

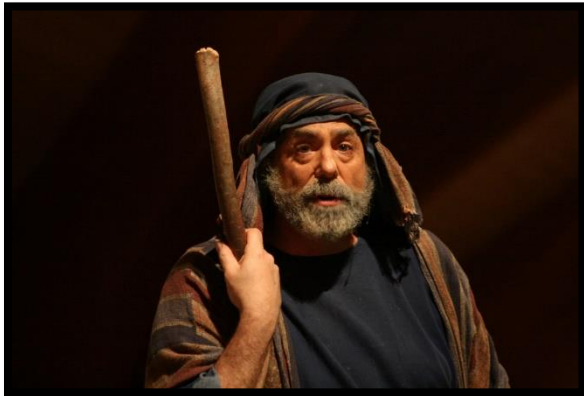
Andrew: The Apostle of Small Things

John 1:35-42

Online Sermon: http://www.mckeefamily.com/?page_id=3567

Ever feel that the resources, time and spiritual gifts that you have to offer are too insignificant to make a difference in God's kingdom? If one cannot sing like an angel, preach and thousands become born again, pray and have the earth shake, have faith that moves the mightiest of mountains, command healing through the power of the Holy Spirit and have unspeakable love that has no limits and is inclusive of all; then why bother serving in God's kingdom? Unfortunately, many Christians foolishly believe that the public results of service are far more important than the object of one's service, pleasing God! While service that is seen by many is often deemed impressive, so are the acts done in secret of which no eye can see except our Father in heaven. While Apostle Andrew never preached to multitudes of people, never founded any churches, wrote any epistles or was mentioned in the book of Acts; his indiscrete service has been heard loud and clear for centuries! From Andrew's testimony we learn that there are no insignificant gifts, no inconspicuous service and evangelism one on one is powerful and effective!

Background on Andrew



Andrew's family lived in the city of Bethsaida on the northern shore of the sea of Galilee (John 1:44) but later moved to Capernaum¹ where he and his brother Peter had a fishing business (Mark 1:21, 29), with James and John as likely partners (Luke 5:10).² Andrew's father's name was Jonah (Matthew 16:17) or John (John 1:42, 21:15-17). After having heard John the Baptist's testimony that Jesus was the "Lamb of God" (John 1:35-40), both Andrew and Peter became apostles of

Christ. Andrew is always listed in the top four names of the apostles, along with Peter and two other brothers, John and James (Matthew 10:2-4; Luke 6:13-16; Acts 1:13-14).³ While the Bible

¹ Taken from the following website: <https://bible.org/seriespage/peter-man>

² Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, "[Peter, The Apostle,](#)" *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1659.

³ George W. Knight, "[Andrew, The Apostle,](#)" *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 87.

does not mention the death of Andrew, tradition is rather uniform that he was not nailed but lashed to a X-shaped cross and that it took two days of suffering before he died.⁴

The First Disciple

Before he met Jesus Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist (John 1:35). While he



whose name meant ‘manly’⁵ could have been impressed by the rugged man who lived in the desert, clothed in camel’s hair and whose diet was locusts and wild honey (Matthew 3:4), it would have been John’s role as forerunner of the Messiah (Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1) that would have impressed Andrew the most!⁶ It had been over 400 years⁷ since God spoke to humanity through the last prophet Malachi, and now the “voice of one calling in the wilderness” was challenging the people to “prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him” (Matthew 3:3). John warned

the crowd that Jesus would soon come and those who had by faith received His Good News would be baptized by the Holy Spirit and those who rejected Him would be burned up like chaff



in the unquenchable fire (Matthew 3:11-12). Andrew most likely recognized John’s words to be the fulfilment of Scripture so he became one of his disciples.

The moment Andrew met Jesus he became His disciple. When questioned by the priests, Levites and Pharisees who he was, John the Baptist freely confessed that he was not the Messiah but merely a voice calling in the wilderness who was unworthy to untie straps and sandals of Christ (John 1:24-27). Andrew who had been waiting for

⁴ John F. MacArthur Jr., [*Twelve Ordinary Men: How the Master Shaped His Disciples for Greatness, and What He Wants to Do with You*](#) (Nashville, TN: W Pub. Group, 2002), 74.

⁵ John F. MacArthur Jr., [*Twelve Ordinary Men: How the Master Shaped His Disciples for Greatness, and What He Wants to Do with You*](#) (Nashville, TN: W Pub. Group, 2002), 64.

⁶ James Montgomery Boice, [*The Gospel of Matthew*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 46.

⁷ Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, [*“Malachi, Book Of,” Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1380.

the right Person to be identified was overwhelmed when he heard John speak the words “look, the Lamb of God” (verses 35-36). Both Andrew and the other disciple with him (either John or Phillip)⁸ immediately left their former teacher John and followed Jesus!⁹ The very next thing Andrew did was he went and got his brother Peter and brought him to the Messiah (verse 41). We are told in Scripture that Andrew and Peter both went back to Capernaum and continued their fishing career¹⁰ for what might have been several months and then were formally called by Jesus and assigned their roles as “fishers of men” (Matthew 4:18-22). Immediately they left their fishing business and followed Jesus!

Leadership Style

Andrew and Peter had completely different leadership styles.¹¹ Peter was often brash, clumsy, hasty and impulsive. Growing up with Peter, Andrew must have known the moment that Peter joined the twelve he would soon take charge and as a result would be relegated to a secondary status.¹² And yet there is no bitterness, sibling rivalry or estrangement to be found between these men of God! Andrew knew in his heart that being called by the Chief Cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20) meant that the Messiah had great things planned for each of the disciples. While Peter’s leadership style was bold and aggressive, Andrew’s leadership style was one that used the gifts and calling bestowed upon him to work in the background as a one on one evangelist. While you will not find stories of Andrew walking on water or preaching in front of big crowds like his brother Peter, Andrew’s leadership is equally impressive for he certainly knew the value of relational ministry! “His eagerness to follow Christ, combined with his zeal for introducing others to Him, fairly typifies Andrew’s character.”¹³ The remainder of this sermon will focus on what we can learn from Andrew’s



⁸ J. Ramsey Michaels, [John](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 37.

⁹ John F. MacArthur Jr., 65.

¹⁰ Ibid., 66.

¹¹ Ibid., 64.

¹² Ibid., 63.

¹³ Ibid., 61.

leadership style: 1) there is value in inconspicuous service, 2) small gifts and 3) one on one evangelism.

Seeing the Value in Inconspicuous Service

Often Christians will not get involved in serving unless they are guaranteed that God will reward them handsomely for their service. They say things like “I will tithe lots of money if you promise to give me back more than I gave!”, or “I will give you all my free time if only others



will see the “miraculous” fruits of MY service and praise MY name.” Sounds preposterous right and yet the mother of the sons of Zebedee asked that her children be elevated to sit at the right and left side of Jesus (Matthew 20:21), a dispute erupted amongst the disciples about whom amongst them was considered the greatest (Luke 22:24) and Peter boldly asked Christ what the disciples would get for having given up everything to become fishers of men (Matthew 19:27)? In response Jesus reminded the apostles that they were not to be like the Gentiles and lord their positions

over them but instead to be first they must emulate Jesus and become servants, giving their lives as ransoms to many (Matthew 20:24-28). Service is not receiving worldly blessings (Matthew 6:19-21) but choosing to be a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2) in response to God having given us the bread and water of life (John 6:34-35)!

Like Andrew today’s leaders must be ok with humbling serving God whether in the spotlight or the background. Having his name only mentioned nine times and often being addressed as Peter’s brother, did not bother Andrew for he knew the value in serving God comes



not from the results of service that only God can claim, but in the honor of serving his Creator!¹⁴ To answer Peter’s question, “what is in it for us?,” Jesus told the disciples that their reward would be to one day sit on twelve thrones and judge Israel and to receive eternal life! Andrew was overwhelmed with joy for like the Psalmist he truly believed that God, being his portion and cup, was truly a reward beyond measure (16:5-11)! While the apostles started out clamouring for positions

¹⁴ John F. MacArthur Jr., [*Twelve Ordinary Men: How the Master Shaped His Disciples for Greatness, and What He Wants to Do with You*](#) (Nashville, TN: W Pub. Group, 2002), 63.

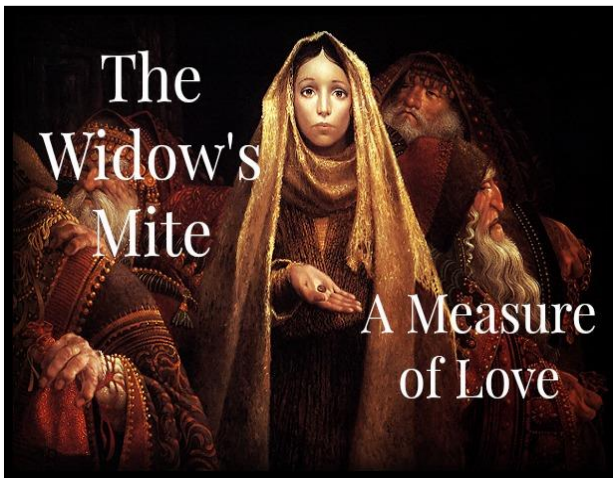
of power and authority they later learned how to be living sacrifices willing to risk everything for the sake of the kingdom! From Andrew we learn that effective leadership whether public or private only comes to those who are called and have humble, servant hearts!

Seeing the Value in Small Gifts

Andrew was a great leader because he saw Jesus as being able to perform miracles with even the smallest of gifts.¹⁵ When Jesus crossed the far shore of the Sea of Galilee John chapter six tells us that a great crowd followed Him because they saw Him heal the sick (verses 1-2).



When Jesus saw the crowd coming toward Him He tested Phillip by asking him where they might buy bread to feed so many people (verse 5)? Phillip did some quick accounting and responded that this would be impossible for it would cost eight months of a person's wage to buy enough bread to give each in the crowd but a mere bite (verse 7).¹⁶ In Matthew's, Mark's and Luke's version of this story the disciples then recommend that Jesus send the crowds away to the villages to buy their own food (14:15; 6:35; 9:12). It was at this point that Andrew spoke up and said that there was a boy present with five barely loaves and two small fish (verse 8). While Andrew would have been aware that such a small amount of food would not physically feed so many, he believed no gift would be insignificant in Jesus' hands!¹⁷ Jesus then blessed this small amount of food and was able to feed five thousand men plus women and children (verse 12).



From Andrew we learn the value in offering what "little" we have to Jesus. Ever look at the offering that you give to God on

¹⁵ John F. MacArthur Jr., [*Twelve Ordinary Men: How the Master Shaped His Disciples for Greatness, and What He Wants to Do with You*](#) (Nashville, TN: W Pub. Group, 2002), 71.

¹⁶ Merrill C. Tenney, "[John](#)," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: John and Acts*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 9 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 71.

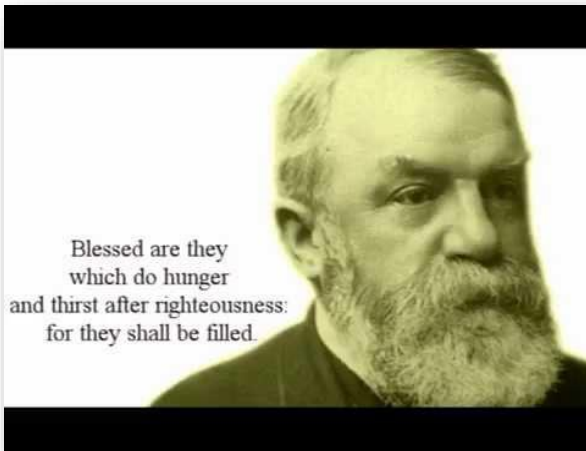
¹⁷ John F. MacArthur Jr., [*Twelve Ordinary Men: How the Master Shaped His Disciples for Greatness, and What He Wants to Do with You*](#) (Nashville, TN: W Pub. Group, 2002), 72.

a Sunday morning and are embarrassed you can give so little? Ever think about serving God but refuse to do so because you think God would never use so little amount of time to accomplish anything? If this is you then remember what Jesus did with the five fish and two loaves. Also, when offering tithes to God remember we have a lot here in North America! Remember what Jesus said about the poor widow who only could offer two mites, mere fraction of a day's wage?¹⁸ Even though the rich placed more money in the offering plate it was the widow whom Jesus commended because she gave not out of her abundance but out of her poverty all she had to live on! A leap of faith might require us to be like the boy in the feeding of five thousand who gave all his food or the poor widow who gave all she had to live on. They did not worry about their lives, what they would eat or drink because they knew Jesus would take care of their needs (Matthew 6:25-27). And even when giving all you have is still small, never underestimate what God can do with your precious gift!

One on One Evangelism

How many have heard of Edward Kimball? Let me tell you his story.

“Kimball was the antithesis of the bold evangelist. He was a timid, soft-spoken man. He went to that shoe shop frightened, trembling, and unsure of whether he had enough courage to confront this young man with the gospel. At the time, Moody was crude and obviously illiterate, but the thought of speaking to him about Christ had Kimball trembling in his boots. Kimball recalled the incident years later. Moody had begun to attend his Sunday school class. It was obvious that Moody was totally untaught and ignorant about the Bible. Kimball said,



I decided to speak to Moody about Christ and about his soul. I started down town to Holton's shoe store. When I was nearly there I began to wonder whether I

ought to go just then during business hours. And I thought maybe my mission might embarrass the boy, that when I went away the other clerks might ask who I was, and when they learned might taunt Moody and ask if I was trying to make a good boy out of him. While I was pondering over it all I passed the store without noticing it. Then, when I found I had gone by the door I determined to make a dash for it and have it over at once.

Kimball found Moody working in the stockroom, wrapping and shelving shoes. Kimball said he spoke with “limping words.” He later said, “I never could remember just what I *did* say:

¹⁸ Walter L. Liefeld, “[Luke](#),” in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 1018–1019.

something about Christ and His love; that was all.” He admitted it was “a weak appeal.” But Moody then and there gave his heart to Christ.”¹⁹

While many people come to know Christ through public evangelism campaigns, others come to know Christ through one on one relationships. Andrew was the one who introduced the



leader of the twelve, Peter to Jesus. Andrew was the one who spent time with the crowd and knew what the boy in the feeding of the five thousand had to offer. Kimball was the one who introduced D.L. Moody to Christ. I want to conclude this sermon by encouraging you to reach out and develop relationships with those around you. While many become Christians through public testimony many more become Christians through the testimony of a friend! While you may not be called to be an evangelist like Billy Graham who preached to billions

and had millions of converts,²⁰ plant as many seeds as you can and trust that even if you do not get to see the fruits of your service God will bless and yield crops of a hundred, sixty or thirty times what you have sown (Matthew 13:8)!

¹⁹ John F. MacArthur Jr., [*Twelve Ordinary Men: How the Master Shaped His Disciples for Greatness, and What He Wants to Do with You*](#) (Nashville, TN: W Pub. Group, 2002), 69–70.

²⁰ Taken from the following website: <https://factsandtrends.net/2018/02/21/billy-grahams-life-ministry-by-the-numbers/>