

# Ordinary Men/ *Extraordinary God*

## 3 – ANDREW: The Inconspicuous Apostle

**Peter's brother Andrew is the least-known of the four disciples in the inner circle of disciples which also included Peter, James, & John. Although Andrew *was* a part of this inner circle, the vast majority of the time, Andrew was in the background. At the same time, there's no question that Andrew had a close relationship with Christ, because he was often the means by which other people were personally introduced to the Master.**

**Andrew was the first of the disciples called by Jesus. In just a bit, we're gonna read about Jesus' call of Andrew. And as we shall soon see, Andrew was responsible for introducing Peter—his more dominant brother—to Jesus. Andrew's eagerness to follow Christ, along with his zeal for introducing others to Christ, was typical of Andrew's personality.**

**Andrew and Peter were originally from the village of Bethsaida, which was in the northern region of Galilee. At some point, they relocated to the larger city of Capernaum where they started a fishing business. Andrew and Peter had probably been lifelong friends with another set of fisherman—James and John, the sons of Zebedee. At some point, these two sets of brothers had apparently become partners in a fishing business. And so, it was quite natural that this foursome formed a cohesive unit within the Twelve.**

**However, at least three of them apparently wanted to lead the Twelve. We saw last week that Peter became the most dominant one within the group, and he was usually the spokesman for all twelve—perhaps at times, whether the rest of them liked it or not. Their eagerness to lead—which caused a variety of clashes when all of them were together—ultimately became very valuable when these men went their separate ways as apostles in the early church. Jesus was training them for leadership, and in the end, all four of them filled important leadership roles in the early church.**

**But—of the four within the inner circle, Andrew was the least prominent. Scripture doesn't tell us very much about him. You can practically count on your fingers the number of times that Andrew is mentioned specifically in the Gospels. In fact, apart from those places in which *all* of the disciples' names are listed, Andrew's name appears in the New Testament only nine times. Most of those references simply mention him in passing.**

Andrew lived most of his life in the shadow of his better-known brother. In many cases like this, resentment, sibling rivalry, or even estrangement are common. But such was not the case with Andrew. There is no evidence in Scripture that Andrew begrudged Peter's prominence. Again, it was Andrew who brought Peter to Jesus in the first place. Andrew was well-aware of Peter's tendency to dominate. And yet, Andrew brought Peter to Jesus anyway. This fact alone *says* something about Andrew's character.

Of all the disciples in the inner circle, Andrew appears to be the least contentious *and* the most thoughtful. As we learned last time, Peter tended to be rash, undisciplined, and impetuous. James and John were nicknamed "*Sons of Thunder*" for a reason. They were also the ones who provoked many of the arguments about who was the greatest. But there's not a hint of *anything like this* recorded in Scripture about Andrew. Whenever Andrew spoke—which was rare in Scripture—he always said the *right* thing. . .not the wrong thing. Whenever Andrew's name is expressly mentioned in Scripture, he is *always* commended for what he does. This is proof positive that one doesn't have to be in the spotlight to be an effective leader.

John's Gospel describes Andrew's first meeting with Jesus. It took place in the wilderness, where John the Baptist was preaching repentance. John records this incident as an eyewitness. John was obviously the other disciple mentioned in this account. So let's look at Jesus' call of Andrew:

<sup>35</sup> *The next day John [the Baptist] was there again with two of his disciples.*

<sup>36</sup> *When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"* <sup>37</sup> *When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus.* <sup>38</sup> *Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?"* <sup>39</sup> *"Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour.* <sup>40</sup> *Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus.* <sup>41</sup> *The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ).* <sup>42</sup> *And he brought him to Jesus.* John 1:35-42 (NIV)

Please note the first thing that Andrew did upon being called to follow Jesus. He went, found Peter, "*And he brought him to Jesus.*" Most of what Andrew did in serving Jesus was not flamboyant. In fact, one could accurately say that Andrew was the inconspicuous apostle. Let's learn about. . .

## **Servant Ministry—Andrew-Style**

What can we learn from this reserved, behind-the-scenes apostle about the value of quiet, inconspicuous, servant-ministry?

### **1. Andrew Saw the Value of Individual People.**

When it came to dealing with people, Andrew fully appreciated the value of a single soul. Andrew was known for bringing individuals, not crowds, to Jesus. Almost every time we see Andrew in the Gospel accounts, he is bringing someone to Jesus. In addition to Andrew bringing Peter to Jesus, here's another example, found in John 12:20-22 (NLT) <sup>20</sup> *Some Greeks who had come to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration* <sup>21</sup> *paid a visit to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee. They said, "Sir, we want to meet Jesus."* <sup>22</sup> *Philip told Andrew about it, and they went together to ask Jesus.*

It's significant that when these men approached Philip, he took them to Andrew, and with Andrew's help, they introduced them to Jesus. Why didn't Philip just take them to Jesus himself? Perhaps Philip was timid, or maybe he wasn't confident enough in his own relationship with Christ. Or maybe, Philip wasn't sure if Jesus would *want* to see them. At any rate, Philip knew that Andrew was good at introducing individuals to Christ. *Andrew* understood that Jesus would want to meet anyone who wanted to meet Him.

Apparently, Andrew was very comfortable introducing people to Jesus, because he did it so often. In John 1, he brought Peter to Christ, which made him the first home missionary. In John 12, he brought some Greeks to Christ, making him the first international missionary.

Can I tell you what I've observed over years and years of ministry?

The most effective evangelism usually takes place on an individual, personal level. A majority of people do not come to Christ as an immediate response to a sermon they hear. Most come to Christ because of the influence of another individual—because of the influence of someone like you. In most cases, people who come to Christ tell us that their conversion was due primarily to the testimony of a coworker, a neighbor, a relative, or a friend. It's obvious that the most effective means of bringing people to Christ is **One person at a time, person-to-person**. Let's put this to the test: If you know Christ, and if you *came* to know Christ through the influence of one more individuals rather than through a crusade service or something similar—please **raise your hand**—and keep it raised. Good—look around you. You see all of those hands?

**Here's what I want to do: If you raised your hand, I want to send Tim or Tom to you with a microphone.**

**In just *a single sentence*, I'd like you share the following:**

**Who is the primary person whom God used to bring you to Jesus?**

**I find it interesting that both Andrew *and* Peter had evangelistic hearts, but their methods were *very* different. Peter preached at Pentecost, and 3,000 were added to the church that day. Nothing in Scripture indicates that Andrew ever preached to a crowd of people. But again, be reminded that Andrew brought Peter to Christ. So—in one sense, everyone who came to Christ through Peter was—ultimately, the fruit of Andrew's personal witness. God *often* works that way. . .**

**Few have ever heard of Edward Kimball. His name is a footnote in church history. But—Kimball was the Sunday School teacher who led renowned American evangelist Dwight L. Moody [PICTURE] to Christ in the late 1800's. Kimball went one afternoon to the Boston shoe store where the 19-year-old Moody was working. He cornered Moody in a stock room, and there, he introduced him to Christ. Kimball was the antithesis of Moody. Kimball was a timid, soft-spoken man. He went to that shoe store frightened, trembling, and unsure if he had enough courage to confront Moody with the Gospel. At that time, Moody was crude and brazen. Here is how Kimball recalled this scenario years later in a biography about Dwight L. Moody:**

**I decided to speak to Moody about his soul. I started downtown to Holton's shoe store. I thought maybe my mission might embarrass the boy, that when the other clerks asked who I was, they might taunt Moody and ask if I was trying to make a good boy out of him. While I was pondering it all, I passed the store without noticing. So when I found I had gone by the door, I determined to make a dash for it and have it over at once. And so. . .When I found him in the stock room, I spoke with limping words. I never could remember just what I did say—something about Christ and his love. Truly, it was a weak appeal, but then and there, Moody gave his heart to Christ.**

**Dwight L. Moody was used mightily by God as an evangelist in both America and England. Tens of thousands came to Christ because of his ministry. Among Moody's many converts was C.T. Studd [PICTURE] who became a *great* missionary. Studd is the one who penned the now famous words. . .  
*"Only one life, 'twill soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last."***

Kimball-Moody-Studd. . . thousands more. Moody also formed the Moody Bible Institute where thousands of missionaries, evangelists, and other Christian workers have been trained for over a century, and sent out all over the world. All of this began when *one individual* faithfully introduced another individual to Christ. This is also the way that Andrew operated—one-on-one, life-on-life. There is great value in befriending one individual—and then with God’s help—bringing that individual to Christ.

## **2. Andrew Saw the Value of (Seemingly) Insignificant Gifts.**

Some people appreciate the value of the small things in life. *Andrew* fit this category. This comes through clearly in the feeding of the five thousand. At the feeding of the five thousand, all the other disciples were at a loss as to how to obtain food for the multitude before them. Then there was Andrew. Let’s read this account in John 6:

*<sup>5</sup> When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, “Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?” <sup>6</sup> He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. <sup>7</sup> Philip answered him, “Eight months’ wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!” <sup>8</sup> Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up, <sup>9</sup> “Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish. . .” John 6:5-9 (NIV)*

Andrew could see the multitude of people surrounding them as well as anyone. He knew that five loaves of bread plus two Filet-O-Fish sandwiches would not be nearly enough to feed everyone. And yet, somehow, somehow, Andrew had enough faith to bring this boy—and his sack lunch—to Jesus. Andrew did the best he could with that which was available. Something inside him seemed to understand that *no gift* is insignificant when touched by the Master’s hand. Let’s continue the narrative:

*<sup>10</sup> Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” There was plenty of grass in that place, and the men sat down, about five thousand of them. <sup>11</sup> Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. <sup>12</sup> When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, “Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.” <sup>13</sup> So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. John 6:10-13 (NIV)*

*No gift is ever insignificant when it’s given to Jesus! It was true in that day, and it’s still true today. What if the boy with the fish and loaves had said, “No! I’m not gonna give what I have cause there’s no way it’ll be enough!”*

Little becomes much when touched by the Master's hand. It's not the greatness of the gift that counts—but rather—the greatness of the God to whom it's given. God used *Andrew* to set the stage for this miracle because of his faith.

### **3. Andrew Saw the Value of Inconspicuous People.**

There are those people who won't play in the band unless they can play the biggest drum. James and John had that tendency. So did Peter. But not Andrew. Andrew is never mentioned in the debate about who's the greatest. Andrew was more concerned with bringing people to Jesus than about who got the credit.

Andrew is the very picture of those who labor quietly, in humble places, *“not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.”* Ephesians 6:6 (NKJV) Andrew was one of those rare people who was willing to play second fiddle, happily serving in a support role. He didn't mind remaining hidden *as long as* God's work was accomplished.

There are many people at Parkway who are just like Andrew. I'm talking about people who love Jesus, who love people, and who really don't clamor for attention. They just want to be sure that God's work is accomplished. While we are blessed at Parkway to have a number of these types of servants—more than I can mention—I do want to mention a few:

**Frank Connor.** Frank has the heart of a servant. Frank and Pinky come every week to help count the offering and prepare the bank deposit. Frank recently fixed a messed up toilet at the church—why? Because it needed to be fixed. A few weeks ago, *Frank called us* after temperatures dropped and we had an influx of dead bugs all over the church. Frank *asked us* if he could come and clean up the bugs before people came to church. Frank—thank you.

**Jeff Stublely.** Some of you don't know Jeff. Jeff is not here on Sundays because of his job. But every Wednesday night for more than a decade, Jeff has ministered to our children in Awana. Also—have you noticed the church marquee sign out front? And have you noticed that every week, the message on the sign changes? Those letters don't changed themselves! Every week for more than a decade, Jeff Stublely has changed the message on the sign. Jeff is a servant of God.

**Missy Hacker.** Missy is one of several volunteers who run the PowerPoint during worship services. The only time that people ever notice the PowerPoint or the sound—is when something goes wrong. That you are not aware of Missy

during the worship service is a tribute to the quality of her work. Missy also loves and cares for our babies in the nursery. How important is nursery work? Ask any parent of one of those babies—and you’ll know. One more: **Donna Frederick.** God has gifted Donna such that she serves Christ *both on stage—and off*. You get to hear Donna’s *on stage* ministry as she plays the piano and sings. How long has Donna played the piano at Parkway? So long that nobody can remember for sure! That’s a long time. But what many of you *don’t* see is the ministry God does through Donna *behind* the scenes. Without Donna’s help, we would still be communicating through carrier pigeons instead of email messages. Donna has given countless hours of her time to help set up the church’s computer network, wireless internet, and much more. Every time somebody’s computer malfunctions, you know who we call? **Donna Frederick.** Thank you, Donna, for the way you serve the Lord at Parkway.

This type of quiet service is something that more Christians today would do well to learn. The Bible cautions us against seeking roles of prominence. Listen to what Jesus taught his disciples: *“If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”* Mark 9:35 (NASB) It takes a special kind of person to lead with the heart of a servant—someone like Andrew. As far as we know, Andrew never preached to the multitudes. And he never wrote an epistle. In fact, there’s no mention of Andrew after Pentecost. Whatever his role was in the early church, he remained behind the scenes.

Eusebius, the ancient church historian, said that Andrew took the Gospel north. Eusebius also said that Andrew died in Achaia, which is in Greece, near Athens. One account said that Andrew had led the wife of a Roman governor to Christ, which infuriated her husband. When the governor’s wife refused to recant her faith in Christ, her husband the governor—crucified Andrew. And so, Andrew continued to bring people to Christ to the very end.

Andrew’s legacy is an example for us—a legacy that reminds us that in effective ministry, it’s the little things that count—things like bringing individual people to Jesus; things like recognizing supposedly insignificant gifts; things like recognizing the value of inconspicuous people. God delights in such things, because He has <sup>27</sup> . . . *chosen what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen what is weak in the world to shame the strong.* <sup>28</sup> *God has chosen what is insignificant and despised in the world—what is viewed as nothing—to bring to nothing what is viewed as something,* <sup>29</sup> *so that no one can boast in His presence.* 1 Corinthians 1:27-29 (HCSB)

**I thank God for the example of Andrew—the Apostle who did the little behind-the-scenes things in a big way. For the glory of God, may we do the same.**