

Orthodoxy

“What communion
hath light



with darkness?”

and Heresy

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH AND FREEMASONRY

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A basic tactic of various groups, movements, organizations, etc., the character, teachings, and practices of which are completely incompatible with our Orthodox Faith, is the attempt to manipulate people by means of disinformation. This tactic is employed *par excellence* by Freemasonry.

A constant refrain of various Freemasons is the assertion that they are simply a philosophical organization of a non-religious nature, the aims of which are to search for the truth and to promote social and individual progress. They endeavor to disseminate this view by every suitable means and at every opportunity.

In fact, they believe that one can be a Christian and a Freemason at the same time.

• But is such a thing feasible? Is it possible for someone to be an Orthodox Christian and at the same time a Freemason?

For our Orthodox Faith such a thing is not only impossible, but even inconceivable.

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In this regard it is helpful for us to remember that the Church has repeatedly stated its position on Freemasonry in a clear, responsible, and forthright manner.

- Here are some typical examples:

(1) The Inter-Orthodox Commission which met at the Monastery of Vatopedi on the Holy Mountain from June 8–23, 1930, characterized Freemasonry as “an anti-Christian and erroneous system.”

(2) On October 12, 1933, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Church of Greece emphasized, *inter alia*, that Freemasonry “is reminiscent of the ancient pagan mystery religions or cults, from which it is descended and of which it is a continuation and a revival.”¹

(3) The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Church of Greece reiterated, in November of 1972, that

Freemasonry is demonstrably a mystery religion, an outgrowth of the ancient idolatrous religions, entirely alien and antithetical to the revealed, saving truth of our Holy Church. The Church states categorically that the identity of a Freemason under any form whatsoever is incompatible with the identity of a Christian member of the Body of Christ.²

(4) The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Church of Greece, in October of 1996, reckoned Freemasonry to be “a pagan religion” incompatible with Christianity and characterized it “as a congregation of the Antichrist.”³

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Various Masonic circles maintain that these crystal-clear Orthodox statements are inaccurate, unfounded, and speculative proclamations and are, in all that they assert, the fruit of intense prejudice.

But does this contention have any validity? Without doubt, it does not. On the contrary, such protestations constitute yet another example of Masonic disinformation, for the simple reason that the pagan, occult, and anti-Christian nature of Freemasonry can easily be demonstrated from a multitude of Masonic documents and testimonies.

¹ Ἐκκλησία, No. 48 (December 4, 1933), p. 1.

² Ἐκκλησία, Vol. I (1973), p. 17.

³ Ἐκκλησία, Vol. LXXIII (1996), pp. 673–674.

In proof of this, we shall quote illustrative excerpts from the *Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία τῆς Ἐλευθέρας Τεκτονικῆς* (Encyclopedia of Freemasonry), on the one hand because it is published by the “Homer” Masonic Lodge [Homer Lodge 59, Provincial Grand Lodge of Athens], and on the other hand because the editor of the different entries cites the views of other Freemasons, both Greek and foreign, in such a way as to render the work in question a representative specimen of its genre.

A. The presence of occult elements in Freemasonry

With regard to the higher degrees of Freemasonry, we read, in the Masonic encyclopedia in question:

Its higher degrees are nothing other than a summation of the different forms of ‘esotericism’ which affords the Mason a broad avenue for inquiry into the realm of the supersensible.⁴

- On the same page there is also the following statement:

It remains incontrovertible that the entire structure of the degrees above the third encompasses a very great part of both the science and the mysticism of the hermetic tradition. It would otherwise be impossible to explain or understand these degrees, their symbols, and their allegories.⁵

Now, do the testimonies end here? No.

- We will cite yet another characteristic testimony out of many. This one contains an admission of the presence in Freemasonry of the Jewish esoteric tradition of Kabbalah.

“The Kabbalah is used in very many of the higher degrees of Masonry, and entire Masonic teachings are based on its principles.”⁶ Elsewhere it is stated: “An attentive study of the different Masonic degrees demonstrates the indisputable influence of the Kabbalistic tradition on Freemasonry.”⁷

⁴ Nestoras Laskares (ed.), *Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία τῆς Ἐλευθέρας Τεκτονικῆς* (Athens: 1951), p. 127.

⁵ *Ibid.* Cf. p. 103.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 507.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 510.

B. The presence of pagan elements in Freemasonry

Equally striking are the testimonies in the Masonic encyclopedia in question concerning the presence of a pagan element in Freemasonry.

- We will cite two passages in support of this:

However, no one who attentively examines the ways in which resurrection or a return to life were taught through symbols and rituals in the ancient mystery religions and are taught even today in Masonic initiation can deny that Freemasonry derives from the ancient mysteries.⁸

- With the same assurance and clarity it is elsewhere admitted:

The three first symbolic degrees are nothing other than a faithful reiteration of the teachings concerning the 'immortality of the soul' of the Egyptian, Dionysiac, Orphic, Eleusinian, and Mithraic Mysteries.⁹

C. The presence of anti-Christian teachings in Freemasonry

Out of the plethora of errors in which Masonic ideas consist, we will dwell only on one instance in order to prove our point: the anti-Christian error of reincarnation.

The statements made about this error in the Masonic encyclopedia are extremely enlightening.

- We find the following statement, among others:

Masonic esotericism also professes, as is natural, the doctrine of reincarnation, without which the law of development cannot be understood or undergirded.... Moreover, the immortality of the soul, as professed by Freemasonry, would be incomprehensible without reincarnation.¹⁰

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 93. Cf. Albert G. Mackey, *An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, revised and enlarged by Robert I. Clegg (Chicago: The Masonic History Company, 1947), Vol. II, p. 851.

⁹ *Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία τῆς Ἐλευθέρας Τεκτονικῆς*, p. 127. Cf. pp. 151, 633.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 607.

The foregoing Masonic testimonies prove that the positions expressed by the Orthodox Church on Freemasonry are corroborated by reality and are not unfounded accusations born of prejudice, as sundry Masonic circles contend.

At the same time, however, they demonstrate the efforts undertaken by Freemasons to spread disinformation concerning the nature and traits of their organization.

We consider it self-evident that anyone who wishes to be a conscientious Orthodox Christian cannot be simultaneously a Freemason.

What relationship can there be between the Light of Orthodoxy and the occult and pagan mist of Freemasonry? Undoubtedly none.

The initiation and incorporation of someone into Freemasonry is a return from the realm of life, from the realm of the “New Creation” in Christ,¹¹ which is the Church, to the realm of shadow and darkness,¹² which is paganism and occultism.



Source: *Στῦλος Ὁρθοδοξίας*, No. 72 (October 2006), p. 23. See also *Διάλογος*, No. 32 (April–June 2003).

¹¹ II Corinthians 5:17.

¹² St. Matthew 4:16; St. Luke 1:79.