

THE CHURCH VERSUS THE LODGE

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DEFINITION

The CHURCH is that visible body of the professors of Christ united together for the service of Christ and for the betterment of all mankind. It consists of the various bodies of Christians holding to the faith of the Gospel.

The LODGE is that organized system of oath-bound secrecy composed of men united together for personal profit and for the purpose of serving its members. It consists of the numerous orders which, taken together, form the empire of secrecy.

ORIGIN

The CHURCH was ordained by Jesus Christ, Who acts as its Head, and Who desires to be its life. He has called its faithful members out of sin and has redeemed them unto God with His own blood. Paul says that God "gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church." Eph. 1:22.

The origin of the Church is God.

The LODGE was formed by men, who act as its head, who constitute its life and establish its laws. Mackey says: "The power of a Master in the lodge is absolute. * * * For no misdemeanor can he be tried by his lodge * * * and his commands must be implicitly obeyed."—Mackey's Lexicon, article on "Master of a Lodge."

The origin of the lodge is man.

TEXTBOOK

The CHURCH has as its textbook the Bible, which is a divine revelation of God's will to man. It reveals the plan of man's salvation and contains the rules for his daily conduct. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

Its authorship is divine.

The LODGE has for its textbook certain writings of men, such as Mackey's Lexicon of Free Masonry, Chase's Digest of Masonic Law, Webb's Free Masons Monitor, Grosh's Manual of Odd Fellowship and such other writings as recognized leaders have produced, including the "Book of Constitutions" which, says Mackey, "is a summary of all the fundamental principles of Masonry."—Mackey's Lexicon, page 63.

Its authorship is human.

RELIGION

The CHURCH is a religious institution. It worships and serves the Three-One God. Its religion is the Christian Religion. Christ is its center and its life. It is the religion that saves men from sin and eternal death and brings them into possession of eternal life. It rescues from the midnight depths of misery to the noonday heights of glory. It is offered not to the few but to the many.

The conditions of salvation are faith in Christ, repentance for sin, and obedience to the Gospel. There is no other way. "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, where-by we must be saved." Acts 4:12.

This is the true religion.

INFLUENCE

The influence of the CHURCH is compared to the light. Christ says: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." Christianity is the great world system of light. It has nothing to conceal from the whole wide world. Its business is to diffuse the light. Jesus says: "In secret have I said nothing." "Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel but on a candle stick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." Matt. 5:15.

This is an institution of light.

LIBERTY

The object of the CHURCH is to lead men out of the bondage of sin and bring them into the "glorious liberty of the sons of God." Philips Brooks says that "Liberty is the fullest opportunity for man to be and do the very best that is possible for him." Christianity gives to men the liberty to speak

(Please see page 3, Col. 1)

The LODGE is also a religious institution. This it claims for itself. Mackey in his article on religion, says: "The religion of Masonry is pure theism." The lodge has an altar, a creed, a ritual, and a burial ceremony.

These are used in worship.

It is a Christless religion. Christ's name is expunged from its scripture and excluded from its worship. It professes to save men, but without faith, without repentance, without Christ. In the few degrees and orders where Christ's name is mentioned the setting can bring no honor to Him.

Mackey's Ritualist, page 23, says: "Initiation is, as it were, a death to the world, and a resurrection to a new life."

This is a false religion.

~~The LODGE opposes the light. Its~~ business is transacted behind closed doors. No person can enter who has not taken an oath to "forever conceal and never reveal" the secrets of the lodge. This is an institution of darkness. Christ says that men "loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." God says: "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret." Eph. 5:11, 12.

This is an institution of darkness.

The LODGE would curtail the liberty of its members. Two things the candidate must swear: one is to conceal, the other is to obey. Should he learn that sin is there, he has foresworn himself never to reveal it. He is deprived of his liberty to speak against that sin. Should he be asked to do something

(Please see page 3, Col. 2)

against sin and to refuse to do wrong. The greatest liberty in the world is found in the Bible. It is the ladder by which we can climb to our highest possibilities. The Psalmist said: "I will walk at liberty, for I seek Thy precepts." Ps. 119:45.

True liberty is proclaimed by the Church.

CHARITY

The CHURCH is founded on charity. Jesus went about continually doing good. He ministered to all classes of need. He rejected no one because of age, rank or condition. The greater their need the greater was His readiness to help. He gave them His best without money and without price.

The Church throws open her portals. The poor, the aged, the blind and the halt are graciously invited. "Whosoever will may come." "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James 1:27.

Its benefits are offered to the many.

FRUITS

The FRUITS of the CHURCH are seen in the lives of its members. Here we find a mighty army of consecrated, upright souls who are marching triumphantly to glory—young men and women who go to the ends of the earth to carry the Gospel tidings to the perishing; middle aged men and women who would lay down their lives in the defense of the Gospel; old men and women, ripened saints of God who live in joyful anticipations of that eternal fellowship with the Blessed Christ. Upon the life of every consecrated member of Christ's church will be found the fruits of "love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance." "By their fruits ye shall know them."

wrong, he has already bound himself to obey. Mackey in his article on obedience says: "The spirit of obedience runs through the whole system and constitutes one of the greatest safeguards of our institution."

True liberty is suppressed by the Lodge.

The LODGE also claims to be a charitable institution. Mackey says: "Charity is the chief cornerstone of our temple." Yet those who are likely to need any help cannot come in. The aged, the infirm, the cripple need not apply. The greater their need the less are their chances for aid. Help is promised only to members and none will be taken as members except those who seem able to take care of themselves. When a member becomes sick or dies, help may be given to him or to his widow provided only that his standing is good and his dues are paid in full. Insurance societies do the same, but they call it BUSINESS.

Its benefits are offered to the few.

The FRUITS of the LODGE are also seen in the lives of its members. It, too, has its army of men marching onward—but whither? That it has its moral men we will not deny. But here is a rival religion! Its members who are faithful to its teachings see little need for the church. If a man can be saved in the lodge, why surrender to Christ? The sad fruitage of the system is seen in that thousands of men are satisfied in the lodge. They have no interest in Christ and no care for the church. These will be among the disappointed hosts who expect to enter into life, but have never known Him Whom to know is life. "He that hath not the Son of God hath not life." I. John 5:12.

"Cut it down. Why cumbereth it the ground?"

Dwight L. Moody

SAID

“Give them the truth anyway, and if they would rather leave their churches than their lodges the sooner they get out of the churches the better. I would rather have ten members who were separated from the world than a thousand such members. Come out from the lodge. Better one with God than a thousand without him. We must walk with God, and if only one or two go with us it is all right. Do not let down the standard to suit men who love their secret lodges or have some darling sin they will not give up.”

CONCLUSION

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said I will dwell in them; and I will be their God and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” 2 Cor. 6:14-18.

WITNESS COMMITTEE

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