

# Should we Ignore their Secret Savior to Maintain Church Unity?

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**J**UST BEFORE JESUS ASCENDED into heaven, he gave his disciples clear instructions:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Mt 28:18-20

One of the primary purposes of the church is to carry the Gospel of Jesus to the lost. Paul summed up the basic facts of the Gospel:

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: 1 Cor 15:1-4

Scripture stresses the importance of unity, that we might glorify God:

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom 15:5-6

Jesus prayed that His disciples would be as one. Jesus wanted all of those who believed in Him to be brought to complete unity to let the world know that God had sent Him. Just before Jesus was betrayed, he prayed:

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Jn 17:22-23

While teaching the necessity of a spirit of unity, Paul stressed the importance of sound doctrine:

Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

1 Tim 4:16

The foundational doctrines of the church include the Deity of Jesus Christ and the fact that He is the only way to salvation. Jesus said:

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. Jn 14:6

In the midst of the church there are some individuals who do not follow the commands of Jesus. Their presence within the church causes division. The Scriptures speak clearly about the proper response to those who would cause division. Paul gave these instructions to Titus:

A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

Tit 3:10-11

In some denominations, a significant number of church members are Freemasons. Their numbers vary from congregation to congregation. Some are currently active in Freemasonry. Others are no longer active, yet they still maintain their lodge membership. Many Masons serve as Sunday School teachers, Elders, Deacons and even Pastor. All of the members of churches who are Freemasons state that Masonry is compatible with Christianity. Many claim that Masonry has made them better Christians. Masons are involved in a host of good works which provide service to society. They feed the poor, provide medical care for injured children and even send pastors they are trying to influence on tours of the Holy Lands.

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## Scripture stresses the importance of unity. . .

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Some within the body of Christ oppose the Masonic Lodge and believe that Masons who will not renounce Freemasonry should be expelled from the church. Freemasonry's opponents are unwilling to compromise.

There are many others who seem to be stressing the importance of Church unity. They fear that if the attitudes of the opponents of Freemasonry are embraced by a significant number, division will result. They believe that opposition to Freemasonry may destroy unity in the church. Their worst fear is that their congregation will be involved in a church-split over an insignificant issue.

### **Why are the opponents of Freemasonry insisting that there be total separation between the Lodge and the church?**

The foundation of Freemasonry is known as the Blue Lodge. It consists of three degrees: Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason. After he completes the Master Mason degree, a man is as much of a Mason as he will ever be. Each of the degrees contains teaching which is revealed through ritual. The man being initiated into Masonry takes an active part in the ritual. In the Master Mason degree, the new Master Mason portrays Hiram Abiff. In that portion of the ritual known as the Legend of the Third Degree, Hiram is unjustly **killed, buried** and then **raised** from the grave. At the close of the ritual, the following summary of the meaning is spoken:

**Then, finally my brethren, let us imitate our Grand Master, Hiram Abiff, in his virtuous conduct, his unfeigned piety to God, and his inflexible fidelity to his trust; that, like him, we may welcome the grim tyrant, Death, and receive him as a kind messenger sent by our Supreme Grand Master, to**

**translate us from this imperfect to that all-perfect, glorious, and celestial Lodge above, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides.**<sup>1</sup>

The meaning of the ritual is clearly explained: Masons are to imitate Hiram Abiff that they may welcome death and be translated into heaven.

### **Who is Hiram Abiff?**

When a man is raised to Master Mason, he is given a small book called a monitor. Monitors are produced for each jurisdiction and are distributed at the direction of the authorities of Freemasonry, the Grand Lodges. The Grand Lodge of Kentucky revealed the functional identity of Hiram Abiff in a discussion of various religions:

All believed in a future life, to be attained by purification and trials; in a state or successive states of reward and punishment; and in a Mediator or Redeemer, by whom the Evil Principle was to be overcome and the Supreme Deity reconciled to His creatures. The belief was general that He was to be born of a virgin and suffer a painful death. The Hindus called him Krishna; the Chinese, Kiountse; the Persians, Sosiosch; the Chaldeans, Dhouvani; the Egyptians, Horus; Plato, Love; the Scandinavians, Balder; the **Christians, Jesus; Masons, Hiram.**<sup>2</sup>

The meaning is perfectly clear. Masonry teaches that Jesus is not unique. Jesus is a savior for Christians and Krishna is a savior for Hindus, while Hiram Abiff is a savior for Masons. Lynn Perkins, clarifies the teaching:

Therefore Masonry teaches that redemption and salvation are both the power and the

responsibility of the individual Mason. Saviors like Hiram Abiff can and do show the way, but men must always follow and demonstrate, each for himself, his power to save himself, to build his own spiritual fabric in his own time and way. Every man in essence is his own savior and redeemer; for if he does not save himself, he will not be saved. The reader who succeeds in getting back to the real teachings of the masters, including Jesus of Nazareth, will find unanimity of thinking on this matter.<sup>3</sup>

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## **Masons are to imitate Hiram Abiff that they may welcome death and be translated into heaven.**

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The fact that Masonry teaches redemption and salvation is also documented by Albert Mackey.<sup>4</sup> Mackey's book has been adopted, virtually without alteration, as the monitor of the Grand Lodge of South Carolina. The monitor explains the meaning of ritual:

It was the single object of all the ancient rites and mysteries practiced in the very bosom of pagan darkness. . .to teach the immortality of the Soul. *This is still the great design of the third degree of Masonry. This is the scope and aim of its ritual.* The Master Mason represents man, when youth, manhood, old age, and life itself have passed away as fleeting shadows, yet raised from the grave of iniquity, and quickened into another and better existence. By its legend and all its ritual, **it is implied that we have been redeemed from the death of sin** and the sepulchre of pollution. . .and the conclusion we arrive at is, that youth, properly directed,

leads us to honorable and virtuous maturity, and that the life of man, regulated by morality, faith, and justice, will be rewarded at its closing hour by the prospect of eternal bliss. . . The important design of the degree is to symbolize the great doctrines of the resurrection of the body and the immortality of the soul; and hence it has been remarked by a learned writer of our Order, that **the Master Mason represents a man saved from the grave of iniquity, and raised to the faith of salvation.**<sup>5</sup>

Mackey's words are reproduced in the monitors of many states. The Grand Lodge of Indiana reproduces most of the passage when explaining the meaning of the *Legend of the Third Degree*.<sup>6</sup> The Indiana Monitor proclaims the universality of the Hiram Legend in Masonry and stresses its importance:

*The Legend of the Third Degree.* This is the most important and significant of the legendary symbols of Freemasonry. It has descended from age to age by oral tradition, and has been preserved in every Masonic rite, practiced in any country or language, with no essential alteration.<sup>7</sup>

The Hiram Legend is the glory of Freemasonry. . .<sup>8</sup>

Freemasonry has a savior named Hiram Abiff. Freemasonry teaches that Master Masons have been redeemed from the death of sin and represent those raised to the faith of salvation. Each Mason has portrayed Hiram Abiff in a ritual in which he was killed, buried and raised from the grave. That ritual mocks the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The ritual of the third degree directly states that by imitating Hiram

Abiff, Master Masons may get into heaven.

### **The situation in the church is as follows:**

- Freemasons have infiltrated the church, claiming to be Christians.
- Active Masons within the church are meeting in secret to teach salvation on the basis of another savior. Inactive Masons have portrayed Hiram Abiff in ritual, yet they defend Masonry as being compatible with Christianity.
- The false gospel of Freemasonry will result in many souls being cast into hell.
- Unless we directly and publicly take issue with the false gospel of Masonry, additional sons, grandsons, husbands and brothers will become ensnared.
- Masonry is using the church as a cover, just as organized crime uses legitimate businesses. The Lodge points to Masons who are church members to support their claim that Freemasonry is compatible with Christianity.
- By allowing Masonry to utilize a congregation as a cover, that congregation is allowing the world to believe that there is nothing in the teachings of Freemasonry with which they strongly disagree.

Those who oppose Freemasonry are justifiably intolerant: they are insistent upon total separation between the church and the lodge. Many others in the church feel that Masons are doing no harm: Masons do not promote imitation of Hiram Abiff as a way to salvation publicly, but only in secret. Those who are against actively opposing the false gospel of Freemasonry say that if we take

a stand against Freemasonry, few Masons will renounce and some in their families will stand with them, following emotions rather than the Spirit of Truth. Some fear it will destroy the peace and unity of the church and result in division. But, is all division bad? Could division ever be God's Will? Consider the words of Jesus:

Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. Lk 12:51-53

The gospel of our Lord and Savior is divisive and the presence of Masonry within the church has resulted in a strong difference of opinion. Some are firm in their belief that Masons who will not renounce Freemasonry and repent should be denied membership in the church. Others feel that we should avoid dealing with the issue in order to maintain unity.

Some claim that it is impossible to know what a man believes. They claim that we cannot know that a man has accepted the teachings of Freemasonry, simply because he is a member of the Lodge. What we can know is that any man who remains a Mason after being confronted with the teachings of Freemasonry has not rejected those teachings, as would a Christian.

### Why are there different opinions?

Paul spoke to differences which existed between members of the church at Corinth:

For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. 1 Cor 11:18-19

A. W. Tozer, a contemporary leader said:

**Division is not bad. To know what to divide - and to know what to unite - is the key.**

The desirable outcome is separation of all church members from the Masonic Lodge. It is not God's will for any to perish. Realistically,

some Masons have not and will not accept Jesus as their savior, although they may claim that they have.

### The fundamental question remains:

**Should we ignore their secret savior to maintain unity in Christ's church?**

Only those on one side of this issue have God's approval. Your voice may be the one which causes a Mason to repent and accept Jesus. By not taking a side in this battle, a person is choosing to ignore the secret savior and the peril of lost souls. Can there be unity in the church while some follow a false savior? Is peace with the world and the appearance of unity so important that the church should tolerate another savior?

1. **MASONIC RITUAL.** Ritual is supposedly never written down. However, text virtually identical to this portion of ritual can be found on page 152 of the 1946 edition of **THE KENTUCKY MONITOR.** G.M.H.A. has been substituted for Grand Master Hiram Abiff.
2. **THE KENTUCKY MONITOR,** issued by Grand Lodge of Kentucky, pages XIV-XV, 1946 edition.
3. **THE MEANING OF MASONRY,** 1960, 1971 - CSA Press, page 95.
4. **MANUAL OF THE LODGE,** Charles E. Merrill Co., New York, 1862, page 96.
5. **AHIMAN REZON,** 1947 edition, Grand Lodge of South Carolina, pages 141-142.
6. **INDIANA MONITOR AND FREEMASON'S GUIDE,** 1993, Grand Lodge of Indiana, page 154.
7. *Ibid,* page 41.
8. *Ibid,* page 158.

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Documentation to substantiate the facts presented in this paper is available from Ephesians 5:11, Inc. Please send the following documentation:



- \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 Video tape of Masonic ritual reenacted by former Worshipful Master and other Ex-Masons for Jesus. The portions reenacted include the Legend of the Third Degree in which Hiram Abiff is killed, buried and raised from the grave. NTSC FORMAT
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$3 Bound Xerox copies of the pages of the Masonic books which contain the quotes used in the paper, **SHOULD WE IGNORE THEIR SECRET SAVIOR TO MAINTAIN CHURCH UNITY?**

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