

V. Project Andrew
Bring Them to Him
“Project Andrew: The Harvest Field”
John 4:1-42

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This will be our last study and fifth study in this series on Project Andrew – bring them to Him. This is the Word of God inspired, inerrant, infallible and sufficient. John 4:1-6 says [1] *Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John [2] (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only His disciples), [3] He left Judea and departed again for Galilee. [4] And He had to pass through Samaria. [5] So He came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. [6] Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as He was from His journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.*

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

We’ll be looking at the whole chapter of John 4 so obviously we can't do the deep dive, but we are going to do the appropriate study of this text that brings us to a distillation of this ministry theme of bring them to Him. At the end of every study I generally give a takeaway and at the end of this study I’m hoping to give you a walk away to sum up what we've been studying for these past five studies, to take it into next year, as we build this ministry theme into our lives and the life of our congregation.

We are in a present age that’s very challenging – the sifting and shifting. There is the sifting that's taking place in the culture around us, and the shifting that's taking place within the confessing Evangelical church is very profound. We don't get to choose the days and the ages that we live, but we are, by God's grace, enabled to make the choices of how we respond to it. So how do we respond to such an encircling, almost suffocating culture that is intentionally deconstructing the blessing of Christendom, with all of its imperfections, in Western civilization, and then watching the deconstruction of Biblical doctrines within the professing Evangelical church? The temptation is relying on our ingenuity, or perhaps it's a personality, or a program which is kind of our reflex. When there are special challenges, we feel we have to come up with a special plan or a special person or a special program. That is kind of where we're going and I've tried to suggest this series where that's not the way to go.

The way to go in the days of adversity and testing is to renew your commitment to the basics, to stay focused on the essentials and embrace them with persistence and excellence. So here is Christ’s church, which He purchased with His own blood and we are not without direction for He has given us our direction in something called the Great Commission. He has given us the culture that ought to be at work among us that the world would see in the midst of its polarization, chaos and destruction. What would they see, but a great commandment culture, to love the Lord with all your heart, soul and mind, and that we reach out and love those made in the image of God as ourselves. That's what ought to be seen.

We are a church that has purpose and direction for our God has given us our mission, our message and our ministries and it wasn't just for the first century. It was from His ascension until He returns. It's given to us clearly, at the end of all four gospels, and Acts 1, and I'll just reference that one in the end of Matthew 28:18-20 which says [18] *And Jesus came and said to*

them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [19] Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

In taking that Great Commission I've distilled it into this statement as a church that is on mission, on message and in ministry. Until He returns, which means He hasn't come back yet so that means this age – until He returns, Christ has unleashed His church on a God-glorifying, Christ-exalting, Spirit-empowered, Gospel enterprise to make disciples of all the nations. How? Through implementing a ministry of outreach – evangelism, a ministry of inreach – enfolding, a ministry of downreach - equipping and a ministry of upreach – exaltation or worship. All of it is just wrapped right up in that great commission.

He gives us the imperative verb – here's your mission, make disciples of all the nations. He then gives us our message – teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. The whole Bible with the Gospel at the center, the circumference and the substance – the whole Bible is necessary for whole Christians. Our ministries are as you're *going* – that's evangelism. They were baptized believers and their household and added to the church – enfolding, shepherding, communion of saints, the love of the brethren, bringing us together into the covenant community, winning them to Christ, enfolding them in the body of Christ, and then equipping them with the mind of Christ – teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

What's the result? It is demonstrated right here in the text. Here are the disciples who Jesus evangelized, enfolded and equipped, and when they saw Him, they worshiped Him, exaltation. Lifestyle worship is likened unto I Corinthians 10:31 which says *[31] So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.* In all things Christ is preeminent and gathered worship is in spirit and in truth. This is our task, but this year we want to narrow it beyond on mission, on message and in ministry to just the evangelism part. How can it be built into every congregational community, every small group, every worship service, every ministry? How can it be built in, embedded, embraced and woven as a thread throughout the entire tapestry of that assembly, that community, that ministry?

So, we took one guy whose name was Andrew. He's mentioned in the other Gospels, but he's found with some description only in the Gospel of John. When he shows up three times, all three times, he's bringing someone to Jesus. So, it was Project Andrew Evangelism – bring them to Him. In our very first study on was we looked at how Andrew was brought to Jesus by John the Baptist. Then after he came to Jesus, he went and found his brother and brought Peter to Jesus. Guess what? Peter's going to bring 3000 and then 5000. So, we begin to see that the expansion of the kingdom is not addition, it's not even multiplication but it's geometric expansion that takes place. You never know when you bring someone to Christ how God's going to use them to bring others to Him. Here's what we learned in that first encounter – bring them to Him by bringing Him to them and then step by watch out how many they may bring to Him. We may not be Peter to bring 3000, but we can be Andrew to bring Peter.

In the second encounter there was a small boy who Andrew brought to Jesus in the feeding of the 5000. When that small boy was brought to Jesus, he brought five loaves and two fishes. What did we learned then? When we bring them to Him, they not only come to Him, but they bring with them to Him the things that He has given to them, that the Savior may use them and watch what He does. I would love to have heard the conversation when that boy got home to his mom to tell him what the lunch she packed did. That must have been something.

The third encounter was when Philip and Andrew brought the Greeks standing in the courtyard of the Gentiles that Jesus will cleanse the next day, but he brings the Greeks to Jesus and Jesus, who had said five times, 'My time has not come,' when He sees them, said 'the hour is now.' And He will go to the cross to save His people from their sins, from every tribe and nation, and bring forth the New Covenant community, circumcised not in the flesh, but in the heart, filled with the Spirit, with new hearts, new lives, and new records. This is because of what He does on the cross, where He redeems His people.

In our fourth study we learned what is foundational to all of this. We looked at Matthew 9 where Jesus said 'the harvest is plentiful. Pray earnestly, intentionally, persistently pray for workers in the harvest.' Jesus has secured the harvest at the cross. Pray to the Lord of the Harvest, Christ, the first fruit of the harvest, that He, through the Spirit, will send us into the harvest. So that prayer is foundational to the entire enterprise of bringing them to Him. We are to pray for those whom we're going to. We are to pray for what will happen when we go to them and pray that there will be more of us to go to them because there's a plentiful harvest and we need more workers for that harvest to bring His people from every tribe and nation to Himself. We don't want to send people called out there into the harvest, if we're not going into the harvest here.

That brings me finally to just one more encounter for Jesus. This is the fourth time of the five sermons we've been back in the Gospel of John and hopefully you have the idea here that John has very interesting texts. First of all, the opening chapters are devoted to the first week of Jesus' ministry there are Bethany across the Jordan – after He has been baptized and gets back from the wilderness. Then as you move into John, you see the seven 'I am's' – I am the door, I am the shepherd, I am the bread of life, etc. John also arranges seven signs, wonders and miracles that point to Jesus and he gives us seven encounters where we see how Jesus works in the harvest Himself. One of those is in John 3 with a religious man named Nicodemus, who was sneaking in by night, didn't want anybody to see him to talk to Jesus. He's going to get converted.

Now we see Him in another place. Here's the way the original reads – I must/need to go through Samaria. Geographically, He didn't need to go through Samaria, although it was the shortest way back to Galilee. In fact, most of the time Jews, because of the distaste of Samaria and their apostasy would not go through Samaria, but if they did, they would dust their shoes off when they got to the other side or their sandals. They usually went what they call the Transjordan route. Normally that's what Jesus did, but not this time. He's in Jerusalem and going back to Galilee and says, 'I have to go through Samaria.' I don't think it was for any geographic reason or psychological reason, but I think it was a Divine appointment. There is this woman He is going to meet at this well. That woman doesn't know it yet, but this is a Divine appointment of God's sovereign grace. Jesus goes to seek and save the lost at Sychar, in Samaria by the well of Jacob.

This well is 150 feet deep. Think of a building 15 stories high. It has been used and drawn water for 2000 years. They're just taking water out of this thing all over the place. It's right between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, right near the capital of Samaria, the city named Samaria. But there's a smaller town right there named Sychar from which this woman has walked out to the well at the sixth hour, which means 12 noon. Now, immediately we know something's up. Now, women were the ones that went got the water, but they went in the morning to get the water for the day and they went in groups. In other words, they didn't go get water without a support group. They would get there in the morning, get the water, take it

home, use it all day, then at night, come back in the late evening, in the cool of the day to get some more water. That was the rhythm, unless you were a social outcast for then you went by yourself. This woman went at noon at the heat of the day.

Jesus is sitting there at the well. Here we see another evidence of Jesus, true humanity. He's weary, He's thirsty – fully God, fully Man. He is in His full humanity, sitting by the well and the woman shows up. Now let's continue in the text to see what happens next.

John 4:7-9 says [7] *A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."* [8] *(For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.)* [9] *The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)*

We need to understand the word 'dealings' here. John is giving us a little editorial here. It doesn't mean they have no dealings at all because His Disciples are in Sychar buying food. The dealing here means intimate connection – no sharing of intimate utensils, forks, knives, cups, intimate associations, marriage, partnerships, intimate encounters, table fellowship. Here are some reasons why they wouldn't do any of that. Number one, Samaritans had apostatized from the Pentateuch and the laws of God given through Moses after they'd gotten into the Promised Land. They had set up their own worship center at Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. They had set up their own sacrificial system and no longer participated there in Jerusalem at the tabernacle, and then later the temple. Secondly, they had intermarried with the nations that had come in. They had married outside of the covenant. Thirdly, was because of syncretism for when the Greeks came in, they embraced the Greek paganism and then amalgamated it into their religion. So there was another apostasy. A fourth reason was they had fomented a rebellion against the throne of David and had departed the scepter that belonged to Judah and the line of David. So, Samaritans, all ten tribes were written off and the Jews would have nothing to with them and not even go through their area if at all possible.

This woman wants to know why this Man (Jesus) would have anything to do with her. Number one, she is a woman, He is a man. Number two. Number two, she is a Samaritan, and He is a Jew. Number three, the unspoken reality that's clear by her being there at noon, she's a social outcast. Number four, He just ask her for a drink from her jar, her utensil. That's what caught her attention even more, that He would drink from her jar. Well, what is Jesus going to say to her? Let's continue in the text.

John 4:10- says [10] *Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."* (Jesus has moved from physical water to spiritual water, a physical well to a spiritual well.) [11] *The woman said to Him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"* [12] *Are you greater than our father Jacob? (She realizes something is being stated in this exchange.) He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."* [13] *Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, [14] but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."* [15] *The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."*

This is a jam packed statement. This woman is tracking with Him, but not yet quite with Him. Then He is tells her, if she knew who she was talking with He would give her one living water, two eternal life and three newness of life, because not only would she have something to

draw from, a well of water which is Jesus that would give her living water unto eternal life, but living water unto a new life. He will actually make her a well springing up from within her.

When I played golf at East Carolina, even though it was not exactly the best golf course in the world, at that time it only cost me \$0.50 to play so that was great. I would go there to practice and play and I always loved hole 14. There is an Artesian well that is still there today, that is just springing up. This woman would become not only one who draws upon a well for new life and eternal life, but she will become a well. You can almost hear Jesus at the temple in the Gospel of John when he says to them, "If anyone comes to Me and drinks of Me from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:31). Water will not only come from Me to you and you will have the newness of life, but it will flow up and out of you and into the wilderness and will cause the blossoming of redemption.

He is telling her, it's not just this well, but that she has been going to another well, that adulterous, immoral men have dug for her and she has been drinking of it with the jar of adultery and promiscuity. And it doesn't satisfy. It poisons. It pollutes, but you come to Me and I'll give you not only living water for eternity, but it will change you now and you will have hope – from the well of helplessness and hopelessness to a well of redemption and life is what I offer to you. She says, 'Give me this water.' But He's not through with her yet. Let's continue in the text.

John 4:16-26 says [16] *Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."* [17] *The woman answered him, "I have no husband."* Jesus said to her, *"You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; [18]for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."* [19] *The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. [20] Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship."* [21] *Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. [22] You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. [23] But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. [24] God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."* [25] *The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things."* [26] *Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."* (Literally, 'I Am.')

He is telling her "I am that Messiah." But now they get to the crucial point of it. He has exposed to her, her sin that she knew but was hiding. He brings it and exposes it. The good news is never good news until the bad news is known. Then the good news is not only good news, it is amazing grace – the helpless and the hopeless redeemed. He not only exposes her violation of this second tablet of the law, He shows her, her violation of the first tablet of the law - false worship. He informs us that there's one thing that the Bible says God seeks from us. Every Lord's Day you get a chance to decide whether you want to follow it or not. I understand providential hindrance. The Father seeks true worshipers in the gathering of His people who will worship him in spirit and in truth and lady, the answer in the Word is no longer where, but it's how. My people in spirit bless the Lord, O, my soul and all that is within me, bless His holy name. God's Word is truth, so that in worship we do only what He commands, which is what pleases Him, and that becomes the joy of their heart. He exposes her idolatry of worship and he exposes her sin and she says, 'I need a redeemer' and He says, 'I am.' So what happens next, when someone comes to Him?

John 4:27-30 says [27] *Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that He was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why are you talking with her?"* [28] *So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people (men),* [29] *"Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?"* [30] *They went out of the town and were coming to Him.*

Why does it say she left the water jar? She is not only changing wells, she's no longer going to the well of sin and death that she drew from with promiscuity and adultery, she is leaving the jars as well as the well and coming to a new well that you draw from through the preaching of the Word, fellowship and worship – God's Word and God's Spirit. She has a new well and she has new jars. Where does she go? If she's going back in to tell people what happened to her, will the women talk to her? Oh, no, but she has a fishing pool for she goes to the men and I think that is a better translation than using 'people.' What happens next?

John 4:31-38 says [31] *Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."* [32] *But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."* [33] *So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him something to eat?"* [34] *Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to accomplish His work. [35] Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. [36] Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. [37] For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' [38] I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."*

In other words, every time you go into the harvest field to bring them to Him when they come, very likely you're not the only one that He has sent. Some are planting, some are watering, some are cultivating and some are reaping. He's bringing all of that to bear at a moment like that but then He tells the disciples, 'My joy is not in the physical food. My joy is in the spiritual food that comes with the satisfaction and gratification when we are obedient to God's Word, to go into the field and bring others to Him.' Let's continue in the text.

John 4:39 says [39] *Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did."*

This woman used her testimony. Learn to use your testimony. It's not the Gospel. It's the results of the Gospel, but it's a bridge to tell other people the Gospel. She gave her testimony and that brought them to Him who saved her. The testimony is a wonderful instrument to use when you bring Him to them so that you might bring them to Him. We are in the midst and the Evangelical church where we're trying to win people to come to Jesus with the Gospel, to save them from their sins and we're trying to do it without telling them that they're sinners. What was it that endeared this woman to Jesus? Not only that He could save her from her sins, change her life with living water, turn her into an artesian well, but what endeared her to Him was He told her the truth about her sin – her false worship and her adultery.

When she said sure, 'sir, give me that water' He could have just closed it right there. He said, 'No, you have to understand, I'm not saving you simply to Myself, I'm saving you from your sins to Myself.' So He backs up to make sure we understand. You have to confess your sins to be forgiven by the only One who could do so with justice because He paid for it at the cross. What happens next?

John 4:40-42 says [40] *So when the Samaritans came to Him, they asked Him to stay with them, and He stayed there two days. [41] And many more believed because of His word. [42] They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe,*

for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.” So here is the woman that came to Jesus, and then she goes and brings them to Jesus.

So here's your take away – this is your walk away throughout the rest of this year; An authentic Christian not only comes to Christ as Lord and Savior but reflexively and intentionally will seek to bring Christ to others to bring them to Him. The key words here are reflexively and intentionally. Andrew intentionally went to Peter and he reflexively would just go to everybody. When you become a Christian, you're commanded to share the Gospel. Seek the lost. Preach the Gospel to the whole world, but the authentic Christian actually once their believers can't wait to tell somebody. It's reflexive. It's intuitive.

Jesus gave this woman no command to go tell others to bring them to Him, she just went. Now, does he tell us to go to the lost? Yes. Be intentional, but reflexively, one of the evidences is we want to, we desire to. Now, sometimes we get fearful and we need training but that also helps us be intentional and reflexive. Ask God to help us build that in our lives. The harvest is plentiful. Let's get in the harvest. Spirit of the living God, lead me into the harvest.

Can you just imagine what the Disciples thought when Jesus said to them, ‘Look, the fields are ripe unto harvest’ (John 4:35)? Do you know what was happening when He said that to them? There's a woman coming with an entourage of men from Sychar behind her. When He said that, Jesus may have looked out there on the fields and it was white unto harvest, the white grain, but it may have been that as Jesus said that they would have seen white robed Sycharian men coming to Him, led by this woman, with her testimony of sharing the Good News of the One who redeems and brings us to eternal life – it is in Him.

First of all, if you have it, I want you to leave the jars of sin and quit drinking from the well of sin for it poisons and it will you. It will tell you ‘Just keep coming back and drink for maybe it'll work later’ but it never does. It's vanity. Come to Jesus, for He will not only give you living water for everlasting life, but it will well up within you and overflow into your family, your friends, your team, your class, your work, your neighborhood. This what I pray as a pastor, “God help me work hard at preaching and teaching, but if there's some way O God, not out of any desire not to work hard, but just if there's some way, help me when I preach that it overflows of what You're pouring in.” That is what He is telling you. Drink of Him and it will overflow.

People have been asking me about the Asbury Revivals. They have asked me if I have ever been in a revival and yes, I have had the privilege. The most profound one is now six decades old. It's in the East African revivals. The epicenter is Uganda. The epicenter point is Kampala. I've been going there since 1980. It's absolutely astonishing. I remember my first time. I'm preaching all day to crowds that are coming every hour – we preach and they leave and then another crowd comes and it keeps going like that. I was so worn out on that Sunday that I went outside just to get a drink of water and I looked across where there were bamboo hedges with ‘no trespassing’ signs in Bugandan around this old colonial house. We didn't have iPhones then so I took out my camera to take a picture and my guide said to me “no hurry, Harry. It's a state identification house, a state interrogation house.” I said “What are you talking about?” He said ‘That's where Idi Amin and Obote would bring Christians.’

I can't describe to you what he would do to them from the pulpit, but they died for Christ and their blood is stained all over that. Museveni has closed it. I couldn't help but look at that closed place of torture of my brothers and sisters in the 1970s when the revival broke out and their faithfulness. That is a place of shame that is boarded up and across the street is All

Saints Cathedral – Jesus says, “I will build My church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18).”

There are white robed Sycharians. The harvest is plentiful. It's all around us and all around the world. May God grant us the heart and the desire to go there. Perhaps you are thinking ‘What do I do? I feel so surrounded by this present age, the entrenchment of sin. I feel suffocated. It seems like it's a tsunami wave. Where do I start?’ In Charlotte, when we had the 38 people to start Christ Covenant, one of them was a very sweet young lady who was a vivacious and contagious Christian, but her husband was not. He was a non-practicing Jew with affection for his Jewish religion. He didn't mind her being a Christian. She had become a Christian after they were married. He would even come with her to church every once in a while, and we would begin to pray for him. We put him in our focus prayer group, and we just reached out to him.

One Friday night I got a phone call from this lady who said “Pastor, guess what? My husband wants to become a Christian. He is coming home and he wants to talk to you. You have to get over here tonight!” I said, ‘Oh, this is awesome, but I can't. There's somebody else that wants to become a Christian and I've had this time set up to meet with them tonight.’ She said, “No, no, no, no. We've been praying for him.” I said, ‘Well, we've been praying for him to.’ She said, “No, no, you have to come here now, now, now.” I said, ‘I can't.’ She said, “We can't lose this.” I said, ‘Hold it. Wait, I'm not being a fatalist. Listen, if this is the work of the Holy Spirit, he'll still be there tomorrow morning.’ So, I set up the time to meet with him the next morning.

It was a Saturday morning and he gave his life to Christ as we prayed together. Then I said to him, which is what I always do when a person gives their life to Christ, “Would you read the opening three chapters of John, and let's get together next week and talk. Would you memorize John 3:16 and then the third thing, would you go tell three people that you've become a Christian?” I will never forget what he said, ‘Sure, they don't have to be Christians, do they?’ I said, “Oh, no. Preferably not.” Reflexively, intentionally bring Him to them that we might bring them to Him.

Harry, what do we do, suffocated and surrounded with the cultural elite calling darkness light and light darkness? Share the Gospel, through your testimony even, with the next person you meet tomorrow. That's what we'll do. That's not all we'll do but that's the most important thing for us to do. They're helpless and hopeless, drinking from a well of emptiness. Give them living water. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Just let the Holy Spirit speak to your heart now. If you want to pray with someone today about your commitment to Christ or about a commitment to Christ, call us here at Briarwood at (205) 776-5200 for we'd love to talk and pray with you privately and confidentially about this commitment to Him. You may also call us if you have something you want to pray with someone about. But right now, let's do business with the Lord. Lord, work in our hearts to go out into the fields that are ripe for harvest. Thank You for the power of Your Spirit and Your amazing grace, in Jesus' Name I pray, Amen.