

# EARS HARD OF HEARING

## Introduction

- 1) **Acts 28:17-29** – Paul met with the Jewish leaders in Rome and taught them about Jesus for an entire day; they left disputing among themselves
- 2) None of these men had any excuse not to believe and obey the truth so powerfully preached to them, yet they wasted a great opportunity by arguing among themselves
- 3) Paul ended this frustrating experience by quoting to them from Isaiah (6:9-10): “Their ears are hard (dull, heavy) of hearing, and their eyes they have closed...”
- 4) There are things in our lives that can make our ears “hard of hearing” the truth when it is proclaimed; we must beware of these obstacles to hearing and obeying the truth!!

## I) **WORLDLY WISDOM AND PROMINENCE**

### A) ***1 Corinthians 1:18-29***

- 1) “Not many *wise* according to the flesh, not many *mighty*, not many *noble* are called”
- B) Not attracted to the “foolish,” “weak,” “lowly,” “despised” things of God
  - 1) Such things as God, creation, the gospel, faith, baptism, the church, the Bible, etc.
- C) Tend to turn to scientists, professors, entrepreneurs instead of God and His word
- D) Much worldly pride and ego – hard to humble self and submit to God (Jas. 4:6-10)
  - 1) More concerned about what others might think – pleasing peers and other people, being non-offensive, going with the mainstream “flow” (Mk. 6:26; 15:15)
  - 2) Look down on others and regard their simple faith as unintelligent and foolish

## II) **MATERIAL WEALTH**

### A) ***Matthew 19:20-26***

- 1) Young, rich ruler would not part with his vast material wealth to follow Jesus
- 2) “Hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven” (not impossible, but difficult)
- B) Material wealth (and the desire for it) can be a big obstacle to hearing the truth
  - 1) Increases the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches (Matt. 13:22)
  - 2) Can become conceited (snobbish), and trust wealth instead of God (1 Tim. 6:17)
  - 3) Refuse to hear what we should do with wealth, or too busy to care for spiritual things

## III) **IMMORAL LIVING**

### A) ***Matthew 19:9-11***

- 1) Jesus teaches that a remarriage after divorce (except for the cause of fornication) results in committing adultery; disciples agree that it would be “better not to marry”
- 2) Jesus said that “all cannot accept this saying”; some are unwilling to be “made eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake” (remain unmarried to be faithful to God)
- B) Immoral living causes many to be “hard of hearing” about repentance and godly living
  - 1) Immodesty, gambling, drinking, drugs, fornication, homosexuality, extortion, etc.

## IV) **RELIGIOUS ERROR**

### A) ***Matthew 15:6-14***

- 1) Jesus rebuked human traditions as vain worship – Pharisees offended!
- 2) Jesus warned them not to blindly follow blind guides – not see because will not hear
- B) Religious error will blind people to real source of authority, and pointing out error will offend (“my preacher said...” “my parents believed...” “my God accepts me...”)
- C) Hardened ears refuse to hear that there is *no* NT authority for instrumental music, social gospel, denominationalism, “holy” days, Holy Spirit baptism today, faith only, etc.

## Conclusion

Many have great difficulty with the strait and narrow way of Jesus, and their ears become hard of hearing. Yet, it is the way of truth, and refreshing for those who love truth. Will you hear Jesus?