

Session 7

NOVEMBER 26, 2017

ANDREW: ACTIVE WITNESS

John 1:35-42; 12:20-26

There's nothing like growing up in the shadow of an older brother. Just ask Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter! He was one of two sets of brothers who were fishermen that made up the inner circle of Jesus' disciples. Andrew was the first disciple called by Jesus (1:40), but he is consistently named after Peter, and most often referred to as Peter's brother (if he is mentioned at all!) Andrew's name means "manly," but unlike his impetuous brother, or the "sons of thunder" they ran with, Andrew stole no headlines and was at the center of no one's spotlight. He missed out on the transfiguration of Jesus, and wasn't a part of the Garden of Gethsemane prayer group. Yet Andrew shines as an example of quiet humility and deep devotion. While Peter boasts about Peter, Andrew boasts about Christ.

Those we know well need to hear the gospel (1:35-42). These verses are dramatic as the focus moves from John the Baptist and his ministry to the Lord Jesus and His. The words used—"look" (v. 36); "looking" (v. 38); come and "see" (v. 39)—are invitations to be a part of something new and exciting. But as quickly as the discovery of the Messiah is made, the word is spread. Jesus' Great Commission instructions in Acts 1:8 remind us that our task is not complete until the gospel reaches "the uttermost." But that process must begin somewhere, and that starting point is where we are; what we might call our "Jerusalem." For Andrew, that meant sharing with his own brother. Three specific actions highlight Andrew's approach. First, Andrew went looking for his brother (v.41). While this might seem to be a natural response for two close brothers, it's not always the easiest. No one is harder to witness to than those who know us best! Regardless, of their close relationship, Andrew was intentional. He decided that Peter needed to hear the good news, so he went to find him. Second, Andrew shared a clear message. "We have found the Messiah" (v. 41). There is no doubt in Andrew's mind, and no vagueness in his message. Andrew was convinced he had met the Christ and equally convinced his brother needed Him as well. Third, Andrew "brought Simon to Jesus" (v. 42). This speaks of Andrew's enthusiasm. The effect of the encounter is immediate. Andrew "brought" him and Jesus "beheld" him. The Lord's recognition of and immediate connection with Peter is evidenced in the name change mentioned in verse 42.

Those we never met need to hear the gospel (12:20-26). But Andrew, the unsung hero of our lesson, didn't limit his witness to his family. The Great Commission would be the Great *Omission* if we stopped sharing before we reached the uttermost. Here, certain Greeks arrive to worship the God of the Jews. These are Gentiles who have heard about Jesus and want to meet Him personally. They first inquired of Philip (perhaps they had met him previously in Bethsaida), who passed their request to Andrew. It could be that Andrew's close connection to Jesus made him the go-to person, but I like to think that by this time, Andrew had the reputation for introducing people to Christ. The pattern he established the first day he met the Lord had become his "normal." Again, Andrew's actions are very intentional. John's account then summarizes the message Jesus gave to the Greeks: His death, burial, and resurrection (v. 24), the cost of discipleship (vv. 25-26), and the eternal reward offered to those who serve Him (v. 26).

Andrew may have lived in his brother's shadow here on earth, but he certainly received his reward in heaven. Peter may have won 3,000 to Christ in Acts 2...but it was Andrew who won Peter to Christ. Somehow, I think Andrew would be satisfied with that.