

XIV — SECRET SOCIETIES

The Christian's supreme loyalty must be to Jesus Christ who is Lord (Rom 14:9; Acts 2:36). In all associations the Christian must be free to follow Christ, obey the will of God and should not be unequally yoked with an unbeliever (2 Cor 6:14-18). In light of biblical teachings, the Christian needs to understand the demands of discipleship regarding membership in secret societies.

Those organizations which demand a secret oath, affirmation, or password as a condition of membership are considered to be secret societies. Most secret societies are religious in nature. Frequently, prayers are offered, hymns are sung, members engage in acts of worship, and chaplains are chosen to lead in worship and to conduct funerals. However, the worship of these societies is often Unitarian, not Christian; the religion is moralistic, not redemptive; and the ends are humanistic, not evangelical (Acts 4:12). In contradiction to the teachings of Christ and the New Testament, these societies require secret pledges and vows which bind the future actions of those who join. Swearing unreserved loyalty to any secret society is in direct conflict with the Christian's commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord. The Christian must be free to follow the will of the Lord in all things.

Therefore, members of our church shall refrain from membership in all secret societies and those who unite with the church must resign from membership in any lodge or secret order previously joined.

— Adopted by the 1991 General Conference