

FREEMASONRY

&

THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

Lamentation is often heard concerning the apostate condition of the Southern Baptist Convention. However, there is a reasonable explanation for the broad path which the SBC is traveling, namely important statistics regarding the number of Freemasons who hold membership in the SBC, as published by [Biblical Discernment Ministries](#):

"U.S. membership [in the Masons] is claimed at about three million, with about five million worldwide... The official magazine of Masonry in the U.S. is titled New Age. Some church denominations are also led by avowed Masons. For example, a 1991 survey by the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board found that 14% of SBC pastors and 18% of SBC deacon board chairs are Masons. It is also estimated that SBC members comprise 37% of total U.S. lodge membership. (A 2000 updated SBC report found that over 1,000 SBC pastors are Masons.)"

37% of 3,000,000 would have been 1,110,000 Masons who held membership in the SBC. This estimate was for 1991. How many are there today? Also, how many Masons attend SBC churches but do not hold formal memberships? And how many Masons belong to other Christian denominations? (A Freemason once informed us that the Masons encourage their members to go to church.)

In 1993, the Southern Baptist Convention published a [Report on Freemasonry](#) which noted the many fine SBC leaders who were also Freemasons as well as many points of agreement between Freemasonry and Christianity, along with some areas of disagreement between the two. The verdict of the SBC as to whether or not a Southern Baptist could also be a member of a Masonic Lodge was not based on the Scriptural prohibition of I Cor. 10:21: "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." Instead the Southern Baptist Convention appealed to the old Masonic cliché regarding every man's "liberty of conscience":

"In light of the fact that many tenets and teachings of Freemasonry are not compatible with Christianity and Southern Baptist doctrine, while others are compatible with Christianity and Southern Baptist doctrine, we therefore recommend that consistent with our denomination's deep convictions regarding the priesthood of the believer and the autonomy of the local church, membership in a Masonic Order be a matter of personal conscience. Therefore, we exhort Southern Baptists to prayerfully and carefully evaluate Freemasonry in the light of the Lordship of Christ, the teachings of the Scripture, and the findings of this report, as led by the Holy Spirit of God."

THE JESUS SEMINAR IN THE SBC

Considering that over 1 million Freemasons belong to the Southern Baptist Convention, and many hold positions of authority, it is not surprising that in 1998 a Jesus Seminar leader was invited to address an SBC congregation.

"In February Jesus Seminar leader Marcus Borg spoke for three days at Myers Park Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. Myers Park is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Borg denies that Jesus Christ even claimed to be the Messiah. He denies that Jesus Christ was virgin born. He denies the bodily resurrection of Christ. He denies that Christ worked miracles. 'We would say these are paranormal happenings, meaning things we don't have an explanation for' (*The Charlotte Observer*, Monday, Feb. 16, 1998, p. 6C).

"In 1992 Borg stated: 'It is a distortion of Scripture to read [the Bible] as a book of the future. It has a profoundly disturbing effect, and leads to the image of God as judge and emphasizes us as getting ready for judgment. It takes us away from the world' (*The Berean Call*, Apr. 1992).

"That same year Borg testified that He believes almost nothing in the Bible: 'I would argue that the truth of Easter does not depend on whether there was an empty tomb, or whether anything happened to the body of Jesus. ... I do not see the Christian tradition as exclusively true, or the Bible as the unique and infallible revelation of God. ... It makes no historical sense to say, 'Jesus was killed for the sins of the world.' ... I am one of those Christians who does not believe in the virgin birth, nor in the star of Bethlehem, nor in the journeys of the wisemen, nor in the shepherds coming to the manger, as facts of history" (*Bible Review*, December 1992).

"The misnamed Jesus Seminar, composed of some 75 'experts in religion and New Testament studies,' began meeting in March 1985 (its organization was first announced in 1978) with the supposed object of discovering which words of the Gospels are authentic. After a passage was discussed by the participating 'scholars,' they used colored pegs to indicate the degree of authenticity they felt should be ascribed to it. Red means they believe it is definitely authentic; pink for maybe; gray for probably; black for absolutely not authentic. The colors indicate degrees of doubt in God's Word. In 1993 the Jesus Seminar published *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus*. This included a new translation called 'The Scholar's Translation.' The color coding was incorporated into the text to describe the degree to which the various portions of the Gospels are considered authentic by the Jesus Seminar. Most of the passages are black!

"The Seminar concluded that Christ spoke only 18 percent of the sayings attributed to Him in the Bible. According to the Jesus Seminar, Christ did not speak most of the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount; He did not say anything about turning the other cheek or giving to those who ask of you; He did not speak the parable of the sower, the parable of the ten virgins, the parable of the ten pieces of money, or the parable of the talents; He did not say 'I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it'; He did not pray in the garden of Gethsemane; He did not say 'Take eat, this is my body' and the other sayings associated with the Lord's Supper; He did not say 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do' or 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me' when He was on the cross.

"The Jesus Seminar determined that Christ did not walk on the water; he did not feed the thousands with only a few loaves and fishes; Christ gave no prophecies of His death or resurrection or second coming; Christ did not conduct the Last Supper as it is recorded in Scripture; there was no Jewish trial of Christ; Christ did not appear before the high priest or before Pilate; the Jewish crowd did not participate in His condemnation; Christ did not rise again bodily on the third day and did not ascend to Heaven bodily.

"According to the Jesus Seminar, 'THE STORY OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS ENDED WITH HIS DEATH ON THE CROSS AND THE DECAY OF HIS BODY' (Religious News Service, March 6, 1995). ([Christ-Denier Speaks at Southern Baptist Church](#))

THE Gnostic GOSPELS OF THE JESUS SEMINAR

Presently there are an abundance of books which promote the thesis of the Jesus Seminar: that the true message of Jesus Christ was suppressed by the early Church but has been preserved in non-canonical works written by Gnostics ~ especially the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were discovered in Qumran in 1945, and the Nag Hammadi Library, which was discovered in Egypt in 1947.

The majority of books promoting these heretical manuscripts are of Masonic origin: *The Hiram Key*; *The Dead Sea Scrolls Deception*; *The Message of the Sphinx*; *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*; and *Bloodline of the Holy Grail*. [1](#)

The Introduction to a popular volume of the Nag Hammadi Library rejects the inspiration of two of the Gospels in the traditional Christian canon:

"The Jewish Christianity of the first generation in Galilee that developed the collection of sayings imbedded in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke may well have been considered heretical even by Paul and the Hellenists, and the feeling may have been mutual."

The Gospel of Mark is also suspect, according to the Masonic authors of *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, subsequent to the recovery in 1958 of the Gnostic Secret Gospel of Mark near Jerusalem. [2](#)

Since its inception in 1985, the Jesus Seminar has been preoccupied with discrediting Jesus Christ as revealed in the canon of Scripture and seeking to discover "the historical Jesus" in the Gnostic scriptures. With three Gospels of the New Testament now discredited, Jesus Seminar scholars have turned to a new gospel which presents "another Jesus" who preaches "another Gospel."

A survey of the [Jesus Seminar](#), available at the University of California at Santa Barbara web site, mentions their "scholarly" translation of a new version which includes the "recent archeological discovery" ~ the Gospel of Thomas:

"Part of the project was also the preparation of a new translation of the gospels, prepared by a group within the Seminar, known as 'the Scholars Version.' This translation, and the work of the Jesus Seminar as a whole, includes the non-canonical Gospel of Thomas, preserved in a Coptic version as part of the Nag Hammadi

Codices discovered in Upper Egypt in 1945...The results of all this work appeared in 1993: *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus*, by Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, published by Macmillan in New York."

Gnosis means "knowledge" - specifically hidden or occult knowledge. The Gnostics taught that it is possible for Man to attain to the divine state through the knowledge of secret mysteries. The Introduction to the Gospel of Thomas describes the Gnostic message of "another Jesus" who imparts *gnosis* to those seeking their divine origin:

"The Gospel of Thomas in its oldest form, stressed the finding of wisdom, or of the 'Kingdom of the Father,' in the knowledge (gnosis) of oneself (cf. saying 3), guided by the sayings of Jesus...The theme of recognizing oneself is further elaborated in sayings (cf. 50, 51) which speak of the knowledge of one's divine origin..."

Note the variety of New Age concepts preached by the Gnostic Jesus of the Gospel of Thomas:

(22) "Jesus said to them, 'When you make the two one, and when you make the inside like the outside and the outside like the inside, and the *above like the below*, and when you make the male and female one and the same, so that the male not be male nor the female; and when you fashion eyes in place of an eye, and a hand in place of a hand, and a foot in place of a foot, and a likeness in place of a likeness; then you will enter the kingdom.'" (As above, so below; androgyny)

[NOTE: According to *The Message of the Sphinx*, the "'Hermetic writings' (of the Gnostic School of Alexandria, Egypt)...express the philosophy 'as above, so below' and advocate the drawing down to earth of cosmic powers as an essential step in Mankind's quest for knowledge of the divine and immortality of the soul: 'And I, said Hermes, will make Mankind intelligent, I will confer wisdom on them, and make known to them the truth. I will never cease to benefit thereby the life of mortal men; and then will I benefit each one of them when the force of nature working in him is in accord with the movement of the stars.'" [3](#).]

(30) "Jesus said, 'When you disrobe without being ashamed and take up your garments and place them under your feet like little children and tread upon them, then [will you see] the son of the living one, and you will not be afraid.'" (sexual rites of initiation)

(41) "Jesus said, 'Whoever has something *in his hand* will receive more, and whoever has nothing will be deprived of even the little he has.'" (cf., Rev. 13:16,17)

(50) "Jesus said, 'If they say to you, 'Where did you come from?', say to them, 'We came from the light, the place where the light came into being on its own accord and established [itself] and became manifest through their image...' (divine origin of man)

(61) "Salome said, 'Who are you, man, that you...have come up on my couch and eaten from my table. Jesus said to her, 'I am he who exists from the undivided. I was given *some* of the things of my father.'" (Jesus not co-equal with God)

(70) "Jesus said, 'That which you have will save you if you bring it forth *from yourselves*. That which you do not have within you [will] kill you if you do not have it *within you*.'" (god within)

(72) "[A man said] to him, 'Tell my brothers to divide my fathers possessions with me. He said to him, 'O man, who has made me a divider?' He turned to his disciples and said to them, 'I am not a divider, am I?'" (ecumenical unity)

(77) "Jesus said, 'It is I who am the light which is above them all. It is I who am the all. From me did the all come forth, and unto me did the all extend. Split a piece of wood, and I am there. Lift up a stone, and you will find me there.'" (pantheism)

(114) "Simon Peter said to them, 'Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of life. Jesus said, 'I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven.'" (androgyny)

MASONIC TAKEOVER OF THE DENOMINATIONS

Gnosticism began to threaten the doctrine of the Church during Apostolic times and became fully developed as a major heresy in the second century A.D. Paul seems to have been dealing with an early form of Gnosticism in the book of Colossians, where there are references to a religious system that attempted to devalue the person of Jesus Christ and undermine His redemptive work by promoting a combination of Greek speculation (2:4,8-10), Jewish legalism (2:11-17), and Oriental mysticism (2:18-23). The theme of Colossians is the complete sufficiency of Jesus Christ, rather than forbidden knowledge, for every spiritual and practical need of the believer.

Today, the Gnostic heresy is enjoying a worldwide revival. Other denominations besides the SBC, such as the United Methodist Church, have also invited speakers from the Jesus Seminar to address their congregations. By promoting the heretical doctrines of the Jesus Seminar and Freemasonry, these denominations have become major vehicles for the dissemination of Gnosticism.

It appears that this renaissance of Gnosticism has not been spontaneous, but is the result of premeditated infiltration of Christian churches. The writings of New Agers such as Theosophist Alice Bailey revealed that plans to form a fifth column within ALL denominations were laid early in this century:

"Very definitely may the assurance be given here that, prior to the coming of the Christ, adjustments will be made so that at the head of all great organizations will be found either a Master, or an initiate who has taken the third initiation. At the head of certain of the great occult groups, of the Freemasons of the world, and of the various great divisions of the church, and resident in many of the great nations will be found initiates or Masters." [4](#).

"The Christian church in its many branches can serve as a St. John the Baptist, as a voice crying in the wilderness, and as a nucleus through which world illumination

may be accomplished. I indicate the hope. I do not assert a fact. Its work is intended to be the holding of a broad Platform. The church must show a wide tolerance, and teach no revolutionary doctrines or cling to any reactionary ideas. The church as a teaching factor should take the great basic doctrines and (shattering old forms in which they are held) show their true and inner spiritual significance. The prime work of the church is to teach, and to teach ceaselessly, preserving the outer appearance in order to reach the many who are accustomed to church usages. Teachers must be trained; Bible knowledge must be spread; the sacraments must be mystically interpreted, and the power of the church to heal must be demonstrated.

"The three main channels through which the preparation for the new age is going on might be regarded as the Church, the Masonic Fraternity and the educational field. All of them are as yet in relatively static condition, and all are as yet failing to meet the need and to respond to the inner pressure. But in all of these three movements, disciples of the Great Ones are to be found and they are steadily gathering momentum and will before long enter upon their designated task." [5](#).

[The Masonic New World Order](#)

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1. Christopher Knight & Robert Lomas, *The Hiram Key*, Element Books, 1996; Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Deception*, Element Books, Touchstone Books, 1993; Graham Hancock & Robert Bauval, *The Message of the Sphinx*, Three Rivers Press, 1996; Michael Biagent, Richard Leigh & Henry Lincoln, *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, Dell Publishing, 1982 ; Laurence Gardiner, *Bloodline of the Holy Grail*, Element Books, 1996.
2. *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, p. 320.
3. *The Message of the Sphinx*, pp. 132, 270.
4. Alice Bailey, *Initiation: Human & Solar*, Lucis Publishing, 1922, pp. 61-2.
5. Alice Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, Lucis Pub., 1957, pp. 510-11