Napoleon’s Rise to Power

“Napoleon Bonaparte was a ruthlessly ambitious young man. The turmoil of the French Revolution gave him a prime opportunity to rise quickly to power. Within a few short years, he would rise from a mere army captain to become the ruler of France.”

~Human Legacy, page 609
Opportunities for Glory

• Early Victories
  – Drives British from the port of Toulon, 1793
  – Defeats Austrians in Italy 1794
  – Puts down the Parisian mob 1795
  – Invades Italy 1796

• Invasion of Egypt 1798
  – Wants to disrupt British trade with India
  – French Fleet destroyed at the Battle of the Nile by British admiral Horatio Nelson
Napoleon Seizes Power

• National Crisis
  – Directory weak & inefficient
  – Fear of Austria & Britain
  – Fear of royalist insurgency

• Coup D’etat November 1799
  – Napoleon voted 1st Consul
  – Napoleon promised order & stability
  – People willing to give up some freedoms in exchange for peace, prosperity & glory
Emperor Napoleon

“As first consul, Napoleon moved quickly to strengthen his power over France. Once France was firmly under his control, he set about conquering Europe.”

~Human Legacy, page 610.
Napoleon Crowns Himself

- **Plebiscite of 1804**
  - People declare France an Empire with Napoleon as ruler
- **Napoleon crowned as emperor**
  - Pope Pius VII comes to crown him
  - Napoleon seizes the crown and places it on his own head
Desire for Empire

- **Europe**
  - Wants to expand French territory into Germany & Italy

- **Americas**
  - Controls Louisiana, Florida & Saint Domingo (Haiti)
  - Fails to put down revolt in Saint Domingo
  - Decides to give up overseas empire and concentrate on Europe
    - Sells Louisiana to U.S.
The Napoleonic Wars Begin

- Napoleon’s strategy
  - Dominate Europe on Land
  - Cut off Britain from Trade
  - Build a fleet to Invade England

- British Strategy
  - Form a coalition against France
  - Destroy French Fleet

- Napoleon’s Successes
  - Defeats Austrian & Russian forces at Austerlitz in 1805

- British Success
  - Admiral Nelson Destroys French & Spanish Fleets at Trafalgar in 1805
The Continental System

- Economic Warfare
  - British blockade French ports
  - Napoleon tries to disrupt British trade
    - Invades countries which trade with Great Britain
- Results
  - Other countries resent the continental system
  - Russia refuses to comply
  - France drawn into a war in Spain
The Peninsular War

• Napoleon Invades Portugal
  – Wants to impose the continental system

• Joseph Bonaparte becomes king of Spain in 1808
  – Spanish people revolt from French Rule
  – British send an army to Portugal
  – Napoleon defeat Spanish regular troops, but the Spanish people conduct guerrilla warfare
Napoleon Dominates Europe

• 1806 Napoleon defeats Prussia
  – Creates Confederation of the Rhine
  – Established the Duchy of Warsaw (Poland)

• 1809 Napoleon defeats Austria a second time
  – Marries and Austrian Princess
  – Makes peace with Russian Czar, Alexander I
  – Proposes a joint invasion of the Ottoman Empire
Napoleon’s Policies

“As Napoleon ruled his empire, he also strengthened the power of France’s central government. He developed a plan to establish order and efficiency throughout France, which involved reforms in many areas of society.”

~*Human Legacy*, page 613.
Reform of Church-State Relations

• Concordat
  – France was a Roman Catholic nation
  – Laws enforced religious tolerance
  – Made common people happy because Catholic faith was recognized
  – Provided effective separation of Church & State
    • Napoleon did not interfere in religious matters
    • Catholic Church no longer had any *de iure* political power
“Because Napoleon knew that a good financial system was essential for the stability of France, he established the Bank of France to regulate the economy. He also set up a more efficient tax collection system. These measures ensured that the government would not face the kinds of financial crises that occurred before the Revolution.”

~Human Legacy, Page 613.
Legal and Educational Reforms

• **Napoleonic Code**
  - Uniform Law Code
  - Eliminated many injustices
  - Promoted order over personal freedoms
  - Political censorship
  - Women under authority of fathers or husbands

• **Education**
  - Established a system of schools, universities & technical schools
  - Advancement by merit
Napoleon’s Legacy

• Ideas of French Revolution
  – Equality before the law
  – Freedom of Religion
  – Representative government
  – Uniform tax system

• Nationalism in Europe
  – French people gain a sense of patriotism & loyalty to France as opposed to the monarch
  – Begins unification of Italy & Germany
  – Recreation of Poland
  – Russian & Spanish nationalism in resisting France