

Rebirth!

Long Beach Alliance Church • July 8th, 2012 • Pastor Chris Lankford

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

~Galatians 3:26-29 (NASB)

1) Eating The Pizza Of Making Disciples

- A) The primary mission of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) is to “make disciples.” The method for our disciplemaking is “going,” “baptizing,” and “teaching.”
- B) Each of these actions supports the mission of being disciples of Jesus Christ who make disciples of Jesus Christ.
- C) Often, we think of these three key actions as having great differentiation, or being three very different actions. However, the verse views these three supporting methods of disciplemaking as one organic whole.
- D) It is important to note that while we view our “going,” “baptizing,” and “teaching” as different methods which all support our mission of “making disciples,” Jesus Christ drew them together to represent one singular whole.

2) From The “Going” To The “Baptizing”

- A) In the Old Testament, circumcision of newborn male babies represented separation from the unsaved world unto God, and identification with God’s people, the Jews (Genesis 17).
- B) The promise which God made to His people carried the heavy requirement of the Law, of which circumcision was a part. But Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law, thus satisfying all of the Law’s requirements (Romans 5:18-21).
- C) When a person responds to God by putting their trust in Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sin, their life is identified with Christ in every manner (Galatians 2:20).
- D) Baptism is the “testimony” or “outward sign” of life in Christ (Romans 6:3-11). In the church, there is no distinction between people (positional equality) -- baptism is the sign of the great truth that we are one in Christ (Galatians 3:26-29). Our community belonging is based on our baptism!
- E) Baptism represents salvation! Baptism cries out to the world that “Jesus Saves!” Baptism is the first great step in one’s Christian testimony (story), “I was lost, but now I am found!” Baptism is the new circumcision -- redemption!

3) Remembering Jesus In All We Do

- A) It is difficult to identify a person based on how they look. As Scripture notes, looks can be deceiving, which is why God looks upon the heart (1st Samuel 16:7). Even being baptized is not a sure-fire method for identifying a follower of Christ.
- B) But with baptism comes “your story.” Your story is how Jesus has saved you. We call people to baptism because we want to spread the name and fame of Jesus. We want to call people to salvation, and celebrate that Jesus saves!
- C) As we make disciples, we share about Jesus (God’s story) and then testify of how Jesus saves (our story), through total identity with Christ and His people (baptism). We celebrate rebirth, and champion lost people getting found!



Quick Talks...

Discuss the following questions one-on-one...

- Read Matthew 3:13-17 together. Why was Jesus baptized? What do you think baptism is? Have you been baptized? Why or why not?

Some Basics On Baptim...

1) Baptism Represents Faith In Christ!

- A) You **MUST** be born again, or born "from above" (John 3:3, 5, 1st John 1:9).
- B) You can be saved and not be baptized (Luke 23:39-43).
- C) Baptism was often associated **IMMEDIATELY** with salvation (Acts 2:38).

2) Total Identification With Christ!

- A) Baptism is symbolic of **TOTAL** identification with Jesus Christ! It includes His death (Romans 6:3), His life (Romans 6:8) and His resurrection (Romans 6:5). It is complete.
- B) The act of being baptized is a commitment on the part of a Christian in all good conscience to make sure that what baptism is symbolizing is progressively becoming a reality in their life (1st Peter 3:21).

3) Baptism Is An Important Step Of Obedience!

- A) Jesus was baptized to identify with mankind and show us a pattern for life (Matthew 3:13-17).
- B) Jesus commands His followers to be baptized (Matthew 28:19).
- C) All believers should follow Christ's example and be baptized (Acts 10:48, Mark 16:16).