

Witnessing

Andrew, next to our Lord Himself, is the Bible's master soul-winner. His name appears only three times in Scripture, but always, he is bringing someone to Jesus. First, there is Simon Peter, the big fisherman; then, the little boy with the loaves and fishes; and finally, the Greeks who would *"see Jesus."* Andrew's technique is a model for us all. Our text outlines three phases in being God's instrument in changing normal men into God's men and sinners into saints.

The first step in bringing people to Christ is finding your brother.

That is not sharing Jesus, and it is certainly not soul-winning. Surprise, its visitation!! Finding your brother should generally be done in two ways:

- 1) **way-of-life evangelism**, in which we are constantly aware of the special possibilities all around us
- 2) **organized, planned, disciplined visitation**, as with a weekly church visitation program.

Are you sensitive to those around you? I have found that the easiest way to get into a discussion about the things of God **is to listen**. In almost any conversation, people can say something that you can pick up on and turn toward spiritual talk. I've been with Joel Bailey on several occasions on a golf course where he has done just that. Sometimes the other person will ask a leading question or bring up a topic with a spiritual implication. When we hear this in conversation we need to **stop talking and listen**, listen, listen. When we do you will find that there are doors opening big enough to drive trucks through.

- They may say, "Things are sure bad in Washington." You say, "Yes, but I know who can make it better."
- They say, "My father has cancer." You say, "I'll pray for him."

God did not call us to live in monasteries. We are the world's light and salt. The salt is not intended to remain in the shaker. Touch people, plan to visit, and prepare to listen. Be on constant alert for the opportunity to introduce Jesus into every casual conversation. People are everywhere! Look for them, listen to them, and talk to them about what's important. Andrew first found his brother. Contact with the prospect, whether planned or seemingly coincidental, may be God's date with destiny for some lost soul.

The second step in bringing people to Christ is the witness.

Listen to John's account: ***“He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ).”*** (John 1:41, NKJV).

At this point Simon was just a lost Jew who knew nothing of Jesus. Andrew found Simon for the purpose of saving him. This shows us that finding your brother is visitation. Telling your brother whom you have found is witnessing to him. Jesus did not say you should be His arguers, His debaters, His apologists, His defenders. He said, ***“You shall be my witnesses”*** (Acts 1:8, RSV). Witnesses simply tell what they know and have seen by personal experience.

The Bible presents world evangelism as a courtroom scene. Jesus is on trial in every person's life. He is the true Light who lights every person who comes into the world. Each person is aware of spiritual reality. The problem is people don't know what the light is. God can illuminate each heart, but that heart must be exposed to the Light. So, He uses witnesses to tell people that the Light of the world is Jesus. That's what witnesses do. They tell what they know by firsthand experience.

World evangelism is like a courtroom trial. Satan is the prosecuting attorney condemning Jesus, accusing Jesus, whispering to the heart of each person, “No. You don't want Jesus. Reject Him today, forever.” The Holy Spirit is the defense attorney commending Jesus, loving Him, urging people to accept Him as the Christ and obey Him in baptism.

The Holy Spirit is the master attorney, trying billions of cases all at once. He knows where every case is at each moment. The time comes when He uses a witness for the defense. He needs our strong and clear-cut testimony **for** Christ and when that opportunity arises we need to be ready to be a good witness for Jesus. As Peter said in 1 Peter 3:15, ***“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear”*** This defense may be needed on a moment’s notice. This defense might not be easy to give especially if the one to whom we are being a witness is a loved one or one that we want to respect us. Truth is that when the opportunity comes to defend Jesus needs it now.

So, as we pray for opportunity I believe God prompts the heart of a non-Christian to say something in casual conversation to which you can respond. Go ahead do it. Speak - drop in the truth. Give your testimony as a witness. Tell the truth. Go ahead, do it, and do it now. If you do so faithfully, your **testimony may be the turning point that wins the case** for the Holy Spirit and brings in a verdict for Jesus—*redeemed!!*

Conversely, our silence may lose the case. Our reluctance may destroy that opportunity and it may NEVER come again!! But if we open our mouth; share the good news holding nothing back, a soul might be saved. We may not be around to see the verdict come in, but we will have done our part. Listen **you and I are not responsible for the results; we are only responsible to be a good witness.**

The third step in bringing people to Christ is the closure.

First, Andrew visited—he found his brother.

Second, he witnessed—he told his brother whom he had found.

Third, he practiced soul-winning: ***“And he brought him to Jesus...”*** (John 1:42, NKJV).

What is the natural consequence of telling your brother whom you have found? It is that you tell your brother how he can find Him. The gospel is shared, the plan of salvation given, the closure offered, and the person repents of his or her sins and is baptized for the remission of their sins. Notice the order. It is crucial:

1. Visitation
2. Witnessing
3. Soul-winning

Most of us go directly from visitation to soul-winning, but with only limited success. The reason for this is that we are giving cold hard facts. Now there is nothing wrong with that at all for some folks.

But for the clear majority they will respond more strongly when they can relate that **YOU** have been down this road yourself and have become a Christian. This tells them that you have “skin in the game” so to speak. You are not telling them what **THEY MUST DO**, you are sharing with them the truth that **YOU HAVE OBEYED!!**

I know that I have seen far more results when I let the person know that I struggled with this for a time before I could bring myself to believe the whole thing. I let them know that when I first heard the gospel I was not ready to receive it yet. I spent time studying and asking questions before I could just say OK to being baptized. But when that decision was made it was made from my soul. It was not haphazard or reluctantly.

People may argue theology, refute your topic, debate Scripture, or ridicule your beliefs. But virtually no one—I repeat **no one**—will argue about your **personal experience**. It softens the soul; it moves the heart and disarms the obstinate. Share your faith and leave the results to God.

I tried to sell insurance for a time. As I went into the home of a person that wanted insurance it came to the point where I needed to close the sale. Every time I pulled out my policy and showed that person that I had bought one because I believed in the product.

This is what Andrew did with Simon. He did not just begin showing Simon a lot of OT prophecies about the coming of the Messiah – He shared with his brother the belief that he had found Jesus.

This order, when followed believing in the power of the Spirit, should not only take the pressure off you as you witness, but it also should greatly increase the results.

Remember, you are not on trial. You do not fail or win depending on the verdict. You only fail if you do nothing.

A successful experience is presenting the gospel as the power of God to salvation and leaving the results to God. And let me add, a successful experience is the sharing of your own faith, as well.