

Freemasonry.

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IN 1927 our Synod decided that if any Freemason wishes to become a member of our church he must cut his connection absolutely with Freemasonry.

In this article it is proposed to answer, as briefly as possible, the questions, What is Freemasonry? Why should young people avoid it?

Modern Freemasonry is a world-wide institution that aims at social intercourse, the exercise of charity and the promotion of the individual and common interests of its members. It is thus like a Friendly Society; but it has a distinctive religion, not pure Christianity, but a mixture of Christianity and old pagan religions derived from Egypt, Greece, India, etc. Its members can recognise one another by means of secret passwords and by a peculiar grip of the hand

Freemasonry had its origin in the Middle Ages when masons travelled from place to place to build cathedrals and monasteries. They were able to recognise one another by means of the signs and symbols of their craft, e.g., square-and compass, etc. As they belonged to a Trade Guild, they were "Free Men," not serfs. After 1600, men who were not practical masons were admitted into this secret union. In 1717 the Christian element was cut out, thus reducing Freemasons to the level of Deists or Theosophists. In fact, the Duke of Sussex who healed the split in Masonry in 1813 was a bitter Deist. Mrs. Besant, the well-known Theosophist, became leader of Women's Lodges all over the Empire. For these reasons alone, young people should avoid the Craft; but there are other reasons.

From the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Scotland which declares, "Let a man's religion be what it may, he is not excluded from the Order, provided he believes in the Glorious Architect of heaven and earth," it is clear that any man, except an avowed atheist, is welcomed. It should also be remembered that "the Glorious Architect of heaven and earth" and "The Grand Architect of the Universe" are not Scriptural titles for God. Jews, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Confucians, Hindoos, etc., are welcomed on equal terms with Christians, and the name of Christ is not mentioned in their Ritual. That is sufficient to condemn the whole movement.

Young people should also avoid the Craft because they bind entrants with an oath “ever to conceal and never to reveal” secrets of which, at the time, they are ignorant. Such conduct is explicitly condemned in Scripture. (Lev. v., 4.)

It is a popular fallacy that because the Pope condemns Freemasonry it must be a bulwark against Roman Catholicism. But the Pope, for his own purposes, condemns all secret societies. Freemasonry has been condemned by the Lutheran Churches, the Wesleyan Methodists of U.S.A., the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland, the Salvation Army, etc. Besides, in various countries, the Craft, owing to its interference in politics, has been suppressed. Among many books exposing the errors of Freemasonry, one of the simplest and most informative is The Menace of Freemasonry to the Christian Faith by Rev. G. P. Hunt, RA. (Freedom Press 2/6.) - M. G