

FREEMASONRY AND RELIGION



FREEMASONS' HALL
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1985

Introduction

This leaflet is intended to deal with a topic mentioned in the leaflet "What is Freemasonry". It explains the United Grand Lodge of England's view of the relationship between Freemasonry and Religion.

Basic statement

Freemasonry is not a religion, nor is it a substitute for religion. It demands of its members a belief in a Supreme Being but provides no system of faith of its own.

Freemasonry is open to men of all religious faiths. The discussion of religion at its meetings is forbidden.

The Supreme Being

The names used for the Supreme Being enable men of different faiths to join in prayer (to God as each sees Him) without the terms of the prayer causing dissension among them.

There is no separate Masonic God; a Freemason's God remains the God of the religion he professes.

Freemasons meet in common respect for the Supreme Being as He remains Supreme in their individual religions, and it is no part of Freemasonry to attempt to join religions together. There is therefore no composite Masonic God.

Volume of the Sacred Law

The Holy Bible, referred to by Freemasons as the Volume of the Sacred Law, is always open at every Masonic meeting.

The Obligations of Freemasonry

The obligations taken by Freemasons are sworn on or involve the Volume of the Sacred Law, or the book held sacred by those concerned. They are undertakings to help keep secret a Freemason's means of recognition, and to follow the principles of Freemasonry.

The physical penalties are purely symbolic. The commitment to follow the principles of Freemasonry is, however, deep.

Freemasonry compared with Religion

Freemasonry lacks the basic elements of religion:

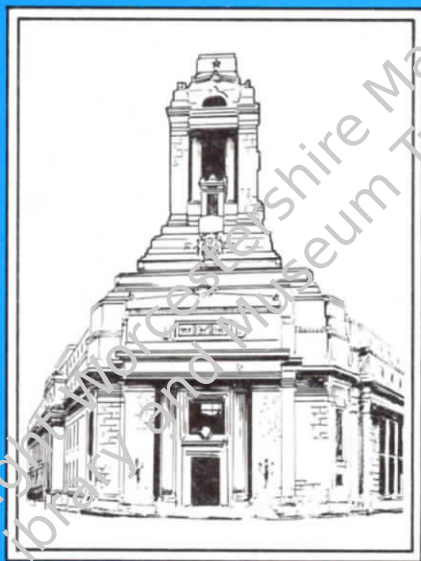
- a. It has no theological doctrine, and by forbidding religious discussion at its meetings will not allow a Masonic theological doctrine to develop.
- b. It offers no sacraments.
- c. It does not claim to lead to salvation by works, by secret knowledge or by any other means. The secrets of Freemasonry are concerned with modes of recognition and not with salvation.

Freemasonry supports Religion

Freemasonry is far from indifferent to religion. Without interfering in religious practice it expects each member to follow his own faith, and to place above all other duties his duty to God by whatever name He is known. Its moral teachings are acceptable to all religions.

Freemasonry is thus a supporter of religion.

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