I LEFT THE LODGE

DALE A. BYERS

REGULAR BAPTIST PRESS
1300 North Meacham Road
Schaumburg, Illinois 60173-4888
I LEFT THE LODGE

© 1988
Regular Baptist Press
Schaumburg, Illinois
Printed in U.S.A. All rights reserved

Second printing-1989
Contents

Preface 7
1. Why I Joined the Masons 9
2. Freemasonry on the Surface 13
3. Freemasonry Beneath the Surface 17
4. The Roots of Freemasonry 21
5. The Masonic View of the Bible 29
6. Freemasonry Is a Religion 33
7. Masonic Symbols Betray Christ 43
8. Masonry, Mormonism and Witchcraft 51
9. Masonic Oaths Are Ungodly 67
10. Masonry Belittles the Church of Jesus Christ 73
11. The Christian Does Not Need the Lodge 79
12. The Lodge Binds the Believer to Unbelievers 81
13. The Mason’s Obligation or the Christian’s Obligation? 83
14. The Final Argument for a Christian to Withdraw from the Masonic Lodge 85
Conclusion 87
Appendixes 89
Bibliography 135
Sample Demit Letter 137
Preface

For many years I have remained silent in regard to the Masonic Lodge. This silence has not been out of fear or shame but out of respect. I have many fine friends and loved ones who belong to the Lodge. It is not my desire to be offensive or harmful to them, but I must speak out on what the Lodge really is. I pray that those Masons who read this book will understand that this is not an attack on them as individuals but rather a disclosure of the organization and the principles upon which it is founded.

I was regularly initiated an Entered Apprentice on August 10, 1958, and passed to the Degree of a Fellow Craft on September 17, 1958, and raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason on September 22, 1958. These events marked my entrance into the Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in Veedersburg, Indiana, Lodge #491.

The greatest event of my life came, however, in February, 1961, when I surrendered my heart and life to Jesus Christ. Following my conversion I experienced a great struggle regarding my membership in the Lodge. Only after much thought and prayer did I withdraw. I was asked, “Why are you dropping out of the Masons?” Too many times my answer was not the best and lacked the real reason for my action. I would like to answer that question for you today: “Why must the Christian withdraw from the Masonic Lodge?”
Why I Joined the Masons

Veedersburg, Indiana, population 2,000, lies twenty miles from the Illinois border. Like most small towns, the residents there are tightly knit. I came from a middle-income family—my father being one of a long line of railroaders. Life at home was sweet and pleasant, and I thank God for the memories of that town. Those people shall always be cherished—they are part of my life, and I hold them dear.

There are certain experiences in our lives we never forget. When I was in my early teens my father, older brother and I began digging a basement under our house. Removing the dirt by wheelbarrow was a laborious undertaking, and my father became seriously ill and spent several months in the hospital. To add to this burden, rains came and the basement began to fill with water, causing the house to settle and begin to sink into the basement hole. The care of two teen sons, a house that was settling into a mudhole and the sickness of her husband placed a tremendous load on my sweet mother.

At this difficult time in my life I was introduced to the Masonic Lodge. I can still picture in my mind the group of men who came into our situation, pumped the water out, jacked the house up, set it on a proper foundation and poured the cement floors for our basement. Words cannot describe what that meant to our family.

My father recovered from his illness, the house remains intact on its foundation, and my brother and I have both matured through the process of raising our families, but that experience is still with me.
From that experience there was a family commitment to the Masonic Lodge. I personally desired to become a Mason, but I was required to wait, since a Mason must be one who is "freeborn, of lawful age, and coming well recommended." The lawful age at that time was twenty-one.

Following high school I met the girl who was to become my wife, and I pledged that my marriage would have the same commitment and happiness that my parents knew. The following July after we were married, I became a man of "lawful age." Applying for Lodge membership, I was regularly initiated an Entered Apprentice the following month, and the next month passed to the Degree of a Fellowcraft. Just a week later I was raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason. Normally it takes several weeks or even months to earn each degree. A Mason once stated that he did not see how I could learn the required materials in such a short time. However, the fact that I did learn it shows how important it was to me. These events marked my entrance into the Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in Veedersburg, Indiana, Lodge #491.

This might seem to be a good time to end my story and state that "all lived happily evermore." But the best was just beginning. Soon after we were married, my wife asked if we might start attending church, so we tried various churches in the city of Crawfordsville, where we had moved at the time of our wedding. My wife had been a member of Calvary Baptist Church in Danville, Illinois, where she lived prior to our marriage, so we also visited the Pleasant View Baptist Church. The people greeted us warmly. Some of them were employees of R. R. Donnelley Co., where I was an offset printer. Pastor Paul Hubble preached from the Bible with clarity and concern. The message of Jesus Christ was presented, and I was confronted with my need of salvation.

We became regulars at this church and began to see God working in our lives. As a boy I had visited my aunt for a week and attended a Nazarene church with her. There I heard for the first time the gospel and my need to be saved, but I did not come from a church family and there were many things I did not understand. So when Betty and I became regular attenders at the Baptist church it was quite an accomplishment.
One night we attended a revival meeting, and my wife walked to the front of the church and rededicated her life to Christ. She asked the church to pray for her husband. They prayed earnestly and fervently for me, but I did not respond. I felt I could not make a commitment to Christ unless there was some assurance that I could keep and honor the commitment.

Several months passed after my wife’s decision to follow Christ. Her example and patience with me made me realize she did have something I needed in my life. There was a hunger in my heart that I could not explain. I would awake often in the night and would sit on the porch smoking and watching the moon sail across the night sky. Several of the workers at Donnelley had witnessed to me of Christ in their lives. I knew they were praying for me.

Finally on a February Sunday morning as the invitation was given to trust Christ as Savior, I closed my hymnal and slipped to the front, where Pastor Hubble shared Bible verses and prayed with me. There was peace and an inner joy at letting God have His way in my life.

We left the church that morning and were enroute to my parents for a birthday dinner for my nephew. There was snow on the ground, and the road up the huge Covington hill west of Crawfordsville was covered with ice. As we approached the crest of a hill, a car going the opposite direction slid sideways into my lane. There was no stopping my little Rambler on those slick roads, and we plowed into the car broadside. This happened less than fifteen minutes after I had trusted Christ!

Pastor Hubble, learning of the accident, came immediately to the scene. I’ll never forget his words: “Skip, it’s a good thing you got right with God this morning!”

Fortunately there were no major injuries. What God did in my life that day was only a prelude to more blessings. I could not get enough of my Bible, praying or attending church. I am thankful for a pastor who was patient with my elementary questions. I followed the Lord in believer’s baptism and grew in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ as my Savior.

Some time later Pastor Hubble informed me that some
people had spoken about nominating me for a church office. But there was a clause in the church constitution stating that an officer could not be a member of a secret organization such as the Masonic Lodge. I had read that in the constitution myself and wondered why it was there. He explained some of the Biblical principles involved, prayed with me and left a tract by Dr. Robert T. Ketcham and some other literature about the Lodge.

Words could never describe the turmoil that went on in my heart and mind after this visit. There were three reasons why I thought I could not leave the Lodge. First, there was a love and respect for my father—the one man in my life whom I idealized. He was stronger, wiser, kinder and more joyful than any man I knew. Second, there was a respect and admiration for the men who had taken me into the Lodge. They were men I enjoyed. Third, I was a great debtor to the Lodge. They had come in to help at a time when it seemed no one else would. That strong sense of debt was hardest for me to face. I had not been a member of the Masonic Lodge for very many years, but there was a great depth of commitment.

Only after much thought and prayer did I withdraw and receive my demit. There were many repercussions from my family and friends. Often I was asked, “Why are you dropping out of the Lodge?” This book is an attempt to answer that question.
Freemasonry on the Surface

Many people have no knowledge of, or experience with, Masonry. If you are among this group, you need a brief description of the Lodge, a definition of Masonic terms and an explanation of the rites and ceremonies.

Basically the Lodge is a fraternal organization, with secret rites and ceremonies that supposedly teach men good moral principles. The Indiana Monitor and Freemason’s Guide is a handbook given to each person who becomes a Mason in that state. Other states have their own official Monitors. On pages 7 and 8, the Indiana Monitor states:

WHAT IS FREEMASONRY?

For more than two centuries learned craftsmen have ardently sought an accurate, all-inclusive definition for Freemasonry. Our most eminent savants have devoted time, effort and verbiage to the commendable task of expressing in a few, simple words that which is Masonry. Some have almost succeeded. But always, that vital spark which is the very touchstone of our Craft has eluded them.

There is inherent in this ancient and honorable institution an intangible, indefinable element which apparently lies beyond the power of words. Without it, no definition of Masonry can be considered complete.

We may find it impossible to define this elusive component in words, but the understanding Mason knows it is there just as certainly as he knows there is a G.A.O.T.U. He is therefore satisfied to accept at face value one or
more of those definitions which, although admittedly incomplete, most closely approach the ideal. Perhaps therein lies one explanation of the power which Masonry exerts upon the hearts of its votaries, who are thus bound together by that "mystic tie" which never the tongue of man shall speak nor the pen of man shall write.

Officially, Masonry is defined as consisting of a course of moral instruction, illustrated by types, emblems and allegorical figures. The old English Constitutions state it in this manner, "a system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols." Webster says an allegory "represents by suggestive resemblance"; and a symbol is "a visible sign or representation of an idea."

Right Worshipful Brother Charles C. Hunt, Grand Secretary Emeritus of the Grand Lodge of Iowa, A.F. & A.M., proposes the following definition, after an extensive analysis of opinions of other eminent Masonic scholars, "Freemasonry is an organized society of men symbolically applying the principles of operative masonry and architecture to the science and art of building." This especially distinguishes our Fraternity from all other organizations which teach a system of morality.

In the March 8, 1987 Grand Rapids Press, an entire page was devoted to defining and explaining Freemasonry, written by the illustrious potentate, Robert R. Wagner (see Appendix A). There are three basic degrees: the Entered Apprentice, the Fellowcraft, and the Master Mason. All three degrees must be obtained before a man is considered a Mason. This group of degrees is known as the "Blue Lodge" because of its universality.

There are various degrees and rites and organizations within Freemasonry, but they are all built upon the foundation of the Blue Lodge. For example, the Eastern Star is a branch of Masonry designed for the participation of both husband and wife. There is the DeMolay for the young men and the Rainbow Girls, Triangle and Job’s Daughters for the young ladies.

There are two appendant bodies through which a Master Mason may advance in degrees. They are the York Rite and
the Scottish Rite. In the Scottish Rite a Mason may advance to the earned 32d degree. There is also a 33d degree, which is an honorary degree bestowed upon especially worthy Masons who have accomplished outstanding work in such fields as politics and religion. For example, former president Gerald Ford and Norman Vincent Peale are both 33d degree Masons.

In the York Rite, a Master Mason may become a member of three bodies—a chapter of Royal Arch Masons, a council of Royal and Select Masters, and a commandery of Knights Templar. (For more information about the York Rite, see Appendix A.)

The Shriners are well known. When a man reaches the 32d degree in the Scottish Rite or the Knights Templar in the York Rite, he may petition to become a Shriner. Every Shriner is a Mason. (For additional information about the Shriners see Appendix A.)

A key point to remember is that many people have become involved with Freemasonry thinking they have united with only a fraternal organization. If you are considering becoming involved with Freemasonry, be sure you know all the facts.
Freemasonry Beneath the Surface

Why cannot a Christian properly belong to an organization that on the surface seems so innocent, so doctrinally neutral, so philanthropic?

My purpose is to demonstrate that Masonry is a part of the system of this world, which worships Lucifer and is in opposition and rebellion to the true and living God. This ungodly system is powered, designed and controlled by Satan, who is called “the god of this world” (see 2 Cor. 4:4). There is an ordered system by which Satan controls and manipulates the wicked affairs of men and nations (see Eph. 6:12). Satan manifests himself as an “angel of light” (see 2 Cor. 11:14,15), giving an appearance of good—but it is only an appearance. Masonry is part of that system. It appears (as does Satan) to be a ministry of light, but it is of spiritual darkness. No amount of good works and social endeavors can conceal the darkness of Masonry. There is more power and influence in this system than most of us are willing to recognize.

For years there has been great speculation concerning the involvement of Freemasonry in governmental affairs of this nation as well as other nations of the world. Consider the markings on the one dollar bill of U.S. currency. On the backside of the dollar bill are two seals of Masonic identification. It cannot be denied that the pyramid with the eye on top is definitely Masonic in origin. The pyramid represents the unfinished Temple, and the eye is symbolic of the “grand architect
of the universe." The other seal contains an eagle with its wings spread.

Some have claimed that this eagle had thirty-two feathers on its right wing and thirty-three feathers on the left wing, relating to the earned 32d degree and the honorary 33d degree. It is most clear that there are thirty-two feathers on the right wing, but the thirty-three feathers on the left are not as discernible. The tail of the eagle is well spread, displaying nine feathers which correspond with the nine degrees of the York Rite. Above the head of the eagle is a series of thirteen stars arranged to form the Star of David. King David plays a very significant role in Masonry. There were thirteen colonies which formed the Union, but the number thirteen may also have some Masonic significance. In the eagle's left claw are thirteen arrows and in the eagle's right claw is a branch bearing thirteen berries. Thirteen Masons organized and built the first Shrine temple in 1872, which is the Mecca Temple in New York City. The banner, "e pluribus unum," has also been used in Freemasonry. The motto at the bottom, "novus ordo seclorum" is translated as "a new order of ages" or "new world order." The word world comes from the Latin root from which we get "secular," which means world or worldly. This new order is opposed to all that is God's given order.2

While it is impossible to prove these symbols have Masonic associations, there have been others who have noticed the obvious connections with Masonry. In 1954, the University of Texas doctoral candidate James David Carter wrote a dissertation ("Freemasonry in Texas: Background, History, and Influence to 1846") that summarized further significance of the Great Seal.3

On the front of the dollar bill is a picture of George Washington, who is honored by the Lodge because he was a Mason, as were other U.S. presidents and leaders.4 (A list of presidents who were Masons is given in Appendix B.) The Masonic Holy Bible gives this picture of the Mason's influence in American history:

Many in the early history of Scotland, England, and France are reported, with reasonable authenticity, to
have been Masons. The great majority of the fifty-six signers of the American Declaration of Independence were Masons; George Washington was famed as a Mason; it is authentically reported that most of the generals in the Revolutionary War were Masons; fifteen of the men who have occupied the White House at Washington as presidents have been Masons, and the two others had proposed to unite with the Order, but were overtaken by death before these proposals were carried out. 5

Whether or not Masonic involvement in our government's affairs can be proved, we must consider the following statement from a 33d degree Mason:

When the Mason learns that the key to the warrior on the block is the proper application of the dynamo of living power, he has learned the mystery of his Craft. The seething energies of Lucifer are in his hands and before he may step onward and upward, he must prove his ability to properly apply [this] energy. 6

Thus we see the connection between “the god of Masonry” and “the god of this world.”

It must be remembered that Masonry is an organism that is universal in scope. Masonry cannot always be measured by what we observe in America. It can be compared with Roman Catholicism which takes on different natures in various countries, depending on its strength. It has been said that Catholicism is a lamb when it is in the minority, a fox when it is in equality and a roaring lion when it is in the majority. Likewise, Masonry has a different nature in various countries. For example, where the occult is more readily accepted you will find Masonry taking on that flavor.

Does all of this sound absurd? Then you do not know the nature of Masonry or the extent and organization of Satan, “the god of this world.”

2 Ralph Epperson, Secret Societies, (Oklahoma City: Southwest Radio Church, n.d.), p. 35.


4 Rev. C. G. Finney, in The Character, Claims, and Practical Workings of Freemasonry (p. 222), quotes a letter from President George Washington, dated Sept. 25, 1798, in which Washington declares he has little to do with the Masonic Lodge.

the Masonic Holy Bible, according to H. L. Haywood in Freemasonry and the Bible (Chicago: The Masonic History Co., 1947), p. 9.