

News Story Summary

In August, federal government investigators seized huge shipments of fake handbags, belts, wallets, and perfume. The items seized were counterfeits of popular brands like Gucci, Chanel, Tory Burch, Coach, Michael Kors, and Louis Vuitton. If the counterfeit items had been the real thing, their value would have been around \$450 million. In the elaborate scheme, the fake items were made in China, and then shipped into the U.S. in giant shipping containers, under the names of legitimate companies. Once in the U.S., the plan was to sell the fake goods to stores across the country. When the counterfeit ring was busted, investigators arrested 22 people, in what authorities call one of the largest busts of counterfeit goods in New York City history.

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the term “NYC counterfeit ring bust”.)

Focus Attention

To supplement the Focus Attention idea, share the news story above. Note that sometimes, it can be confusing and difficult to spot a counterfeit item, especially when it’s made to look so much like the real thing. Call for volunteers to share if they have ever struggled to see the difference between a counterfeit item and the real thing.

Continue by asking the question included under Welcome by asking: *How might an untrue spiritual message be confused for the true gospel?*

Challenge

To supplement the Summarize and Challenge ideas, remind the group of the news article and the counterfeit items. Point out that as believers, we have the only true gospel message – Jesus crucified and resurrected – any other message is a counterfeit. Continue by asking the questions under Challenge: *To whom has God appointed you to be a messenger of the gospel? What tools can you use to share with them in the next week?*