

The Old Paths

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“Andrew, God’s Worker”

Jarrold Jacobs

Can we remember God’s servant named Andrew? Though there is little in the Bible recorded about his work in the Lord, what is recorded gives testimony to his humility, his faith in God, and his interest in the souls of others. The record of Andrew’s work takes its place with the record of other servants of the Lord such as: Oded (II Chron. 28), several of the Judges, Phebe (Rom. 16:1-2), and many others whose lives (as a whole) are unknown to us.

There are many unknown (to us) or unnamed workers in the vineyard of the Lord. For this, we should be thankful, for oftentimes, it is those who work “behind the scenes,” those who get little or no fanfare in their duties, who often do the most for the Lord! Let us remember and remember well that just because man does not recognize our spiritual work and sacrifice, does not mean that God does not see (Prov. 15:3)! Too, man’s lack of recognition does not negate or belittle anything we do in service to the Lord.

Sadly, I think what keeps a lot of folks from serving God to the fullest is because they think their work in the Lord is not as “great,” or “recognized” as someone else’s. They think that they cannot accomplish anything for God if they are not doing what “brother so-and-so” is doing. Too many have made supermen out of people they know. This can be harmful, especially when one feels he can not live up

to “their” legacy. Thanks be to God that there are folks like Andrew who did not have such an attitude. Paul said that we must realize that our work in the Lord is not in vain, or worthless (I Cor. 15:58).

In this issue of “*The Old Paths*,” we will study a man named Andrew. He serves as a rich example that so-called “lesser known” Christians are as important to the cause of God as “famous” ones.

Andrew, An Average Man?

According to the standards set by so many today, he would be considered such. Andrew did not have any spectacular feats or miracles recorded in the Bible. Yet, he was an Apostle, and vital to the cause of Christ. Although the stories of every one he converted are not recorded, we read of one conversion in particular that made a great impact on the church. Let us read John 1:35-42.

“Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have

found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.”

Notice what Andrew did. He “first” found his brother and brought him to Christ. Andrew set the example for us to follow. Think for a moment about Simon Peter and all the things he did for the cause of Christ. Without the contribution of Andrew, how many souls taught by Peter would have been lost (Acts 2:36-41; 10:11; etc.)? Is Andrew average? No, sir!

Andrew, A Driven Man

After finding Jesus, Andrew did not stop. Andrew put his conviction into practice. *“He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone”* (Jn. 1:41-42). Andrew’s sincere love of God motivated him to tell others about Christ.

Let us learn and learn well that there is no greater work a man can do for God than to convert a soul. (Prov. 11:30; Jas. 5:20). Regardless of whether or not the “prominent” people ever recognize us, God knows what we have done, and will reward us openly (Ecc. 12:13-14; Matt. 6:4, 6, 18).

Friends, let us imitate Andrew’s drive to teach others the truth. He did not wait! He did not spend years in college preparation before he was “qualified” to bring others to Christ. Andrew had wonderful news to proclaim, and he went out and did it!!

Andrew, The Teacher

Andrew was an example of what a true soul winner is. In bringing his own brother

to Jesus, Andrew showed sincerity, a willingness to search for the Truth, a drive to proclaim Christ to others, and a true love of Christ and His word.

Friend, in order to convert people, one must first be converted, himself! Notice that Andrew first heard and followed Jesus himself (Jn. 1: 37). How great it would be if we all listened to Christ as Andrew did (Matt. 17:5; Rom. 10:17)! Likewise, we must follow Jesus instead of following the world (Lk. 11:28; I Jn. 2:15-17).

The best teacher is the one that not only knows the facts, but leads by example! Consider the lives of Ezra (Ezra 7:10), Jesus (Acts 1:1), and Paul (I Cor. 11:1). They led not only in teaching, but in example as well. We must not only hear, but sincerely follow Jesus. The hypocrite will not convert anyone to Christ (Matt. 23:3).

Let us decide to be like Andrew and the other apostles in teaching and converting lost souls to Christ!

Andrew, A Sincere Man

His sincerity led him to develop a willingness to search for the Truth. Sadly, too many do not want to hear the Truth preached. Much of this attitude can be attributed to their lack of sincerity. They do not want to sincerely study and learn what the Truth is for fear that they are wrong, and will have to change their ways!

Jesus promised to fill those who hunger and thirst after righteousness (sincerely search for the Truth, Matt. 5:6). In John 1:38, we see in no uncertain terms that Andrew was seeking the Lord. Andrew sincerely and honestly sought his Creator (Matt. 6:33).

Sometimes, we wonder why people today do not have that thirst for Biblical Truth like others did. Let me suggest that several things contribute to this lack of knowledge. First, some have such

a thirst for social acceptance, that they cannot be "bothered" with spiritual truths for fear it will cause others to look down on them. Secondly, others will not thirst after righteousness because they do not want to lack the financial security they now enjoy. Third, some just have so many selfish pleasures, that they do not make time for God, or spiritual matters.

Let us learn and learn well that if we wish for Christ to mean anything in the lives of others, He must first mean something to us! This is what Andrew did, and the effects of his work are still being felt!! (If you don't believe this, read the first half of Acts and I and II Peter, and remember these records wouldn't have come into being were it not for Andrew!!)

Conclusion

As we think about being Christians in 2004, do we not also have that wonderful news to proclaim? Do we not also have opportunities for teaching and spreading the gospel every day? God does not expect us all to be "well known" by men. He does, however expect us all to be soul winners (II Tim. 2:2).

One thing is guaranteed; the Lord's body will be greatly blessed if more Christians develop Andrew's qualities of a sincere heart, a willingness to search and learn the Truth, and a drive to proclaim the gospel to every creature! May God help us to develop these qualities.

Persuading Men

Jarrold Jacobs

"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (II Cor. 5:11). Paul recognized that in order to bring men to Christ, it required "persuading" them. To persuade is to "to convince (by argument, true or false); to assent (to evidence or authority), assure, obey, trust" (Strong's). Therefore, he set out to convince men of Jesus Christ being the Son of God (Acts 17:3), he proclaimed the gospel (Rom. 1:16), and made clear the consequences of both accepting and rejecting God's word (II Thess. 1:6-9). These things he taught consistently, everywhere he went (I Cor. 4:17).

It is high time that people today were persuaded to hear and obey the gospel of Christ (Matt. 7:24). If men are not persuaded, then they have no hope of Heaven. Men need to hear "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27), and woe is me if I do not do this (I Cor. 9:16). Keeping this in mind; don't be the one who is "almost persuaded" (Acts 26:28), but be one who is altogether persuaded to do the will of God (Acts 17:11-12)!

Have you been persuaded to turn from your sinful ways and turn to God? What is keeping you from being a Christian (Heb. 2:3)? Don't delay doing what is right (II Cor. 6:2; Heb. 3:7-8)!!

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