

# Tell Them First

*“The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon [Peter] and tell him, ‘We have found the Messiah.’” (John 1:41)*

What do you know about Andrew? He was one of the twelve disciples. What else comes to your mind when you hear his name? He was Peter’s brother. Time after time when Scripture identifies Andrew, it does so with these words, “Andrew, Peter’s brother.” Do you think that this bothered Andrew to always be known as “Peter’s brother”? I remember growing up in our small town where I was known as “Jim’s brother.” His nickname was “Kurls,” which was a strange shortened version of our last name. As I entered high school, I became known as “Little Kurls”—not exactly a name that a new freshman aspires to claim. Such is the plight of being the little brother.

Andrew was Peter’s brother, but Scripture tells us that he was known for more than that. Andrew brought Peter to Jesus. He is not the only one that Andrew brought to Jesus. We are told that he brought a little boy forward with his bag lunch:

*“Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up, ‘Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?’” (John 6:8-9).*

We are also told that he brought certain Greeks forward who wanted to meet Jesus:

*“Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. ‘Sir,’ they said, ‘we would like to see Jesus.’”*

*Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus” (John 12:20-22).*

Andrew did what he had done with others. He opened the door for them to meet Jesus.

Andrew may have taken a back seat when it came to his brother Peter, but this did not stop him from telling people about Jesus and bringing them forward to meet Him.

When I review these three readings, certain things impress me about Andrew’s character. First, Andrew seemed to be a humble person, whose pride did not get in the way of being a witness for Jesus. As soon as Andrew had met Jesus, he immediately went to his brother:

*“The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, ‘We have found the Messiah’” (John 1:41).*

“The first thing.” So excited with the news about Jesus and so devoted to his brother, Andrew goes immediately to tell him. A dominant, older sibling can sometimes cause the younger brother or sister to be filled with resentment or jealousy. There is none of that here. Andrew brought Peter to Jesus. Could he guess that his elder brother would overshadow in this area as well? Probably. Jesus would give Peter a new name, a nickname of sorts:

*“‘You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas’ (which when translated is Peter [or Rock])” (v. 42).*

There is no such mention of a nickname for Andrew.

Would it later bother Andrew that he was not a part of the inner circle in the significant moments of Jesus' ministry, even though he was one of the first ones called? If it bothered him in any way, he didn't let it slow him down in telling people about Jesus or in bringing them to Him.

Ponder those Bible readings about Andrew. Do you see some common threads? Here is a servant who has a heart for the outcast. The Greeks come forward, knowing that Gentiles are not welcomed in Jewish circles. Philip is uncertain what to do with their request. Who does he turn to for help and advice? Andrew. Why doesn't Philip take these Greeks to Jesus himself? We do not know the answer to that. What is clear, though, is that he assumes Andrew can help in this matter. Andrew does not brush them away. He, along with Philip, brings them forward to meet Jesus.

Andrew does the same thing with a little boy. The other disciples are ready to send the crowd home for lunch as Jesus raises the question, "*Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?*" (John 6:5). Philip sees only the impossibility of the task—"*Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite*" (v. 7). Andrew, however, views it differently: "*Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?*" (v. 9). It probably all seemed so ridiculous. Such a small lunch—five loaves and two small fish. Small is a good word. The original language would suggest the fish were the size of a sardine. Yet, by now Andrew had seen what Jesus can do with just a little. So he brings the young boy and the small lunch forward. The rest, as they say, is history—the history of Jesus doing fantastic things with a little.

It may be that Andrew played "second fiddle" to his brother. He wasn't a part of the inner circle even though he was one of the first to be called by Jesus. This did not stop him from placing others first when it came to telling them about Jesus or helping them in

their journey. Andrew was willing to give up many things, including his pride, for the sake of bringing people forward to meet Jesus. Who is the Andrew in your life? Who brought you to Jesus? Who has placed you first, not caring if they got acknowledged or even noticed?

The mission of the Church is blessed when there are those who are willing to serve as an "Andrew" within the ministry and lives of its people. Who are the Andrews in your congregation—those people willing to sacrifice in order to help other people?

Years ago, Albrecht Durer was blessed by an Andrew in his life. Albrecht Durer, a renowned artist in the 1500's, had a friend by the name of Franz Knigstein. Albrecht and Franz as friends went to art school together while trying to work to pay their way. Rather than having both of them fail at their art studies, they decided one should work while the other attended school. Franz agreed to work as a laborer, while Albrecht gratefully pursued his art career—promising to return the favor once he became a successful artist.

Much time passed as Albrecht developed his potential genius. Finally, he returned to keep his promise to Franz, who was overjoyed at Albrecht's success. Soon Albrecht realized that the years of labor had been hard on Franz. His fingers had become too bent and twisted to manipulate a paintbrush. He could never become the artist he hoped to be, nor could Albrecht ever fulfill his promise of repayment.

One night, as Franz knelt in prayer, Albrecht sorrowfully sketched the crippled hands of the friend who had made his success possible. His painting is what we today know as "The Praying Hands." Albrecht Durer's beautiful artwork is a tribute to the spirit of love and sacrifice to which Franz Knigstein's life was testimony.

For Albrecht, it was Franz's hands that represented the love and service of an Andrew in his life. Whose hands remind you of Andrew's thoughtfulness and helpfulness?

Praise be to God for the Andrews of this world—those people who work quietly

behind the scenes. They give of themselves sacrificially for the sake of the mission, without getting much recognition. Yet, this is not what they hunger for in life. What excites them is the opportunity to introduce one more person to Jesus.

Andrew was one of the first to hear of Jesus, the Lamb of God. He was the first to tell his brother Peter about Jesus. Yet, often times he comes in second as far as recognition in Scripture. He never wrote an Epistle. He is not mentioned in the Book of Acts or any of the Epistles. None of this apparently fazed him in the slightest way. Second in life so often, his passion was to tell others first. Tell them about Jesus. His first priority was to bring them to Jesus so that their hearts

could be ablaze with His love as was his own. Can you imagine the impact upon our churches were they to be filled with people with Andrew's heart—befriending people and introducing them to Him one at a time? The fire of Christ's love is kindled in the hearts of people one at a time.

**Prayer:** Lord, for all of the Andrews in my life, who have sacrificed for me and who have brought me to you, I thank and praise you. May their hearts be blessed in the joy of knowing what I now share with you. Show me this day where I can be an Andrew for someone in my life—not seeking the attention, only wanting to help and serve. Give me the opportunity where I might introduce someone to you, my Lord and very best friend. **Amen.**

**Challenge:** Who are the Andrews in your life? If possible, give them a call or send them a note to thank them for how they have given so much to you.

**Scripture Reading:** John 1

**From the Book of Concord:** “In Luke 22[:24–27] Christ expressly forbids lordship among the apostles, for the question of who would be in charge and become, as it were, the vicar of the absent Christ was the very thing about which they were arguing when Christ spoke of his passion. Christ rebuked the apostles for this error and taught that there would be neither lordship nor superiority among them but that the apostles would be sent as equals to carry out the ministry of the gospel in common. For that reason he said, ‘The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, but it is not so with you. Rather whoever wants to be great among you will be your servant.’ The contrast here shows that lordship is rejected. So does the parable in which, during a similar dispute about authority, Christ sets a little boy in their midst to show that just as the child neither assumes nor desires the chief place, so among his servants there will be no preeminence [Matt. 18:1–4]” (Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, p. 331.8).