

**A MINISTER AND MASONRY**  
By Brother and Rev. John R. Selders  
Pastor, Christ's Church, Boardman, Ohio

My father was a Mason (a 32nd Degree and Knight Templar). He was also a great Christian. The Lodge had helped him grow spiritually. I saw Masonry as a marvelous adjunct to the church. Therefore, when I had saved up the money, I too became a Mason. The men who coached me in my degrees and many of my lodge brothers were also my church members. There was no conflict for them between the two. It never occurred to me that there would be a problem between the lodge and the church for anyone. Over the years it has become evident that some church folks are very negative about Freemasonry. Some of this is due to misunderstanding of teaching and some due to outright lies that are perpetrated against Masonry. However, the major criticism is that Masonry is a religion and the Lodge is a church. This erroneous idea can be disproved in two ways:

(1) In the Installation Service for the Symbolic Lodge Chaplain the ritual reads, "though Masonry does not pretend to be a religious institution (church); yet.. she should be an auxiliary to whatever is good and great." So, Masonry does not claim to be a church, regardless of the church-going habits of its members.

(2) In my present congregation there are many fine Masons including Past Masters, and others who have been removed by the Fraternity. These men are the "backbone" of our church. These great Masons are also grand Christians and most are in leadership positions. Here's my question: If Masonry is a church, why are these distinguished Masons so faithful and active in Christ's Church?

As you can see, there need not and should not be any conflict between the Lodge and the Church. The experience of this minister with Masonry has been very positive. Even as I desire to see men join our church, I desire to see them become Masons. I always promote Masonry, because it is a great auxiliary to the church.