

**What is the Truth about George?
(including a Latin American perspective)**

By

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What is the truth about George?

As viewed in his roles as Mason, Christian, from a U.S. and Latin America perspective
by Sara Ann Frahm

The Ecuadorian Bolivarian Society gave homage to Washington on the bicentennial anniversary of his birth. "Creating a national faith, strengthening it so that it remains despite all changing vicissitudes, is the distinctive call of the leaders of peoples and founders of states....we from this Andean summit are aware of the palpitations of universal history, which ascend along the peaks of the abrupt mountain chain....it is important to keep iconoclasts alive, to support the transcendence of society."¹

Some evangelical Christians in the United States believe Washington was more than an iconoclast, that he was instead God's instrument, chosen to father a Christian nation, fulfilling dreams of New England Puritans, furthering the destiny to become the "new Israel."

Freemasonry, that secular fraternity of which Washington was its most acclaimed member, has another view. Masons look to Washington as a man too tolerant to have believed that there was only one way to heaven, a way won by the shedding of the Savior's blood almost two thousand years ago.

What is the truth? Is Washington emblematic of "American religion," all things to all men? Does the United States have a national religion? Should we have a national religion? If we do, what is it? Is it the religion of Freemasonry, "the religion in which all men agree,"² or is it the religion of Jesus Christ who said, "I am the way, the truth, the life, no man comes to the Father except through me."³

If the United States is viewed as a Christian nation, and the founding fathers are seen as model Christians, many Christians understandably will desire to regain an inheritance on the wane. Political involvement and social action are filtered through this lens of necessary action.

However, if the United States is a nation of mixed heritage, and Christians believe that God is more concerned with the righteousness of His people, the church, than that an entire nation be Christian, prayers and actions will emphasize the purification and reformation of the church. This is the dilemma of the Christian community in the United States. These two views are not mutually exclusive; it is rather a question of emphasis.

Latin Americans have been instructed by the Roman Catholic Church to know that Masonry is not consonant with Christianity. Nine papal bulls bear witness to that. There is less confusion here, less mixture of Christianity and patriotism.

Vicente Rocafuerte, early promoter of religious tolerance in Mexico, wrote, "It had taken forty centuries for the ten commandments to spread their light; how much time would it take for the code of reason to be understood and adopted by all men?" He saw the United

States as an example of republican philosophy based on reason, blessed with the ideas of Washington and Franklin.⁴

From the point of view of some Latin Americans, Washington was not only a man for the United States. He was also, "a link uniting two peoples, the father of American patriotism, the creator of the Republic in the New World....the Father of American liberty on the continent of Cabot and Columbus. His actions were emulated by Miranda, Bolivar and San Martin. He bequeathed his virtues to humanity."⁵ According to an article in the *Gaceta de Buenos Aires*, he was a citizen of the continent, opposing the oppression of European monarchs. Using a Masonic term of deity, the author remarked, "the North American revolution was a finished painting, a work of wisdom and virtue; ours is still in the hands of the great architect."⁶

The Bolivarian Society of Ecuador honored Washington on the 4th of July, 1932. "In time and space there was no meeting of the Eagle of the North, the Condor of the South, when in their flights of light they illumined American skies." (Washington died in 1799 without meeting Bolivar). Nevertheless when Bolivar made his sacred oath to free South America on Monte Sacre in Italy, according to the Venezuelan poet Gil Borges, the new world reverberated with thunderous glory, causing the ashes of Washington to tremble, that one which Bolivar called "the first son of the new world, the father of America."⁷

Washington was much admired by Latin Americans. Research done by Nettie Lee Benson indicated that Mexican revolutionary publications of the first quarter of the 1800's pointed to Washington as the American who symbolized all that the United States represented. Periodicals and books of the post-revolutionary period show that the admiration continued. The Declaration of Independence, Acts of Confederation, the Constitution of the United States and Bill of Rights were often published in Latin American newspapers and pamphlets.⁸

Merle E. Simmons states that in the late 1700's Benjamin Franklin was the American most revered in Latin America. This changed in the early 1800's when Washington took precedence. The disillusionment brought by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic invasion of Spain caused Latin America to look to the United States as the guiding light of democracy, liberty and reason. The names of Franklin and Washington symbolized revolution, but a revolution quite different from that of the French.⁹

George Washington (1732-1799) was born in Bridges Creek, Westmoreland County, Virginia, on February 22, 1732. His great-grandfather, Colonel John Washington, had immigrated from Yorkshire, England to Westmoreland County, Virginia. His will of February 26, 1677, cited by Charles H. Callahan in Washington, the Man and the Mason, expressed that the Colonel was a devoted Christian.

Being heartily sorry from the bottom of my heart for my sins past, most humbly desiring forgiveness of the same from the Almighty God, My Savior and Redeemer, in whom and by the merits of Jesus Christ I trust and believe assuredly to be saved, and to have full remission and forgiveness of all my sins, and that my soul with my body at the general resurrection shall rise again with joy.¹⁰

George Washington's family belonged to the established Episcopal Church in Virginia. His father Augustine, like George, served as vestry man.¹¹ After Washington's second term as president, he gave up these duties, seldom attending church. His absence from the communion table provoked the officiating pastor to preach on the importance of example by great men. George never again attended church.¹²

John R. Alden wrote that after the war Washington was no longer a faithful Episcopalian.

Soon after his (Washington's) return home from the war he resigned from the vestry of the nearby Truro church. Thereafter he continued now and then to attend religious services, but then or somewhat later ceased to take communion. Precisely why his attitude toward religion had altered, one cannot say. It has been suggested that he had learned as a Mason to believe in a ruling Providence rather than an orthodox Christian deity....It would seem that like, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and many another Patriot leader, he was affected by waves of Unitarianism and deism that accompanied the Revolution. He did not become an enemy of organized religion.¹³

Washington did not support Jefferson and Madison in their struggle to separate church and state. He was, however, opposed to special privilege for the Episcopal Church. He liked the general assessment plan of the Virginia assembly, apportioned to "various Christian sects and Jewish and Mohammedan churches."¹⁴

Peter Marshall and David Manuel, authors of The Light and the Glory, were overjoyed at their fortuitous finding of a book entitled, George Washington, the Christian, in the stacks of the Yale Divinity School Library. This book contained daily prayers written by the young George, when he was about twenty. The prayers indicated a personal belief in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross. They verified his belief in the blood of the lamb and in the Holy Spirit.¹⁵

Tim LaHaye in Faith of Our Founding Fathers declared that Washington's handwritten prayers from his prayer book were discovered in 1891. They were found among his personal papers, and to date no historian had questioned their validity. The prayer book contained twenty-four pages of his morning and evening prayers.¹⁶

It appears that the prayers referred to by LaHaye, Marshall and Manuel come from the same prayer book. If these were written by Washington at age twenty, they varied from his later writings, in which there appeared to be only one mention of Jesus Christ. This was in a speech to the Delaware Indians in which he exhorted them, "Brothers...you do well to wish to learn our arts and ways of life, and above all the religion of Jesus Christ. These will make you a greater and happier people than you are..."¹⁷ Washington also referred several times to the life of a Christian, in terms of living a moral life, rather than any proscribed belief.

God was referred to in general terms, such as "providential goodness, Supreme Officer of all Good, all wise and powerful Being, the Wise and Virtuous, an indulgent Providence, the Grand Architect of the Universe (when writing to Masonic brothers), Supreme Ruler of the Universe, glorious Being, Almighty God."¹⁸ Why did this man who earlier expressed his faith in orthodox Christian concepts, later rely on the common terminology of deism? Is it possible that upon Washington's admittance to that Ancient and Accepted Order of Freemasons, his earlier beliefs were challenged?

On November 4, 1752, at the age of twenty, George Washington received his first degree in Masonry at the lodge in Fredericksburg, Virginia. He was "raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason, August 4, 1753."¹⁹

According to William Mosely Brown, author of George Washington, Freemason, he seldom attended the Fredericksburg lodge. During the years 1755-1777 he was not very active in Masonry. In 1779 he took part in a Masonic procession to Christ Church in Philadelphia on St. John the Baptist's Day, an important day for Masons. From then until his death in 1799, his Masonic activity greatly increased.²⁰ This can be substantiated in his original writings as edited by John C. Fitzpatrick. There are letters or references to letters written to various Masonic lodges in the years 1782, 1783, 1791, 1793, 1795, and 1797.²¹ Brown commented:

From the vestigial, local lodge Masonry of 1730 to the powerful national Fraternity of 1800, it is Washington's figure that stands out above all others; and it was the inspiration of his personal leadership that above all other single influences led the Craft from its beginnings in the first half of the century to its triumphant national emergence in 1800.²²

Latin Americans also looked to Washington as a model Mason. According to Alcibiades Lappas in his book, San Martin and his Liberal Ideology, "the breach (with the Catholic church) begun by philosophers was widened by the intellect of statesmen, such as Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, all Masons....these were present in the thought and memory of San Martin, as were other protagonists of the South American emancipation."²³

Fray Servando de Mier of Mexico traveled to Philadelphia hoping to promote interest in Mexican independence. He admired the Masons of the United States. However, lamenting the lack of support, he wrote, "the names of Washington and Franklin have been as sweet in our mouth as in theirs...even today any downfall of theirs afflicts us, any success of theirs causes us happiness. Yet they have been ungrateful and have seen us perish without compassion." He wrote this in 1821, anxious to see the demise of the Mexican emperor, Agustín Iturbide.²⁴

Washington was a lifelong member of the Episcopal Church, believing that religion served the good purpose of promoting morality and maintaining order. Nevertheless, he disliked religious quarrels which might upset the peace. Paul F. Boller, in George Washington and Religion, stated that Washington had the "characteristic unconcern of the eighteenth century deist for the forms and creeds of institutional religion." Washington, like most American deists who were not as anticlerical as European deists, gave money to many denominations for church building funds.²⁵

During the era in which Freemasonry had its debut, Anglicans were immersed in latitudinarianism, the belief that sincerity saved and all creeds were welcome within the state church.

Freemasonry, as an organized "speculative" society, began in England in 1717. Although the society had existed prior to that time, it had been primarily an organization for operative masons, those involved in the building trades. Formerly referred to as operative masonry, it was later organized as a secret philosophical society, referred to as speculative masonry.

Frustrated with organized religion, many from Britain searched for a new faith. Optimistically, it was hoped Freemasonry would unite all religions, disposing of past antagonisms and controversies. Religious tolerance was in vogue.

Scholars have seen John Locke as a forerunner to deism, but hardly in agreement with it. Locke, although emphasizing the necessity of reason, was unwilling to disregard Scriptural authority. According to him, if all men had been reasonable, there would have been no need for revelation. However, all men were not reasonable. Nevertheless, he believed people were more likely to embrace the beliefs achieved by reason and contemplation than those received through revelation. Dogmas causing dissension were better left alone.²⁶

Locke's impact on the desire for religious tolerance was profound, especially within the church of England. Archbishop Tenison, primate from 1694-1715, encouraged all Christians to come under the umbrella of Anglicanism. Rather than deviance from a creed, heresy was newly defined as living an immoral life. Original sin was minimized, along with the atonement and the incarnation. There was much discussion concerning the Trinity.²⁷

Some have contended that Methodism checked this trend of latitudinarianism, but it is questionable. George Whitefield and John Wesley were men of culture, and Wesley understood the difficulties of combating deism. Methodism made its mark, not among intellectuals and Freemasons, but among the lower classes, when Wesley was forced out of the established church.²⁸

The Anglican church of Virginia was established in 1619. Royal governors insured that colonists observed the rites of the Church of England. By 1629 the established church had become extremely intolerant. Dissenters were forced to leave Virginia or pretend conformity.²⁹ In 1730 when Scotch Presbyterians arrived, they requested that the English Act of Toleration of 1688 be enforced in Virginia. Baptists arrived in 1743 and began to be confrontational between 1750-60, receiving support from Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and George Mason, among others.³⁰

The controversy regarding the established church continued for several decades. Not until Jefferson's Bill for Religious Freedom passed in 1786, ten years after its introduction, was the Anglican Church disestablished in Virginia. There had been debate concerning the preamble to the Bill. Some wanted to promote Christianity exclusively, but they were in the minority. In Jefferson's autobiography he wrote:

Where the preamble declares that coercion is a departure from the plan of the holy author of our religion, an amendment was proposed, by inserting the word (s) "Jesus Christ," so that it should read "a departure from the plan of Jesus Christ, the holy author of our religion." The insertion was rejected by a great majority, in proof that they meant to comprehend, within the mantle of its protection, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and mahometan, the Hindoo and the infidel of every denomination.³¹

J. G. A. Pocock, professor of history at John Hopkins University, doubted that the General Assembly in Virginia was concerned about the freedom of the above mentioned religions. It was more likely that "Unitarians, Socinians, and other kinds of deists and humanists had the vote." Even though Unitarianism had not yet appeared in Virginia, liberal

Episcopalians adopted Unitarian and deistic beliefs. It is evident that the liberal tendencies of British Anglicanism were present in the Virginia Episcopal church. Furthermore, Pocock observed, "The Virginia Statute is not neutral as to religion: it defines it, declaring it to be something - opinion or free inquiry - and denying it to be something else - a presence of Christ as anything more than a historic figure about whom opinions may be held."³²

If these liberal Episcopalians had adopted deistic beliefs, could it be because they were steeped in Freemasonry? As the crown had decided to open wide the doors to the church, sincerity rather than belief becoming the test of membership, many Freemasons were allowed to continue in the faith. Why not? Kings (and queens!) in England have themselves been the titular heads of Masonry!

Latin Americans, at least those eager to separate from Spain, the crown, and Roman Catholicism were eager to embrace the North American founding fathers. Vicente Rocafuerte compared Napoleon Bonaparte with Washington. Bonaparte was inferior,.. "unable to imitate the immortal example of the great Washington...the most perfect government is the American...liberty is only found in the shadow of the laurels and cypresses that cover the tomb of the immortal Washington. The constitution of the United States is the only hope of oppressed people.... and the capitol of Washingtonworthy temple of independence."³³

Years later Washington was still emulated. Dr. Luis F. Villarán, rector of the University of San Marcos of Lima, Peru, spoke on the occasion of a visit from the U.S. Secretary of State in 1906. "You, the Americans of the North, were the founders and defenders of the international and political liberty of these states. Washington, whose greatness has been given worthy expression in the inspired words of Byron, "The first, the last, the best of men," and the glorious group of illustrious citizens who aided him in his work, were the apostles of democracy and of the republic.

On this same tour Secretary of State Root visited Mexico. The governor of Vera Cruz exalted Washington as he welcomed him. "This occasion gives rise to the thought that your Washington and our Hidalgo were the instruments chosen for planting the sacred tree of national independence...which has brought forth the fruit of liberty to nourish the people of the United States and Mexico."³⁴

Latin Americans do not look to Washington necessarily as a model Christian, but rather as the father of liberty. However, they often used religious language to refer to him, "apostle of democracy, sacred tree of national independence." Nicolás Vegas Rolando spoke of the initial moment of human redemption. "New gods were created, one of which brought redemption and exaltation of souls. This was the goddess liberty. She arrived when a group of men shook off the yoke of oppression. Two hundred years later (this was 1976) we celebrate the prosperity and greatness of the United States anniversary of independence."³⁵

This language, referring to liberty as a goddess bringing redemption, would be offensive to many in the United States. Even though religious language may be used in the United States for political concepts, there is enough mixture of Christianity within that framework to keep from offense. My contention is that it instead brings deception and confusion.

Many Christians in the United States are upset when their founding fathers are called deists, accusing those who thus label them as being "revisionist," claiming that they have tampered with history, revising it. Other Christians are convinced that it is deceptive to insist that the nation's heritage is predominantly Christian. Although the founding fathers may have been Godly men, the claim that they were dedicated Christians, is certainly questionable.

What is the connection between Freemasonry and deism or natural religion? Deism was in fashion at the time speculative (philosophical) Freemasonry was birthed. Douglas Knoop and G.P. Jones, Masonic historians, submitted a paper in 1946 entitled, "Freemasonry and the Idea of Natural Religion," to Quatuor Coronati Lodge of London, No. 2076, the lodge specializing in historical research. They discussed the first charge of Masonry, the basis for Masonic belief in religious tolerance. It reads as follows:

A mason is oblig'd by his Tenure to obey the moral Law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid Atheist, nor an irreligious Libertine. But though in ancient times Masons were charged in every country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet 'tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all men agree, leaving their particular opinions to themselves, that is, to be good Men and true or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguished; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true friendship.³⁶

Knoop and Jones noted that this charge was a summary of the thought of the time, emphasizing deism and natural religion. "...in the early eighteenth century there was nothing very strange in making the cult of natural religion the basis of a society of peaceable people....the ideas expressed in it [the First Charge] were current at the time."³⁷

Examining Masonic constitutions dating as far back as 1410, they observed that the Trinity was not deleted until 1723. Deism had two aspects: the first being a belief in God, as the "constitutional monarch of the universe," and secondly, the denial of revelation, asserting

that the human mind was not only capable of forming an adequate idea of God, but was also able to discern the moral duties required of humanity.

These two beliefs made up the basis for "natural religion," considered natural and universal, binding upon all men. The thought of Matthew Tindal (1653-1733), an English deist, especially in his book, Christianity as Old as the Creation, the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature, summarized the theology of earlier deist and latitudinarian authors, clearly setting forth the idea of natural religion.³⁸

Tindal's book was often referred to as the deist Bible, appearing in four editions in three years, also translated into German. This work was perhaps the most significant of those denying revelation in favor of reason. It marked the climax of the deist controversy, stating that the only credible use of the Bible was to confirm scientific, rational discoveries. Discrediting all miracles and opposing the triune God, Tindal denied the incarnation and the resurrection. Especially scornful of Old Testament stories and so-called Jewish legends, he disallowed the fall of man, the need for revelation. Why, he wrote, would God single out one insignificant tribe to be the recipient of His favor?³⁹

Deists claimed to return to a more ancient tradition than Christianity, drawing from magical, mystical, Druidic, Egyptian and Babylonian sources. They attacked church dogma, attempting to show that scriptures were not authentic or reasonable. "A great effort was made to attach that feeling of the divine to a religion more essential than Christianity."⁴⁰

Christianity speaks of one way to salvation, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ paying the penalty for man's sinfulness. Freemasonry, on the other hand, acknowledges truth in all religions, collecting the best from all, uniting them into a glorious whole, becoming a "society of speculative architects engaged in the construction of spiritual temples."⁴¹ According to Albert Pike, a Masonic authority, "Masonry, of no one age, belongs to all time; of no one religion, it finds its great truths in all."⁴²

The cross, for Christians, symbolizes the crucifixion, resurrection and atonement of Jesus. For Freemasons, the compass and the square depict man's ability to achieve perfection and progress on this earth, through intellectual and spiritual enlightenment. A Mason hopes to secure a position in another world, the grand lodge on high.

Bernard Fay, author of Revolution and Freemasonry, believed Freemasonry was most influential in developing unity in the fledgling colonies:

In 1760 there was no town, big or small, where Masonry had not spun its web. Everywhere it was preaching fraternity and unity...Masonry alone undertook to lay the foundation for national unity in America, because, through the very nature of its

organization, it could spread throughout all the colonies and work steadily and silently. It created in a limited, but very prominent class of people, a feeling of American unity without which American liberty could not have developed, without which there could have been no United States.⁴³

Anson P. Stokes agreed with Fay, commenting on the strength Masonry gained before the Revolution, unifying patriots from different colonies. Some Protestants saw Masonry as a necessary successor to Christianity to implement harmony, and they worked with the brotherhood.⁴⁴

Callahan wrote that the first military lodge organized in the continental army was American Union Lodge in the Connecticut line, encamped at Roxbury.

It was the beginning of that peculiar system of Masonic institution which later permeated the whole military fabric of the American colonies...in those nomadic temples, during the eight years of privation, some of the most distinguished men in the history of America received Masonic light and afterwards became potent factors in the organization and work in both the grand and subordinate bodies.⁴⁵

The Temple and the Lodge by Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, two British journalists, commented on the prevalence of Freemasonry within British regiments. This spread rapidly to colonial units. "Lodges proliferated, Freemasonic ranks and titles were conferred like medals, or like promotions." British Freemasonry thus strengthened the infant lodges of the United States. "Freemasonry would come to suffuse the whole of colonial administration, society and culture." The rights of man and the perfectibility of society were two concepts emphasized by Freemasons.⁴⁶

An elaborate spy network was based in Paris, run by men with Masonic connections. Masons listed were George Washington, Paul Revere, Patrick Henry, and Benjamin Franklin as well as John Hancock, Peyton Randolph, presidents of the first and second continental congresses. Alexander Hamilton and James Monroe are known to have been Masons.⁴⁷ Most sources state that Thomas Jefferson and James Madison were not, although there is some disagreement.

Interesting is Washington's connection with the Society of Cincinnati. Major General Henry Knox, Washington's Chief of Artillery, according to an entry in Jefferson's diary, had wished for "some ribbon to wear in his hat...to be transmitted to his descendants as a badge and

proof that he had been found in defense of their liberties." He proposed a society called the Cincinnati. Plans were made and dated, Westpoint, 15 April 1783. Washington was elected president. The eagle became the Society's emblem. Benjamin Franklin objected, as he felt the eagle looked too much like a turkey and was not a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America. The turkey would have been a better choice!⁴⁸

The Masonic Biography and Dictionary compiled by Augustus Row had this to say about the Order of Cincinnatus. "It was instituted on the 13th of November, 1783. This was a society that originated with Masonic officers associated with Washington in the Revolution. It had long been their desire to see Washington placed and constituted the head of Masons in the United States. The object of the association was benevolence, relief and to perpetuate the lasting friendship formed under trying circumstances and patriotism. General Knox is the author of the system..."⁴⁹

Garry Wills, author of Cincinnatus, George Washington and the Enlightenment believed Washington was willing to meet the expectations of "the Enlightenment's conception of political heroism...his life verged on legend...because he had models he was trying to live up to; and he came close enough for others to accept him as a literal fulfillment of the age's aspirations."⁵⁰

Cincinnatus was a legend based upon a Roman citizen called from his plow to rescue Rome, returning to farming when danger was past. Enlightened men wished to replace churchly saints with secular images. At the time of Washington's death, he was compared with Moses. It wasn't long though before classical images were invoked. Parson Weems, the biographer largely responsible for the cherry tree myth, was behind this. Weems was a Mason and a latitudinarian who favored religious freedom.⁵¹

Marquis de La Fayette, who fought alongside Washington in the Revolutionary War, received from Washington's family the cordon of the Order of Cincinnati used by "the liberator of North America." He then traveled to South America, presenting the cordon and a medallion containing Washington's portrait to Simon Bolivar. These words were engraved on it, "this portrait of the author of North American liberty is presented by his adopted son to that one worthy of equal glory in South America."⁵²

Washington received this medal after the final battle of the Revolutionary War. It was presented to Bolivar after the final battle in Ayacucho. Bolivar was most honored, remarking that Lafayette was another link in the chain, forged to unite all nations of the earth. All three: Washington, Lafayette, and Bolivar were Masons. George Washington P. Custis, Washington's adopted son, had kept this medal..."until a second Washington arrived worthy to be the owner."⁵³

R. Blanco Fombona, in his book Mocedades de Bolivar (the youth of Bolivar) relates how Bolivar was accustomed to wear this medallion, as there was no one he so admired as Washington. He never used another medal, after receiving this one. When he was able to visit the United States he read Washington's biography, studied North American independence, and probably visited Washington's tomb.⁵⁴

This medallion symbolized for Bolivar the important contact with the Father of American liberty. Upon receiving it he remarked, "Washington, presented by Lafayette, is the crown of all human rewards...my confusion is equal to the immensity of recognition that I offer you, together with the respect and the veneration that all men owe to the Nestor of liberty."⁵⁵

Many in the United States referred to Bolivar as the Washington of South America. Henry Clay made a toast at a banquet, "To General Bolivar, the Washington of America, to South America, to the republic of Colombia." This cordon and medallion later became the property of General Guzmán Blanco, given to him by the nephew of Bolivar. Guzmán Blanco was a well-known Masonic figure in Venezuela, responsible for changing the national cathedral of the Trinity into the national pantheon.⁵⁶

William Mosely Brown referred to the laying of the cornerstone of the United States capital as "the greatest public Masonic occasion in American history...the cornerstone...was laid by George Washington in his dual capacity as President of the United States and as Acting Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Maryland." Washington, Joseph Clark and three other worshipful Masters assumed their positions at the right of the cornerstone. Brown conjectured that it was the three Masters who bore the consecrating elements: corn, wine, and oil. Ancient Masonic tools were applied (square, plumb, and level). The stone was "well and truly laid according to the ancient customs and usages of the fraternity...the ceremony ended in prayer, Masonic chanting honors and a fifteen volley from the artillery." Washington wore his Masonic apron, a gift from Madame Lafayette. It was "wrought with silk, and had...on the frontlet the Mark Master's circle, and mystic letters, with a beehive as its mark in the center."⁵⁷

Washington became charter Master of Lodge No. 22, in Alexandria, Virginia. He served about twenty months. This lodge was selected to lay the first cornerstone for District of Columbia. There was an account in the United States Gazette of Philadelphia, April 30, 1791. "The Mayor and Commonalty, together with the members of the different Lodges of the town, waited on the commissioners at Mr. Wisers, where they dined, and after drinking a glass of wine to the following sentiment, viz.: "May the stone which we are about to place in the ground, remain an immovable monument of the wisdom and unanimity of North America, the company proceeded to Jones' Point..". Cornerstones of the Smithsonian Institute and the Washington Monument were laid by the same lodge.⁵⁸

George Washington died in the winter of 1799. Four clergymen attended the funeral, three being members of Washington's lodge. The Reverend Dr. Davis quoted Jesus in the Gospel of John, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Episcopal burial services were used, and Mr. Davis gave a short address. Then the Master of the Lodge performed the mystic funeral rites of Masonry.

The apron and swords were removed from the coffin...It was ready for entombment. The brethren one by one cast upon it an evergreen sprig, and their hearts spoke the Mason's farewell as they bestowed their last mystic gift. The mystic public burial honors of Masonry were given by each brother in due form...The mystic chain was reunited in a circle around the tomb; the cannon on the vessel, anchored abreast the mansion, boomed its minute guns, and the soldier on the banks above them echoed back their solemn burial salute and Mt. Vernon's tomb was left in possession of its noblest sleeper.⁵⁹

It is remarkable that most Christian authors who write about our country and its history choose to ignore Freemasonry. Perhaps this is not deliberate. Perhaps they are truly ignorant of its significance. Timothy LaHaye in his book Faith of the Founding Fathers remarked that George Washington and Benjamin Franklin were the most respected delegates at the Constitutional Convention. He quoted John Marshall's testimony regarding Washington's sincerity of faith in the Christian religion. Marshall was also a Freemason. LaHaye further stated that the principal institutions of this country: government, education, media and the church were, at the time of its birth, controlled by believers in God or those who respected Christianity.⁶⁰

James Carter, author of Masonry in Texas, names eleven colonial newspapers controlled by Masons. At the top of the list was The Pennsylvania Gazette, published by Benjamin Franklin, the dean of American journalism, and an influential Freemason.⁶¹ According to him there were twenty-two Masons in the First Continental Congress,⁶² sixty-five Masons in the Second Continental Congress.⁶³ Thirty-two Masons signed the Declaration of Independence.⁶⁴ Carter also lists ten lodges in the Continental Army, and 1,864 Masons fighting in the American Revolution, among them 117 generals, 29 adjutants, 152 colonels, 43 lieutenant colonels, 93 majors, 317 captains, and 234 lieutenants.⁶⁵

Indeed Masonry believes in God, but not the God of the Bible. Little understood is how Freemasonry has interwoven pagan and occult elements from many sources into its beliefs and rituals. Seeds sown early would later bear fruit and bring moral decay. It is difficult to understand how LaHaye is able to state that, "atheism, secularism, and humanism were largely

philosophical imports from France, Germany and England after the constitution was written and after the death of most of our nation's Founding Fathers."⁶⁶

It is true that Masons cannot be atheists. Nevertheless, in their ritual there is polytheism; in their philosophy there is secularism and humanism. Some have claimed Albert Pike introduced Satanism into Freemasonry. LaHaye wrote that the legal mentors of the Founding Fathers, John Locke and Charles de Montesquieu were Christians who wrote from a Biblical worldview. Locke may have been a Christian. He may also have been a Mason. Montesquieu was the president of French Freemasonry.

Another popular book among Christians has been The Light and the Glory by Peter Marshall and David Manuel. They also ignore Freemasonry. In all fairness, Freemasonry did, as an institution, make contributions to religious tolerance, democracy, freedom and equality. It is probable that Masonic belief in separation of church and state was at least partly responsible for the disestablishment of state churches and the emphasis on freedom of religion. Many times Masons cooperated with Christian groups to achieve these goals, but their philosophical and religious motivations were quite different.

Mentioned in The Light and the Glory was the Christian influence of the Puritans. Their importance cannot be denied, although one could debate whether the Puritan concept of America as a new Israel was accurate or misleading. Sermons compared Washington to Moses. Washington was quoted as stating that we should imitate the characteristics of the Divine Author of our religion, a vague statement which can be interpreted by both Christians and Freemasons to mean what they wish it to mean.

One Christian book that mentions Freemasonry is Defending the Declaration by Gary T. Amos. He mentioned that although he had been urged to consider Masonry, he remained unconvinced that it was philosophically important to the Declaration of Independence or the Revolutionary War. His good study was less than complete as a result of excluding Masonry.

Many well-known Christian radio personalities, including James Dobson and James Kennedy, seek to persuade Christians that the United States is indeed a "Christian nation." One cannot deny that there have been outstanding, influential Christians, but seldom do we hear discussion by Christians on the role of Freemasonry in our history or on the influence of Masonry in our churches.

What role did Washington's early biographer, Mason Locke Weems, have in creating the dearly held image of our first president? Weems, a parson turned book peddler, was widely read in his own generation. By the time of Weem's death his biography of Washington had forty editions; by 1932 there were eighty editions. Nineteenth century America preferred his biography to any other. According to William Bryan, author of George Washington in

American Literature, "Weems's book was far more popular than any other writer before 1865, and had the greatest influence of all works on Washington to the present day."⁶⁷

Lawrence C. Wroth saw Weems' writings as literary curiosities. Others viewed him as an inaccurate biographer, a preacher of morals, "a saucy fellow who was sometimes vulgar...his biography was popular not because of his accuracy, but because of his enthusiasm."⁶⁸

Even though there was no chapel at Mt. Vernon, Weems claimed to be its rector! Perhaps it helped his sales. Actually he was the rector of a parish church in Dumfries, Virginia. The McGuffey reader, among other schoolbooks, carried Weems' work, creating a sense of patriotism and nationality.⁶⁹

What about Parson Weems? What was he up to? Weems' book, the History of the life and death, virtues, and exploits of General George Washington, notes on the title page that Rev. M.L. Weems was a member of lodge no. 50, Dumfries. On June 24, 1799, Weems wrote to Mathew Carey of Philadelphia, his employer and printer:

I have nearly ready for the press a piece christ'ned,..."The Beauties of Washington." This artfully drawn up, enlivened with anecdotes...what say you to printing it for me and ordering a copper plate Frontispiece of that Heroe, something in this way. G. W. Es., "The Guardian Angel of his Country. Go thy way old George. Die when thou wilt we shall never look upon thy like again....the whole will make but four sheets and will sell like flax seed at quarter of a dollar. I cou'd make you a world of peace and popularity by it.⁷⁰

Another letter written on January 12 or 13, 1800:

I've something to whisper in your ear. Washington, you know is gone. Millions are gaping to read something about him. I am very nearly prim'd and cock'd for 'em. Six months ago I set myself to collecting anecdotes of him. You know I live conveniently for that work. My plan! I accompany him from his start, through the French and Indian and British or Revolutionary wars, to the President's chair, to the throne in the hearts of 5,000,000 of People. I then go on to show that his unparalleled rise and elevation were owing to his Great Virtues: 1) His Veneration for the Diety, 2) His Patriotism, 3) His Magnanimity, 4) His Industry, 6) His Temperance and Sobriety, 7) His Justice. Thus I hold up his great Virtues to the imitation of our Youth. All

this I have enliven'd with Anecdotes apropos interesting and Entertaining...⁷¹

Sometime later on December 2, 1806, his letter showed aggravation with Carey, "See here Citizen Carey, - I love you. I've had a hell of a time in your service that's certain - but I believe you're honest...But I'll be no slave."⁷²

The youthful Washington learned his lessons "in the book of nature," preparing him for higher lectures of revelation of the "blessed gospel which contains the moral philosophy of heaven. There he learnt that 'God is love' and that all he desires, with respect to men, is to glorify himself in their happiness; and since virtue is indispensable to that happiness...God is in favor of virtue and against vice and consequently...will sooner or later gloriously reward the one and punish the other." These virtues, wrote Weems, enabled Washington to be "a bright example of human perfectibility and greatness." This, said Weems, was the creed of Washington.⁷³

Describing Washington in battle, Weems wrote:

Jehovah, the God of hosts, was with him: and oft' times, in the ear of the slumbering hero, his voice was heard, "fear not; for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, for I am thy god." For liberty he had fought and conquered, and now considered it, with all its blessings, as at hand. Yet a little while, and America shall become the glory of the earth, a nation of Brothers, enjoying the golden reign of equal laws, and rejoicing under their own vine and fig tree, and no tyrant to make them afraid...after having thus waded, like Israel of old, through a Red Sea of blood, and withstood the thundering Sinais of British fury...after traveling through a howling wilderness of war, and with the ark of your country's liberties in camp, safely arrived on the borders of Canaan...⁷⁴

On the occasion of Washington's resignation, Weems wrote, "The sight of their great countryman, already so beloved, and now acting so generous, so godlike a past, produced an effect beyond the power of words to express. Washington had his heart set on the imitation of God in happy and benevolent life...he spent his life acquiring immortal virtues. He had glorified God by exemplifying the charms of virtues to men."⁷⁵

Regarding his death, Weems wrote,

He was about to leave his country whose beloved children he had sought to gather 'even as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings.' He remembers how God...brought their fathers into...a land flowing with milk and honey...with the blessings of liberty and peace, of religion and of laws, above all other people. He breathed out, 'Father of mercies, take me to thyself.' Swift on angel's wings, the brightning saint ascended; while voices more than human were warbling through the happy regions." Other nations ...from your example will aspire to the same honour and felicity...jealousies and hatred will cease and cordial love prevail...Thus step by step, progressing in virtue, the world will ripen for glory...a new earth shall spring, far happier than the first...the spirits of good men shall dwell together.⁷⁶

Weems authored biographies of Franklin, Penn, Marion. He planned to write a noble addition to the Bible to set before the people of America the "brightness and blessings" of democracy, a kind of appendix updating scripture. "I have got a synopsis nearly ready," he said. But perhaps Carey, a Roman Catholic, objected or other activities interfered. The improved and democratic Bible didn't materialize.

Moralizing pamphlets, such as: "God's Revenge against Gambling," "Gods Revenge against Drunkenness," "God's Revenge against Adultery," were also penned by Weems.⁷⁷ One of Weems' biographers described his clever salesmanship:

It is said that, armed with a sheaf of pamphlets, he would invade crowded tavern bars, take up a favorable position in view of all, and after a few words of good natured bantering, launch a virile diatribe against the sin of drunkenness and its attendant evils...then would sell his Drunkard's Looking Glass at twenty-four cents a copy, combining thus philanthropic service and personal profit.⁷⁸

Weems confided to Carey, "I have ever glowed with a book vending enthusiasm...I believe in the immortality of the Soul and the future reign of Light, Liberty and Love. I believe too that...those who have aided the diffusion of Light and Love shall outshine the stars. Hence my enthusiasm to vend good books." Presidents from Washington through Monroe made flattering comments about his books, aiding his sales. The arrival of his "Flying Library" to a country town was a public event.⁷⁹

A passionate exhortation in a Masonic ceremony in Atlanta, was followed by a thanksgiving from the Sabbath School teachers for his contribution of \$18 to aid the operation

of their schools. He traveled up and down the coastal states, becoming acquainted with perhaps more people than anyone else at the time.⁸⁰

Did the story of George and the cherry tree really happen or did it emerge from Weems' fertile imagination? Weems claimed the story was "communicated to me by... an excellent lady...who was a distant relative and when a girl, spent much of her time in the family...". Weems' anecdote of a Quaker named Potts, who found Washington praying in the woods, became a favorite tale as did the story of his attending a Presbyterian communion service, as an Anglican service was unavailable. But these were all of dubious origin.⁸¹

Another biographer of Weems, Harold Kellock, had this to say, "Weems created a Washington that all the study and research of the scholars have been unable to erase...there persists...in the popular imagination, a figure of truly terrifying piosities and incredible perfections..."⁸²

William Gilmore Simms wrote:

If we deny to Weems the merit of the historian, we cannot deny that he was a man of genius. His books have had a vast circulation, have exercised a wondrous influence over the young minds of the country, have moulded many of our noblest characters. His racy and excellent frankness,...the cleverness with which he would make his persons swear and swagger and rebuke them for it, the pleasing diversity of his pictures, ..the proper morality with which he wrote, have united to exercise a greater spell over young America, in past days, than almost any collection of writing within our experience.⁸³

Weems was not alone in his adoration of Washington. Horatio Hastings Weld in his Pictorial Life of George Washington (1845) wrote, "The first word of infancy should be mother, the second father, the third WASHINGTON." On the other hand, Marcus Cunliffe's opinion was that, "It is true that he was a sound Episcopalian, but his religion though no doubt perfectly sincere, was a social performance, quite lacking in angels or visions - except for those that Parson Weems contrived for him."⁸⁴

Many Latin American independence heroes were compared to Washington, including Hidalgo of Mexico, Bolivar of Venezuela, San Martin of Argentina, José de la Riva-Agüero of Peru. These heroes were probably all Masons. The newspaper of the Scottish Rite in Mexico, El Sol, on August 1st, 1823, commented that Washington "shed on all sides the spirit of union and fraternity...the spirit that made the North flourish and that will lay the foundation for the greatness of Mexico."⁸⁵

In Mexico Agustín Iturbide was encouraged not to look to ancient models but to the immortal Washington. When Iturbide became emperor, not too much was written about Washington. After he abdicated the newspaper El Sol said, "Ambition blinded him, whom we had thought to be another Washington."⁸⁶

Vicente Rocafuerte, dejected by the crowning of Iturbide, lamented:

In order not to experience the tyranny which will oppress the lovely city of México, I have abandoned the agreeable views of the precious valley of Tenochtitlan for the banks of the Potomac, close to the sacred tomb of the hero of centuries, the great, the immortal Washington. Come hither - oh valient Mexicans - to consult his worthy ashes and at the first glimpse your souls will be quieted. This is the true oracle of virtue and of liberty.⁸⁷

Most Latin Americas idealized Washington. Venezuelan independence hero, Francisco Miranda, precursor of Bolivar, had another view. Despite the fact that he was a Masonic brother, he had this to say, after dining with Washington in the United States, "he was circumspect, taciturn and has little expression, but tranquility and great moderation make him tolerable...he never set aside these qualities despite the fact the wine flowed with humor and merriment." He referred to him as "the idol," and said that when Washington entered Philadelphia on his way to the Congress assembled at Annapolis, "children, men and women expressed such contentment as if the Redeemer had entered Jerusalem! Considering the many illustrious personages in American who...have accomplished the great...work of this independence, none have either a general approbation or the popularity of this leader (better said, nobody has it but him.) Just as the rays of the sun, shining, upon the burning glass, concentrate in the focus and produce such an admirable effect in physics, so do the achievements and deeds of so many individuals in American reflect upon the independence and concentrate on Washington! A usurpation as capricious as it is unjust."⁸⁸

Another author, Carlos Pereyra, wrote a book called Bolivar y Washington, un paralelo imposible. Pereyra saw Washington as a man of avarice. He believed that Alexander Hamilton, not Washington, was the true founder of the North American Republic. "Everything that Hamilton touched turned into gold." According to Pereyra the French and Indian Wars were brought about by land speculation, in which area Washington was a specialist. He saw Washington as a realist, Bolivar as a mystic. Washington was calculating, inexpressive, whereas Bolivar was sentimental, imaginative, a man of passion.⁸⁹

A popular book of the era was William Meades' Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia. He repeated the story of a Quaker, expounding on Washington's opposition to profanity, card playing, dancing, theater and hunting. Washington's adopted son, George W. Parke Custis, told another story in his memoirs (1860). He stressed Washington's tolerance regarding religion, his occasional anger, his propensity to swear at times. He was fond of theater, fox hunting, playing cards, smoking pipes and even a glass of wine at mealtime.⁹⁰

William J. Johnson in George Washington the Christian, quotes various authors to validate the first president's Christian faith. The book is dedicated, "To the memory of Brison Blair and Lydia Overton Johnson. My Father and Mother who taught their children from earliest childhood to revere the name and emulate the character of George Washington." Examples included Washington gathering troops for prayer, Washington using words like "providence," God's miraculous protection as Washington had two horses shot from under him, Washington sending to England for prayer books and Bibles for his step-children.

Also mentioned was his role as vestryman, church warden, his devout behavior in church, his prayers before meals, his desire to respect the religion of the country, his reading to Mrs. Washington a sermon or portion of Scripture. Included in the book is a portrait of Washington, in which he wears his Masonic uniform. Mrs. Washington said it was her favorite portrait, as it showed the "real" Washington, not the idealized Washington!⁹¹

Steven C. Bullock in Revolutionary Brotherhood noted that Masonry became very popular among Christians following the Revolution. Masons and even non-Masons saw Masonry as fulfilling the truths and purposes of Christianity. "For cosmopolitan Americans eager to avoid both a narrow and parochial sectarianism on one hand and an equally dangerous nonbiblical rationalism, Masonry seemed to reinforce an enlightened middle way."⁹²

De Witt Clinton, Grand Master of New York Grand Lodge, gave a speech celebrating Masonry as "the center of union." He was speaking as the vice president of the American Bible Society! There was a development of common ground between Masonry and the Bible Society, as Christians emphasized nonsectarian friendship. "With Christianity facing disestablishment and growing diversity.... many believers judged the beliefs and oral standards shared by all Christian groups more important than their disagreements over specific dogmas."⁹³ "...the fraternity's standing gained enormously from the growing numbers of eminent laypeople and clergy in its ranks. Prominent clergymen from rationalist, conservative, orthodox and evangelical denominations all contributed to the roster of the fraternity and its claims to religious sanction and purpose." The first missionaries to Palestine were Masons, raising support partly through Masonry. Nevertheless, Unitarians and Universalists were "proportionally over represented."⁹⁴

A newspaper editor in Boston claimed that most Methodist preachers of the New England Conference were good Masons. Methodist ministers found it helpful to be Masons because they traveled so much. Masons were involved in church and cornerstone dedications throughout the country. "Even at the height of Antimasonic opposition, President Jackson suggested that Masonry first acted to 'consecrate'...a church building. Then religion sent its votaries, its devout worshipers, to the tomb, not as members of the church, but as brothers of the fraternity. According to Jackson and many post-Revolutionary Christians, Masonry represented the deity...in sanctifying the two key loci of nineteenth century piety, the church and the grave."⁹⁵

Therefore many citizens saw no problem with holding memberships both in the local lodge and the local church. There was some controversy, but remarkably little.

What is the truth about George? Is it possible for a man to be a Christian and at the same time a Freemason? Following are excerpts from letters and addresses written by various lodges to Washington along with his responses.

An address from the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania in 1791 read:

To George Washington, President of the United States
Sir and Brother: The Ancient York Masons of the jurisdiction of Pennsylvania...beg leave to approach you with congratulations from the East, and, in the pride of fraternal affection, to hail you as the great master-builder (under the Supreme Architect), by whose labors the temple of liberty hath been reared in the West, exhibiting to the nations of the earth a model of beauty, order, and harmony worthy of their imitation and praise....Our prayer [is] that you may long continue to adorn the bright list of master workmen which our Fraternity produces in the terrestrial lodge; and that you may be later removed to that celestial lodge where love and harmony reign transcendent and divine; where the Great Architect more immediately presides, and where cherubim and seraphim wafting our congratulations from hearth to heaven shall hail you brother!
J. B.. Smith, G. M..

Washington's reply was as follows:

To the Ancient York Masons of the Jurisdiction of Pennsylvania

Gentlemen and Brothers: I receive your kind congratulations with the purest sensations of fraternal

affection...I request you will be assured of my earnest prayers for your happiness while you remain in this terrestrial mansion, and that we may hereafter meet as brethren in the celestial temple of the Supreme Architect. Go. Washington.

In a letter to the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts Washington wrote:

Gentlemen: To enlarge the sphere of social happiness is worthy the benevolent design of the Masonic Institution, and it is most fervently to be wished that the conduct of every member of the Fraternity, as well as those publications that discover the principles which actuate them, may tend to convince mankind that the grand object of Masonry is to promote the happiness of the human race...And I sincerely pray, that the Great Architect of the Universe may bless you here, and receive you hereafter in his immortal Temple. Go. Washington.

Another letter from the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania reads:

...permit us to add our most fervent prayers, that after enjoying to the utmost span of human life, every felicity which the terrestrial lodge can afford, you may be received by the Great Master Builder of this world, and of worlds unnumbered, into the amble felicity of that celestial lodge, in which along distinguished virtues and distinguished labors can be eternally rewarded.

Washington's response was as follows:

To have been in any degree an instrument in the hands of Providence to promote order and union, and erect upon a solid foundation the true principles of government, is only to have shared, with many others, in a labor, the result of which, let us hope, will prove through all ages a sanctuary for brothers, and a lodge for the virtues....Permit me to ...supplicate that we may all meet hereafter, in that eternal temple, whose builder is the great Architect of the Universe.

A letter written by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts and signed by Paul Revere, the Grand Master said:

...it is our earnest prayer, that when your light shall be no more visible in this earthly Temple, you may be raised to the All Perfect Lodge above, be seated on the right of the Supreme Architect of the Universe, and receive the refreshment your labors have merited.⁹⁶

Is the Supreme Architect, the Great Master Builder of the World, the very God of the Bible? Is the Perfect Lodge above, the celestial Temple the place that Jesus has prepared for us? Perhaps this article from The New Age Magazine, the journal of the Scottish Rite, can answer the question. It is entitled, "One Nation Under God," and was written by C. I. McReynolds, 32nd degree, in August of 1954.

This article was written shortly after the president signed a law providing that the pledge of allegiance include the phrase "one Nation under God." McReynolds commented that this was merely a recognition of something always expressed since the nation was founded. "Religion is as much a part of the human soul as the human soul is a part of God, and I feel sure that most of us in Masonry accept this. Masonry is universal and central to all creeds." There are many creeds, but only one religion, supposedly the religion of Freemasonry.

Statements of various creeds were quoted. "The pure man respects every form of Faith. My doctrine makes no difference between high and low, rich and poor. Like the sky, it has room for all, and like the water, it washes all alike: (Buddhist teachings.) "Heaven is a Palace with many doors, and each may enter in his own way." (The Koran) "Broad is the carpet God has spread, and beautiful the colors He has given to it." (Persian Scriptures.)

The article continues by claiming that Scottish Rite Masons have the greatest opportunity to realize the truth of many faiths as existing in many lands. Most Christians in the United States are only Christians by birth. "...the time will surely come when a Jew can worship equally as well in a Catholic cathedral, a Catholic in a Jewish synagogue, a Buddhist in a Christian church, and a Christian in a Buddhist temple, or in a place sacred to the Hindus, or in a mosque of the Mohammedans...then, at long last, we shall have accomplished the true teaching of Freemasonry and perhaps we shall have gone as far toward the East as we may in this life."⁹⁷

The pertinent question is not whether there is a God, but rather, who is God? This is not a new question, but rather one that Christians should have been asking from the inception of our country. Why is it that our churches are filled with Freemasons? What fellowship does light have with darkness? "Come out from among them, and be separate."⁹⁸ May our Lord grant that many good citizens who call themselves by both names, Christian and Freemason, will see the truth and profess that Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life, and that no man comes to the Father except through Him."⁹⁹

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- ¹Homenaje de la Sociedad Bolivariana del Ecuador, 4 de julio, 1932 (Quito, Ecuador: Talleres tipograficos nacionales, 1932), pp. 20-22.
- ²James Anderson, Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, (Washington, D.C.:The Masonic Service Association of the United States, 1924),p. 80.
- ³John 14: 6 (NIV)
- ⁴Vicente Rocafuerte, Colección Rocafuerte 16 vols.(Quito: Talleres Gráficos Nacionales, 1947) 3:5-8, 2:XX.
- ⁵Nicolás Vegas Rolando, Como se ligan las revoluciones y sus hombres, Washington, Bolivar, Miranda, Lafayette (Caracas:Ediciones Vegas Rolando, 1976), pp. 17, 21-22.
- ⁶Gaceta de Buenos Aires, May 25, 1816, cited in Merle E. Simmons, La revolución norteamericana en la independencia de hispanoamerica (Madrid: Editorial Mapfre, 1922), p. 279.
- ⁷Homenaje de la Sociedad Bolivariana del Ecuador, 4 de julio, 1932 (Quito, Ecuador: Talleres tipograficos nacionales, 1932), pp.7-9.
- ⁸Nettie Lee Benson, "Washington:Symbol of the U.S. in Mexico 1800-1823," The Library Chronicle, II:4., pp. 176-178.
- ⁹Simmons, La revolución norteamericana en la independencia de hispanoamerica, pp. 273-275.
- ¹⁰Charles H. Callahan, Washington, the Man and the Mason (Washington, D.C.: Memorial Temple Committee of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association, 1913), pp. 5-6.
- ¹¹Ibid, p. 11.
- ¹²Gary Wills, Cincinnatus. George Washington and the Enlightenment (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co, Inc., 1984), p. 24.
- ¹³John R. Alden, George Washington, Southern Biography Series, ed., William J. Cooper (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1984), p. 217.
- ¹⁴Ibid., p. 218.
- ¹⁵Peter Marshall and David Manuel, The Light and the Glory (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1977), p. 284.
- ¹⁶Tim La Haye, Faith of Our Founding Fathers (Brentwood, Tennessee: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, Publishers, Inc., 1987), pp. 110-113.
- ¹⁷Writings of Washington from the Original Manuscript sources, 1745-1799, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. (Washington, D.C.:U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931), 15:55.
- ¹⁸Ibid., 11:343, 78; 24:389, 497; 27:249; 30:383; 35:426.
- ¹⁹Callahan, Washington, the Man and the Mason, p. 253.
- ²⁰William Mosely Brown, P.G.M (past grand master), George Washington, Freemason (Richmond: Garrett & Massie, Inc., 1952) p. vii.
- ²¹Writings of Washington from the Original Manuscript sources, 1745-1799, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols., 24:497; 26:202-203;31:288n, 285n, 309n; 32:391n; 32:391n; 83n;34:236n; 35:426,439.
- ²²William Mosely Brown, George Washington, Freemason, p. viii.
- ²³Alcibiades Lappas, San Martín y su ideario liberal (Buenos Aires: Editorial Simbolo, 1982) p.12.
- ²⁴Fray Servando de Mier, "Nos prometieron constituciones," in Escritos Ineditos (México: El Colegio de México, 1944).p.368.
- ²⁵Paul F. Boller, Jr. George Washington and Religion (Dallas: Southern Methodist University, 1963), p. 121. See also Paul F. Boller, Jr., "George Washington and Religious Liberty," in George Washington, a Profile, ed. James Morton Smith (New York: Hill and Wang, 1969), pp. 165-167.
- ²⁶Robert E. Sullivan, John Toland and the Deist Controversy Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1982), pp. 75-80.
- ²⁷Margaret Jacob, The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans (London: George Allen and UNWIN, 1981), p. 69. See also Sullivan, John Toland and the Deist Controversy, pp. 253-262.
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- ²⁹Garland E. Bayliss, "The Separation of Church and State in Virginia: The contributions of James Madison and Thomas Jefferson," (Masters Thesis, University of Texas, 1953), pp. 1-17.
- ³⁰Ibid., pp. 17-23, 33.
- ³¹Thomas Jefferson, Writings, ed. Merrill D. Peterson (New York and Cambridge, 1984), p. 40 as cited by J.G.A. Pocock, "Religious Freedom and the Desacralization of Politics," in The Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, eds. Merrill D. Peterson and Robert S. Vaughan (Cambridge and New York:Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 65-66.

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- ³³Vicente Rocafuerte, Colección Rocafuerte, prologue, Vol. III.
- ³⁴Addresses by Elihu Root, Latin America and the United States, eds. Robert Bacon and James Brown Scott (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1917), pp. 133, 206.
- ³⁵Nicolás Vegas Rolando, Como se ligan las revoluciones y sus hombres, Washington, Bolivar, Miranda, Lafayette, portico.
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- ³⁷Douglas Knoop and G.P. Jones, "Freemasonry and the Idea of Natural Religion," Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, LVI (1946), pp. 42-43. (Ars Quatuor Coronatorum is a publication of the historical research lodge in London, Quatuor Coronati Lodge no. 1076, available from the Masonic Library in Waco, Texas)
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- ⁴⁶Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, The Temple and the Lodge (New York:Arcade Publishing, Inc., a Little Brown and Company, 1989),p. 211.
- ⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 223, 226-227, 233-236.
- ⁴⁸Edgar Erskine Hume, General Washington's Correspondence concerning the Society of the Cincinnati (Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins Press, 1941), pp. xi-xiv.
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- ⁵⁰Garry Wills, Cincinnatus, George Washington and the Enlightenment (Garden City, N.Y.:Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1984), pp. xxiv, 13, 23.
- ⁵¹Ibid., (check pages)See also the title page of the first edition of "The Life of George Washington," by M. L. Weems, formerly rector of Mt. Vernon parish, in which it is said "printed for the Rev. M. L. Weems, of Lodge no. 50, Dumfries by Green & English, George-town.
- ⁵²Nicolás Vegas Rolando, Como se ligan las revoluciones y sus hombres, Washington, Bolivar, Miranda, Lafayette, pp. 25-26
- ⁵³Nicolás Vegas Rolando, Como se ligan las revoluciones y sus hombres, Washington, Bolivar, Miranda, Lafayette, p. 27 and Homenaje de la Sociedad Bolivariana del Ecuador, 4 de julio, 1932, p.10.
- ⁵⁴R. Blanco Fombona, Mocedades de Bolivar, (Caracas: Ministerio de Educación, Academia Nacional de la Historia, 1988), pp. 154-155.
- ⁵⁵Recopilación de Nicolás Vegas Rolando, Como se ligan las revoluciones y sus hombres, Washington, Bolivar, Miranda, Lafayette, pp.16, 29.
- ⁵⁶Ibid., pp.24-25.
- ⁵⁷William Mosely Brown, George Washington, Freemason, pp. 60-68, 77.
- ⁵⁸Charles H. Callahan, Washington, the Man and the Mason, pp. 287-289, 308.
- ⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 297-302.
- ⁶⁰Tim LaHaye, Faith of Our Founding Fathers (Colorado Springs: Master Books, 1994), pp. 23, 99, 102.
- ⁶¹James Carter, Masonry in Texas (Waco:Committee on Masonic Education and Service for the Grand Lodge of Texas, 1955),p. 43. (Carter noted that this list was determined by comparing lists of known Masons with lists of colonial newspaper owners and publishers compiled from Bleyer, Main Currents in the History of American Journalism and Mott, American Journalism.)
- ⁶²Ibid., pp.51-52 (Determined by checking list of known Masons against membership of body as given in Biographical Congressional Directory, 15-18)
- ⁶³Ibid., pp. 54-55. (Determined by comparing list of known Masons with the membership roll as given in Biographical Congressional Directory, 15-18)

- ⁶⁴Voorhis, Facts for Freemasons as cited in Carter, Masonry in Texas, pp. 67-68.
- ⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 107, 112-113.
- ⁶⁶LaHaye, Faith of Our Founding Fathers, p.33
- ⁶⁷William Alfred Bryan, George Washington in American Literature, 1775-1865 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), pp.96, 119, 239.
- ⁶⁸Lawrence C. Wroth, Parson Weems, a Biographical and Critical study (Baltimore: The Eichelberger Book Co., 1911), pp. 57, 70.
- ⁶⁹Thomas Griswold Ruth, Mason Locke Weems: Mythbuilding in American History (Report, University of Texas, 1968), pp.2-3,11.
- ⁷⁰Americana, 1942, "Mason Locke Weems," by William Alfred Bryan, 36:154
- ⁷¹Ibid., 36:154-155.
- ⁷²Ibid, 36:161
- ⁷³Ibid., pp.11, 295, 298.
- ⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 136, 198-199.
- ⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 211, 213, 273.
- ⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 278-279, 369-370.
- ⁷⁷Lewis Leary, The Book Peddling Parson (Chapel Hill, N.C.:Algonquin Books, 1984), pp.113, 124. See also "Weems", Americana, 36:148, by William Alfred Bryan.
- ⁷⁸Wroth, Weems, a Biographical and Critical study, p. 45.
- ⁷⁹Leary, The Book Peddling Parson, pp. 140, 143-144.
- ⁸⁰Ibid., pp.147, 152.
- ⁸¹William Alfred Bryan, George Washington in American Literature, 1775-1865, p.16. See also Mason Locke Weems, A History of the Life and Death, Virtues and Exploits of General George Washington, (Macy Masius, 1927) pp. 19, 23-24.
- ⁸²Harold Kellock, Parson Weems of the Cherry Tree, (N.Y. and London: The Century Co., 1928), p. 90.
- ⁸³William Gilmore Simms, Views and Reviews, 2nd Series (N.Y., 1845), as cited by Americana, 1942, vol. 36:125, "Mason Locke Weems," by William Alfred Bryan.
- ⁸⁴Marcus Cunliffe, George Washington, Man and Monument (N.Y.: Mentor books, New American Library, 1958), pp. 19, 60.
- ⁸⁵Nettie Lee Benson, "Washington: Symbol of the U.S. in Mexico 1800-1823," The Library Chronicle, Vol.II, no. 4, p.180.
- ⁸⁶Ibid., pp. 177-179.
- ⁸⁷Vicente Rocafuerte, Rocafuerte y la historia de Mexico. Colección Rocafuerte 2:XX.
- ⁸⁸Miranda, Francisco de, Travels of Francisco de Miranda in Unisted States, 1783-84, trans. Judson P. Wood, (Norman:University of Oklahoma Press, 1963) pp.58, 164..
- ⁸⁹Carolos Pereya, Bolivar y Washington, un paralelo imposible. (Madrid: Editorial-América, 1915), pp. 215, 217, 262, 272.
- ⁹⁰William Alfred Bryan, George Washington in American Literature, 1775-1865, pp. 17-18, 22.
- ⁹¹William J Johnson, George Washington, the Christian, (New York, Cincinnati, Abingdon Press, 1919). Books cited are: The Religious Opinions and Character of Washington by Rev. L. McGuire; Memoirs of Washington by Mrs. C.M. Kirkland; The Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution, Benson J. Lossing; Life of George Washington, Washington Irving; J.M. Butler, Washington at Valley Forge; Elizabeth B. Johnston, George Washington, Day by Day; James Baldwin: An American Book of Golden Deeds; Rev. Theodore Wm. John Wyley, Washington, a Christian.
- ⁹²Steven C. Bullock, Revolutionary Brotherhood, (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), pp. 163-164.
- ⁹³Ibid., pp. 165, 167.
- ⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 175-176.
- ⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 177-179.
- ⁹⁶These letters and responses are from Charles H. Callahan, Washington, the Man and the Mason, pp. 272-276.
- ⁹⁷"One Nation Under God," New Age Magazine, August 1954 (Washington, D.C. The Supreme Council, A & A. Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, S.J., U.S.A.),pp. 491-492.
- ⁹⁸2 Cor. 6:17a (NIV)
- ⁹⁹John 14:6 (NIV)