



SERMON NOTES

Write the Word deep within your heart



A Kingdom Impacting Church - No Substitutes

Rev. Murray Cornelius || Sunday July 13, 2025

Main Passages: Acts 13:1-3, 2 Chronicles 12:9-11, 1 Kings 10:16-17, 1 Chronicles 29:2

Acts 13:1-3 – *In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So, after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.*

Antioch is the first place we hear the expression "Christian." (**Acts 11:19-24**)

This is a picture of an Authentic Church. A church that is an instrument of the Kingdom of God. A church that impacts the world.

In Kingdom Impacting Churches:

The presence of God is more important than putting on a performance.

- To do the work of the Father, we need the Holy Spirit. It's impossible without Him. There is no substitute for His presence. There is no substitute for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- "As the Father has sent me, so also, I send you. And he breathed on them and said receive the Holy Spirit." **John 20:21-22**
- God's presence activates leadership, worship, spiritual gifts, compassion, and abundantly more.
- Sons and daughters are called out for their God-given purposes in His presence.

REFLECT: *How can I embrace God's presence, cultivating hunger for the word, true worship and fellowship?*

People are more important than programs

- The leaders of the church in Antioch are known by name. They came from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Their uniqueness was celebrated. Diversity was immediately a hallmark of the church.
- The church must be a family. We must love and care about each other. We lose good people when there isn't a sense of belonging.
- There are no substitutes for people empowered by the Spirit of God.

REFLECT: How can we practically integrate people into God's church?

The Mission is more important than our methods

There is no substitute for obedience to the Great Commission:

- Worship, Discipleship and Community are important church principles but Mission must be at our heart.
- Mission is the organizing principle: It informs our worship, community and discipleship.
- "It is not so much that God has a mission for His church in the world, but that God has a church for his mission in the world. Mission was not made for church, the Church was made for mission." Christopher J.H. Wright.

There is no substitute for the Gospel message.

- The church in Antioch nurtured, celebrated and released God's mission.
- Kingdom Impacting Churches relentlessly share the Gospel (*Matthew 28:18-20*).
- When we release workers to sow in one field, we trust God to multiply workers in our own.
- Our culture embraces God's call to the places where we will send our missionaries.
- God has a church for his mission, and that mission is primary for the church

REFLECT: How can we discern God's call for our church?

Unity is more important than perfection.

How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! (Psalm 133:1)

- Praying for others is the most significant thing we can do for them.
- We cannot hate the person we're praying for, no matter how much they hurt or harm me. We have to see this person as transformed when we intercede on their behalf.
- Christian fellowship lives or dies by its intercession for one another.
- Don't close the book on those who deserve it. Instead, give them the opportunity to grow.
- "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (*John 13:35*)

REFLECT: How do I want to be treated by others? How can I better treat others?

Conclusion

I will Build my Church and the Gates of Hell will not prevail against it. Matthew 16:18

There are no substitutes!

- There is no substitute for light and salt. (*Matthew 5: 13-16*)
- We cannot follow the Lord with substitutes. We cannot make an impact with substitutes.
- There is no substitute for:
 - God's presence;
 - People who are valued and loved;
 - The gospel message;
 - The mission that God has given to us;
 - Unity that comes from being part of His family.

God is building His Church — If we let him be Lord of that church, He will do more than we can ask or imagine.

Next Steps

Ask yourself:

- What am I substituting in my life?
 - What does the Lord want to me remove? How will He replace it?
- Who am I praying for?
 - Is my heart pure when I pray for them?
 - Am I seeing them as transformed?

Actions to take this week: Intentionally living God's mission

- Think about one way you can live out God's mission (Spreading the gospel, interceding for someone, etc.) and commit to doing that everyday this week. It takes discipline, obedience and intentionality. It requires reliance on the Lord, but that is what the Lord requires.