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FREE MASONRY AS A RELIGION

BY THE REV. DR. J. DAY BROWNLEE

REPLY

TO THE ORATION OF THE REV. DR. MAHER, AT THE DEDICATION OF THE NEW MASONIC HALL, WELLSVILLE, OHIO.

Copies of this Sermon may be secured by writing to

THE WITNESS COMMITTEE
Appointed by
The Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church
119 Federal Street N. S. Pittsburgh, Pa.
The following is a passage taken from the close of Dr. Mayer's address:

"Such being the case, this great art may rightly be called a religion. It defines the relation of the individual man to his Creator, to his fellow-men, to himself; it develops man into perfection. Free Masonry is a faithful guide through life, with proper instructions to square our actions, and straight measures to keep us in due bounds with all mankind. It teaches truth, recommends peace, and directs our attention to the very perishableness of all things. Is it not a religion? Religion! No, my brethren, we may rather call it THE religion! It is entitled to this sublime distinction, through its aim to make man's life happy and godly and his death enviable and peaceful. It is certainly the true religion of mankind, its truth being obvious by its suitability for all men, its applicability to all ages, its unchangeableness under all circumstances, its harmonious working in all zones, and the privilege it grants to every man to entertain his own view of his Creator. A true religion is the revelation of wisdom, opposing superstition and prejudice, working in a simple and intelligible way, being conceivable by the simplest mind, and overcoming ignorance by its very simplicity. Who is so blind and fanatical as to anathematize Free Masonry on so-called religious grounds? The religion of Free Masonry is within the reach of the Jew and Gentile, the Mahometan and the Hindu, the white and the black, the master and servant, the free and the captive, the rich and the poor—it is the religion of mankind, it is universal. No sooner this religion will be the property of all than the secrets of the lodges will give way to the publicity of active life; the grips will be converted into sincere handshakings; the passwords will be replaced by well-meaning salutations, and the snares will be those of faith, hope and charity. Therefore a good Mason who puts his trust in God, and beholds in the many millions of human beings just as many children of God, may be properly called a 'Son of God'; he is a great representative of his Maker, ready and nimble to do his will. A good Mason loves religion as a pleasant and useful companion in every proper place and every temperate occupation of life; but he hates religions as edifices constructed on prejudiced and superstitious traditions, fanatical propensities and clerical overbearing."
Free Masonry as a Religion

Sermon by the Rev. J. Day Brownlee.
Sabbath, December 7, 1873.

Text: For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.—1 Tim., 2:5.

As I announced on last Sabbath, I to-day expect to answer the attack upon Christianity and the Church of Christ which was made at the dedication of the Masonic Hall a few weeks since. First, I wish to make a few prefatory remarks. I never studied the subject of secret societies till called to it by this occurrence. I never owned any of their revelations—never read any works on the subject, for or against. I thought they were unnatural organizations, cutting through natural ones, as the family and church, and often alienating natural relations by forming unnatural ones. Their secrecy, too, looked suspicious—as if there was something wrong. It seemed to give bad men an advantage, and even weakened the moral sense of the good, by the constant thought that everything done here, or through, or by this order, is covered up till the day of judgment. It also looked like a reflection upon society, as if we need to be watched; and at the same time a stealth-like though unmanly and cowardly conspiracy against it; and it certainly seemed contrary to the command of Christ, to “let our light shine before men,” and to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness”; and also to His example, who “spake openly to the world,” and “in secret have I said nothing”; and to that of the
Apostles, who "renounced the hidden things of dishonesty." It seemed like uniting with the wicked, under the Prince of darkness, who do "works of darkness," and who love darkness, because their deeds are evil." "Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their council from the Lord, and their works are in the dark; and they say, Who seeth us and who knoweth us?" Their oaths also, swearing or promising before they know to what, always seemed objectionable to me. "To agree to give yourself passively to your guides, to lead you whithersoever they will" looked like making one's self a very slave. I wondered that a man, a freeman who has a mind and a conscience of his own, and must live and die for himself, and be judged for "the deeds done in the body" and for "every secret thing, whether it be good or evil":—I wondered he would make such a promise. So to promise to "conform to all the ancient and established usages of the order," before the veil was lifted, and you saw whether those "ancient and established usages" were heathen or Christian, seemed very much like ensnaring and enslaving the conscience, and "pronouncing with an oath to do good or to do evil, and it be hid from him." And to promise "to ever conceal and never reveal" anything, before we know what it is, whether or not the law of God may require its exposure, seemed like both being deprived of our liberty, and disabled in our duty as witnesses for the truth. And this did not seem to me at all like swearing in "righteousness, truth and judgment," as the Scriptures require. Candidly, now, does it seem so to you? And then Abraham's servant did not swear this way. (See Gen. 24:2-9.) Neither did those Odd Fellows, Jonathan and David, 1 Sam. 20.
Again: The ridiculousness of their public exhibitions (you know I don’t know anything about the goat performance inside), was always an objection to me after “I became a man and put away childish things,” and they forbid boys joining them. Yet perhaps I became old too soon; for some one says, big boys must have their playthings as well as little boys; and their bibs, too, like little girls.

These and other objections I have long had to secret societies; but not till I came to Wellsville did I know that they made claims to be a religion, and even here I came to the knowledge slowly. I was a dull student; and as I see it now, I look back and wonder at my stupidity. It was in this way:

First, I was set to thinking by some obituary notices that appeared in the paper, in which the brethren, in substance, expressed the assurance that, from their knowledge of the deceased as a good Mason or Odd Fellow, their loss was his eternal gain, and he had only gone from the Lodge below to the Grand Lodge above. I was astonished at this, and when, being a stranger to the deceased, I inquired his character and was informed that he had lived an un-Christian life and died as he had lived, my astonishment was increased. To think that good men, for I knew there were such belonging to the Lodge, would publish and teach men to believe these three delusions: First, that an un-Christian man had gone to heaven; second, that he had gone there because he was a good Mason or Odd Fellow; and, third, that heaven is a Grand Lodge above! I began to see dimly.

Next I saw—sent from headquarters, I was told—hanging upon the walls of Odd
Fellow parlors, pictures of Jonathan and David, I believe, embracing each other, and around and over them Odd Fellow symbols. I thought now, is it possible that they are trying to delude the ignorant into believing that their society is founded upon the Bible, and so lead them to build hopes for eternity upon it? This was strengthened by learning that passages of Scripture were pointed out to the Odd Fellow student, as establishing the divine authority of the order. My eyes were opening.

But when, having been absent for a few weeks, one Monday, after preaching Jesus and Him crucified the day before, I picked up the East Liverpool Gazette, sent me by the editor, and read the orations of "Dr. Mayer, the orator of the evening," at the dedication of "one of the finest Masonic halls in Ohio," my eyes were opened, and now, seeing clearly, as a sworn witness for the truth, I must declare it.

It has been said, I ought not to preach on the subject of "Secret Societies." What! know there is a false religion here, attempting to take the crown from my Redeemer and allure and destroy immortal spirits, and a minister of Christ and a seeker of souls not expose and denounce it! No, no! by the grace of God, I will never—no, never—prove so recreant to my trust. Immortal souls are at stake, the Church is assailed, Christ is dethroned, I rise on behalf of the truth.

But it has been said, I know nothing about these societies. I do not propose to tell you what I know; neither what they who have come out from them have revealed; but to tell you what they declare themselves to be. I have Dr. Mayer here, and this book—perhaps some of you recognize it. It is titled "The Craftsman and
Templar's Text Book." I received it through the postoffice. It represents itself as coming from the Wellsville Lodge. Accompanying it was a note, saying, "We present you the enclosed book, which contains the fundamental principles of our Order," etc. I am very much obliged, gentlemen; and I assure you I have studied it diligently the last few days. It has been a text book to me, indeed, and it has done me great good. I doubt if it has ever so benefited yourselves; but I hope it may yet, and I shall do my best to have it.

But let me say this is not all of Masonry. Theirs is a secret society. They send me this book; I have never sworn to keep it concealed, and do not intend to. But if it be so erroneous, as we shall see it is, what must there be behind the curtain—in the deep, desperate secrecy of the Lodge room?

I do not know Masonry. Neither do you Masons. I don't believe you would ever have sent me this book if you did, and let me say, many of you are almost entirely ignorant of it. I wish we had some more of the Doctor's speeches, for I look on them as missionary tracts in a good cause; and I wish you would read the authorities on Masonry, just as they themselves describe and declare it; and if you are an intelligent man, and such study does not make you feel like coming out from among them, you are not a Christian.

Notice, in this Text Book, Webb and other writers are acknowledged as good authority, for I may wish to quote them. These, then, are the witnesses we call upon the stand to-day—intelligent, informed, unimpeached and sworn witnesses; and let me inquire if they have revealed Masonry to be what it is not, are they not "perjured villains"?
It is unnecessary for me to say to the brethren of Wellsville, that I am not persons—it is only against the system I speak. When I denounce Mormonism, you do not understand me as alluding to any individual Mormon, whether he has two wives or sixty. It is the system of Polygamy I mean. I know there are good Masons. I have many warm friends among them, and near ones; and am only sorry that they are bound nearer, by a mystic tie, to any other. I will be sorry if I lose any by this discussion; but will be more sorry if they get angry at the truth. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God is, that you may all be saved, and for that I labor.

But why this intolerance of discussion? Everything else is discussed—the Church, her doctrines, forms and practices; the State, her laws, officers, etc. Why this extreme sensitiveness about being examined—this bashfulness about being looked at? Is it because these societies will not bear examination—cannot endure the light of day? “This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil; for every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved; but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”

But I propose to-day to exercise my right as an American citizen, to express my opinions, and my duty, as a minister of Christ, to expose error in whom and in whatever and wherever found. So we proceed to call the witnesses, remembering that while they tell the truth, they do not tell the whole truth.
FREEMASONRY'S AGE.

Dr. Mayer says: "Some enthusiastic brethren trace the origin of the Order as far back as Noah." What a large fraternity they must have had at that time—Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth, these four and no more! I wonder they didn't feel like taking the women in then, to enlarge the society. But that would have been no secret which the whole race knew, and the mothers would have told their children; and Masonry would have become, as our orator says it will, "the property of all," and every sinner would have known the art, now, alas, concealed, by which "to become good and perfect without the instrumentality of hope and fear." What a pity Noah did not begin right in this thing of Masonry! But, no, the women were excluded, and in addition to that I expect poor Ham was black-balled.

Dr. Mayer again says: "There is a belief, widely spread, and certainly endorsed by an overwhelming majority of the brethren, to-wit, Masonry originates with King Solomon."

Dr. Mayer, in the third place, says: "Brethren, be pleased to take notice of my intention to advance the theory of the origin of Freemasonry to be traced as far back as to the period of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt."

Here, then, we have three dates set as the time of the origin of Masonry. What do they prove? They cannot all be true. Two of them cannot be true. We have then, two to one that none of them is true. The man who proves that Masonry originated with Noah proves thereby that it did not originate with Solomon or in Egypt; and the man who proves that it started in Egypt proves thereby that it did
not begin with Noah or Solomon; and he who proves that it was founded by Solomon proves thereby that it did not originate in Egypt or with Noah. They thus contradict and confute each other, and unitedly prove only that they know nothing about it, or that it did not originate in those ancient times. So much for the Doctor's information concerning the rise of Masonry. He gives us to know that they do not know it is of ancient origin; and leaves the impression that they know it is not. But where does our orator say the Jews got Masonry? "Brethren, I will neither trespass on your time, or take advantage of the occasion, or else I could point out to you on a historical basis and by the results of comparison, the details of a resemblance of Jewish doctrines and customs with the particulars of the Egyptian mysteries," and then, a little on, in concluding what he calls his researches, he says: "I leave it to the brethren to explain the connection of the essence and purport of these mysteries with the essence and purport of Freemasonry." The connection! Ah, then, Masonry has its origin in the mysteries of Greece and Egypt, some of which were borrowed from the "Hindoos who worshipped sun and moon." Now, what were these mysteries, "which in the veil of various solemn ceremonies were communicated to the initiated only in special meetings by perfect seclusion?" All ancient history assures us that they were the veriest abominations—cruel and profane and obscene to the last degree. So the apostle teaches in that striking description: "For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret." Is this, then, the origin of Masonry? Remember, "its unchangeableness under all circumstances."
Is this the source of Masonry? What wonder it is such a desperate secrecy? What wonder! The stream can rise no higher and flow no purer than its head. So much, we say again, for the Doctor's information concerning the origin of Masonry.

We might here leave this part of the subject, and we think to the utter confusion of "the best orator in the State of Ohio," and of all who believe with him. How he confounded himself, condemned his own order, and broke his own head with his own club!

But we will not leave it there. We love truth too well. We have another date for Masonic birth; and one given us, too, by Masons themselves. Steinbrenner, the great Masonic historian, says Masonry dates no farther back than 1717. The "American Encyclopedia" says the same thing. Dr. Dalcho, the compiler of the book of constitutions for South Carolina, and a leading Mason, says: "Neither Adam, nor Noah, nor Nimrod, nor Moses, nor Joshua, nor David, nor Solomon, nor Hiram, nor the St. Johns, were Freemasons. Hypothesis in history is absurd. There is no record, sacred or profane, to induce us to believe that those holy men were Freemasons; and our traditions do not go back to those days. To assert they were Freemasons may make the vulgar stare, but will rather excite the contempt than the admiration of the wise."

I wonder if the Doctor, by his speech in Wellsville, only sought to make the vulgar stare, their "ignorance, superstition and prejudice," making it "dangerous" to tell the truth! Citizens, it is an insult to your intelligence, and even Masons should blush to hear their orators proclaim such silly falsehoods. Solomon a Mason! Hiram a Grand Mason! The St. Johns both Masons!
Jonathan and David hugging each other, Odd Fellows! How ridiculous! Who believes such soft nonsense?

But yet the orators claim it for them, and they are not living to deny it, and we find it published all over the land—the great antiquity of Masonry. Why is it? Just that they may gain for it age, and honor, and great names, even inspired men and Bible authority, and thus delude the ignorant, increase their numbers and power—but how? By false pretenses, and you know what that means in law.

Bible authority for secret societies! We search the Bible in vain for anything of the kind, unless such precedents as the "band of more than forty men who bound themselves with an oath, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul." Or that other dark combination between the chief priests and Judas, with the sign and password agreed upon between them, by which the traitor, for money, betrayed his Divine Master.

But what if Masonry is as old as they claim? That does not make it right. Idolatry is older than the Jewish nation, and there are idols still. Heathenism is hoary with the age of centuries, and there are heathen yet. Sin is almost as old as the human race, and still there are sinners. Satan is older than the earth, and shall live forever. So that we see they may go back with it into remote antiquity as far as they please, and still find a father and mother for it, and have it ill-begotten, too.

FREEMASONRY'S CLAIM TO BE A RELIGION.

I do not expect to speak much of Odd Fellowship; but would say that all I prove in regard to Masonry is true of Odd Fellows. I have examined the authorities.
What we wish to notice particularly today is the claim of Freemasonry to be a religion.

The Doctor begins his address thus: "Brethren, the honor conferred on me, on this most solemn occasion, is certainly great; for the work to be done is important. The dedication of a hallowed place to the service of the incomprehensible Architect of the Universe signifies a worship of unsurpassable devotion, in which all the laborers of the invisible Master participate." Does not that sound very much like dedicating a church?"

But toward the close of his address he declares himself, plainly: "Yes, brethren, Freemasonry is truly the great art to promote the perfection of mankind"; and a little farther on he says: "Such being the case, this great art may be called a religion. It defines the relation of the individual man to his Creator, to his fellow-man, to himself; it develops man into perfection." Again, "Is it not a religion? A religion! No, my brethren, we may rather call it the religion. It is entitled to this sublime distinction through its aim to make man's life happy and godly, and his death enviable and peaceful. It is certainly the true religion of mankind." And he then describes what a true religion is, and concludes by saying, in substance, that a good Mason loves the religion of Masonry, and hates the religion of Christianity.

Now that is late authority, and I should suppose good authority. That man stands high in the degrees and knows much more about Freemasonry than the members of Wellsville Lodge do. Moreover, he is a recognized authority—their orator, called from a distance to represent their system. Further, if it is not true, let them contra-
dict it as publicly as it has been declared and published. They dare not. They should not be misrepresented. They are not. He knew what he was doing, and did not falsify his own craft. No minister in the Church of Christ would declare Christianity to be not a religion, when it is; and yet this would be no greater mistake than to proclaim Freemasonry to be a religion, if it is not. And if such a minister could be found, he would not long remain unrebuked and unsilenced, and by his own church, too. Yes, "silence gives consent." Masonry is "the true religion." It was so declared by one of her leading orators at the dedication of one of her best halls in Ohio, and published and republished; and for more than a month the Wellsville Lodge has stood by the assertion, and proposes to do so. It is startling!

And yet this is just what Masonry is—a religion, but not the true religion. Here, in this book, I find its creed; its hymns and scriptures and prayers; its order of advancement in perfection, from the "entered apprentice" up to the "All Pussiant"; its priests and symbols and offerings; all here in the Text Book of Wellsville. To read this book you would think they were doing little else than singing, and praying, and reading Scripture, and engaging in the worshipful services of their religion. I wonder why some of them love it so much who are not particularly given to worship in their families, and to attendance, especially in a dark night, upon the prayer-meeting and Church of God. But perhaps it is the kind of worship that makes it attractive.

Yes, Freemasonry is a religion. It claims to be a saving religion, to perfect man, and at last to take him from earth to heaven—the Lodge below to the Lodge above.
Hear more authority, and, if possible, even better than this Text Book. Webb, in speaking of the common gavel, says, on page 47: "But we, as Free and Accepted Masons, are taught to make use of it for the more noble and glorious purpose of divesting our minds and consciences of all vice and superfluities of life, thereby fitting our bodies as living stones for that spiritual building, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." So, Salem Town, in his "System of Speculative Masonry." Now, this work is recommended by nine Grand Officers, and by the Hon. De Witt Clinton, General Grand High Priest of the General Grand Chapter of the United States of America, and Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New York, etc., etc. He here says: "The principles of Freemasonry have the same co-eternal and unshaken foundations, contain and inculcate the same truths, in substance, and propose the same ultimate end as the doctrines of Christianity." Again, "In advancing to the fourth degree, then the Freemason is assured of his election and final salvation. Hence, opens the fifth degree, where he discovers his election to, and his glorified station in the kingdom of his Father." I thought Masonry was not sectarian, and yet here we have the distinctive doctrines of election and perseverance! I wonder how "all men agree" to that. But again, page 78: "With these views, the sixth degree is conferred, where the riches of divine grace are opened in boundless prospect," and so on "from glory to glory." Now, this is high authority. Does it not claim that Freemasonry is a saving religion? If not, can language make such a claim? Gen. Sickles teaches the same. He declares it as Masonry's purpose to "restore man to his God."
He says: "This (the Master’s) degree is a type of the communion of man and God," and then, page 188, thus concludes: "We now behold man complete in morality and intelligence, with the stay of religion added to insure him of the protection of Deity, and guard him against ever going astray. These three form a perfect and harmonious whole, nor can we conceive of anything that can be suggested more which the soul of man requires." So this Text Book teaches the Mason to pray "that by the secrets of our art," he may be made so and so, and to sing:

"Hail! Masonry divine!  
Glory of ages shine:  
Matchless beyond compare;  
No art with thee can share,  
Thou art divine."

So, in conformity with all this teaching, do not Masons, when defending their Order, tell you, in their innocence, how solemn they feel when entering the Lodge, and engaging in its "sacred services."—"why, the Church does not so impress them." It is the weakest thing they could say for it. And others will declare, "It is religion enough for them." And do not the obituary notices universally declare, in substance, that because they were good Masons they have only gone from the Lodge on earth to the Grand Lodge in heaven? "Wherefore, comfort ye one another."

Yes, their books publish, and their orators and preachers preach, and their members believe and practice that Freemasonry is what the Doctor called it: "A religion"—"no, the religion"—the true religion of mankind; and this certainly excludes all other religions; and there is no hope at all for such poor souls as are only Christians! How narrow and ungenerous!
Illiberal as I may be thought to be today, I freely grant that there are Christians in the Baptist, Methodist and other churches, whom I trust I love in the Lord; but Masonry proclaims itself as the only religion, and Heaven as nothing but a “Grand Lodge above.” Oh! how cruel to shut out all women and children, the crippled and old, and all who cannot pay the $10 and $50 fees, and so go on to perfection. This is shutting up the Kingdom of Heaven, indeed. Heaven only a Grand Lodge of Masons! Here, then, we have another mysterious doctrine—that of infant damnation; and our little ones, who passed away in their innocence, their bodies laid to sleep beneath the grassy hillock, and of whose souls we have been thinking as shining spirits in a happier home than that of their earthly fathers, never reached there; they had not the passport and were shut out by the Tyler at the gate—they were not old enough. Heaven only a Freemason’s Grand Lodge! Nothing but a “Bachelor’s Hall and a Widower’s Refuge.” No mothers, and wives, and daughters, and sisters there! None who have not “Met upon the level, and been tried upon the square, Women and girls there are none: Men, only men, are there.”

We have now seen that Masonry is a religion. There are quite a number of churches that are opposed to organized secrecy and they are sometimes called “narrow” for not receiving Masons into their communion. Why, I ask. In all reason, if they have one religion, what do they want with another? We do not receive even a Presbyterian or Methodist till they are dismissed from their own church. It would be an insult to those churches if we did.
Neither will they receive us. Masonry itself, as we shall see, will not admit Christians till they throw away their religion; and we do not propose to admit Masons until they throw away theirs.

We have now proved conclusively, and by their own best witnesses, that the Doctor told the truth when he said, "Freemasonry is a religion."

We now propose to prove that he did not tell the truth when he said "it is the true religion."

What kind of a religion is Freemasonry? We answer:

1. It is a profane religion. Here, for strongest proof, I should produce their oaths; but they do not reveal them, and I am not calling other witnesses today. If I should say that the Knight of Malta takes the fifth libation of wine from a human skull, taking upon his soul all the guilt of the departed soul, if he fail to keep the oath, they would reply, "I don't know that, I never saw him." I might respond, just for argument's sake, I have read and heard others say he does, and from the mouths of more than two or three witnesses, too, just as I have of many things I never saw, but which, nevertheless, are facts. Yet, when pressed, I would have to confess I never saw him, and might add, with a shudder, I never want to. But my argument would be destroyed. I never saw him. So I proceed to call witnesses who have seen.

See how they symbolize Jehovah. The Doctor says: "The double triangle signifies fire and water, and represents the mighty and good God. A triangle with the apex upwards, which means a flame, is the symbol of the mighty God." So Webb, page 280, "I now have the pleasure of invest-
ing you with the Triple Triangle, a beautiful emblem of the eternal Jehovah!" Where did they thus learn to symbolize the Almighty? Not in the second commandment. No, nor in God's Holy Word. "God is a spirit." As another remarks. "I suppose the Israelites did not think Jehovah was really like their golden calf, but they took it for a symbol or emblem of Deity. Was that any worse than to represent Him by a triangle? Nay, I believe the latter more gross and absurd. Is Jehovah three cornered, or nine cornered? How degrading and absurd!"

Again: The religion of Freemasonry is guilty of the profanation of holy things. Here is Jacob's Ladder, the Ark of the Covenant, the Altar of Incense, the Burning Bush, the Breastplate of the High Priest, etc. Now, how do they use these emblems? Either as a means of worship or not? Is it in worship? Then they are Judaising, to say the least; and doing what is not only not required, but forbidden by Christ—He having done away with these things by the offering of Himself. But do they use them, yet not as a means of worship? Then, that is profanation of the gravest character—taking them from their original design, and making things sacred common and profane. Even heaven, that holy place, where nothing unclean can enter, is profanely converted by them into a Lodge room. Oh! is not this wickedness? How dare men thus trifle with God's holy things!

Again: The religion of Freemasonry profanes God's name. They have names and titles, lofty and awful enough to turn a mortal's head, and "to stun republican ears and to appal humble Christian hearts." They have Masons, Grand, and Elect, and Per-
fect, and Sublime, and so on ad libitum et ad nauseam. They can “out-Herod Herod,” get above the Czars and Emperors, and even eclipse the Pope of Rome. They have Master Masons, Mark Masters, Past Masters, and Most Excellent Masters, etc.; and yet the Christian is taught to “call no man Master.” They have Priests, High Priests, Grand High Priests, and a “Most Excellent General Grand High Priest.” This is above Christ, who never got higher than “Great High Priest.” Then they have Most Excellent, and Most Worshipful! Who is Most Excellent and Most Worshipful, but God? Is not this assuming His titles? Then to eclipse all, and as if to get a name above every name that has been named, either in heaven or on earth, they have a “Thrice Illustrious Grand Puissant,”—which means the Most Powerful, or literally the All Mighty! What horrid blasphemy! A mortal man and a sinner, calling himself and being called “The All Mighty!”

Again: The religion of Masonry profanes the Holy Scriptures. They mutilate them, as we shall subsequently see. I do not know what form of government to call this Masonic Church. It is not Presbyterian, or Episcopal, or Congregational; and yet it has a form of government and follows it as rigidly as either of these. In this Church Manual—it is nothing else—they have different degrees of religious advancement, as we have quoted, just as another church may have—as from probation to confirmation, or from licensure to ordination. Now, set to each of these Degrees is a hymn and prayer appropriate, and Scriptures more or less illustrated,—here are the pictures—upon which they claim the degree is founded, and which they interpret and apply in
this manner. Now hear how they travesty and caricature the Holy Scripture; for what follows is true of the Masons or Odd Fellows, or of both. When the bandage is removed and the Apprentice passes from darkness to light, these words are read: "God said, Let there be light, and there was light": as though God, by these grand words, meant the making of a Mason or an Odd Fellow! The three knocks at the door, by the candidate are explained, "Ask, and it shall be given; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you"; as if Christ, by these assuring words, meant the entering of a Lodge. In order to inspire the Odd Fellow candidate, these words of God are kept before him: "I will bring the blind by a way they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known," etc. See Odd Fellows' Manual, page 92. Just as if God in this language promises that He will lead the candidates into the Lodge. At the making of a Mark Master Mason (see Text Book, page 90) the following texts of Scripture (I read from the book) are introduced and explained: "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner," and others like it; just as if these words which refer exclusively to Jesus Christ, only refer to the making of a Mason. Oh! is not this taking Christ's glory and giving it to another? Then, at the close of these ceremonies they read: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." Rev. 2:17. And then, I understand, presenting the stone to the candidate, he says: "I present you with a white stone, in which is written a new
name." Is not this trifling with the word of God? Nay, it is worse—it is sacrilege. Nay, it is worse still. I cannot characterize it. But as if that were not enough, Christian Mason, listen to the application of Heb. 7:19-21, to your Masonic High Priest. See Text Book, page 170. "And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest; for those priests (under the Levitical law) were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec." Seriously, my Christian brother, is not this worse than robbing your Lord of His glory? Is it not a bold and impudent falsehood to say of him whom you exalt to be your High Priest, "but this with an oath by him who said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent; thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec." The Lord never said or swore anything of the kind to him; nor will He accept your offerings at his hands.

Now we have seen, without revealing their oaths, and from their own books, that Freemasonry "makes graven images"; that it profanes holy things; that it profanes holy names, even usurping some of the titles of the Saviour, and of the great God Himself; and that it profanes the Holy Scripture. May we not then fairly conclude that the religion of Freemasonry is a profane religion? Is not this sound logic? I leave the Christian Mason to meditate upon and pray, if he will, over these things. Remember there is nothing more hateful to God than a profane religion. There is nothing more dear to God than His own glory; this robs Him of it. There is nothing which He guards more jealously than His own worship; this prostitutes it. It was not
so much their idols as their false worship
that ruined the Israelites. It was against
these that the direful denunciations of God,
through the prophets, were hurled. It was
for offering strange fire that Nadab and
Abihu were consumed before the Lord. It
was for strange worship that Moses caused
the execution of three thousand Hebrews in
one day. O brother, our God is a jealous
God. Our God will not be mocked. Our
God is a consuming fire. How dare you
then, O how dare you approach Him in an
unauthorized manner, profane His holy
things with unhallowed hands, and offer
strange worship before His burning throne!
O brother, stop and think!

2. We now affirm that Freemasonry is a
Christless religion. Now I admit that there
is a Chivalric Knighthood degree, which
fully recognizes the Redeemer, and to which
my attention has been especially called by
these book marks. But I reply that this
is declared by the highest authority in the
Order to be no part of Masonry at all. It
is not used, not even in Wellsville. This
book itself will testify to that. The part
of the book treating of the other degrees is
thumb-marked and worn till the leaves are
loosened; while this is as hard and smooth
and clean as if it had never been opened,
except to attract my attention to it. I know
too well what book-wear is not to under-
stand that. Brethren, they do not use the
Chivalric Orders in Wellsville; and I ap-
peal to the Lodge if I am not correct. More-
over, the very paragraph to which my at-
tention is especially called says: "The ap-
plicant for these orders must have passed
through the several degrees of Masonry to
that of Royal Arch": and that is a long
way. "Some encampments require the ad-
ditional degrees of Royal and Select Mas-
23
ter" and that is, O, ever so far. I wonder if any ever reach Christ at all. But if they do they would not need a Saviour then, they would be so "Royal," and "Grand," and "High," and "Potent," and "Perfect," and "Excellent." They may then, according to this book, worship through Christ when they reach these high degrees. What does that mean? Certainly, that they may not worship through Christ before they reach them. That is, the Great body of Masons, the vast majority of lodges, and all the orders up to that of Royal Arch—are Christless.

Moreover, this Chivalric Order is not regular Masonry. It is here named differently, and called "Christian Orders of Knighthood" in contradistinction to "Ancient Craft Masonry," and is said to have the same analogy to it as the Old Testament has to the New; that is, as they interpret Scripture, the orders of Knighthood are Christian, while Masonry is Christless. If this marked, pet paragraph does not affirm Masonry Christless, it does not affirm anything, and so Robert Morris, in observations on the "Order of Knighthood," says: "It may be necessary to premise the Orders of Knighthood compose no part of the system of Masonry. They are, in comparison to it, societies but of yesterday, and all of them fall short of the excellence, harmony, universality and utility of the noble institution." We now let those Orders go, with which at first we had nothing to do, they being no part of the system of Masonry, the system we are considering, and proceed to prove farther that the religion of Freemasonry is a Christless religion.

At the dedication of the hall, you remember there was a Bible presented. You remember they professed great reverence for
They read from its sacred pages. Did they read about the Saviour that night, or even pronounce His name? No. They never do. But how do they avoid that Name so frequent—that Gospel so precious—the very life of the whole Book? They do this in three ways; first, by quoting chiefly from the Old Testament, and then misinterpreting and misapplying the signs and prophecies; second, by passing over His name when it appears; third, by blotting it out from their Scripture readings. For proofs take your Bible and turn to 1 Peter, 2 chap. This is read at the opening of the Mark Master degree, page 87 of the Text Book. We will begin at the fifth verse. Now, read with me: "Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God. Wherefore, also, it is contained in the Scriptures," etc.

[For the convenience of the reader we here insert these verses as they read in the Holy Scriptures, italicizing the expunged phrases here and in the following passage merely to make them noticeable. They are not italicized in the Bible. "Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God. Wherefore, also, it is contained in the Scriptures," etc.]

See, Freemasonry has expunged the name of the Redeemer—blotted out from His own blessed Word, "that name which is above every name." Why is this? Because it is His enemy; and every time He makes His appearance, cries like His crucifiers of old: "Away with Him! Away with Him!"

But now we turn to 2 Thess. 3:5-6. This is read at the opening of the Royal Arch degree. It is found on page 152 of the Text.
Book, and reads as follows: "Now we command you, brethren, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly." It is then quoted verbatim to verse 12, which reads: "Now them that are such we command and exhort, that with quietness they work and eat their own bread," so on verbatim to the close of the 16th verse.

[We also insert these verses as they are in the Scriptures mutilated by the daring act of men. Verse 6 reads: "Now we command you, brethren, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly." And the 12th verse, the next one in which our Saviour's name appears, and so the next one mutilated, reads: "Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work and eat their own bread." They quote all the remainder of the chapter, except the last two verses. The last of these is: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen." They do not use that verse.]

Christian Mason, is not this enough to satisfy you that you are in secret league with your own Saviour's foes? The name of your blessed Redeemer blotted out of His own Word, and His authority given to another! Surely you are now ready to say, with weeping Mary: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

These two expressions, "by our Lord Jesus Christ," and "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," both expunged from that short passage! What does this mean? Candidly, have I been falsifying the order when I said it was Christless? and "in neither case is there a mark to indicate
an omission, while every iota of the gospel in the passage is eliminated. Thus they handle the Word of God! I will not characterize it. The naked facts speak for themselves. But I appeal to the Christian brother, who takes part in these Christless ceremonies, to study well these facts. How can you witness the royal crown of your Saviour thus thrust down to the ground, and trampled in the dust!—His very name blotted out of His own precious Word? If God shall take away His part out of the Book of life, who takes away anything from the book of his prophecy, what will be done to him who takes from it that which is its life and power?—that name without which it is a mere form of lifeless words!"

Again, Christ is excluded from their prayers. Surely if the name of our blessed Redeemer would be recognized anywhere in their system, it would be in their prayers. Is it found there? No, not one syllable of that sweet name. I will read a few from their Text Book, page 26: "A prayer used at the initiation of a candidate." It is too long to quote in full. It concludes: "Endow him with a competency of thy divine wisdom, that, by the secrets of our art, he may be better enabled to display the beauties of brotherly love, relief, and truth, to the honor of thy holy name, Amen." No Christ, no grace; but by the secrets of our art. Who taught men to pray that way? Again, page 22: "May the blessing of Heaven rest upon us and all regular Masons; may brotherly love prevail, and every moral and social virtue cement us. Amen." How selfish as well as how Christless.

Here is one at the dedication of a Lodge, page 107. It concludes: "Permit us, O thou Author of light and life, great source of love and happiness, to erect this Lodge, and
now solemnly to consecrate it to the honor of thy glory." That sounds as if Masonry were a religion. So the hymn:

"ALMIGHTY JEHOVAH!
Descend now and fill
This Lodge with thy glory,
Our hearts with good will."

But as the prayer and the hymn have no Christ in them, the Lodge or Church consecrated can have none. Here is the closing of their funeral prayer, page 131: "After our departure hence in peace, and in thy favor, may we be received into Thy everlasting kingdom, to enjoy in union with the souls of our departed friends, the just reward of a pious and virtuous life. Amen." What is that—"The just reward of a pious and virtuous life!" So here is the plea they make—the merits on the ground of which they ask life-everlasting! Christ is not only ignored, but with the most unblushing self-righteousness, they substitute the purity and virtue of their own lives. What a prayer is that with which to approach the throne of God between whom and man there is but one Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ! What if God would answer that prayer? It would send any man who offers it to hell, for "no flesh can be justified in His sight." God forbid I should ever make such a prayer as that!

So I have analyzed these prayers, and there are not a few of them, prayers made at the dedication of their halls, at the opening and closing of their Lodges, at the initiation and advancement of their members, and at the burial of their dead. I have looked them all over, and I assure you I have not found a single recognition of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Great High Priest of our profession, who has passed into the heavens, and who ever liveth to make inter-
cession for us. Let the Christian Mason examine them. But why labor on this point? We have the law. The Monitor says, "Prayers, in Masonic Lodges, should be of a general character, containing nothing offensive to any class of conscientious brethren." Then the Jew can demand the exclusion of your Saviour! But you have all heard Masonic prayers. Did you ever hear Christ's name in one of them? And let me ask you who were present at the dedication of their hall, did you hear Jesus' name mentioned, or His atoning work pleaded in the prayers that were sent up to God's burning throne, even from the lips of His own ministers? No! There were Jews and Infidels there, who hate the name of Jesus worse than they do that of Satan; and by the laws of Masonry, it dared not be introduced in the exercises of that religion in which "all men agree."

And yet, the Word of God teaches us to "give thanks, always, for all things, unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." Jesus Himself says: "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." Again: "Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, I will give it you." Once more: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

We have now proved, and by their own Text Book, that they have taken Christ out of their Scripture readings; that they have excluded Him from their prayers; had we time we could show, from their hymns and
moral lessons. Is it not then fair to draw the conclusion that the religion of Masonry is a Christless religion? O, my Christian friends, I call upon you to think of these things: “By worship we place ourselves in the presence of a Being of spotless holiness, and inflexible justice, and almighty power. And shall we who are sinners—we who have violated His law, and exposed ourselves to His everlasting wrath—appear before His awful throne without a Mediator? Oh! let this presumption never be mine! Let me point the steel to the lightnings of heaven, and dare the wrath of the storm; but let me not present a Christless prayer, or appear unshielded by my Redeemer’s righteousness, before Him at whose frown the hills smoke, and at whose touch the earth trembles!”

We have now proved by their own witnesses, that Freemasonry is a religion; but that it is a profane and Christless religion! We then conclude that it is not the true religion—the religion of mankind!

What religion then is it? Here is their creed, page 357: “The Creed of a Mason is the belief in God, the Supreme Architect of heaven and earth, the dispenser of all good gifts, and the judge of the quick and the dead.” Is there anything about the Holy Spirit and His offices in that creed? Is there anything about the name, or person, or work of the Saviour in all that Masonic creed? And yet the Bible teaches: “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” Freemasonry then proposes to save man without a Saviour! Oh! what a cheat and delusion!
“Heaven still with laughter the vain toil—
And buries mad men in the heaps they raise.”

And what shall we say of men who engage in this worship, trust it, and teach men so? Men who come to sick humanity, and prescribe poison instead of medicine? To hungry, starving immortals, and give a scorpion instead of a loaf? May God in mercy deliver us from them, as birds from the snare of the fowler.

Masonry boasts that it is “a religion in which all men agree,” and what religion is that, I pray? It is not the Christian religion; for with this all men do not agree. The Doctor said: “The religion of Freemasonry is within the reach of the Jew and Gentile, the Mahometan and the Hindoo.” What religion is this that is so accommodating? Let us see. It is not the Christian religion; for the Jews will have none of Christ. It is not the Bible religion; for the Mahometan has not the Bible. It is not the religion of the true God! for the Hindoo believes not that the Lord he is God. What religion then is it? It is pure Deism. It believes not in the Divine Son, the Saviour. It believes not in the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier. It believes not in the Bible, for it has robbed it of its glory by taking away its gospel. It does not believe in the true God; for the God of the Bible is the true God, and the God of the Bible is a God in Christ. But what then is its faith? It has none except that which nature teaches. It requires belief in an incomprehensible Architect of the Universe. That is all, and he may be either the god of the Pantheist or the great spirit of the American Indian. It is pure Deism.
We conclude now: Freemasonry is a false system of religion; that was a false worship which was set up, and that was nothing else than a heathen temple which was consecrated in the town of Wellsville, O., on the thirtieth night of last October; and over its dark door, as on the altar of the Athenian, might truly be inscribed—"To the Unknown God!"

Is it any wonder, then, that, called by this providence, I rise under oath upon this witness stand to-day, before God and man, to testify against this delusion and for the faith once delivered to the saints? Nay, can I, dare I, do aught else? Not for untold gold. Woe unto me if I preach not the truth! "There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

And is it any wonder that Christians stand aghast before the revelation given by its own orator; of this dark system of delusion? and will not all young men, and all true men, as they love their souls, their Saviour and their God, cry out in the strength of promised grace: "O my soul come not thou into their secrets; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united?"

"Christians should walk in the light. Their doctrines, their purposes and manner of life, their rules of action and conduct, should not be concealed. The formation of secret associations for the prosecution of ends, however good professedly, is inconsistent with the requirements of Christian principle." Declaration and Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Chapter 22, Section 5.

Some twenty-two denominations in the United States have a testimony against all secret societies.