

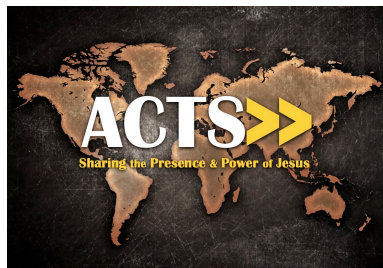
SEQUOIA NOTES

Today's Sequoia Message...

The Real Jesus in a World of Counterfeits

With Ryan Dawson - Lead Pastor

August 17, 2025



- **God desires diversity in the Church.**

Acts 12:25, 13:1 (NLT) “When Barnabas and Saul had finished their mission to Jerusalem, they returned, taking John Mark with them. ¹Among the prophets and teachers of the church at Antioch of Syria were Barnabas, Simeon (called “the black man”), Lucius (from Cyrene), Manaen (the childhood companion of King Herod Antipas), and Saul.”

Revelation 7:9-10 (NLT) “After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ And they were shouting with a great roar, ‘Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!’”

- **God leads us as we intentionally seek Him.**

Acts 13:2-3 (NLT) “One day as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Appoint Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them.’ ³ So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way.”

- **God sets us apart to represent Christ.**

Acts 13:2-4 (AMP) “While they were serving the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul (Paul) for the work to which I have called them.’ ³ Then after fasting and praying, they laid their hands on them [in approval and dedication] and sent them away [on their first journey]. ⁴ So then, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. ⁵ When Barnabas and Saul arrived at Salamis, they began to preach the word of God [proclaiming the message of eternal salvation through faith in Christ] in the synagogues of the Jews; and they also had John [Mark] as their assistant.”

We're sent by the Spirit to show the world the real Jesus.

- **God's Word overcomes counterfeit spirituality.**

Acts 13:6-12 (NLT) Afterward they traveled from town to town across the entire island until finally they reached Paphos, where they met a Jewish sorcerer, a false prophet named Bar-Jesus. ⁷ He had attached himself to the governor, Sergius Paulus, who was an intelligent man. The governor invited Barnabas and Saul to visit him, for he wanted to hear the word of God. ⁸ But Elymas, the sorcerer (as his name means in Greek), interfered and urged the governor to pay no attention to what Barnabas and Saul said. He was trying to keep the governor from believing. ⁹ Saul, also known as Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he looked the sorcerer in the eye. ¹⁰ Then he said, “You son of the devil, full of every sort of deceit and fraud, and enemy of all that is good! **Will you never stop perverting the true ways of the Lord?** ¹¹ Watch now, for the Lord has laid his hand of punishment upon you, and you will be struck blind. You will not see the sunlight for some time.” Instantly mist and darkness came over the man's eyes, and he began groping around begging for someone to take his hand and lead him. ¹² When the governor saw what had happened, he became a believer, for he was astonished **at the teaching about the Lord.**

Jesus is the Real Thing! Nothing else truly satisfies...

Hebrews 1:1-3 (NLT) “Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. ² And now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he created the universe. ³ The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honour at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven.”

Big Idea: God sends a diverse, Spirit-filled Church to show the real Jesus in a world full of fakes.

Reflection Questions:

Diversity: Who in my life is different from me — culturally, socially, or spiritually — that God might be calling me to embrace and welcome as family?

Seeking God Intentionally: Am I making room in my daily and weekly rhythm to truly seek God's direction, or am I just moving ahead with my own plans?

Spirit-Led Sending: How open am I to being sent — across the street or across the world — if the Holy Spirit calls me? And who might God be calling me to send or support?

Confronting Counterfeits: Where do I see counterfeit spirituality in me and around me — and do I have the courage, humility, and love to reveal Jesus as the Truth there?



Sequoia Impact Communities are where we
live out our identity as a
Family of Servants on Mission.

To get plugged in email:

impactcommunities@sequoiachurch.org

The Real Jesus in a World of Counterfeits
#16 of 22 - August 17, 2025

- 1) Read Acts 13:1-12. What is the **Context** for this passage? Who is the writer and who is the recipient? What is the purpose for writing? What has happened prior to this passage?
- 2) **Observation:** What do you notice about this passage? How would you describe the Church in Antioch?
- 3) What is the **Meaning** of this passage? What does the diversity in the Antioch Church and leadership reveal about God's heart for the Church?
- 4) What does this passage reveal about counterfeit spirituality? How can we discern the Truth from a fake? How is the Word of God important in this regard?
- 5) What does it mean to be "set apart" for Christ? In what way are all believers "set apart" to represent Christ?
- 6) Read Hebrews 1:1-3. What does this passage tell us about Christ? Why is Christ the only One who truly satisfies?
- 7) **Application:** How will you apply this message and what next step is God asking you to take today?

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