

Mending Nets

Long Beach Alliance Church • August 5th, 2012 • Pastor Chris Lankford

Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

~Hebrews 13:20-21 (NASB)

1) Why Does The Local Church Exist?

- A) Studying the mission of the church (making disciples) has revealed a specific role in Scripture (going, baptizing, and teaching) for every follower of Jesus Christ. People who live according to Jesus Christ's Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), are those living "missional" lives.
- B) People who live missional lives, are also called "the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10; Hebrews 3:4-6). In other words, the church is a family of missional people.
- C) Oftentimes, we think of "the church" as a place, like a building or a specific location. But in the Bible, the church is not a building (cf. Acts 7:48). Rather, "the church" is always people, related together because of Jesus Christ, living out His mission in their world.
- D) So, if the purpose of the church is fulfilled by people, why do we even have locations and organizations which we call "the church?" Why does LBAC (or any location) exist?

2) A Quick Fishing Trip With Jesus

- A) When Jesus first called James and his brother John to be disciples, they were working in the family fishing business, and were mending their nets (Matthew 4:21-22).
- B) The need for the mending of fishing nets is pretty obvious. If your nets have holes, you can't catch fish. All kinds of different things tear fishing nets while they go through regular use (cf. John 21:8), so the mending of nets was a common daily practice for fisherman.
- C) Mending nets was not simply limited to fixing holes. Mending a net also included washing the net, drying the net, and strengthening the net in locations where the net had become stretched or weakened from regular use.
- D) Interestingly, the reason the local church exists is intimately tied to the mending of fishing nets! In fact, the local church exists to mend the fishing nets of Jesus' missional people!

3) Why The Local Church Exists

- A) The Bible tells us that God has provided different kinds of leaders to the church for the "equipping of the saints" (Ephesian 4:11-12). The word for "equipping?" Yes! It's the same word used in the Bible for "mending nets."
- B) In other words, the **task** of the local church is to "mend nets" (wash off dirt, repair holes, etc.). How does the local church **accomplish** this task? Through equipping (mending nets) in the Word of God (2nd Timothy 3:16-17).
- C) What is the **purpose** of this equipping? So that Christ's missional people (the church) can grow to represent Jesus Christ in the world (Ephesians 4:14-16; 1st Peter 3:14-16).
- D) Why do we need to **represent Christ** inside and outside of the local church? Because it pleases God to see Jesus in our lives (Hebrews 13:20-21) and having a good, strong, well "equipped" net is the best method for increasingly becoming "fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19).