Gary

City of angels

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# Church plant

People from LA say you're from Australia! No, I am from England and they are down. The church plant is a big success, but there have been a lot of other church plants that have had a really tough time getting up from their feet.

Acts 16:6-9 (ESV) And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”

Church planting begins with an ache in your heart for a city begging for help.

Phillippi is the city of cities, an amazing place! But Paul had another city begging for help. Los Angeles sounds like a good city, why would we go there? Got a map of the states, where are you leading us? They were seeing all these cities. Never wanted to live in LA, but he got divine connections.

# Breaking heart

He wanted great times at the beach, but he wanted to weep the whole time. There was so much isolation, pain, loneliness, competition, mask. He needed a break and drove up to Malibu, stopped the car and went on the beach. It should've been so beautiful, but Santa Monica with the high and low rises. The city was crying for help, everyone going there to make it and feeling amazing. But deep down they needed Jesus. Where is God giving you a burden that this place needs the Gospel?

Because where everybody sees beauty you have an aching for the Gospel.

It took them a year to get enough money to start. What does it take to bring the Gospel to LA? It is complex, beautiful, disastrous city.

# Post-Christianity

What does revival look like again? So much open heaven in the past but for the last 30 years a very dry place. What happens in LA happens across the globe. They've seen a big shift in the last 20 years that we've increased from a Christian to a post-Christian culture. No longer Christianity as a privilege and honor.

Fastest growing are the nons, identity spiritual but have no dedication. Worshipping the autonomy and choosing what is true and what is not true. Mix and pick, they are

3 different reactions from 3 different people:

* The first guy got his drink stood up and left
* The other guy confusion and said: I don’t get it you're such a nice guy!
* A girl bright red and imputing judgment and shame

# Respect to disrespect

From respected to disrespected. The used to be the moral high, they did think you are good people. Maybe a bit too much, but these Christians voices were welcome. But now in LA, they have used any moral hay ground. They think far from being a healthy influence in society, but saying you're what's wrong in society. Only one God, sexual oneness. You can walk into a room and feel the antagonization. An agenda to get her fired.

Influence to marginalization. Okay before to wear your faith on your sleeve, but now your influence is not wanted anywhere. If you dare to talk to someone the HR department is all over you, kicked off of your set. Okay to have your quiet belief, but don’t bring it into the public.

Christians are confused, they don't know how to respond to this. They didn't know anything except this. Law school, never knew other Christians.

# Truth

Acts 16:11-15 (ESV) So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. And on the Sabbath day, we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.

Lydia was no Greek, but looking for more besides money. Probably multiple houses, a rich woman! LA is full of Lydia’s, Jimmy Carrey: I wish everyone would have everything they have ever dreamed off so they might realize it is not enough.

Paul understood her situation and brought the word and Holy Spirit into it.

They have a wrong vision of Christians, lots of people who need to be sat down in a safe context and say let me hear your questions. I can help you navigate through the misinformation, the stereotypes. How it is not legalistic, performance driven. God has a life of inheritance for you. Most people aren’t trained to do that.

1. Overflowing with the word of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

# Power

Acts 16:16-19 (ESV) As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and us, crying out, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.” And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.

But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers.

Lydia needed wisdom and intelligence, but this slave girl needed the power of the Holy Spirit. So many people just empowered and delivered into the Kingdom.

2. Full of the Holy Spirit

# Love

Acts 16:22-30 (ESV) The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.” And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

How to reach our people for Christ? Radical love from the Christian community! The jailor had their life in his hands at one point, now it is the other way around. What do they do? They don’t run, they heard the words of Jesus: “I am calling you to love your enemies.”

Love the same people that just tortured you! Don’t beat up the city for its brokenness, but love it!