

The European Invasion

I. Announce:

- A. Slide1-4 LH/AL: Calv Kids. REAL. Blood. Video.
- B. Slide5 AP: Community Groups.
- C. Slide6 Sun Night Prayer: Next Sun [+ communion].
- D. Slide7 Wed Night Identity Series: Shane, *A New Creation*.
- E. We rejoice with **our school** that we received our **Waiver** from the State yesterday!
 1. Wanna help us move desks, meet us at lower campus 8am Tuesday.

II. Slide8 Intro: *The European Invasion* [not live album by an American heavy metal band]

- A. (map) For 4000 years, **Asia** had been the cradle of the human race, **but now** it was to give place of importance to **Europe**, which became *the center of Christianity*.
- B. *The European Invasion* - at the time, the whole Roman empire simply would have seen this as moving from *just one province to another*. **But the Holy Spirit** saw this as moving to **a different continent**, as we now know it today.
 1. **Why is this so important?** Well, in that ship were 4 men who were *the seeds of life* to the Gk world...then *to Europe*, then eventually those seeds would *blow to No. America, Latin America, Oceania...and* so reach, *the end of the earth*.
- C. **Vs.11** is our 1st step onto European soil.
- D. **Alexander of Macedon**, 400 years before, dreamed of **1 empire & 1 language**. He had built better than he knew...*for the dispersion of the Greek language had made the spread of the gospel possible*.
- E. Some would ask Paul, *but what about the continuing need of Asia? What about the heathens at home? Why go across the seas?* (sound familiar?)
 1. We could ask: **Is imperfection here, reason for complete ignorance there?**
Or, wasn't Christ's plan in Acts 1:8 to **go to the ends of the earth?**

F. We will see: The Gospel's Power **when Proclaimed**. The Gospel's Power **over Demons**. And next week, *The Gospel's Power in Persecution* (Paul & Silas in jail).

III. Slide9a **THE GOSPEL'S POWER WHEN PROCLAIMED (11-15)** *Lydia* **READ**

A. **Philippi** became a **colony** of the Roman Empire in **31bc**. [helped Rome win, *no tax, citizenship*]

1. Slide9b **What's a Colony?** *It's a lil Rome away from Rome*. Paul said in Phil.3:20, *For our citizenship is in heaven*. Or lit, *we're a colony of heaven*
 - a) Rome would normally send out **300 veteran soldiers** who served their time, w/their families, & **settle them** in a strategic location.
 - b) They would **speak Roman language**, wear Roman **dress**, have Roman **ceremonies**, & Roman **customs**. They were stubbornly & unalterably **ROMAN**.
2. Paul is saying, Just as the **Roman colonists** never forget that *they belong to Rome*, **you** must never forget that **you** are *citizens of heaven*; & **your conduct must match your citizenship**.

B. **Sat down & spoke** - What an insignificant way to *open up a continent*, to start *Jesus Communities!*

1. Free, simple, informal, w/nothing set or elaborate about the service, **just prayer** and an opportunity of **testimony for Christ**.

C. Women's prayer meeting down at the **Riverside**. **Why?** - Jewish law prescribes there must be **10 Jewish males** to have a synagogue (L.E.). *Otherwise the study of the law in public session and corporate worship should take place in some clean area, a riverside being eminently appropriate*. Richard Longnecker, *The Ministry and Message of Paul*, pg. 63.

D. **Philippi**, 1st church in Europe.

E. **Lydia** - first convert in this area (1st case study). She was Asian (Asia-minor, Slide9c So.Turkey). Very wealthy (entrepreneur, made cover of *Forbes magazine*, CEO, Fashionista). And was a *God-fearer*.

1. She was won to Christ by **public exposition** by simply **hearing the Scriptures**

F. **Thyatira** – center of the purple dye business. Since purple goods were expensive, Lydia was likely a wealthy person. & traveled far more than most women of her day

G. Slide9d (14) **The Lord** opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul -

1. The **Lord** did this! This is *the gospel of grace*.
2. **What is the heart?** It is *the center of our moral life*. It includes...
 - our intellect**/thinking, **our emotions**/feelings, **and our will**/determining.
 - a) It represents our *whole being*, our *personality*.
 - b) A heart is **closed** because of **sin**. [sin in our **nature/root**; sin in our **practice/fruit**]
 - c) It is **opened** because of *The Lord*. [no heart **too tightly closed** that **God** can't open it, no heart **too soft** that *you can open it yourself*]
 - d) His **methods** are sometimes to give *more light* (eg. Lydia). **Other times** by *earthquake* (Philippian jailer).

H. (15) **Her household as well** - In at least 2/3rds of the world...all **important decisions** are made **by groups**.

1. Only **in**significant decisions are left to **individuals**. **When** missionaries come w/an **individualistic** gospel, it frequently seems as though it must be an **un**important issue to those they are trying to win. (Peter Wagner, Acts of the HS)

IV. Slide10a **THE GOSPEL'S POWER OVER DEMONS (16-24)** *Slave Girl* **READ**

A. (16-24) 2 women were the 1st European converts.

1. Was **this** what the great call to Macedonia was all about? **For** a ladies prayer mtg, **and** a demon possessed slave girl? Where was the **man** of Macedonia?

B. 1st **reception** to the Gospel, **now** **opposition** to it. 1st opposition from **the Jews**, **but** **now** from **the Greeks** & *those who held the national interest of the Romans*.

C. A **slave girl** - who was poor. She was **owned, trafficked, subject** to men, & **used** for profit. Spiritually tormented by *the spirit of Python*. She was a *Pythia/Pythoness*.

1. **Slide10b** In Gk mythology **Python** guarded the Oracle at Delphi (Gk city) where an individual was who had a *satanically empowered gift of prophecy*. **Later** Python was slain by **Apollo** & its powers were passed on to him.
 2. Paul commands, *by Jesus' name*, for it to come out...& it did. *That's the story!*
- D. (17) Truth. Prob not Hebrew mindset, *but* what they knew as Greeks (**Most Holy God**/prob thinking *Zeus - salv/prob health, prosperity, rescue from disaster*).
1. Fallen angels/demons *are probably the finest imitators of holiness*. **Or, maybe we christians are 1st, & they're 2nd?** [boasting things we think make us look holy]
- E. **Slide10c** (18) Charles Wesley wrote, *He breaks the power of canceled sin, He sets the prisoner free; His blood can make the foulest clean, His blood avail for me.*
1. What happens in **Philippi puts down a marker**. This is how it's going to be!
 2. **Here was a heart so blind** it needed someone to **remove the blindness**.
- F. (19) The girl's **controllers** were suddenly deprived of business, **as** a fisherman who's boat has just sunk.
1. These were none other than *1st century human traffickers*, who commissioned **forced labor** or **services** by *threat, force, or coercion*. *That's so primitive*...I wish, Today it's a **\$31 billion** business. (yearly)
- G. (20-23) **Philippi** need to keep up it's Roman standards and culture. **These men are not one of us**. They're trying to change our customs. *They're anti-Roman*.
- H. (24) **Was Paul re-thinking his vision of the man from Macedonia? Did they mess up? Come over here** w/the gospel they said. It would be **fun** they said...**Ha!** this didn't set him/them back at all...they start to *sing & pray*.
- I. **Slide11 Wrap Up:** *God has a 1000 keys to open a 1000 different doors in order to deliver His own.* George MacDonald
- J. **A heart must be penetrated by God:**
1. A heart may be as **thin** as an egg shell **like** the Philippian business woman.
 2. A heart may have a **black veil** over it **like** the Philippian slave girl.

3. A heart may be **thick** & needs a great earthquake to crack it, **like** the Philippian prison guard. **But** a heart must be penetrated **by God**.
4. Whether your heart is **soft, blind, or hard**...the Lord wants to **open** it this evening/morning.