



EUROPE AT 'WAR' & THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH

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KEY SCRIPTURE TEXTS.....

When God's enemies are at the gate, HE needs those who KNOW HIM.....individuals, couples, nations, but better still churches and church leaders....(1 Sam 17.1-11; Mt 11.12; 16.18)

Introduction

- ▶ “The adversaries of the Lord have never been bigger, bolder, and as bad—since the days of Sodom and Gomorrah.” (Pst E.A. Adeboye,)
- ▶ The enemy has already entered our territory to terrorize and enslave God’s people –the Europeans!
- ▶ Unfortunately, many Christian leaders are unaware---the events of March 11, 2016

David & his brothers—OT Allegory

<u>DAVID'S BROTHERS</u>	<u>DAVID</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Physically at the battlefield but not prepared to fight— They had titles, privileges and equipment2. Knew so much more of their enemy than their God3. Perplexed by fear4. Confessed failure & success to their enemy5. Relied on outmoded technology of warfare (combats, bows and arrows, standing armies).	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Physically absent from the battle field but spiritually prepared to fight—(no position, power, title or other privilege).2. He knew His God very well.3. Fired by faith in His God and His promises4. Confessed and prophesied success; doom to the enemy5. Received strategy and tactics in the place of worship—speed, smooth stones and sling.

Application to Europe in 2016

- ▶ The church is under severe attack from deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons (1 Tim.4.1-2)
 - Secular humanism
 - homosexual lobby
- ▶ Islamic extremists (the most intense & intransigent)
 - Aim to totally destroy the European culture and the Christian ethics

Historical context

- ▶ Islamic Empire (Caliphate) existed from 8th – 16th century
- ▶ Included previous Christian heartlands like present-day Turkey, the Holy Land and North Africa, Spain, Caucasus and the Balkans.
- ▶ Several times came very close to conquering all of Europe (e.g. Battle of Tours 732, Battle of Vienna, 1571)
- ▶ If Muslim population in a country $> 10\%$, terror tactics are employed to take over.

Current situation

- ▶ Muslim population in Europe to grow to 8% by 2030 (projections before Iraq/ Syrian immigration)
- ▶ Muslim youth not well integrated
 - 65% believe that Islamic law must be superior to the laws of the country they live in.
 - Many believe extremism is an appropriate weapon to fight infidels i.e. non-believers in Islam.
 - Radical imams indoctrinate with extremist teachings on hatred, killings and destruction

Reaction of Church/leaders – Lessons from the Early Church..

- ▶ The church in Europe reacts like the early church of Jerusalem
- ▶ Disobedient to the mandate to move to the whole world (Acts 1.8)
- ▶ Preferring local fellowship in Jerusalem to global evangelisation
- ▶ Preoccupied with divisions and strife (Acts 2, 4; 6.1) over mundane matters like food etc
- ▶ Insensitive to the perils of her leaders (Acts 12.1–4)

Our role model: the Antioch church

- ▶ **PRIORITY NO. 1: PLACED CHRIST ON THE THRONE OF THE CHURCH**
 - First priority is minister to the Lord. (Ex.24.16; Mk.3.14)
 - Revelations when acted upon become *revolutions* that move the church forward
 - Preached Christ Acts 8.5; 35; 11.20–21
 - Modelled or Exemplified Him Col.1.29, Phil. 1.21.
 - Raised disciples to follow Him...1 Cor. 11.1.
 - Not relying on the flesh to direct the affairs of the Lord's church, like Uzziah, Judas, Ananias or Gehazi (Jn.6.63).

Our role model: the Antioch church II

- ▶ **PRIORITY NO.2: TOTAL OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT.**
 - The church obeyed the Holy Spirit immediately, totally and completely, even sending out 2 of its greatest leaders
- ▶ **PRIORITY NO. 3: GIFT -BASED CHURCH**
 - Every minister knew his/her own gifts and functioned in that unction. There were prophets and teachers and others. Complimentarity NOT competition!

Our role model: the Antioch church III

- ▶ **PRIORITY NO.4: LOVE AS BASIS FOR FELLOWSHIP, NOT NATIONALITY OR RACE**
 - a multi-racial, multinational and diverse church Gal.3.28; Rev. 7.9
 - Christ-like in love, manifestation of gifts and grace. Acts 11.26.
- ▶ **PRIORITY NO.5: MISSIONARY AND MENTORING CHURCH.**
 - sent off her best leaders to start new churches
 - Trained young people like John Mark, Timothy, Titus (2 Tim.4.11, 1 Tim.4.12, Titus 2.15)

COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE

- ▶ SPIRITUAL—As discussed, Antioch Church
- ▶ POLITICAL— Support for Christian politicians, political parties and giving Christians voice.
- ▶ SOCIAL—Support for needy migrants
- ▶ ECONOMIC—Helping migrants to acquire job and social skills
- ▶ CULTURAL—Raising younger generation of believers and encouraging them to reach out to their generation.

Conclusion

- ▶ Both the Old and New Testament present us with examples of triumphant ministers who led their people into great victories.
- ▶ The adversaries of the Lord are strong but they will end up as His footstools. (Isaiah 6.1 – 3) *if we walk in the spirit and NOT in the flesh...with eyes, ears, mouths, hands touched by the Lord...and with a mind-set like that of Christ.* (Gal.5.16–17; Phil. 2.5, 3.10; Josh.6.1–5).