

## John 1:35-42

### *Bring One*

**Main idea:** Not everyone will speak before thousands of people at a time, inviting them all to receive Jesus. But everyone can bring one.

Turn to John 1.

These last few weeks, we've been emphasizing sharing Jesus with others. But I'm sure as we've been talking about this, many of you have been thinking to yourselves, "I know I'm supposed to share my faith, but I just don't feel equipped to do that. I don't know enough Scripture, or I don't have an outgoing personality, or I'm afraid it's just going to lead to an argument."

If that's how you feel, you're actually in good company. None of the disciples that Jesus selected were perfect. They weren't professional speakers or debaters. For example, Jesus referred to James and John as the sons of thunder.<sup>1</sup> He called them that because it didn't take much to tick them off. If somebody didn't want to hear the gospel, James or John would say, "Let's call down fire from heaven! That'll take care of them!"<sup>2</sup> Not exactly a model of the kind of compassion we should have for the lost.

And then we have Simon Peter, who was hasty, proud, and usually spoke before he thought.<sup>3</sup> Most of the time, Peter responded without Christ's permission.<sup>4</sup> If I was putting together an all-star team of patient, reasonable evangelists, I certainly wouldn't include Peter! But then again, the person we're going to be looking at today just seemed rather insignificant compared to Peter, and yet Peter wouldn't have ever even met Jesus if not for this person.

John 1:35-42.

The next day again John [that's John the Baptist] was standing with two of his disciples, and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. 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?" 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. One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ). 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). (John 1:35-42)

It's interesting that this is the only person that we see Andrew bring to Jesus. We're not told in Scripture that Andrew reached anyone else: only Peter. Christian tradition states that Andrew went on to become a missionary in Greece and Russia, but the Bible doesn't mention that. It only mentions that he reached one person, but that the one he reached, reached thousands.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 3:17

<sup>2</sup> Luke 9:54

<sup>3</sup> Mark 9:5-6

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 16:22-23

<sup>5</sup> Acts 2:14-41

You know, most of us know or at least have heard of the ones who have reached thousands, but don't know the one who reached just one. We've heard of Billy Graham, but not of Albert McMakin, the one who invited Billy Graham to church when he was a rowdy 16 year old boy. Albert McMakin was rather insignificant. He never founded a church. He never instigated a movement. But he brought one kid that then brought millions to the Lord.

You see, what we've done is we've lost the capacity to really understand how important even those who feel they're insignificant really are. The Bible teaches that when Andrew got converted, the first thing he did was he went and found his brother," and listen to exactly what it says in verse 42: "He brought him to Jesus." He didn't do like some parents do, just send their kids to church. He didn't just tell him where to go. He brought him to Jesus.

This is so fundamental, and yet we forget about it so often. I think all of us have someone we know that, when we hear some news, we think, "I've got to take this to them." It could be good news or bad news, but you've just got to make sure they know. For Andrew, it was his brother Simon. Many of you had someone who told you, whether it was your mom, or your dad, or your friend. For you, it may be your spouse, or your kids, your one, and you feel this growing burden in you to bring them to Jesus. You may think, "I'm no Billy Graham. I'm insignificant." Look at the person next to you. You're probably thinking, "There's no way this fool is the next Billy Graham!"

But here's the thing. When you bring someone to Christ, you never bring anyone insignificant to Jesus. Did you know you're created in the image of God?<sup>6</sup> The person sitting next to you was created in the image of God. Your neighbor, your coworker, the person sitting next to you, your one, is loved by God,<sup>7</sup> and Christ paid the ultimate price on the cross to redeem you and them.<sup>8</sup> You think that's insignificant?

You don't need to be a great speaker or an outgoing person to reach one. Andrew didn't need a platform. He just went to his brother, and said, "Come."

You might say to me, "Pastor Chris, everyone I know is saved and goes to church." Do ever go out to eat? Do you know if your waiter goes to church? Invite them! Does someone pick up your trash? Do you know if they go to church? One day, catch them at 5 am or whatever time they pick up your trash, and give them a plate of cookies, and invite them! I guarantee you that will live an impression on them.

And I don't mean to imply that going to church is what really counts, but it is an indicator or at least often a precursor that they believe in the One that really does count. Jesus is what matters. Jesus is the One who died on the cross so that we would be forgiven of our sins,<sup>9</sup> so that where He is, there we would be also.<sup>10</sup> So we don't want to just bring people to church, we want to bring them to Jesus.

Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist. He had probably already been baptized. That's kind of what John the Baptist did. He dunked them under water. But John also knew his place. He told his disciples, "I baptize you with water, but He that comes after me will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."<sup>11</sup> He was pointing his disciples to Jesus.

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<sup>6</sup> Genesis 1:26-27

<sup>7</sup> John 3:16

<sup>8</sup> Ephesians 1:7

<sup>9</sup> 1 Peter 2:24

<sup>10</sup> John 14:3

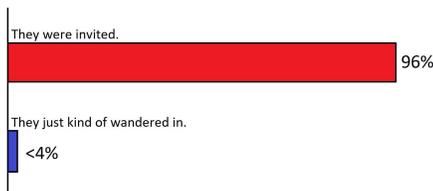
<sup>11</sup> Matthew 3:11

And so, one day, Andrew's standing with his mentor, John the Baptist, and John says in verse 29, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world." And so Andrew quit following John the Baptist and started following Jesus. And I think Andrew immediately learned from John the Baptist that since Jesus is who truly matters, we need to bring others to Him. We need to invite people to come to know Jesus.

This is why that's so important. As I mentioned a couple weeks ago, 96% of the people that will ever sit in the empty seats in this room will come because somebody invited them. Not many people will just wander in because they woke up and said, "I just feel like going to church today." Some do, but it's less than 4%.

### [Picture of Why People Start Attending Church]

#### WHY PEOPLE START ATTENDING CHURCH



See, check out this very official looking graphic I made.

You see, most people will come by the invitation of a friend, a neighbor, a work associate, a relative, and they will be changed forever because they heard the gospel and believed. So when you simply invite someone, you're not just an inviter, you're an introducer.

What your friend needs isn't merely to come to a building to sing some songs and hear some fool preach. They need to know Jesus. And by bringing them to church, you're giving them an opportunity to come to know Jesus.

Andrew is really an unsung hero in the Bible because he lived the majority of his life in obscurity. You can go and find tons of books to read about Peter, and Paul, and John. You can read the book of martyrs, and you'll read some wonderful stories, but they'll say little to nothing about Andrew. You might say he was insignificant, but the Bible actually highlights him as the one, the first one, to bring one to Jesus.

You see, I think Andrew saw the value of individual people. Andrew appreciated the value of a single soul. We have no record of him ever preaching before an assembly or to a crowd. We only have this record that he brought this one to Jesus.

So, you know what our challenge is for next week, right? Who's your one? Who's the one person that you think, "I've just got to tell them! I've just got to bring them!" Easter is one of the days that people are most willing to go to church. Take advantage of that, and invite your one.

Now, I'm not limiting you to just one. I have a list of over 20 people that I know I'm inviting this week. Some of them are some of your family members that I haven't seen in awhile and I just want to let them know they're welcome, and if they hear it from me and from you, maybe they'll show up. So I'm not limiting you to just one person. But the bottom line is that the majority of you that are hearing my voice have never invited anybody to hear about Jesus in a long time, and I'm just encouraging you to invite one.

I think Andrew brought his brother because of two reasons. He loved Jesus, and he loved his brother. And because of that, God used him. He brought Peter to Jesus.

Listen, most people do not come to Jesus Christ as an immediate response to a sermon they hear in a crowded setting. They come to Christ because of the influence of an individual on their life. Because of their mom, or their friend, who kept on loving them, and inviting them, and showing Christ to them.

Andrew brought one. On the day of Pentecost alone, Peter preached and brought thousands. So in a way, all the fruit of Peter's ministry was ultimately also the fruit of Andrew's bringing him to Jesus.

And if I had to pick one of these two men that I identified more with, I'd pick Andrew. I'm more of a quiet, get to know one person at a time kind of guy. What are you trying to say, Pastor? I'm trying to tell you that you're not looking at some bold witness. You're looking at a man that has the same struggles as you when God says go over there and tell him.

Listen, I'm not the most eloquent preacher. Some of you are like, "Yeah, you don't need to tell us! We've heard you preach for 10 years!" I've got some education in the Bible, but I was the student in seminary that had to keep on taking the same subjects over and over again before I finally got it. And some of you are like, "I like how you keep it simple, Pastor. You don't use all those big theological words like some preachers do." Listen, I don't use all those words because I don't know all those words!

Some of you may have heard of D.L. Moody. Do you know what they called Moody when he preached? A lot of people at the time called him Crazy Moody. He wasn't the best speaker. He'd kind of jump around and not really sound like he knew how to talk. Matter of fact, one woman came to him one day after a service and said, "As much as you slaughter the King's English, you ought to never go in the pulpit again." It discouraged him. He didn't know what to do. So he said to her:

"Ma'am, pray for me. I want to do better, and I'm working to try to get better at the English language, but what I'm trying to do is give the gospel all I can, with all I know, so that all who can hear maybe will come." - D.L. Moody

Then he turned to her and said:

"Ma'am, what are you doing with what you have?" - D.L. Moody

Some of you may be far more intelligent than I am. You may be far more literate than D.L. Moody, but the question is: what are you doing with what you have?

Some of you know the name Charles Spurgeon, one of the most powerful Baptist preachers from the 19th century. Do you know how Charles Spurgeon came to faith in Jesus Christ? There was a snow blizzard that morning, but something in Charles made him intent on going to church. He was walking up a hill to go to one particular church, but the snow was coming down so hard that he couldn't make it there because of the distance. So he turned and wandered into a small Methodist church. He went into the church service and the regular preacher couldn't get there because of the snow. So instead, a regular old church member stood up, opened his Bible, and read Isaiah 45:22, which says:

Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other. (Isaiah 45:22)

Then he said just a few things, and said, “So look unto Jesus and behold, you will be saved, all you nations.” And he pointed at Spurgeon and said, “You, young man. Be saved.” And he was saved, right then and there, when he trusted in Jesus for the first time. The lay preacher didn’t go into the details about how the wrath of God was absorbed by Jesus Christ. He didn’t mention the penal substitutionary theory of atonement. All he did was stand and point to the only One who can save us. You see, it’s the gospel that’s the power of God,<sup>12</sup> and the Holy Spirit took that simple gospel witness, and drove it home into that man’s heart, and God radically changed him.

Tell people what you know. Tell them what He did for you. Don’t wait until you think you have everything perfectly figured out. I’ve been a Christian for 25 years and a pastor for almost 10, and I don’t think I have everything perfectly figured out. God just calls us to be faithful with what we’ve got, and then He’ll give us more when we’re ready for it.<sup>13</sup>

Listen, the world will not hear the gospel unless God’s people get faithful and take the gospel to the ends of the earth.<sup>14</sup> He didn’t choose to use a loud speaker or the angels. He raised us up, filled us with the Holy Spirit, gave us the Word of God, gave us our marching orders and sent us out.<sup>15</sup>

You’ve got 7 days. Who you gonna bring? Let me ask you this. If you knew the next person you brought to church would be the next Billy Graham, how fast would you call them up and invite them here? You’d be so excited, you’d probably text them to invite them before I even finished preaching! But here’s the thing: even if they don’t become the next Billy Graham, does that make their value any less significant? To someone who’s on the road to experience the wrath of God in hell, your invitation could make all the difference!

Johnny Hunt told a story about how he became a pastor after he had only been a Christian for three years. One day, he was going to preach on the topic of hypocrisy in the church, but he didn’t know how to pronounce the word, so he preached on ‘hypocritsy.’ He said, “I’ll tell you this church is full of ‘hypocritsy.’ You ‘hypocritsies,’ you need to just get right with God!”

A lady came down to him afterwards and said, “Pastor,” and she was really sweet, she said, “It’s not ‘hypocritsy,’ it’s hypocrisy.” And Johnny said, “Well, I don’t care if it is, some of them ‘hypocritsies’ got right with God this morning.” You see, you may not always say it right, but God always gets it right. It’s not that God’s depending on you, you’re depending on God.

Andrew didn’t wait until he had studied under Jesus for three years. He didn’t wait until He could clearly articulate the Order of Salvation. “Let’s see, are we foreknown because we’re predestined, or predestined because we’re foreknown?” Andrew didn’t wait until he had all that figured out. He just saw Jesus, and saw his brother, and said, “I’ve got to bring my brother to Jesus.” Andrew was perhaps the most insignificant disciple, and yet he brought Peter to Jesus.

Andrew did one other thing that we often don’t give him credit for. He saw the value of insignificant gifts. Very briefly, John 6:8-9.

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<sup>12</sup> Romans 1:16

<sup>13</sup> Luke 16:10

<sup>14</sup> Romans 10:14

<sup>15</sup> Acts 1:8

One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" (John 6:8-9)

Andrew thought, "God, there's 5,000 men, not counting the babies and their wives, and Philip says we need to send them away!" Andrew thought if God said feed 'em, evidently God wanted to feed 'em. Isn't that something? Aren't you glad for people like Andrew? He's thinking God didn't say that unless He's up to something.

So what does he do? He goes and finds a little boy—now picture this, with 5 bread rolls and a couple sardines. Now, I don't think Andrew had any idea what Jesus was about to do, and yet he brought that boy to Jesus. He saw the value of an insignificant gift. But even, he posed a question: what is so little among so many?

That's the reason some of you don't give. You're going through a tough time, and you can't afford to give much, so you decide not to give at all until you get out of this mess. It seems insignificant, and you think, what is that among such a great need? But here's the thing: our little is much when God is in it. Insignificant gifts are used to do significant things, and God gets the glory.<sup>16</sup> Listen, I don't know what anyone at church gives, we have volunteers who do all the accounting and financial stuff, and I don't say these things because I'm trying to get you to give more, and I'm not promising you financial blessing if you give. But I'm just saying that Andrew said to Jesus, "I know it's not much, but here's what we've got." And we need to have that kind of faith, not even knowing what God's going to do.

And that applies to inviting people, too. We don't know what God's going to do when you bring your one. They could get saved that day, or a seed could be planted in them that will begin to grow, so that years later they would trust in Jesus. That's not up to us. God brings the growth.<sup>17</sup> But either way, nothing's going to happen unless you trust God with your insignificant gifts. Unless you trust God and say, "All I know to do is invite this one person, and I'm trusting God for the outcome."

I heard about a new preacher, and he had a man in the church that always gave him a hard time about his sermons. So this young preacher was preaching, and he got fired up, and he said, "I wanna tell you something," he said, "Jesus took 5,000 loaves of bread, 2,000 fish and fed five people."

Then the man in the back of the church said—listen to what this cranky old fellow said: "Pfft, I could do that." So the young preacher, he got so upset about it, he couldn't finish his sermon. He just had to throw his hands up and dismiss the service. He thought, "I'll go back next week, and I'll preach it right." So he went back the next week, and he said, "Jesus, took five loaves and two fish and fed 5,000 people." Then nobody said a word. He said, "How 'bout that?" And the old man said, "Pfft, I could do that." And he said, "How?" And he said, "With what you had left over from last week."

Now, what is the significance of Jesus feeding 5,000 with a boy's lunch? The thing is, no gift is insignificant in the end with Jesus. So little could be used to accomplish so much, it was a testimony to the power of God. No gift is really insignificant in His hand. Some of you think, I could never go witness to my neighbor.

But here's the thing. God can take your little weakness, and it's only when you acknowledge your weakness that the power of Christ can become your strength, and He can take your insignificant abilities and accomplish

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<sup>16</sup> 2 Corinthians 12:9

<sup>17</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:7

extraordinary things. And make no mistake, someone actually coming to church and giving their life to Jesus is an extraordinary thing.

We've been talking for weeks now about bringing your one. But I was reminded this week through a sermon preached by Francis Chan what the challenge of evangelism actually is. The Bible describes those who don't know Jesus as dead. We were dead in our sins.<sup>18</sup> Now, if you've been around awhile, you're probably used to that kind of terminology, so we need to be reminded of what that means.

So imagine I told you to bring one, but the one I want you to bring doesn't live in a house, but in a grave south of town. What if I told you to go out this week and bring one out of the cemetery. What would you do? You could go grab a shovel, but that's really not going to do much, because even if you bring their body, the person is still dead. So what would you do? Because here's the thing. Even as we talk about bringing someone to Jesus, we need to recognize that we can't really do it. Only God can raise the dead. John 5:21 says:

For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. (John 5:21)

And that's why it's so crucial for you to pray for your one. Because when you engage in the task of evangelism, you're actually beseeching God to raise the dead. We were dead in our sins. We didn't save ourselves. God saves us by grace, and He even gives us faith as a gift so that we might follow Him to do the things that He's prepared for us to do.<sup>19</sup> We can't boast about anything we do for Him. When you go and invite someone this week, don't get all proud about it and say, "Look what I did!" No, glorify God that He's a God who works through us for His glory, saving sinners, rising the dead, inviting, as Trevor read in 2 Chronicles 6:33, all the peoples of the earth to know the Lord.

So I invite you this morning. It starts with one. Give your life to Jesus.

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<sup>18</sup> Ephesians 2:1

<sup>19</sup> Ephesians 2:8-10