Lost Religious People

Intro: The Bible has much to say about lost religious people—religious, but religiously wrong.

I. Pharisees.
   A. They were the religious intelligencia of their day.
   B. Jesus called them the child of Hell; Mat. 23:15 “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.”
   C. Why were they lost?
      1. Said and did not; Mat. 23:3 “All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.”
      2. Did works to be seen of men; Mat. 23:5 “But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,”
      3. Shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; Mat. 23:13 “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.”
      4. For a pretense made long prayers; Mat. 23:14 “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.”
      5. Omitted the weightier matters of the law; Mat. 23:23 “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”
      6. Strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel; Mat. 23:24 “Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.”
      7. Outwardly appeared righteous to men, but within were full of hypocrisy; Mat. 23:28. “Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.”

II. Another Pharisee; Luke 18:9-14 “And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 9Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. 10The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 11I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. 12And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. 13I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”
   A. Notice what this Pharisee did.
      1. Went to the temple (represented the worship of God).
      2. He prayed.
      3. He fasted.
      4. He gave tithes.
      5. Did not do many things that are evil.
   B. Why was he lost?
      1. Trusted in himself that he was righteous.
      2. Luke 18:9 “And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others;”
   C. Luke 18:14 “I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” cf. Pro. 3:5 “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.”
III. Saul of Tarsus.
   A. Was extremely religious.
      1. Phi. 3:4-6 “Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: ‘Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; “Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.”
      2. Had good conscience; Acts 23:1 “And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.”
   B. Met Christ on the road to Damascus.
      1. Became faithful to the point he wanted to know what to do; Acts 9:6 “And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.”
      2. Was penitent, so much so that he fasted and prayed; Acts 9:9, 11 “And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.... 11And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth.”
      3. But he was still lost.
         a. Acts 22:16 “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
         b. Why?
            (1) He was religiously wrong.
            (2) He had not complied with (completed) God’s law of pardon.

IV. Ethiopian Eunuch; Acts 8:26-40.
   A. A Religious man.
      1. Had been to worship; Acts 8:27 “And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,”
         a. It is possible to worship unacceptable.
         b. Mat. 15:9 “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”
         c. Acts 17:23 “For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To The Unknown God. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.”
      2. He was a Bible reading man; Acts 8:28 “Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.”
   B. But, he was lost because he had not obeyed God plan of pardon.
      1. When he did he was saved and went on his way rejoicing.
      2. Acts 8:39 “And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”

V. Man Given One Talent; Mat. 25:14-30.
   A. Represents some in the kingdom or church.
      1. Mat. 25:14 “For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.”
      2. They were servants of the master.
   B. He was lost.
      1. A wicked and slothful servant; Mat. 25:26 “His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:”
2. Cast into outer darkness; Mat. 25:30 “And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

3. Why?
   a. He buried his talent.
   b. He failed to use his talent: and did not add to his talent.

VI. **Five Foolish Virgins; Mat. 25:1-13.**
   A. **Portrays those in the kingdom or church; Mat. 25:1** “Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.”
   B. **They were shut out from the marriage.**
      1. They were lost.
      2. Why?
         a. They were not ready.
         b. They had not made proper preparation.

VII. **Church at Laodicea; Rev. 3:14-22.**
   A. Writing to the church there.
   B. **But those of the church are lost.**
      1. “I will spue thee out of my mouth”; Rev. 3:16 “So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”
      2. They were wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked; Rev. 3:17 “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:”
      3. He tells them to repent; Rev. 3:19 “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”
   C. **Why were they lost?**
      1. They were lukewarm.
      2. Rev. 3:15-16 “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. I will spue thee out of my mouth.”

VIII. **Many Religious People; Mat. 7:21-23** “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”
   A. **They are religious.**
      1. Call the Lord’s name.
      2. Done many things in His name.
   B. **They Were Lost.**