

Acts Lesson 37 Handout

Religious

Godless

Why can't
they see
what I
see?

Spiritual Blindness

Psalm 119:18

**18 Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things
from Your law.**

Ephesians 4:17–18

**17 So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that
you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the
futility of their mind,**

**18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from
the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them,
because of the hardness of their heart;**

John 3:19–21

**19 "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the
world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light,
for their deeds were evil.**

20 "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.

<i>More compassionately.</i>	<i>How they were RAISED ~ their BACKGROUND ~ their CHURCH affiliation.</i>	THEY DON'T SEE LIFE BIBLICALLY LIKE YOU DO.
Recognize their past and start there.	God is the ONLY one that can change their mind.	<i>Pray that God opens their eyes to the truth.</i>
<i>God opens spiritual eyes in His timing.</i>	RELIGIOUS people.	Jesus hated religion and had nothing good at all to say about the religious elite of His day.

Matthew 23:

4 They make loads that are hard to carry and lay them on the shoulders of the people. However, they are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

5 "They do everything to attract people's attention. They make their headbands large and the tassels on their shawls long.

6 They love the place of honor at dinners and the front seats in synagogues.

7 They love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have people call them Rabbi.

13 "How horrible it will be for you, scribes and Pharisees! You hypocrites! You lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. You don't enter it yourselves, and you don't permit others to enter when they try.

15 "How horrible it will be for you, scribes and Pharisees! You hypocrites! You cross land and sea to recruit a single follower, and when you do, you make that person twice as fit for hell as you are.

16 "How horrible it will be for you, you blind guides! You say, 'To swear an oath by the temple doesn't mean a thing. But to swear an oath by the gold in the temple means a person must keep his oath.'

17 You blind fools! What is more important, the gold or the temple that made the gold holy?

Acts 14

1 Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed.

2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren.

<p>Sometimes the farthest people from God are the most religious.</p>	<p>Following a Religion.</p>	<p>Following Jesus.</p>
<p>1.) Religion sees people as the enemy. Jesus sees sin as the enemy.</p>	<p><i>We have to be able to distinguish between the essentials and non essentials.</i></p>	<p>He came to draw battle lines between God and Satan. He came to destroy sin.</p>
<p>2.) Religion says showing grace is dangerous. Jesus says, "I know."</p>	<p>Religion doesn't deal with uncontrollable. It's too dangerous. They have no control.</p>	<p><i>True grace has the potential to be abused, but without this layer, it wouldn't be grace. It wouldn't transform. And it couldn't save us.</i></p>

3. Religion makes God the boss and you the employee. Jesus makes God the Father and you the son or daughter.

4. Religion is fueled by fear and punishment. Jesus is fueled by love and mercy.

The Holy Spirit literally changes how we think about things.

3 Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

4 But the multitude of the city was divided: part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

5 And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them,

6 they became aware of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding region.

**GODLESS
people.**

7 And they were preaching the gospel there.

8 And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked.

9 This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed,

10 said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked.

11 Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!"

12 And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker.

13 Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes.

14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out

15 and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them,

16 who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways.

17 Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

18 And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

19 Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.

20 However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch,

22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

23 So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

24 And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

25 Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.

26 From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed.

27 Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

28 So they stayed there a long time with the disciples.

Be in it for the long haul.

