

I Am Andrew

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[0 : 00] Please turn with me to John chapter 1 and verse 35 through 42. John 1, especially verse 41.

The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon. I am Andrew. Andrew was a person who, having himself become a disciple of Jesus, brought Simon, his brother, to Jesus also. Surely all of us here want to be like Andrew in that having ourselves become disciples of Jesus, we want our family and our friends to come to Jesus also. We want them to experience the same forgiveness and freedom we have. So that's why I hope we could all say this morning, I am Andrew. Because we want to bring our family and friends to Jesus, just like Andrew did. Now at the heart of Glasgow City is the word equip.

[1 : 10] We want to equip you to be the best Christians you can be at home, at work, at school, in university, or whatever you happen to be.

The best Christian parents, children, spouses, brothers, sisters, friends, and colleagues you can be. So over the next few Sundays, we want to equip you in this one particular area, that of evangelism, or to put it more directly, of bringing our family and friends to Jesus, of being Andrews to our Simons.

So to solidify our intention to be an Andrew, we're going to challenge each one of you here to begin thinking and praying for one person in your life who you will designate as your Simon.

Perhaps a family member or a friend you want to bring to Jesus. In these verses, John 1, verses 35 through 42, we learn of the three basic characteristics of an Andrew, such that if we want to be like him in bringing our friends to Jesus, we need to copy him.

[2 : 31] First, develop. Second, disciple. Third, draw. First, develop. Andrew seems to come out of nowhere, but like the rest of us, he's got a history.

Before he became a disciple of Jesus, he had been a disciple of John the Baptist. We read in verse 35 that when John the Baptist pointed at Jesus and said, look, the Lamb of God, he had two disciples with him.

One of them was Andrew. So, it had been the evangelistic message of John the Baptist which had first drawn Andrew to Jesus.

That message John preached. Look, the Lamb of God. Or to put it even another way, it had been John the Baptist who had brought Andrew to Jesus in the first place.

Andrew seems like a name out of nowhere, doesn't he? But like the rest of us, he had a history. A history of being brought to Jesus by someone else.

[3 : 42] Now, if you're a Christian here today, ask yourself, who was it who brought me to Jesus? Who was it who brought me to Jesus?

Perhaps it was a parent, or perhaps it was a minister, or perhaps it was a family member, or a friend who did for you what John the Baptist did for Andrew.

Who pointed you to Jesus as the Lamb of God who could take away your sin and make you new. Perhaps you could even remember the things that person said to you which convinced you of your need to follow Jesus.

Or maybe it wasn't so much the things which one person said, but that your conversion to Christ was down to many interactions you had over many years with many different people.

So I can look back in my own history, and although I can name the person through whom I made the decision to follow Jesus as Lord, I can also name another 10 or 20 Christians who were links in the chain that brought me to Jesus.

[4 : 56] And that's probably what it's like for most of us. Not just one person's evangelism, but the many interactions we had over many years with many different Christians, each of whom were links in the chain which finally brought us to Jesus.

So when we say, I am Andrew, we are not suggesting that you take full responsibility for bringing a person to Jesus, that you and no one else is accountable for their faith or non-faith in Jesus.

What we're asking you to do is to commit to being a link in the chain which brings them to Jesus.

You may or may not be the most important link in that chain.

But by saying, I am Andrew, you are committing yourself to being a link of any size in that chain which brings them to Jesus. So you may not be the most intelligent Christian that person will ever meet.

You may be the only Christian that person will ever meet. You may not have a range of apologetic arguments at your fingertips.

[6 : 19] You may not be the next C.S. Lewis. But you can love them and you can pray for them.

And when you get an opportunity, you can speak a word to them about Jesus and what he's done for you.

You can be a link in a chain. However small that link might be. Yes, you can. But then I can hear I can hear my own heart saying, I can't.

And why should I anyway? Why can't I just leave it to the minister or to Luke and Hannah or to Matthias or to the elders or to those who are better about speaking to Jesus, speaking about Jesus than I am?

Well, you know, it's wrong to think that way for any number of reasons, but look at the text of John 1 to see why. Can you imagine where you would be today if that Christian who was instrumental in your conversion had that attitude toward evangelism that it's someone else's job?

Simon would never have become a believer if first John the Baptist had not pointed Simon's brother Andrew to Jesus. It would have been a terribly bad way to repay Andrew.

[7 : 42] Sorry. It would have been a terribly bad way for Andrew to repay John the Baptist if he had refused to serve his brother Simon in the same way.

So, just for a second, see those people in your mind's eye. Those people through whom you became a Christian.

So, this particular man I'm thinking about through whom I became a Christian was Captain Bob Senior. And I'm thinking of his face right now. He was a link to one extent or another in my conversion to Christ.

if just one of those people in that chain had said, but I can't, it's someone else's job, then I wouldn't be a Christian today and I'd still be headed to a lost eternity.

So, enough of that objection. The best way to repay them for bringing us to Jesus is to bring others to Jesus. Jesus himself said, freely you have received, now freely give.

[8 : 57] And that's why we want to say today, I am Andrew. Develop. Second, from verses 39, 30, sorry, 38 through 40.

My mouth is a muddle today. Disciple, disciple. We don't know what Andrew was like as a person. We really don't. Was he an introvert?

Was he an extrovert? We don't know, but what we do know is that whatever kind of person he was, he didn't allow that to get in the way of bringing his brother Simon to Jesus.

And there's good medicine for us all here that whatever kind of people we are, whether we are introverted, really quiet, or whether we're extroverted and really loud, that doesn't stop us from bringing our family and friends to Jesus.

Then you say to me, well, but I've never been trained to be an evangelist. I don't know what to say or how to say it. And that sounds like a perfectly valid objection.

[10 : 05] After all, surely our interest is to equip one another to share the good news of Jesus. And I think that lessons in sharing our faith are absolutely vital for us as Christians.

But what about Andrew? Did anyone put him through a 10-stage evangelism training course and give him a shining certificate at the end? And then say to him, well, now you can evangelize.

Before you couldn't, but now you can. Yes, perhaps that would reverse the church's decline in Scotland if we just gave Christian certificates to show how good they were at thinking about mission.

Let's look more closely at Andrew's preparation for bringing his brother Simon to Jesus. In the first instance, of course, and we'll look more at this in a moment, Andrew was qualified to bring Simon to Jesus by virtue of his being Simon's brother.

He already had a relationship with Simon. But at a more fundamental and basic level, what qualified Andrew to bring Simon to Jesus was that he himself had become a disciple of Jesus.

[11 : 17] So look carefully at the text with me. Having heard what John the Baptist said about Jesus, Andrew and the other disciple we read in verse 37 started following Jesus.

Then, according to verse 38 and 39, they spent the rest of the day with Jesus. Only then did Andrew go looking for his brother Simon to bring him to Jesus.

In other words, Andrew's preparation for evangelism consisted in him knowing and following Jesus for himself. No certificates involved, just plain following and knowing Jesus.

Among the clamor of voices which I hear in this congregation all the time, clamoring for training and evangelism, which is a good thing, let me say. The answer Andrew gives is, I just started following Jesus for myself.

I just spent time with him. The more we know Jesus for ourselves and the closer we follow him, the more we want to bring our family and friends to him.

[12 : 29] Let me say that again because it really is at the centre of what we understand in Glasgow City as the best preparation for evangelism. The more we know Jesus for ourselves, the closer we follow him, the more we want to bring our family and friends to him.

Over the years, a rather unhelpful dichotomy has been drawn between personal devotion to Jesus and personal evangelism for Jesus. The former accused the latter of being shallow.

The latter accused the former of being pietistic. Of course, the problem with this dichotomy is in the first instance it lacks historical evidence. In our own free church tradition, it was often those who walked closest with Jesus who were the most passionate evangelists.

You want proof? Go upstairs. Look at Andrew Boner's pulpit up there. One of the most pious men the free church has ever been privileged to have in its ministry. One of the most passionate evangelists.

But also, this unhelpful dichotomy lacks biblical evidence. The apostle Paul walked closely with Jesus and yet the church never had a more passionate evangelist.

[13 : 41] In other words, the most powerful way you can express your devotion to Jesus is by bringing your family and friends to him. And the most evangelistic activity in which you can engage is to yourself invest in engaging with Jesus and spending time with him as Andrew did here in John 1.

It was only then when Andrew came to realize for himself that Jesus was the Lamb of God who could take all his sin away that he went to find his brother Simon to bring him to Jesus also.

And so not only do we say I am Andrew because of those who led us to faith in Jesus but because we ourselves are declaring are we not our personal devotion to him.

Is there anyone here who is unwilling to say I am Andrew? Surely not for in saying we're denying our intention to be evangelists for Jesus.

We're denying that we're disciples of Jesus also. Disciple. And then thirdly draw. Draw. Now these previous two points are absolutely central in our evangelism.

[15 : 03] Very important indeed and yet they're the stuff of intention and not action. Nevertheless it is vital to know why we are to bring our family and friends to Jesus and yet it is another thing altogether to bring them.

It is one thing to design a program of evangelism which is what we've done time and time again in this congregation. It is another thing to draw our family and friends to Jesus so that they can discover for themselves that he is the Messiah and that in him is forgiveness meaning an eternal life.

So I want to address two issues briefly. First of all who to draw and then how to draw. First of all who to draw. You'll notice from our text that having spent time in the afternoon with Jesus the first thing Andrew did was to go looking for his brother Simon.

Actually the original text is even more pointed than verse 41 says. The first thing Andrew did was to go find his brother Simon his own brother.

Yes that's a really good question is it not? To whom should we become Andrew? And here in John 1 41 we have our answer first to our own.

[16:28] Our own that is entirely consistent with the rest of the first chapter of John when in verse 11 we learn of the incarnation of our Lord he came to that which was his own but his own did not receive him.

Jesus came first to his own in his great commission Jesus commanded his disciples saying go into all the world and make disciples of all nations.

That is all the mandate we need to engage in the worldwide mission directed toward the nations.

But does that mean we are absolved of our responsibility to our own?

Does Jesus ever say don't bother telling your family and friends and workmates about me I have got a bigger mission for you to accomplish? Not at all. The first place in town Paul visited when he was on mission was the local synagogue.

He went first to his own. The great commission of Jesus does not absolve us from the responsibility and the delight to bring our own to Jesus. Do we not love them?

[17:40] Do we not want the best for them? Do we love them enough to tell them about the Jesus in whose blood there is eternal life and without whom there is only eternal hell? Do we really want the best for them?

If we're happy to give them Christmas presents costing hundreds of pounds but aren't willing to tell them about the Christ of Christmas?

So who to draw? Draw your own. Your nearest and your dearest. Be an Andrew to a family member or a friend or a workmate. And yes they are most often the hardest people to talk about your faith with.

They are the ones to whom God has called you. Andrew was uniquely qualified to bring Peter to Jesus because of his brotherly relationship. You are uniquely qualified to bring your family and friends to Jesus because of who you are and your relationship to them.

So when we are asking who should I bring to Jesus? In the first instance there is no need to buy yourself a huge world map and pray over where God would send you.

[18:57] Rather twiddle the wedding ring on your finger. Look at the photographs of your kids contacts on your wall.

Scroll through the contacts on your phone. Look at all your Facebook friends. That's who you should draw. Who to draw.

Second, how to draw. How to draw. Unfortunately, I guess this is the bit we've all been waiting for, the how to. I could have hoped that as long as we had the why to, the how to would be less important.

But as human beings, we do need to know how. Let me briefly suggest to you the five steps we can glean from how Andrew brought his brother Simon to Jesus.

He did it prayerfully, personally, intelligently, confidently, and courageously. Prayerfully, first of all.

[20:04] Now, we don't know to what extent Andrew spoke to Jesus about his brother and about his family. During that afternoon, they spent together. Did Andrew tell Jesus that he had a brother called Simon with whom he fished?

Who he was later going to bring to meet Jesus for himself? We don't know. But we do know that part of saying, I am Andrew, is that we're going to commit to praying for at least one person, one person, that we're going to bring to Jesus.

Before we speak to them about God, we're going to invest in speaking to God about them. You see, we have an evangelistic weapon the world knows nothing about.

The Spirit's power unleashed in prayer. So we're going to be prayerfully intentional. To go back to the earlier point I made earlier, perhaps you don't feel as though you have someone to whom you can be an Andrew.

Perhaps you don't. And that's fine. Well, if that's the case, can I ask whether you'd be willing to pray for those among us who are intentional Andrews?

[21:19] can you pray for our Simons? Can you be a link in the chain just as we are to bring them to Jesus through prayer?

Yes, indeed, before we even think of bringing a loved one to Jesus, we must bring them to him in prayer, asking that he would do in them his powerful work of transformation.

Prayerfully. Second, personally, personally, look very carefully at what Andrew says to his brother Simon in verse 41.

We have found, we have found, there's personal experience of Jesus here. Now, I'm fairly certain that Peter probably, Andrew rather, probably used more words than his invitation to Simon, but these are his basic words.

we have found. So, to a certain extent, therefore, Andrew is telling Simon his story. He's telling Simon something from his own experience.

[22 : 28] Andrew's telling his brother the way it really is with him. Now, we're not likely to believe a stranger if he comes up to us and says, look, this has changed my life.

But we are far more likely to believe a family member or a friend. And we do so in the first instance because we trust them. So, of primary importance in bringing our family and friends to Jesus is that we make it personal.

That we tell them our personal story of how we came to know Jesus and of how believing and trusting in him has changed us. Prayerfully, personally, intelligently, third of all, third.

Intelligently, notice the exact words in verse 41 Andrew spoke to his brother. We have found the Messiah, that is the Christ. Now, Andrew and his brother were Jews and were heavily influenced by the prophecies of the Old Testament.

For their whole lives they'd been waiting for God's Messiah, God's Saviour King who would rescue Israel from the dominion of the Romans and exalt them among the nations.

[23 : 44] And so, by telling his brother Simon, we have found the Messiah, Andrew is appealing to Simon's greatest need, the need of his finding the Messiah.

That may not be the greatest need of your family and friends. We know them best after all. So, what is their greatest need? Perhaps it is to your physical brother that you're going to commit to being an Andrew, your physical brother.

Think of him, think of his face. You've known him your whole life. You know him better than anyone else in the whole world. And you know that he struggles with guilt.

That's his struggle. It's not figuring out who the Messiah is. You can't even spell the word Messiah. You know he struggles with guilt. Is the cross of Jesus not the only place at which guilt can be taken away?

Then tell him, I found forgiveness in Jesus. A clean conscience. You can too. Or maybe you know your brother so well and you know he struggles because he is really afraid of dying.

[25 : 07] Really afraid of dying. Tell him then, Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. He has defeated death in the grave and my fear of death is gone. We're intelligent about every other area of our lives.

What about this one? That of showing our family and friends how Jesus can meet their exact needs. Fourth, confidently, confidently.

I wonder whether one of the reasons we aren't so quick to bring our family and friends to Jesus is that somehow we're afraid they'll be disappointed by Jesus. Somehow we're going to build Jesus up into something he isn't.

We've told them, Jesus will forgive your sin if you put your faith in him. But we're afraid that somehow they won't do it right. Or that Jesus won't do it right.

that somehow he won't forgive them. He won't take their sin away after all. We've told them that Jesus will give them peace of conscience and take away their fear of death.

[26 : 11] But what if he doesn't? The problem here isn't so much one of being cautious. The problem here is one of unbelief and doubt. Consider Andrew.

He brought his brother Simon to Jesus. He did not know what was going to happen next. But what happened next was vital for the history of the Christian church. Jesus turned to Andrew's brother Simon and said you are Simon son of John.

You will be called Cephas or Peter. In other words be confident in Jesus ability to do more than our feeble brains can imagine with our family and friends.

after all he loves them more than we do. Be confident in the sovereign promises of God that what he's done for us he'll do for our family and our friends and do not let doubt keep you from saying I am Andrew.

courageously courageously courageously okay have you ever stood in the breakwaters of the North Sea with every intention of going swimming but it's so blinking cold your toes are going to fall off.

[27 : 44] now you can do one of two things you can be a chicken and get out of the water and go back to the beach and freeze there instead or you can pluck up the courage and plunge yourself in

the water now what's it going to be when it comes to you being an Andrew are you going to step out of the water sit on the beach and watch others go swimming or are you going to have a bit of courage and take a plunge Andrew did and what happened next is history his boldness in inviting his brother led to Peter his brother becoming the most prominent Christian in history can you be bold

I know that the thought of speaking to one of your family members or one of your friends or one of your classmates or one of your colleagues about Jesus is terrifying to you well have you prayed for God to give you courage and grace and then are you willing to take the plunge and say to them look I want to tell you about something really important to me rightly or wrongly we're all afraid of the thought of losing face with our family but do we have the courage to show our love for them in this way even if they laugh at us there's only so much equipping we can do are you willing to be equipped are you willing to pick up a card from the hall outside you see them with the slogan I am Andrew that card there you'll see it

Franklin Graham's coming at the end of May perhaps you can think of inviting one of your family members or friends along to one of his evangelistic events but even if you don't are you willing to write a name on the back of this card here it is none of you can avoid seeing it right here it's at the back on the table if you want to know more about this you can speak to Luke and Hannah who are sitting just off centre to my left are you willing to write down the name of one person on that card a family member a friend someone in your class in university or school work colleague and you're going to start praying for them and who in the fullness of time you're going to pluck up the courage to speak to that person about Jesus and about Jesus cross and what Jesus means to you are you willing to pluck up the courage to say I am

Andrew let us pray now Lord every word that's been spoken you have heard our greatest desire oh Lord is to see our physical brothers and sisters our physical children our physical friends classmates husbands wives parents parents all those we love so dearly brought to faith in Jesus Christ and Lord such a thing terrifies us and it's not certain why such a thing terrifies us perhaps it's our own sinfulness which keeps us from telling others about Jesus Father we don't know who or what that person will become when we tell them about Jesus Lord as we come to you we ask for the strength and grace to put these things into practice recognizing that you are sovereign God will work powerfully through even the most foolish thing we say to bring glory to yourself in Jesus name Amen