

This is a copy of a letter written by James E. Gier, PM of Apache Lodge in 1976 and currently a dual member with Payson Lodge. It is in reference to a letter to the Editor of Arizona Masonry that was published in the last issue from an Atheist criticizing Masonry for its non-acceptance of a person who refuses to profess belief in a Spiritual Supreme Being.

Tis true --- "for be it known to you, my Brother, no atheist could ever become a Mason"

This has been a requirement since time immemorial, hence I do not believe that it is a prejudice..... While Matthew may very well be an outstanding member of his community in every way, how could he survive going through the degrees where there are so many references to King Solomon's temple as being the House of God, the Sanctum Sanctorum, to Moses, and the Bible ad infinitum? Were we to even begin to contemplate a change to our ritual to accommodate "non-believers", we would be violating anyone of several long established "landmarks of the fraternity"

What would the "Square and Compasses" be like without the "G"? Matthew doesn't have a religious belief, but rather the lack thereof..... I am sorry that he doesn't believe in a Supreme Being, but he belongs to a group of Americans that has, as part of its agenda, the elimination of all references to God, regardless of how it is spelled. Thus, the Pledge of Allegiance would have to be modified, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States would have to be edited, as well as the preambles to all 50 State Constitutions..... Even the capstone of the Washington Monument would have to be removed.....

No, this would be carrying the idiotic "political correctness" malarkey (not the word I wanted to use) way too far..... When you are in an aircraft out over the North Atlantic Ocean at the point of no return and are losing altitude with engine problems, there are no atheists. Nor are there any found in foxholes when under attack.

I have no idea of what Matthew believes caused all that is beautiful and majestic in the world..... Even though the American Indian was considered by many to be heathen or non-believers, they had a belief in a form of a Supreme Being called by many names by the various tribes, sufficient to allow an Apache or any other tribesman to answer the most important question of all; "Do you believe in a Supreme Being?" honestly without having to be a member of any "organized religion"

No, Masonry is not for atheists, nor should we change our philosophy to accommodate "political correctness"..... There are many civic organizations who would welcome Matthew with open arms, and possibly be enriched by his membership, and I would advise him to seek membership in some such organization..... As an individual, I can be tolerant of his lack of belief, as a Mason I have a duty to reject his application, as I would do if he were a member of a subversive organization.....

Short of wiping out hundreds of years of traditions, landmarks, and regulations, I see no solution to his problem.....

James E. Gier, Past Master Apache Lodge, 1976