

**Look, You Blind!**

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Unknown, Look, Your Blind! n. d. Print, 76 x 54 cm.  
 Source: Yale Divinity School Library, Special  
 Collections, Missionary Ephemera Collection (RG  
 221). See the poster image from the digital archive of  
 Chinese Christian Posters  
 at <https://ccposters.com/poster/look-you-blind/>

“Look, You Blind!” is a Christian poster in Chinese style which was published around 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century in China. The poster’s text and image aim to explain the gospel to unbelievers and impress viewers with its Christian allegory.

This Chinese Christian poster depicts three people marching in line. Viewers can recognize the figure in the front as a Chinese Buddhist monk from his dress of wearing a Kasaya and dots on his bald head.<sup>1</sup> The second and third persons are dressed in robes of Magua and Changpao styles common in China, representing the general public at the time. Right over these three figures, the Chinese characters “God is light” are surrounded by divergent lines, thus reinforce the bright and shiny characteristics of light.

<sup>1</sup> To make the burning incense leave scars on the head is a unique feature for Chinese Buddhism.

The template of this picture is the masterpiece of *The Parable of the Blind Leading the Blind* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1525-1569). Ironically, the leader of the group in Bruegel's work has been replaced with a Buddhist monk. In the Chinese poster, the monk led blind people towards the road sign "Wrong Track", as well as himself stepped into the "Death", which echoes the scriptural words on the right hand side "But those who trust in idols, who say to images, 'You are our gods,' will be turned back in utter shame" (Isa 42:17) and "They are blind guides. If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit" (Matt 15:14) on the left hand side of the poster.

Behind the figures there is a crossroads marked by two road signs. The red sign with its notation "Eternal Life" points towards the red cross and crown; the black one is for "Eternal Death". The red cross has shown "The Lord Jesus died for sinners" that the blind men cannot see. In addition, on the top and bottom of the poster there are slogans in red "Look, you blind, and see!" and "The Lord Jesus said I am the true light". The words respond to the image and try to awaken the blind. Text and image here complement each other making good visual effect and communication to viewers.

Composed of three parallel diagonal lines—the sentence of "God is light", road sign "Eternal Death" to the blind, and road sign "Wrong Track" to "Death"—the poster shows three main characters walking toward the foreground. All elements in the picture contribute to a dynamic composition. The poster has merely two colors of red and black, yet it uses red in key images and texts to imply God's salvation. The contrast between colors of red and black also indicates the meanings of life and death.

The blindness of people's eyes symbolizes the blindness of people's soul and mind. The poster not only speaks to people in the past but also speaks to us today. The image confronts us to reflect upon questions: Do we usually act blindly by following the social trend? Whose teaching do we follow while making decisions? Do we throw Jesus away?