

Do Worshipful Masters Worship the Master?

By Daniel A. Witcher

Masonic Rites & Wrongs: An Examination of Freemasonry by Steven Tsoukalas, P&R, 1995

Contra Mundum, No. 15, Final Print Issue

Copyright © 1996 Daniel A. Witcher

Steve Tsoukalas introduces this work by explaining that he is a son of a former Freemason and that this work was spawned in love for his father. Tsoukalas spent nine years in research and study into Freemasonry and reports that his father, prior to his death in 1989, renounced Freemasonry. Tsoukalas explains that his purpose is twofold: 1) to demonstrate to both Masons and Christians that Freemasonry is indeed a religion and by its religious nature is contrary to the claims of Christ and the theology of the Christian Church and 2) to challenge Masons and masonic scholars to consider the arguments presented and understand why Christianity is opposed to Freemasonry.

Masonic Rites & Wrongs, in a precise and systematic method, cites various rituals and monitors from Freemasonry's Grand Lodges, draws upon the conclusions of various masonic scholars concerning the cited rituals and monitors, draws similar and parallel conclusions from his own study, and then shows how the conclusions conflict with Christianity and stand in direct opposition to Scripture.

Tsoukalas does an outstanding job through research and direct quotes in exposing the religious fiber of Freemasonry. An extensive use of sources uncovered by painstaking research vividly allows the masonic rituals to define themselves. One example is the following quote from masonic scholar Carl H. Claudy:

It is the Masonic way of setting forth the simplest and most profound of truths which Masonry has made so peculiarly her own that there is a way, there does run a road on which men "of all creeds and every race" may travel happily together, be their differences of religious faith what they may. In his private devotions a man may petition God or Jehovah, Allah or Buddha, Mohammed or Jesus; he may call upon God of Israel or the Great First Cause. In the Masonic Lodge he hears the humble petition to the Great Architect of the

Universe, finding his own deity under that name. (*Introduction to Freemasonry*, 3 Vols. Claudy, Washington, D.C. The Temple Publisher, 1959, 1:37)

The same precise scholarship is employed by Tsoukalas to define Freemasonry including the degrees of the Blue Lodge and of the Scottish Rite. *The Rites & and Wrongs of Freemasonry* confronts and challenges Freemasonry's false hope of salvation as presented in many of the masonic rituals and creeds; Freemasonry's trinity of universal soul, thought, and word; and Freemasonry's baptism of candidates.

Throughout the work Tsoukalas gives insight to the difficulty of dialogue between Christians and Freemasons. Very few Freemasons, even though they are encouraged to learn and apply the "knowledge of Freemasonry", actually read and study doctrinal books and writings from their leading authorities. The Mason may not be a Christian. In order to be received into the Lodge one has only to express belief in a "Supreme Being", so he may be a Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, Jew, Unitarian, etc. A Mason may claim to be a Christian but not prove to be one when pressed on essential Biblical doctrines. A Mason may indeed be a Christian but be ignorant of the doctrines of Freemasonry. These and other elements hinder much dialogue.

Tsoukalas concludes that Freemasonry is not the only cancer plaguing the Christian Church; however, it is one of several which must be addressed both personally and corporately. Personally, not man claiming to be a Christian should affiliate with the Lodge (Galations 1:6-10). Corporately, the church or denomination that confronts this issue faces a long, arduous and painful task; long because a thorough study of Freemasonry takes an incredible amount of time; arduous because Freemasonry's primary sources are not easy to obtain; and painful because some of those for whom we care will no doubt be angry at what they deem to be unjustifiable intolerance. It is always true that when the Church presents the error of other religions and the truth of Christ it loses some people, but if some leave the Church and continue with the Lodge it will be made plain that they were never actually in Christ. It is the truth that sets us free; however, the truth also divides. Truth is the vehicle by which God leads some to repentance and some to harden their hearts. Let us stand fast.

Having grown up in the southern highland region of Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina, I have immediate family and numerous close relations who are Freemasons. Freemasonry is quite prolific in this region. Until eight years ago I had not know much concerning the mysteries of this organization. The 16th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America after a study which spanned several years adopted and issued a report which concludes that Freemasonry is incompatible with Christianity, warns the Church of the perils of Freemasonry, and encourages those within the PCA who are also Masons to reconsider their relationship with the Lodge.

Approximately one year after the 16th General Assembly issued its report I was involved in a situation that caused me to seriously examine Freemasonry. The PCA church of

which I was a member at the time called a joint meeting of the Session and Diaconate to hear to hear a Ruling elder who was also a Worshipful Master in a local Lodge rebut the General Assembly's report. After what had been approximately an hour of hearing explanation that the General Assembly had acted in ignorance of Freemasonry, I was somewhat confused. I asked the Worshipful Master/Ruling Elder what I thought was a very straight forward and simple question.

Does not Freemasonry teach that a Buddhist can come to God through Buddha, a Muslim through Mohammed, and a Christian through Jesus Christ?

I was very surprised at the answer that I was given. The Worship Master/Ruling Elder in a very warm and sincere manner and in a very surprisingly un-apologetic manner stated that yes this is exactly what Freemasonry teaches. Suddenly recognizing what appeared to be the core of Freemasonry, I asked a follow-up question.

How can a professing Christian justify such a doctrine that denies the exclusive atonement of Jesus Christ.

The Worshipful Master/Ruling Elder at that point lost his composure and proceeded to berate me as to trouble maker trying to create problems for him in his presentation.

So began my personal study and query into the doctrines of Freemasonry as contrasted to the Word of God. My personal conclusions were very similar to the conclusions reached by Steven Tsoukalas—that the theological teaching of Freemasonry and the exclusive claims of Christ cannot be mixed. They are mutually exclusive: the latter being the truth, the former leading to a false and eternally hopeless state.