Continuing in his apologetic for Freemasonry, Dr. Leazer concludes this section with two statements:

- "1. Masons are not supposed to talk or testify about Jesus during the ritual, and the fellowship immediately afterward. This prohibition does not apply at other times.
2. One Mason wrote that 'perhaps Masons should be reminded that as we seek 'Masonic Light', we find that Jesus is indeed 'The Light of the World.' Christian Masons affirm that Jesus Christ is 'the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me' (John 14:6, NASB)" (A Study Of Freemasonry, p. 49)

How consistent is this conclusion with the material which we have presented from the 26th Degree of Scottish Rite Freemasonry as described in Morals and Dogma and A Bridge To Light? They are not. Dr. Leazer's statement, "Christian Masons affirm that Jesus Christ is...", is not true. As a Mason, Christians embrace the

universalism of the Masonic Lodge, and the equality of Socrates, Plato, Buddha, etc. with Jesus Christ. It is possible for a Christian, who is a Mason, to contradict his Lodge and hold to his Christian teachings, but as a "good" Mason, he cannot. The doctrines and practices of the 26th Degree of Scottish Rite Freemasonry by themselves demonstrate the incompatibility of Freemasonry with Christianity. They also demonstrate the impossibility of the SBC continuing to accept A Study Of Freemasonry as anything but what it is: an inadequate, superficial, non-scholarly study.