

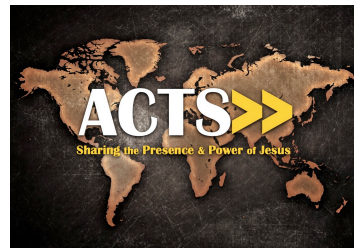
SEQUOIA NOTES

Today's Sequoia Message...

The Light of Christ Overcomes Darkness

With Ryan Dawson - Lead Pastor

September 21, 2025



• The presence of Jesus through His Word & Spirit overcomes spiritual darkness.

Acts 19:1-20 (NLT) While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior regions until he reached Ephesus, on the coast, where he found several believers. ² “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” he asked them. “No,” they replied, “we haven’t even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” ³ “Then what baptism did you experience?” he asked. And they replied, “The baptism of John.” ⁴ Paul said, “John’s baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus.” ⁵ As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all. Then Paul went to the synagogue and preached boldly for the next three months, arguing persuasively about the Kingdom of God. ⁹ But some became stubborn, rejecting his message and publicly speaking against the Way. So Paul left the synagogue and took the believers with him. Then he held daily discussions at the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This went on for the next two years, so that people throughout the province of Asia—both Jews and Greeks—heard the word of the Lord. ¹¹ God gave Paul the power to perform unusual miracles. ¹² When handkerchiefs or aprons that had merely touched his skin were placed on sick people, they were healed of their diseases, and evil spirits were expelled. ¹³ A group of Jews was traveling from town to town casting out evil spirits. They tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus in their incantation, saying, “I command you in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, to come out!” ¹⁴ Seven sons of Sceva, a leading priest, were doing this. ¹⁵ But one time when they tried it, the evil spirit replied, “I know Jesus, and I know Paul, but who are you?” ¹⁶ Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, overpowered them, and attacked them with such violence that they fled from the house, naked and battered. ¹⁷ The story of what happened spread quickly all through Ephesus, to Jews and Greeks alike. A solemn fear descended on the city, and the name of the Lord Jesus was greatly honoured. ¹⁸ Many who became believers confessed their sinful practices. ¹⁹ A number of them who had been practicing sorcery brought their incantation books and burned them at a public bonfire. The value of the books was several million dollars. ²⁰ So the message about the Lord spread widely and had a powerful effect.

1) The light of Jesus clarifies religious confusion.

^{4b} “...’John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus.’” ⁵ As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them...”

Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT) “But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!”

^{11b} “Then [Paul] held daily discussions at the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This went on for the next two years, so that people throughout the province of Asia—both Jews and Greeks—heard the word of the Lord.”

2) The light of Jesus breaks the power of darkness.

¹¹ “God gave Paul the power to perform unusual miracles. ¹² When handkerchiefs or aprons that had merely touched his skin were placed on sick people, they were healed of their diseases, and evil spirits were expelled.”

3) The light of Jesus transforms lives.

^{18b} “A solemn fear descended on the city, and the name of the Lord Jesus was greatly honoured. ¹⁸ Many who became believers confessed their sinful practices. ¹⁹ A number of them who had been practicing sorcery brought their incantation books and burned them at a public bonfire. The value of the books was several million dollars. ²⁰ So the message about the Lord spread widely and had a powerful effect.”

**Where do you need the light of Jesus to expose darkness in your own life?
What do you need to surrender so His light shines through you?**

• The presence of Jesus through His Word & Spirit overcomes spiritual darkness.

So how do we apply this?

¹ Peter 2:1-9 (NLT) So get rid of all evil behavior. Be done with all deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and all unkind speech. ² Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment, ³ now that you have had a taste of the Lord’s kindness. ⁴ You are coming to Christ, who is the living cornerstone of God’s temple. He was rejected by people, but he was chosen by God for great honour. ⁵ And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What’s more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God. ⁶ As the Scriptures say, “I am placing a cornerstone in Jerusalem, chosen for great honour, and anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” ⁷ Yes, you who trust him recognize the honour God has given him. But for those who reject him, “The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.” ⁸ And, “He is the stone that makes people stumble, the rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they do not obey God’s word, and so they meet the fate that was planned for them. ⁹ But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God’s very own possession. **As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.**

Big Idea: Step out of the darkness & live in Christ’s light, so others can see His goodness through you.



Sequoia Impact Communities are where we
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Family of Servants on Mission.

To get plugged in email:

impactcommunities@sequoiachurch.org

The Light of Christ Overcomes Darkness
#21 of 23 - September 21, 2025

Context:

1. What do we know about the city of Ephesus and its spiritual climate (idolatry, sorcery, religion)? How might this background help us understand why Paul's ministry there was so powerful?
2. How does Acts 19 connect with the wider theme of Acts—showing the presence and power of Jesus through His Word and Spirit?

Observation:

3. What differences do you notice between John's baptism and baptism in the name of Jesus (vv. 3–6)?
4. How did Paul's teaching and daily discussions at the lecture hall of Tyrannus impact the region (vv. 9–10)?
5. What stands out to you in the story of the seven sons of Sceva (vv. 13–16)? What does it reveal about spiritual authority?

Meaning:

6. What does this passage teach us about the role of the Holy Spirit in clarifying confusion and empowering believers?
7. How does the contrast between the counterfeit power of magic/sorcery and the real power of Jesus highlight the truth that His light breaks darkness?
8. Why do you think public confession and burning of sorcery books (vv. 18–19) was such a powerful testimony of transformation? What does this show us about genuine repentance?

Application:

9. Where do you see religious confusion or spiritual darkness in our culture today? How might the light of Jesus bring clarity and freedom?
10. In what area of your life do you need to surrender something so that Christ's light can shine more fully through you?



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