

I. Project Andrew: Bring Them to Him
“Andrew Bringing His Brother... and More”
John 1:29–42
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January 15, 2023 • Sunday Morning Sermon

I'd like to open this up for us by reading John 1:19-28 which says [19] *And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” [20] He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” [21] And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” [22] So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” [23] He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”*

[24] (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) [25] They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” [26] John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, [27] even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” [28] These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The grass withers, the flower fades, God's Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy His Word be preached for you. May God be exalted.

I love the way Paul uses language about this present age, the spirit of the age and for us not to be surprised by it but aware of it and be ready to meet it. This present age has all of its distinctives which I'm fully aware of for I think of water going down a drain as I see the intentional deconstruction of western civilization, not that certain things don't need to be changed for obviously they do but that's what we see these days in the culture. I don't have time to develop this in this study but I'll give you a summary; we live in a culture of insanity, absurdity, rampant immorality with attempts to normalize immorality and lethality – a death culture. Why? It is because whenever you normalize sin the wages don't change – for the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

As we see this, there is something we need to remember – what we see in our present culture with its own formulations actually is what has been in the ages before. As Ecclesiastes says, there is really nothing new under the sun. The formation, presentation, and articulation of it may be changed but it's still the same issue – for the heart of the problem is the problem with the heart, unless the grace of God gets a hold of the heart of man. Romans 1 tells us what happens for common grace restrains sin and redeeming grace transforms and saves sinners, and unless that comes there is always a devolution of a life and a culture. No matter what it looks like the answer is still the same. The darker the darkness the clearer the light. The more insanity reigns then the sanity of the Gospel penetrates. The more absurdity of embracing sin and its consequences is seen, the clearer the glorious ramifications of the Gospel can be presented. That is just the great opportunity that's before us.

I'm not exalting the darkness thinking now we get a better shot at the Gospel but I do know that when man's sin becomes the greatest, then God's grace is even more glorious because God's grace is always greater than man's sin. This culture doesn't need for us to come up with some cultural plan for it needs for the church to be on mission, on message and in ministry. We are to be on mission to make disciples with the message of the Gospel declaring the whole counsel of God through the ministries of worship so that when people are brought to

hear Christ in a worship service they will fall on their faces and say ‘God is in the midst of these people, that this is God-centered living.’ There is the ministry of upreach and worship, the ministry of outreach and evangelism, the ministry of inreach where we’re enfolding, shepherding, and loving one another well. The culture of Christ’s church must be different than the polarized, angry, divisive, factious culture of this world and its angst and despair. The hope of Christ ought to be seen not only from our mouths but in our lives. Then as we see those ministries of truth we have this ministry of downreach where that Word is penetrating people’s lives and changing them.

Of those four ministries we will be taking a closer look at evangelism by examining it biographically through the life of Andrew, one of Jesus’ Disciples – thus project Andrew. What did Andrew do? He brought them to Him. In this series we’re going to be looking at three different times where Andrew was bringing them to Him, Jesus. We will see it in John 1 which we’ll look at in this study. We’ll see it in John 6 where Andrew brings a little boy to Him and then in John 12 where he brings the Gentiles to Jesus in the very last week of Jesus’ ministry. As we look at John 1 in this study I want to show you what we can embrace from this and learn from this.

I love the Gospel of John and it’s very interesting. The first couple of chapters of the book are focused on a week. Something that is currently popular is finding someone who is interesting and follow them for a day or week – it may be a celebrity, an athlete, an elected official. The Gospel of John is written by the Apostle John. What I’m about to say is a little bit of speculation on my part, but this John has a brother named James and both are fishermen like their father Zebedee. They are from the Galilee area and probably cooperate with some other fishermen named Peter and Andrew. Philip and Nathaniel also work with them in fishing some. You will hear more about those names in this series. The Apostle John will also write I John, II John, III John and Revelation. The Gospel of John seems to be written in such a way that John knew our fascination with following interesting people and what they do in a week.

The first part of the book of John looks at Jesus’ first week in ministry, after His baptism and being in the wilderness 40 days. Then John finishes his book from John 12 to the end by looking at the last week of Jesus’ ministry. Then he has a number of evangelistic encounters between those two weeks, but he also starts off with some evangelistic encounters in his focus on Jesus’ first week of ministry. We are about to see the salvation of the first six men in the public life and ministry of Jesus and what God does in their life. These six are also going to end up being Apostles as He gifts them in being the foundation of the church which is built upon the Apostles and Prophets.

John is also a cousin to Jesus for their mothers are sisters. I wouldn’t doubt if many came up to John after the ascension of Jesus and said ‘Tell us about Jesus. What would it be like to be with Him for a week?’ So here we have the Gospel of John who starts off telling us about Jesus’ first week of ministry. Jesus is at a place called Bethany across the Jordan which is kind of the headquarters of this new Prophet that is preaching. Think on this; there have been 400 years of silence and now there is a Prophet. This Man is preaching and there’s a revival. People are flocking from everywhere just to hear Him preach. The religious headquarters in Jerusalem and wanting to find out everything about this Man. So they then send out some emissaries and we just heard about them in the opening passage.

These emissaries come out with three penetrating questions for in the midst of this moment there was the anticipation of the Messiah and there would be three people they would be looking for in this anticipation. Moses said that One would come as a Prophet greater than

him. The last book of the Old Testament – Malachi – would tell us that one would come in the Spirit and power of Elijah. Then thirdly, they want to know if he is the Messiah. They ask John the Baptist if he is the Messiah, if he is the Prophet, and if he is Elijah and John the Baptist immediately goes to Isaiah and tells them he is the forerunner, who comes in the Spirit and power of Elijah – the one who makes straight the way of the Lord. He tells them he is the one to minister but not even worthy to tie His sandals who is coming after him. John the Baptist bore witness to Christ as well as affirmed his calling to bring Christ to them. Let's now go to the next day.

John 1:29-34 says [29] *The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! [30] This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who ranks before me, because He was before me.' [31] I myself did not know Him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that He might be revealed to Israel."* [32] *And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on Him. [33] I myself did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' [34] And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."*

In other words, the One that's coming, the Messiah, when He enters into His public ministry as Prophet, Priest and King – the Anointed One – and when He is by the Spirit of God, He will accomplish His Messianic work. When He ascends, He will then anoint His people with that same Spirit that came upon Him. Now John the Baptist not only points to Christ, He proclaims the Gospel with his simple statement, "Behold the Lamb of God." That statement is jammed packed with meaning. This goes all the way back to Abraham and Isaac where the Lord will provide the sacrifice. They remember the Exodus where their firstborn were delivered because of the blood of the lamb and the Passover. They remember Yom Kippur – the day of Atonement. They remember the blood and sacrifices so much so that the Kidron Brook would run red for with God's teaching there has to be a substitutionary sacrifice, but we do it because lambs, bulls and goats can't do it. We need a Lamb of God.

He doesn't point to the consequences when cultures and nations change, he points to the work of the Gospel when sinners get saved and changed. Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of this system of rebellion against God – sin of the world. 'Look to Him' and John the Baptist bore witness and he brings them to Him. We get our first converts. Let's continue in this text.

John 1:35-46 says [35] *The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, [36] and he looked at Jesus as He walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" [37] The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. [38] Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?" And they said to Him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" [39] He said to them, "Come and you will see." So they came and saw where He was staying, and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. [40] One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. [41] He **first** found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ). [42] He **brought him to Jesus**. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas" (which means Peter).*

[43] *The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him,*

“Follow me.” [44] Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. [45] Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” [46] Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

Here we have student evangelism. Here are six students – Andrew, John, Peter, Philip, James, and Nathanael. They have a job. They are fishermen. They live on the northern side of the sea of Galilee, around Capernaum and Bethsaida. Their fishing business must have been pretty good because they have all taken time off to come down to follow John the Baptist. They probably have others who are taking over the fishing. Back then you didn’t go to school by a building but you went to school by a teacher and John the Baptist is their teacher. They have come to learn from him, they were his disciples.

John the Baptist bears witness to send the Levites to Jesus. John the Baptist then bears witness and send two of his disciples to Jesus – Andrew and John, the writer of this Gospel. Both of them will recruit their brothers – Peter and James. We see that Andrew goes to Peter **first** according to John 1:41 which means Peter wasn’t the only one Andrew went to and Andrew brings him to Jesus – come and see, is what he told his brother. Here we have this amazing work of this Gospel movement that is taking place among this group of students. It begins with John the Baptist’s verbal witness to those who have come to ask him and then it moves to two of his disciples and two of them come to Him. Those two go to get others. It doesn’t stop there. Philip is from the same town as Andrew and Peter and they pick up on Philip. Philip then goes and gets Nathanael. Nathanael is a hard one to crack so here is a wonderful way when people don’t just fall on their face and become a Christian the first moment you tell them about Jesus – come and see.

You have probably heard this before but who are the most productive evangelists in a church? It is new Christians and the reason why is that they’re still amazed at grace. They haven’t gotten used to it or categorized it or overly inspected it. They are still amazed that they were headed to hell but they are not going to heaven. They say things like ‘I was weighed down by my guilt but now I’m free. I used to have to sin but now I don’t have to sin. Now I can follow Jesus. I know a lot of people that need to hear this.’ I think new Christians are the most effective as evangelists but one, they are still amazed at grace. Number two, they are still friends with unsaved people and thirdly, they haven’t been a Christian so long that they’re not so worried about being embarrassed.’ They just want to tell people about Jesus.

This happened in my life. When I became a Christian, I just started telling people about Jesus. I had this really good friend named Larry. About two or three months after I became a Christian I saw Larry on the road – he was going one way and I was going the other and I yelled at him, ‘Hey Larry!’ He had his sweet wife with him and my wife Cindy was with me at that moment. We both turned around and pulled into a 7-Eleven and rolled down our windows to talk. I can’t from the pulpit give you the greeting he gave to me but it was sincere. I just kind of broke into the conversation and said ‘Larry, you won’t believe what has happened to me.’ He in his own language basically said to me ‘What is it?’ I said ‘I became a Christian.’ He said ‘What?’ I just started talking really fast as I started out ‘Let me tell you about it...’ because I noticed his car started moving. At first, I thought my car was moving so I put my foot back on the brake, but then I noticed it was his. Then he said ‘That’s great Harry, we’ll catch you later, buddy.’ I turned to Cindy and said ‘Well, I shared with him’ and she said ‘Yeah you did.’ I said ‘How’d I do?’ She said ‘I don’t think you did too good.’

Long story short, three months later I'm out running errands and we run into each other again but this time at a restaurant, both of us with our wives. Larry comes running up to me and hugs me. He said to me 'Harry, I've become a Christian.' I said 'Really?' He said 'Yeah!' I said to Larry, looking at my wife, 'Was it something I said?' He said 'No, you didn't make much sense but I figured if anything could change someone like you that much then I need to go check into this so I went to church the next Sunday and I became a Christian.' If you know enough to be saved you know enough to get in on this thing. New Christians just seem to be the ones sharing it and here's a new Christian whose name is Andrew.

Andrew is not an Apostle yet for he hadn't gone through three years of discipleship yet but he's saved. He goes to get his brother and then his brother gets saved. Do you think there was cultural transformation in that group of fishermen after that, as a consequence? That's what I simply want you to see from this text of Scripture. I want you to see it because of all of its glory. Here are three things I want you to get from this.

One is that Andrew was intentional in bringing someone to Jesus. It wasn't just serendipity. He went to get it. Secondly, he was prioritized. He went to get his brother first. There is your family, your friends, your neighbors, your business associates but I think you are always ready for Divine appointments when they show up. It could be the man you're talking to while you are filling your car up with gas – be ready for those moments. Thirdly, he wasn't just checking the box, he was sharing, bringing Christ to others and bringing others to Christ was a way of life. I know that and because we have two more studies on this I will be sharing how I know this. Peter was first and not last and he wasn't a one off. Andrew was intentional, prioritized and it was a lifestyle for him to bring others to Christ.

Here is your takeaway. To bring them to Him you must bring Him to them. When I was a youth pastor there was this bumper sticker that said 'I found it!' I used to struggle with that bumper sticker because I didn't find 'it' I found Him. Then I struggled more when I realized I didn't find Him, He found me. When He found me, I found Him and that's how I got it, but you can't put all that on a bumper sticker. I encourage you to go back through this John 1 text and see how many times you can find the word 'found/find' but then the text says that Jesus found them.

To bring Him to them, you must first come to Him. Where are you today – in the Savior and saved or lost and headed to an eternal condemnation as an appointment that's unavoidable? Today you can come to Him. We cannot and will not bring them to Him until we come to Him. If you want to make a commitment to Christ, please call us at Briarwood at (205) 776-5200 for we'd love to pray with you about your commitment to Christ. Please do this today, don't let this day go by without doing it. Then with Andrew, you can bring Him to them and bring them to Him.

If you have come to Him, let's bring as a way of life, intentionally and understanding the priority of relationships, them to Him. One of the ways you can do this is by bringing them to Briarwood. Let them hear, see, and feel Jesus' work. Bring them to Him by sitting down and talking with them. Bring them into your small group. This Good News gets multiplied for when you bring them to Him it doesn't stop with them because they start bringing others to Him.

When you look back at the text in John we have covered in this study we see John the Baptist bringing Levites and Pharisees and I know a couple of them that will get saved. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea will be converts of this. We saw in this passage that two of John's disciples follow Jesus. Andrew goes to get Peter and Peter will bring 3,000 and by

God's grace that will be his appointment. Then there will be 5,000 more coming to Jesus. Then there is John and James. What will John do at Ephesus in his ministry? What is James going to do as he bears witness in his martyrdom in the book of Acts for Christ to bring others to Jesus? Philip will show up every time we talk about Andrew in this series – in John 6 and John 12. The narratives are unbelievable for this Good News will get multiplied. Philip starts off bringing Nathanael and who is Nathanael going to bring?

I'd like to close with this. There was a prayer meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina where I'm from. My grandfather and his brothers were apart of this prayer meeting in the 1930s. They were praying for God to bring revival to Charlotte once again as it had had on two other occasions. They were having this prayer meeting on a dairy farm owned by a man named Franklin Graham. He had a little boy playing in the next room named Billy. God led them to call an evangelist to come and preach but before I finish this I want to back up.

There was a shoe salesman named Edward Kimble. Edward Kimble finally worked up the nerve to talk to a teenage boy and he invited him to Sunday school. Then he visited with him and shared the Gospel with him. The teenage boy was D.L. Moody. Many of you are aware of D.L. Moody's ministry for thousands came to Christ under his ministry. One of those thousands was a man named F.B. Meyer – coming to Christ rescued him from the depths of despair. Meyer became a great evangelist in England.

God used F.B. Meyer to bring a man named J. Wilbur Chapman to Christ and through Chapman comes Youth for Christ organization. Chapman led a man who played baseball to Christ named Billy Sunday. Billy Sunday led a man to Christ named Mordecai Ham plus through Sunday's ministry over 300,000 came to Christ, at least professing for only God knows the hearts of men. Mordecai Ham received a letter from a group of Christian businessmen in Charlotte to come in the 1930s to preach in Charlotte and he did. Twenty-eight men went to give their life to Jesus in those meetings and one of them was that little boy playing in the next room where they were praying to bring Mordecai Ham and that little boy was Billy Graham.

Do you see the multiple threads that are at work? These threads are all over the place. We see it in John 1 and this is all over church history. Billy Graham came back to his home church that was planted out of that revival named Calvary Independent Baptist Church, in 1948 and a 19-year-old man with his 18-year-old wife went forward and gave their life to Jesus that day, carrying a two-month-old baby in their arms. That couple was my dad and mom and the two-month-old was me. These are glorious threads. I thank God for Billy preaching and my parents coming to Christ. I thank God for Edward Kimble, D.L. Moody, F.B. Meyer, Wilbur Chapman, Billy Sunday, Mordecai Ham, Billy, and my dad and mom because it went to me. Let's pray.

Prayer:

God, would You allow us to reach the perishing with the Gospel rescue to bring Christ to them and them to Christ? Then we can anticipate how You will bless and use that in the lives of others. You have used Andrews, Peters, D.L. Moodys and You use us. If you have not come to Christ today please pray 'Jesus, I know I'm a sinner and I want to commit my life to You. You died on that cross for me so that I could have everlasting life. You're the Lamb that takes away my sin and You're the only Solution. Put me on the rock in the midst of this sinking sand.' Again please call us at Briarwood if you want to pray with someone, we'd be delighted to pray with you. For the those who know Christ, let's do business with the Lord. Will we

intentionally with priorities as a way of life bring Him to them and bring them to Him? I pray all this in Jesus' Name, Amen.