

Introduction: Death by lethal religion

- We become anesthetized.
- We become paralyzed into patterns.
- Our hearts become closed.

Religion – “to acquire a deep conviction of the validity of a religious belief or practice.”

Root – old French/Latin – religio – to fear the supernatural; religarē – to tie up, to bind (state of a life bound by vows)

(Webster’s)

Jesus’ Commentary on Religion – Matthew 23

Question –

What is the difference between dead religion and a living relationship with God?

Pharisee – Clean

Focus = Death

Subject = Murderer

Jesus = Rebukes

Eyes = Blinded

Becomes An Invalid

“Get Up” – “Go where I will tell what you must do.”

Healed = To carry His message to the Gentiles

Healed = By the name of Jesus

“Get Up” – “All Lydda comes to see what Jesus has

Invalid Begins to Walk

Eyes = Opened

Jesus = Resurrects

Subject = Doer of good works

Focus = Life

Tanner – Unclean

Dead Religion vs. Living Relationship
Acts 9 – A Study in Contrasts

Religion
results in
control, fear
and
_____!

**180°
Conversion**

Acts 9:20-22

**100% Called
to Mission**

Relationship
results in
power, love
and
_____!

Lessons we must learn about religion:

1. Religion focuses on _____ from the outside-in; life occurs from the inside-out.
2. Religion is rooted in _____, life is rooted in _____.
3. Sincerity and _____ are no substitute for truth.
4. Religion is easy to spot in others and nearly _____ to ourselves.
5. It is God's _____ that rocks our world to reveal our _____ and birth a fresh _____.

Application Questions for Personal and Small Group Use:

1. Where have you seen religion bring death in others? In yourself?
2. Read Matthew 23 and discuss Jesus' commentary on religion.
3. Where has religious thinking crept into your life?
4. What specific action do you sense God leading you to take?