

Free Masonry: Very Brief Overview

By [Billy C. Sichone](#)

Central Africa Baptist University

Introduction

Free masonry has generated a lot of speculation and debate within and without the church. While some contend that it is a harmless association or club of individuals much like the Rotary club or The Gideon international, others assert that the clandestine organisation is evil, yea, satanic at the core bent to wreck much harm. But what is the exact truth about organisation? What exactly does it stand for and what are its principle tenets? Who are the principle actors and architects, at least from a historical perspective? This paper highlights some aspects related to the points raised above so that we may have an objective view of this organisation. This author does not give an exhaustive treatment of the subject matter but refers to the major points that the Christian should know about and how best to respond, given the expanding nature of the Free Masonry enterprise. Moreover, much more information about this hidden cult is increasingly now available in public spaces such as the internet but the reader needs to know that what we know about Masonry is still but a tip in the iceberg; the bulk of secrets still lying far beneath the water surface. Increasingly, it is progressively sanitized because some of its adherents include a number of the most prominent mortals in public life today. Presidents, CEOs, Governors, Astronauts, venerable academics, Chancellors, Royalty or celebrities etc. number among this great throng. Even more troubling are the deep inroads this movement has made within Christian circles, offering much success, fame or prominence, in some cases. It's veins, arteries and capillaries run deep. It is high time to objectively assess this entity using Biblical lenses. We kick start this investigative excursion by defining terms; it only makes sense.

Definition and Description

As hinted at earlier in our write up, Free Masonry has evoked varied reactions within religious circles because it comes across as an entity that can fit in several contexts. While some masons freely and publicly claim to be such, many of them remain anonymous and thus found or littered all over the world and in various entities including on church boards! Some, perhaps even lead churches or are powerful financial moguls garbed with a lot of philanthropic works. Given the

above description, we may loosely define Free Masonry as *that entity whose members are initiated by oath and practice rituals consistent with their tenets*. Admittedly, this is not an exhaustive definition but gives several aspects related to this entity. For one thing, it has members from all walks of life and are initiated by oath pleading to serve the “*brotherhood*” that periodically meet at the masonic Lodge where they practice rituals around their Temple. For another thing, these Masons hold that this is a noble cause that they stand for and should be extended to all people but if they are to be part of the family, they must be initiated and accept some form of principles. Thus, Free masons will be found about every institution in the world whether religious or not. They are often financially sound and thus wield a lot of influence and authority given their financial potency.

Brief History and Nature of Free Masonry

The history of Free-masonry is traced to several centuries ago¹, probably in the nineteenth century or earlier. Mitchell & Raster (1723), quoting Dr. Anderson, claims that Masonry is far more ancient than thought, as far back as the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11), through Solomon and down to the present day! Masonry has interestingly confusing sides to it because it seems to claim allegiance to the standard Old Testament narratives as relates to Creation, Noah’s flood or some such narrative without raising objections, of course attaching different meanings to the same words we all use. A naive Christian may potentially be waylaid thus led astray (Mitchell 1723 p 23 Mitchell (1723) further claims that authors look at Masonry from different angles, it’s rise, progress within or outside the Biblical narrative. The exact dates of it’s origins remain inconclusive to this day and obviously into the future. Be that as it may, different orders and units have evolved from different parts of the world, each with a unique flavour. In an age when masons worked with their hands either at rocks or iron, masons diligently worked at their trade, generated a lot of money, diversifying in the process and thus became important. A Mason is simply one who works on a trade/skill using their hands (at least historically). Out of this seemingly harmless and noble trade evolved a system and institution over the years that we have come to know as *the Free Masons* except that they are more clandestine and will rarely claim to belong to this institution. To become a member, one has to be initiated by taking an oath and by further subscribing to prescribed cult practices. What exactly do the Free Masons stand for? Simply stated, Masons are syncretic and polytheistic in nature. They believe that anyone outside their circle is in darkness needing to be enlightened with some secret knowledge which knowledge leads to salvation. Thus, a person initiated into their circle is said to experience a ‘*new birth*’ of sorts

¹ The Masonry site (<http://www.msana.com/historyfm.asp>) suggests dates between 1390 and 1717 listing some prominent historical figures. The site also states what Masons focus on, personal study (education), self improvement, Philanthropy (social betterment), good will to all people. The American Masons Fraternity claim to give out over \$ 1.5 million daily for various social causes giving the impression that Free Masonry is a good and harmless cause or movement.

and from then on expected to devote themselves to their secret lodge community, education, good works seeking the general good of mankind, while espousing distinct masonic rituals and doctrine. Today, Free Masons number over four million worldwide and still steadily increasing (Decker, n.d.). In a pluralistic and syncretic post modern context, masonry flourishes very well and is poised to greater heights, an awakening of sorts.

The Tenets, Source(s) of Masonry Doctrine Practice²

Free Masonry is somewhat derived from polytheistic Gnostic teaching (though in some contexts claims to have Biblical sources especially after the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11) as mentioned earlier and comes across with New Age tenets (see our separate paper on the New Age Movement: NAM for a detailed treatment of this movement; Sichone 2021). It has evolved over the years, drawing Temple rituals from the Bible as well as other religions and yet in the end becomes antagonistic to the Christian holy scriptures. Free masons hold several tenets which essentially are at variance with scripture. Below is a summary of some tenets of this cult:

1. It holds that salvation lies within the individual person not in another. This means that a person does not need to repent from sin but awaken the spirit within. Thus, Jesus Christ, although a good man and perfect example, is not the saviour but the individual person themselves as they realise their inner potential thus activating their own salvation. Evangelical conversion or regeneration are foreign to Masonry. Education and training makes the difference not subjective experiences. Outward reformation not inward spiritual transformation is what counts in Masonry.
2. Free Masons believe that each person is potentially divine, and will only realise their full potential when they activate this latent divine spirit within, having imbibed some special truth or knowledge.
3. As much as Jesus is divine, so can a person become divine! All they have to do is trigger the divinity in them and then they develop into a masonic master.
4. Free masonry demands that a person joins the community by an oath and perform several practices at the Masonic Lodge. Masons are difficult to identify in some contexts but this becomes manifest and evident during a Mason's funeral because of the rituals and peculiar dress that their living colleagues wear on the occasion.
5. Masons look at and interpret scriptures in different ways from standard sound Christian hermeneutical principles. In effect, their views about Christ and even

² Although the Masonic service sight claims that Masonry does not have any dogmas or theology of any sort!

Satan are very different from the scriptural authorial intent. From this, we can see and safely conclude that free masonry is satanic at its core!

6. The source of Masonic doctrine, according to Ed Decker (n.d.), is what is known as *Morals and Dogma*, written by Albert Pike. Further, Decker reveals that Masonry draws its teachings and powers from three deities namely Joa (*Jehovah*): Bul (*Baal*): and On (*Osiris*). This is clearly polytheism and anti-Christian in nature. Syncretism and idolatry are strictly forbidden by God's word.³
7. Masonry is an especially reclusive and clandestine entity harbouring many secrets (including clandestine blood ceremonial rites & oath) in house. Only the initiated are privy to insider information contingent upon their level within the cult hierarchy. Mitchell (1723 p 17) affirms this claim. We quote his exact words here: "Free Masonry was strictly a secret Society for more than two thousand years; its members were forbidden to publish any thing, either in relation to its origin or teaching; and yet, throughout all that period, its history was transmitted from generation to generation, unspotted by time, and unadulterated by the sacrilegious hand of the innovator. Nor is this difficult to be accounted for, when it is remembered that the legends-the traditions of the Order, have ever constituted a portion of the teaching, intimately connected with, and inseparable from, the ritual of the Lodge room. And these instructions have not only been communicated to all initiates, but they have been required so to impress them on their minds as to be able to teach in turn."

This is an indicator of a potential cult, secretive and abounding with ceremonial rites.

Potent Dangers of Free Masonry

From a Biblical Evangelical perspective, Free masonry is a cult of satanic origin. It holds views antagonistic to scripture as earlier highlighted. Once a person comes under its grip, it is very difficult for them to be set free, worst of all, they will least suspect that they have been brought into bondage to teachings of men. The bondage is so thorough that one's world view is extensively corrupted, resulting in impaired judgement. No amount of persuasion, even in the light of clear evidence, would dissuade them from what they have believed; after all, it affords them the opportunity of becoming divine. This is classic *pantheism* leading to a rejection of a personal God, apart from the divine self. It further renders redemption in Christ as useless, illogical or of non-effect effectively reducing the Holy Scriptures to mere writings of humans. This cult is selective in what it accepts as true (i.e. from the Bible) and in another sense is a syncretic combination of several religions in one. The fact that free masonry stands

³ Refer to Ed Decker's book 'Freemasonry: An introduction to Heresy' pp2

opposed to biblical truth is enough ground for any saint to stay away from its alluring but toxic environment.

Why Christians Should Oppose Free Masonry

Christians should oppose the masonry advance firstly because it is anti-God and anti-scripture in all its stands for. It may have a semblance of tolerating the Christian faith and the scriptures when in fact it stands diametrically opposed to the truth. Many well meaning Christians have been captivated into its mould and sadly very few ever realise that they have been taken back into bondage of sorts. They return to obeying rules and regulations of men, rituals and practices that are not essential to salvation. This cult has a tendency of focusing on the material. From our research, a number of USA Presidents have been Masons though associated to the prevailing religion at the time. Some leading Christian University Presidents have been Masons. Zambia has had highly influential and some what extremely wealthy Presidential candidates, Ministers or Judges in the past, present or even possibly into the future that were alleged Masons. While some faked Christianity, others were either indifferent, imbibed other religions (like Islam for instance) or actually were authentically regenerate, though needing spiritual maturity (see my book on Dr Levy Mwanawasa). What ever the case (and each has a right to be in the Presidential office), each has an impact on generations to come. These are sobering prospects. More horrifying, Masons are said to have planted their people within Churches (across the world) holding office! One wonders what their agenda is but these are extremely troubling prospects. Is it any wonder that very few prominent preachers today preach the pure gospel? If they were clear of Masonic influence, they would like Paul, determine to no nothing except Jesus Christ and Him Crucified (I Corinthians 2:1-3). Sadly, many preachers would rather highly and frequently wax eloquent about social issues (important as this is), motivational speaking and scarcely directly attacking sin or pointing men to the cross for salvation. Would we then be wrong to conclude that they are equally Masonry's highly venerated faithful children? We doubt we would be wrong if we thus concluded.

What Others Have Said About Masonry

Many have written about this cult, from different perspectives. Some were once deeply entrenched in it before they were liberated from the clutches of its great grip. Ed Decker is one of the people that spent many years within the vale of Masonry passed down to him from a 175 year history. He writes with conviction and gives deep insight. Ed states that free masonry is a deadly menacing cult that has wormed its way into everyday life, worse in the Church. Not only does it lie on wrong teaching, Masonry is fluid and has potential to hijack the Church of the lord Jesus Christ if not checked. It is anti-biblical, anti Christian, Satanic and sealed by an oath once one joins that community. Furthermore, this cult does not

support holiness in preference for good works as well as promoting pantheistic idolatry. Though the Masonry site claims that the movement is not a religion but supports religion, it is essentially one because its core tenets amount to a doctrinal belief statement.⁴ Another, Mitchell J.W.S (1723) has written an extensive detailed work giving helpful insights into Masonry. Basing his work on Dr Anderson, the work makes a testing reading giving rare perspectives that the modern person may not realise or know. Further, this work highlights rarely considered aspects such as Masonry's claim to Noah and the Tower of Babel right down to the present time. Of course, Masonry has not remained static nor stationary, for that matter but rather has evolved in time. This work is worth reading. Other sources on New Age Movement, Gnosticism or other thought systems sync well with Masonry. Dr Pollitt has done the Church great service in authoring his 1996 land mark book published by the Banner of Truth. The Christian needs to meticulously investigate this deadly cult, assess its potency and deleterious effects on the Church and nation at large.

Lasting lessons from Free Masonry

Having briefly highlighted some aspects of this ancient cult and may we say, religion, it is fitting to wind up this discussion in point form before we proceed to a conclusion. The points that follow highlight some salient take home points for the reader. We harvested them from various sources both from published literature, the internet and interviews with people having first hand experience with Masons:

1. Free Masonry is a Gnostic based cult and religion. It is generally accepted in some contexts despite its clandestine operations and origins. It often runs in families for many generations and difficult to leave unless someone is liberated by the glorious gospel of peace. The gospel of Christ is a hammer, potent enough to shatter thoughts of men. It is for a fact, the power of God (Romans 1:16-17). Christians should therefore diligently & confidently share the gospel without intimidation.
2. According to many saints (and rightly so) & from Masonry's essential nature, the cult is Satanic in nature and origin, deriving its doctrines, teaching and authority from false gods such as *Baal* and others. *Lucifer* (Satan) is considered a source of liberty, light, free will unlike what the Christian scriptures would teach. In a relative post modern context, many attempt to sanitize masonry claiming that right information is now widely available. Others minimize its deadly nature, are indifferent or simply dismiss it as an obscure, fragile passing fad. This is a deadly mistake for before people realize, Masonry will stand hands and shoulders next to orthodox Christianity. God forbid that such a day should come!

⁴ Refer to the Masonic Service Association site at: <http://www.msana.com/religion.asp>, accessed on 14/03/2013

3. Masonry is extremely subtle having weaved it's way into about all institutions effectively controlling some sections of the church. It comes across as harmless when in fact the opposite. Apart from public life, it's influence is within the Church!
4. It is pantheistic, holding that people can develop to be divine. Salvation rests on the individual person rather than God, thus the adherents to this religion are encouraged to become Christ's rather than believe in Jesus Christ for salvation.
5. The religion⁵ opposes the scriptures and is anti-Christian in nature. Polytheism and paganism essentially lace this religion, although it appears to refer to other religious deities like *Baal*, *Allah*, *Buddha* and even *Yahweh* among others!
6. Most Masons are respectable people in society, well accomplished, wealthy and stable who have been initiated into Masonry by blood oaths which they keep to the end of their lives unless liberated by the gospel of Christ. An authentic Mason will never at anytime renounce Masonry. If they do, their days are numbered on this terrestrial ball.
7. Despite the mounting evidence of the destructive nature and satanic roots of this movement, adherents will not abandon ship for any reason. This point closely connects to the previous one. The saint is encouraged to state the truth while remaining at its basic tenets in preaching the gospel.
8. Because Masons can attend any religion of their choice while still remaining devout to their cult, they have easily made inroads into the church working their way while carrying a clandestine evil agenda including hijacking churches. Islam is not spared either. Being ecumenical in nature at the core, it can easily weave its way into any context with damaging effects in the long run. In short, it abhors dogma but flourishes in a fluid relative context. This '*Fraternity*', as the Masonry service site often refers to the movement, is a great danger for the Christian Church today.
9. The syncretic nature of this cult allows it to be ecumenical and thus survive in whatever context it finds itself. That explains why it can comfortably absorb Christian, Islamic and other teachings. Recall that the mason makes reference to *Allah*, *Buddha*, *Baal* and at times the Christian 'god' depending on the origin or context of that masonry unit. For example, the Scottish Masonry has a lot of Christian doctrinal influence but remains pagan at it's very core. The saint should beware.
10. Free Masonry is divided into orders to which individuals are initiated and accepted when they take pledges most of which are veiled in secrecy. A

⁵ Although Masons deny the assertion that the organization is a religion at all but a way of life open to all people irrespective of their back grounds, creed and values.

member so initiated is not allowed to divulge such secrets to the outside world (Mitchell 1723 p 17). Orders such as the *Eastern Star*, *the Adoptive order* and others rank prominently among the Masons with a long history of secrecy and philanthropy (Decker n.d.). The Christian may be fooled into believing that mere oaths and resultant good works would do no harm to their faith. What could be further from the truth?!

11. Akin to Roman Catholicism, Free Masonry has several Orders within its ambit/wings which have differing flavours and inclinations but meant to strengthen the entire global association. The Order of the *Eastern Star* for instance caters for Women needs as well.
12. Masons know each other and always support each other. For instance, they look out for each other offering business deals/contracts to each other. Big Government contracts for example, are designated to fellow Masons. If one of them in a prominent public office, say President or CEO, the cult ensures their member succeed. Wealth, good quality life soon permeates the context, remember that one of the tenets of masonry is doing philanthropic good. This is humanistic materialism.
13. Once in a position of authority, Masons ensure a fellow Mason succeeds them, a kind of succession planning of sorts. This is often easy because they often have/wield economic power to turn the tides.
14. Interestingly, historically, most of prominent people around the world have been Masons. We are talking State Presidents, Royalty (Kings & Queens), University Presidents/Chancellors, Famous celebrities (including some clergy me !). Remember that Masons place a high premium on Education, financial success or control of local economy.
15. Masons are to be found about everywhere whether within Abrahamic faiths, Eastern religions (e.g. Buddhism), secular world, philanthropic groupings, Academia or any other. They take up prominent places, given their hard work and mutual support within their "congregations." Some Churches have been hijacked with leadership positions taken by Masons. Even surprising have been some of the most prominent preachers of yesterday and today that subscribed to Masonry. Masons can be in both small or mega churches, aligning themselves to a particular denomination say Baptist, SDA, Roman Catholic or Charismatic/Pentecostal etc., but never renounce their allegiance or oath to the lodge. Once Masons secretly infiltrate and subsequently hijack a church or denomination, death/decline of that entity logically follows in time. First, the spiritual vitality, followed by neglected prayer before public scandals or lethargy set in. Churches must diligent watch & pray! Other Masons take on heroic roles such as being part of the famous Astronauts corps or cutting edge Jet fighter test pilots. These are daring but highly visible roles. Note that NOT ALL astronauts or test Pilots are necessarily Masons but among them exist faithful masons. Others are excessively rich, financially stable, wealthy

(i.e. business moguls, business leaders, economists, strategic planners etc.) and Philanthropic. These are materialistically naturalistic, often sporting a humanistic world view.

16. Some sources claim that Masonry and the *illuminati* are connected. They oppose Biblical Christianity preferring materialism deceptively couched in gnostic dress. Some further claim that legends like Tertullian of old belonged to the *illuminati* cult.
17. It is difficult to spot, identify or detect Masons (hence the desperate need for spiritual discernment) because they are not only highly secretive about the movement but easily diffuse into given contexts. Only at key points say, funerals, do people finally realize.
18. Masons have a unique way of communicating, through signs, artefacts, dress (e.g. signature rings, badges or bracelets etc.), signals, posture etc., with each other in the public square. As they grow within the system, they are even able to detect or tell to which masonic order/sect/cottage/lodge a given adherent belongs to, much like Catholics knowing to which grouping, say Augustinian, Jesuit or some such “tribe” a Roman Catholic individual belongs to.
19. Not all educated, wealthy, rich, philanthropic or famous people are necessarily Masons or part of the *illuminati*. We should firmly desist from stereotyping. However, what we have presented in this paper are some of the helpful key indicators. In one Church in Zambia, a church member was cautioned against maligning Masonry because the Pastor of that same Church was likely a Mason themselves! We cannot tell hence the need for an active discerning spirit.

Conclusion

Free Masonry is here, strong and alive. It continuously weaves its way into various fabrics of everyday life, the church not excepted. Being slippery and clandestine in its nature, this Gnostic-based deadly teaching has adherents from literally everywhere, including within the church hierarchy, which itself, is an entry point to hijack or side track the Church. The spiritual saint must vigorously oppose this teaching as well as warn others from falling into its pale.

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