

DEMOLITION WORK

Toulouse, June 2006



Dear friends,

The 2005-2006 year was a rather tumultuous one for France, confirming Solomon's saying: "Where there is no revelation, the people *cast off restraint*, but *happy* is he who keeps the law." (*Prov 29.18*) The situation is similar to Israel's in Hosea's day: "Hear the word of the LORD, O children of Israel, for the LORD has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land. There is no faithfulness or steadfast love, and *no knowledge of God in the land...My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since *you have forgotten the law of your God*, I also will forget your children." (*Hosea 4.1,6*). It is always sad to see a country destroy itself and its future for lack of Biblical revelation and knowledge of the truth. As we look over the year, we notice the following tendencies that are demolishing French society and robbing it of happiness, and which show a desperate and renewed need for the gospel.

French society is increasingly...

1. **ATHEISTIC**. I came across a recent study that showed French people to be the most atheistic people, and we certainly feel the effects of an increasingly militant atheism. This past year, France celebrated 100 years of "secularity", after a famous 1905 law providing for the separation of church and state. At the time, it was intended to prevent the state from imposing its religion; now the law is used to banish all reference to God in the daily lives of the people. Recently, the city of

Toulouse ran a publicity campaign boasting of its century of "secularity", yet they would do well to consider Psalm 14 which speaks of the corruption and misfortune that follow when one makes the foolish claim that "there is no God."

2. **ISLAMIC**. Due in part to France's historical ties to northern Africa, the Muslim presence in France continues to grow, bringing with it political, religious and cultural difficulties for the government to handle. Ishmael's trait of having "his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him" continues to be true for his descendants. The social result is ghetto-like Arab communities in all of France's large cities where trouble tends to brew and stew. The situation erupted earlier this year into a streak of rioting, car burnings, and violence all over France, pitting the authorities against predominately Muslim, angry mobs. Despite all this, we see the grace of God working among them and we are thankful for Arab Christians in the church who have an effective witness among their people.

3. **SOCIALISTIC** (to unbiblical extremes). Shortly following a well-thought-out and reasonable attempt by the government to curb unemployment, France recently underwent a mini-revolution/cultural uprising among the youth in which unbiblical socialistic principles carried the day. High-schoolers and university students benefited from the unrest by “striking”, demonstrating, barricading campuses and causing millions of dollars of damage to their schools in a display of defiance against all authority and in an attempt to gain more “rights”, particularly the “right” to be paid for doing a bad job, for being a bad employee, and for not working at all. Would that Paul’s exhortations find their way back into the mindset of this society: “If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12). Of course, the first step to achieving a good work ethic is being inwardly transformed by God and having Him write His law on our hearts.

4. **OCCULT AND CULTIC**. France continues to nourish itself on various forms of occultism, seeking to transmit a fascination and an appetite to the younger generations. Occult ideas and practices have spread rampantly into everyday society: entertainment, medicine, education, parenting, etc. We continually pray for discernment and spiritual wisdom in dealing with people who have suffered from these influences. Others have suffered from the numerous cults that continue to demolish the minds and souls of many. Once again, the negative result for Christians is to make the society and the government all the more wary of evangelical groups and their message.

In the face of these tendencies, we are called to stand firm and fight back with gospel truth. “The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:4-5) We thank you for your support and prayers in this demolition work. We remind ourselves that we serve him who is king and high priest “on the basis of the power of an *indestructible life*” (Heb 7.16)!

For Christ’s sake,

Sam and Rebecca Niblack

Upcoming

- **NATIONAL CONFERENCE**. Theme: *the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*. Please pray for me as I will be bringing one of the messages.
- **CHURCH RETREAT**. Theme: *The marvelous family of God*. Pray that our church grows in unity and in the practice of Biblical principles.
- **BAPTISMS**. Lord willing, there will be a steady streak in June. May God continually teach us how to better make true, constant disciples of Jesus Christ.
- **TRIP TO SAN JOSE**. This is an early notice. We will be in San Jose from 28-AUG to 20-SEP 2006. We look forward to seeing you if possible.