

Engaging Freemasonry – Pt. IV

Before continuing on, it is essential that a term be defined in as much as it can be defined. That term is the word “religion.” The really sad part of trying to define religion is that virtually everyone’s definition of what “religion” is, fails. Hence, this has to be approached from a strictly Scriptural point of view, with the attendant explanation of why men have not been able to define “religion.” Last of all, for the question that must be addressed concerning Freemasonry and its relationship to religion (whether it is a religion, or merely a very good friend to it) is: *Can a religion include different or diverse religions in its particulars and still be a religion in its own right?*

In Scripture, the statement is made:

If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. *(James 1:26-27)*

The rest of the references made to religion in the Scripture only refer to someone’s religion, but describe nothing about what religion is. However, it is indisputable that an integral and primary part of religion is worship, and that that worship has certain confines, or restrictions placed upon it, whether narrow or broad. The Scripture does discuss worship, and even defines it for us. One of the first instances where worship is clearly defined is the instance where Abraham’s servant went to find a wife for Isaac. Upon having his request granted by the LORD God, Abraham’s servant did the following:

And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD. And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who

hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren. (*Genesis 24:26-27*)

Thus, the simple act of prayer is worship, and is a primary element of religion. The second thing we can note about religion is that it self-evidently has a defined set of beliefs, irrespective of whether those beliefs are logical, sensible, reasonable, or even beneficial. The defining aspect of those beliefs relate specifically to the spiritual, its existence, or non-existence, and thus the existence of any spiritual higher power. However broad one may think this definition is, it nonetheless is necessary as one can even make a religion out of such a mundane thing as cutting the grass.

Moreover, religion also has the elements of rite and ritual in some degree. The rites and rituals of a religion may only be a single thing, simplistic in its form, or it may a multitude of things, and very complicated in form. In some instances rites and rituals are used as a means of justification before the higher power(s) of that religion. In others, the rituals and rites are simply a means of illustration of certain truths that the adherents of that religion are to be reinforced in as often as they are performed. The latter was the case throughout the Old Testament as illustrated in the following passage:

Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength. Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. (*I Chronicles 16:28-29*)

The bringing of an offering before the LORD was a picture of Christ to come, and was a teaching that the LORD God wanted illustrated continually. Failure to do so was indicative that one did not follow the LORD, but was bent upon their own way. In case it is not understood that the sacrifices and offerings

were not efficacious for salvation the Scripture does provide the following as proof:

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (*Hebrews 10:1-10*)

And from the Old Testament:

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. (*Jeremiah 7:21-23*)

Hence, though rituals and rites were a part of the worship in ancient Israel, they were not necessary for salvation. In

contrast, in the Catholic Church the ritual of Mass is necessary for the salvation they promise. By this contrast, we can see the varied purpose of rites and rituals and the fact that it is not necessary for a rite or ritual be specifically meant for salvation for it to be an essential part of whatsoever religion that incorporates it. In short, a religion may promise some sort of salvation or justification (and most do), but some of the elements of that religion may not be expressly necessary for the promised salvation to be effected.

So we now see that prayer, a defined set of beliefs (particularly relating to the spiritual), and some rites and/or rituals are all parts of what define a religion. We could say at this point that any system that incorporates these specific elements is a religion. However, for the purposes of this discussion relating to Freemasonry, there is a necessity to answer a final question:

Can a religion incorporate other religions, and still be a religion in its own right?

To say the least it is an interesting question. However, it does have an answer, and that answer is more obvious than most would care to admit. For the answer we must turn to two different systems of belief: Unitarian Universalism, and non-secular Humanism.

I will begin with Unitarian Universalism and its answers to questions that are commonly raised.

Does the UUA have a creed?

No. Although the bylaws of the association do contain a section on purposes and principles, it is not a statement of a religious creed.

Do you subscribe to any doctrines?

We have no specific doctrines to which members are expected to subscribe. However, the bylaws of the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association) and member churches and societies

do contain a Statement of Purpose and Principles (see page 18). These are the basis of a solemn agreement that member churches will support the UUA and that the UUA will support the individual churches.

What do you NOT believe?

We do not believe that any religious precept or doctrine must be accepted as true simply because some religious organization, tradition or authority says it is. Neither do we believe that all UUs should have identical beliefs.

Do some UUs have different beliefs than other UUs?

They certainly do. Since individual freedom of belief is one of our basic principles, it follows that there will be differing beliefs among us. Found in today's churches are humanism, agnosticism, atheism, theism, liberal Christianity, neo-paganism and earth spiritualism. These beliefs are not mutually exclusive—it's possible to hold more than one. While we are bound by a set of common principles, we leave it to the individual to decide what particular beliefs lead to those principles.

Do you believe in God?

We do not have a defined doctrine of God. Members are free to develop individual concepts of God that are meaningful to them. They are also free to reject the term and concept altogether.

Most of us do not believe in a supernatural, supreme being who can directly intervene in and alter human life or the mechanism of the natural world. Many believe in a spirit of life or a power within themselves, which some choose to call God.

What are the bonds that unify UUs?

While there are no written or verbal doctrines designed for that purpose, we have both stated and unstated bonds which unify us. The stated bonds are the Principles and Purposes of

the UUA which we support individually and collectively.

Among the unstated bonds are our mutual respect for each other and our appreciation of the many religious, philosophical and spiritual paths which our members pursue. We are bound together in our mutual concern for one another's well being, and our willingness to aid each other in time of need. ([UU Church of Nashua, NH., 100 Questions: Chapter 1 – Beliefs, Creeds and Doctrines](#))

To be continued . . .

Engaging Freemasonry – Pt. III

There are those who have argued that Freemasonry is anti-religion. However, this is largely (but not totally) confined to the Catholic Church. This charge the Freemasons dispute strongly. I would have to agree with the Freemasons that Freemasonry is not anti-religion or anti-religious. In fact, Freemasonry is a very good friend to religion, and encourages religion to an extent that many churches do not. In the writings of the major proponents of Freemasonry, it is very clear that they seek to encourage religion as they believe it makes a man a better Mason, and a better citizen. ((Messages for a Mission, Freemasonry and Religion-Friends or Foes?, Henry C. Clausen, The Supreme Council, 1977, ISBN 77-78489. The use of excerpts from this article are in accordance with the "Fair use" provision of the Copyright Act.)) Additionally, it is plain in all the rites and rituals, that religion

figures prominently in Freemasonry.

However, it is incumbent upon us to realize that religion, and truly being in fellowship with the LORD God are not the same. In fact, one can be, and the vast majority are, quite religious and involved in religion, yet have no fellowship with the LORD God at all. There are some significant examples of this in Scripture that we would do well to pay heed to.

And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner. And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also? But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you. But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. (Luke 11:37-42)

Now, we must remember that these are the very same people the Lord Jesus referenced in His sermon on the mount at the beginning of His ministry. In this dissertation the Lord plainly stated that the Pharisees possessed a certain righteousness, but that righteousness was not sufficient to enter into the kingdom of heaven:

For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:20)

Thus, as religious as the Pharisees were, they had not sufficient righteousness to enter into the presence of the LORD God as that would require a righteousness that exceeded theirs. This clearly meant that they, as religious as they

were, had no personal fellowship with the LORD God. This also the Lord Jesus made plain while preaching on the mount:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matthew 7:21-23)

The logic of this statement the Lord made plain immediately prior to that when he stated:

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. (Matthew 7:13-14)

The problem the Lord highlights here is one that many have when it comes to understanding how to please the LORD God and be obedient. They think that “good works” are what will justify them before Almighty God, and all they really need is to have more “good” works than “bad” works. However, the reality is there is only one work that one can do which will please the LORD. It is given in the following statement by the Lord Jesus Christ:

Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. (John 6:28-29)

This draws a definitive distinction between religion and what the LORD God actually requires of man. In religion there are rites, rituals and dogma, with the LORD those were never required ((The fact that salvation has **always** been the same is explained to the post [A Departure: Pt. III](#). It should not be

necessary to repeat here the extensive evidence in Scripture of this fact. Additionally, the evidence that the LORD God has always required man to “Repent and believe the gospel” is found in the article [What does God Require of Us?](#)) to be justified before Him. No, what the LORD God requires of all men is a personal relationship available only through reconciliation by the blood atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. This reinforced in Scripture extensively, and that contrast with religion is crystal clear in the following passage:

Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. (*Galatians 4:8-11*)

Now, is that to say that all religion is worthless? No, not quite. The Scripture does clarify that there is one, and only one religion that is undefiled in the sight of the LORD:

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. (*James 1:27*)

Which is to say no more or less than what the Lord Jesus Christ answered to the lawyer who asked what the great commandment in the law was:

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (*Matthew 22:37-40*)

And is confirmed again in the epistle to the Romans:

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (*Romans 13:8-10*)

Now, what religion and all its attendant "good works" are woefully deficient in are not the supposed "love" of visiting the fatherless and widows. Rather, it is the love of God and the keeping of oneself unspotted from the world. Like the scribes and Pharisees of the time of Christ, the works that are done in religion are primarily done for the edification of self and justification before God, without any understanding that the first and foremost thing God requires of man is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as only Lord and Saviour. Hence, religions fail in the love of God, and can never please Him. This also the Lord Jesus Christ made clear:

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. (*John 14:23-24*)

And again from I John:

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. (*I John 3:22-24*)

Knowing these things then, I must ask:

What is the point of religion when I have (which I do), or can have (which anyone can) a personal, one on one relationship with the LORD God of heaven and earth? Moreover, when the LORD God dwells within me, who or what group or organization can make me any better a person than He can?

Thus, though Freemasonry is indeed a friend to religion, it is a friend to an utterly worthless exercise in self-justification that cannot please the LORD God, and cannot gain one entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven.

To be continued . . .

Engaging Freemasonry – Pt. II

One of the most striking aspects of Freemasonry are the religious features of all its rites, rituals and creeds. Thus it was somewhat surprising to see an article in the book, Messages for a Mission, by Henry C. Clausen, 33rd Degree, of the Supreme Council (Mother Council of the World), titled Freemasonry and Religion – Friends or Foes? ((Messages for a Mission, Henry C. Clausen, The Supreme Council, 1977, ISBN 77-78489. The use of excerpts from this article are in accordance with the “Fair use” provision of the Copyright Act.)) The article begins with the statement:

FROM time to time there have been published abrasive pamphlets arguing that Freemasonry is hostile to religion or that its teachings are anti-Christian. Initially it should be observed that the authors of such charges seemingly never are

Masons and yet they purport to reveal its "secrets." Since they could not know the definitive Masonic truths or teachings, their authenticity is destroyed at the very start. If they are renegades or have received material from renegade informers, then so much the worse.

There are a number of things to address here, but a couple of things stand out as requiring immediate attention before continuing with any other issues. The specific statements are:

Initially it should be observed that the authors of such charges seemingly never are Masons and yet they purport to reveal its "secrets."

And:

Since they could not know the definitive Masonic truths or teachings, their authenticity is destroyed at the very start. If they are renegades or have received material from renegade informers, then so much the worse.

Now, since when has any member of an organization, who is in good standing with that organization, ever been harshly critical of the organization they are part of? Not to be flippant, but the fingers of one hand suffice to count them. In short, Masons who are in good standing are never going to point out the defects of Freemasonry, no matter what they are. Why? Because that is unmasonic conduct and it will get them removed. Hence, Mr. Clausen's statement becomes automatically true. Moreover, one who is outside Freemasonry is never going to be allowed to see everything in Freemasonry to make any sort of objective judgement. Thus, Mr. Clausen's statement is axiomatically true again.

What we have here is the setup for a straw man argument, which is completed with the following statement as quoted above:

Since they could not know the definitive Masonic truths or teachings, their authenticity is destroyed at the very start. If they are renegades or have received material from renegade informers, then so much the worse.

No Mr. Clausen, only the straw man is destroyed. The fact remains that either the rites and rituals reflect the teaching given in the various books of Freemasonry, or they are something else altogether different. The problem here is that they are not "altogether different" or even different at all. Why? Strictly due to other statements made by Mr. Clausen in the same article:

The so-called revival of Freemasonry in 1717 and Anderson's Constitution of 1723 reinforced these new freedoms. The document may be called a Masonic religious Magna Carta. Like-minded men, other than operative masons, were admitted as Speculative Masons. They brought speculative thought with them, and thus there evolved a severance from the dogma of any one church, sect, or creed. There was independence and yet dependence, for faith and trust in God was indispensable. Under that belief, reflected in a Holy Bible upon the altar, and in the Brotherhood of Man and in his capacity for improvement, Freemasonry unites all men. They still may retain their own particular theological dogmas and forms of worship.

There is nothing said in what Mr. Clausen argues that contradicts what Mr. Beasley told me, and what I have read in the Masonic books in my possession. Hence, the charge,

Since they could not know the definitive Masonic truths or teachings, their authenticity is destroyed at the very start. If they are renegades or have received material from renegade informers, then so much the worse.

is simply a straw man to cause one to question the things quoted from Masonic books as being factually true. The reason this is done, is the very same reason they are so secretive about the rites and rituals – the vast majority of individuals in society would find the rites and rituals evil, repulsive, and abhorrent. When the statements and teachings contained in Freemasonry's books are brought to light and compared with the Scripture rightly divided, they are found to be actually anti-Christian and utterly condemning of the fraternity. In this, Freemasonry is no different from the Mormon religion and all its secret rites and rituals.

Last of all, questions must be raised concerning a statement made by Mr. Clausen, which is a standard Masonic teaching. To wit:

Under that belief, reflected in a Holy Bible upon the altar, and in the Brotherhood of Man and in his capacity for improvement, Freemasonry unites all men. They still may retain their own particular theological dogmas and forms of worship.

Upon that statement I must ask:

Where is it in Scripture that the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is Almighty God, allows for worship of Himself in whatever way men happen to think appropriate?

Where is it in Scripture that the Lord Jesus Christ is defined in any other way than Almighty God, and God manifest in the flesh?

Where is it in Scripture that salvation is found in anything, or anyone other than the Lord Jesus Christ?

You see, believing in "God" however one chooses to define him,

is not sufficient for fellowship, or for reconciliation with the LORD:

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. (*James 2:19*)

So it is that Freemasonry deliberately chooses not to define the truth, and as will be seen, actually works to obscure the simple truth of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ and Him alone. However, the most interesting statement of all comes at the end of the article, and is an admission of what Freemasonry and Freemasons strenuously deny:

Its truths and teachings are not the exclusive property of any church. On the contrary, Masonry is additive to any religion or theology. We are sure that its immense popularity and strength will continue and grow with an ever-abiding belief in God and “that religion in which all men agree leaving their particular opinions to themselves.”

In case it was missed, Mr. Clausen admits that Freemasonry is:

“that religion in which all men agree leaving their particular opinions to themselves.”

To be continued . . .

Engaging Freemasonry

Recently, I had the opportunity to minister to an elderly man who had been in Freemasonry for about half of his adult life.

He was a 32nd degree Mason and was still looking for the answer that Freemasonry promised him. He had yet to find it.

When I dealt with him, I found him to be very intelligent, inquisitive and driven to learn. In fact, of all the traits he possessed, the love of learning was to me the most outstanding. I began to minister to him because his oldest daughter was gravely concerned for his destiny when he passed away. She saw no evidence that he had ever come to understand the Gospel, or that he knew the Lord Jesus Christ personally. I agreed to do a study with him, even though I really did not know what Freemasonry taught, or what its goals are. It proved to be interesting.

Out of that ministry to Sidney Max Beasley, Mr. Beasley ultimately ended up rejecting Freemasonry and the Freemason funeral rites. Now, the work is not mine as the LORD used a number of individuals over the years to minister to Mr. Beasley. However, apparently what Mr. Beasley lacked was the understanding of the fact that the truth is exclusive (meaning it necessarily excludes all things that are not true) and that two significant things are declared concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. The first thing Jesus declares about Himself, and the second was revealed by the Holy Ghost to the apostle Paul, for the benefit of us all:

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (*John 14:6*)

For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (*Colossians 2:1-3*)

It is a fact that in Jesus Christ and in Him alone resides the truth, and that it is a single truth that has many facets. Moreover, there is no other truth, and that all other claims to the truth are false, no matter how "true" they may appear to be. As a part of this, is a fact that all, not some or most, but all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in the Lord Jesus Christ. If he is the truth, then it does necessarily follow that he is all the truth, and that all knowledge, all wisdom and all understanding are hid in Him.

Hence, there is no other place to look for answers – no matter what the question.

Now the revelation of this to Mr. Beasley followed on the heels of being shown that Freemasonry cannot possibly know the truth as they steadfastly refuse to say which religion or denomination is right, or even the most correct. How can it be that all religions that confess "God" are accepted equally and are equally valid when there is such variance in what they teach, even to the point of being diametrically opposed? Moreover, Freemasonry claims that they will make a better man out of anyone who joins the fraternity and follows the dogma, rituals and rites. However, that raised another question:

How can an earthly organization of any sort make a better person out of someone if that organization refuses to accurately identify the truth, and instead opts to present a mishmash of religious teachings from different religions that don't even agree in their basic tenets?

Added to that is yet another question:

How can anyone improve upon what the LORD God does when he changes a person at salvation, and then continues to work in their life to conform them to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ? Can you really claim to outdo the LORD God and His ability to change a person's life and morals, especially

since the LORD God made man in the image of Himself and knows more about how we tick than anyone else?

Mr. Beasley had no answers to the above questions. I was not surprised. Moreover, my lack of surprise was confirmed after he passed away and I purchased virtually his entire library of Masonic books. The reason he had no answers is due to the fact that Freemasonry cannot answer those questions, and it cannot answer the basic question the LORD God would ask of anyone who is not born-again in Christ Jesus:

How, and in what way, are you as righteous as the LORD God?

With that question left hanging (and I am going to let it hang), let us then proceed to examine what Freemasons state about Freemasonry, its teachings and purpose. After all, there is no more valid testimony as to what a person or organization believes than their own words properly and rightfully cited in context. This I will ever endeavor to accomplish in every article addressing any topic, not just Freemasonry.

To be continued . . .

Missing the Point

One of the interesting things about apologetic studies is the frequency in which I come across the attitude that declares in essence: 'There's got to be more than this. It cannot be this simple and this easy to find' with regard to knowing and understanding God, and the things of God. However, I am thankful that the LORD God does not operate the way man operates and has plainly declared that He desires the salvation of all:

Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die. (*John 12:30-33*)

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. (*I Timothy 2:1-4*)

Thus, to make it possible for all men to be saved, the LORD would not and did not make it hard for man. Rather, it is man that makes it hard for himself. Those who would declare that knowing God is difficult, and understanding Him is impossible, are ignorant of the true nature of the LORD God, and thus ignorant of how the LORD accomplishes His work among men. Clearly, one cannot get around the following statement the LORD made to Jeremiah in the Old Testament:

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD. (*Jeremiah 9:23-24*)

Thus, ignorant of what God has actually stated, many go about thinking (and telling others) that God cannot be known or understood at all. How very sad for them. Yet, the problem is not confined to them. Rather, the attitude evinced at the beginning of this article extends well in to what are generally considered to be "Christian" denominations and religions. One of the most prominent advocates of the idea

that understanding God is virtually impossible (indeed, they frequently tell their people that the things of God are a "mystery") is the Catholic Church. In this particular regard, they have much in common with Freemasonry.

However, the truth of the word of God, the Scriptures, gives away the lie fostered by these organizations upon their members. To begin with, it does all start with the Lord Jesus Christ, and knowing Him.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (*John 14:6*)

Now, I know that people give short shrift to the above passage. However, it is a severe mistake to do so. The above statement declares that there is one, and only one way, one truth, and one source of life – the Lord Jesus Christ. Without the Lord Jesus Christ, one can forget understanding anything about God. The only hitch to this that one must know the right Jesus, as man has an adversary that desires nothing more than to prevent as many as he can from coming to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation and thus reconciliation to God. This was one of the concerns of the apostle Paul as he expressed it to the church at Corinth:

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him. (*II Corinthians 11:3-4*)

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according

to their works. (*II Corinthians 11:13-15*)

The answer to this dilemma is found in following the Scripture rather than the writings of those who alter Scripture to fit various ideas they have about God, Christ, and the salvation offered through the Lord Jesus. If what is written and spoken is consistent with the Scripture, then one can be assured that they are going the right way.

In returning to the subject at hand, the Scripture also reveals to us that in knowing the Lord Jesus Christ, we have access to an understanding that is only limited by our walk with the Lord and the extent to which we please Him. Moreover, this is available to all who come to Christ and is not confined to a select few. The LORD insured this was made clear and plain through the apostle Paul when he wrote the church at Colosse:

For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (*Colossians 2:1-3*)

If we notice how the statement is framed, we can see that the desire of the LORD is that all those who come to Christ be comforted with the knowledge of God and of Christ, and that they need look no further than Christ for the knowledge, wisdom and understanding they need. We can be certain of this by a statement made very shortly after the assurance above:

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. (*Colossians 2:8*)

Thus the contrast is drawn between the true knowledge and

wisdom given by knowing and walking with Christ, versus what man thinks ought to be. We should understand that man's ideas and philosophies are based upon what man sees and thinks he understands. Moreover, man's pride is such that it is inconceivable that such knowledge would be available to everyone. After all, what would make someone "special" and "worthy of honor" if the knowledge and wisdom they seek to obtain is the same knowledge that is available to everyone? What power would one man have over another if all receive their wisdom from the same source and are all able to come to God directly?

Maybe that is why they "miss the point."