

The next day Andrew met Jesus and followed him. We would expect Jesus to be happy to gain a disciple, right? But, instead, he asked Andrew, "What do you want?" That's a question Jesus still asks today. What do we want of him? Do we want him to fix our life? To make us financially secure? To make us popular? While Jesus certainly can do all these things, it's not why he came. He came as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world.

If Andrew was startled by Jesus' question, he quickly got over it when Jesus invited him to spend the day with him. I would imagine that there were hundreds of other things that Jesus could have been doing, but what did he do? He took the time to be with Andrew, to answer his questions, to show him how all the Old Testament promises spoke of him and were fulfilled in him.

Nothing has changed. Jesus wants to spend time with us, too. Through his Word he wants to show us what he did for us and to point out what he has in store for us. He wants these visits with him to last a lifetime, so that our relationship with him stretches all the way into eternity. Unfortunately, we often treat Jesus like a distant relative. We pop in on him from time to time, but only because it's expected of us. And when we do visit with him, our mind wanders as we think about all the other things we could be doing with our time. My friends, Jesus is not some distant relative. He's our brother, who lived, suffered, and died in our place. He's our best friend, who wants to be part of every aspect of our life. He's Jesus, who's come to save us from our sins.

Andrew enjoyed spending time with Jesus, but he recognized that he couldn't keep Jesus to himself. He had to share him with someone. And so, he shared him with the one who most likely was closest to him, his brother, Simon Peter. John says, "The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother, Simon, and tell him, 'We have found the Messiah' (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus."

Isn't it interesting that it wasn't to Peter, the never-at-a-loss-for-words Peter, the soon-to-be-leader-of-the-disciples Peter, that Jesus first appeared? Peter learned about Jesus from his quiet and unassuming brother. Humanly speaking—no Andrew, no Peter. With his headstrong and impulsive nature, Peter wasn't easily led or persuaded. How, then, did Andrew succeed? There's but one explanation, and that is this: It was not Andrew but the Holy Spirit who was at work. Andrew simply told his brother why he believed in Jesus as the Messiah, the Savior of the world. In short, he relied on the power of God's Word to persuade Peter.

By God's grace, we have this same powerful Word of God today. We don't have to resort to our creativity or imagination or ingenuity. We can trust the power of God's Spirit working through God's Word, which says, "Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word about Christ" (Ro 10:17). We can be confident that God will perform his work when and where he wants to, for he says, "My Word that goes out from my mouth will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Is 55:11).

And so, we learn something vitally important about mission work. It's not up to us but up to God. Every one of us, no matter what our personality or gifts and talents, is a missionary for Jesus. Being an "Andrew," doesn't mean that we have to be well-spoken, well-read, or possess a Type A personality. It doesn't mean that we always have to have the right words. It means loving Jesus and caring about people. It means being willing to make an introduction. It means trusting God. That was Andrew's outreach tactic. Not only did he introduce his brother to Jesus, in John 6 he introduced the boy who had five loaves of bread and two fish, so that Jesus could perform the miracle of feeding over 5000 people. And in John 12 it was Andrew, together with Philip, who forwarded a request from some Greeks who wanted to meet Jesus.

And now we can make the introduction. We do this one by one. We do it when we bring a child to meet Jesus in baptism, when we accompany a friend to meet him in the *Following the Promise* membership class, when we show his love and patience to a family member or a friend, or when we offer to give someone a ride to meet him at church. Yes, it takes courage to introduce people to Jesus, but God promises to give us that courage, just as he did to quiet and unassuming Andrew.

For a long time I thought it was up to me to witness to the world. Coming out of the seminary, I thought it was my job to convert everyone. But then, at a synod-wide youth rally, I heard for the first time the theme of this sermon: *Won by One, One by One*, and that changed everything. I started to focus on one person at a time, usually the non-member spouse of a member. I would pray for that person and look for opportunities to share Jesus with them. Let me tell you about Scott. [Tell story.] Knowing that I had been won by one, by Jesus, I could witness for Jesus one by one.

There was a blind man who was taken to a hospital where a missionary doctor removed cataracts from his eyes. The man went back home seeing and rejoicing for the first time in a long time. A few weeks later he was back at the hospital—this time holding the end of a rope to which forty blind people were clinging. He wanted to lead them to the place where he had received his sight. It was too good a thing not to share it with others.

So it is with the good news of our forgiveness and salvation in Jesus. We don't have to go to Africa or Russia or Vietnam. With our dollars and our prayers we can send others to those places for us. But you and I are missionaries in our areas of influence. Of Andrew our Gospel text says, *"He brought him to Jesus."* My friends, let's be an Andrew. Let's make the introduction. Amen.

**John 1:29-42a** – *Joining Jesus on His Mission* – 94, 86, 559  
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According to a recent Barna survey, only half of North American Christians have talked to someone about Jesus in the past year. I saw this sign at Risen Savior Lutheran Church on Drexel Avenue in Franklin: "You are now entering the mission field." It's a good reminder that everyone, not just the pastor or the Evangelism Committee or another designated group, is a missionary. It's why we've adopted as our Mission Statement: *"By every possible means we bring every person in our area of influences closer to Christ."* Every Christian is a witness for Jesus. It's part of our DNA, our identity. Today we're going to see how this played out in the life of Andrew, and from our text we're going to learn this biblical truth:

### **Won by One, One by One**

From what we know of him, Andrew seemed to be the strong but silent type. (His name, by the way, means "manly.") He was a fisherman but, upon hearing about John the Baptist, went out to the Jordan River to hear him preach. Through John's message the Holy Spirit worked faith in Andrew's heart, and he decided to follow John. John's purpose, however, was not to gain followers for himself but to point people to the Messiah, to Jesus. And so, when Jesus came to him one day, John pointed at him and said, *"Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

What John was saying is this: "This is the one I've been telling you about. This is the one for whom I've been baptizing. This is God's Son from eternity, the God-Man, the Messiah promised by God for thousands of years. He's the one who's come to live your life and die your death to reconcile you to God. He's come to redeem you, to deliver you, to save you from your sin and win you for heaven."

This is the Jesus whom John points out to Andrew. He points him out as the one by whom he will be won for God for eternity. So often that's how it works. People are introduced to Jesus through people like us. The message of Jesus is shared one by one.