

ANDREW: JUST AN ORDINARY MAN

John 1:35-44

(John 1:35-44), "Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; {36} And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! {37} And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. {38} 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? {39} 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. {40} One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. {41} He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. {42} 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. {43} The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. {44} Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter."



S **A LITTLE BOY** was sorely disappointed at **THE SIZE** of the egg his bantam chicken had laid. A bantam chicken is smaller than a common chicken, and as a result their eggs are small. They taste just as good as a regular chicken egg, but they are smaller.

So he took a trip down town and came back with something wrapped in a box. He got down in front of the confused bird and unwrapped his purchase. It was **A HUGE OSTRICH EGG**. Holding it up so the chicken could see, he said, "**Take a good look at this and try harder.**"

S **A CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER** asked her students to bring **AN OBJECT** to illustrate a Bible verse of their choice. One little girl brought a **CANDLE**. Her teacher asked, "**Susie**, what Bible verse does your candle represent? She said, "Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world'" Another little tyke brought **BREAD**. **Johnny**, what does your bread represent? He said, "Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life.'" Another little girl brought the most interesting object of all. She brought a **BANTAM CHICKEN EGG**. The teacher was very interested to know what Bible verse that little egg represented.

LITTLE SARAH SAID,

"Mark 14:8, 'She hath done what she could.'"

IN MARK 14 **A WOMAN** came to **JESUS** while He was in the city of **BETHANY**, in the **HOUSE OF** Simon the leper. While reclining with others, that woman poured expensive **perfume** on Jesus' head. That is all she did. She spoke no **words** that were recorded. Her **name** is not given. Some folks in that room became **indignant** with her because they considered what she had done as a waste of good money. Jesus told them to leave her alone because she **HAD DONE A BEAUTIFUL THING** (what they considered a **waste**, God considered **beautiful**).

JESUS SAID OF HER:

(Mark 14:8-9), "**SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD:**

she is come aforehand to **ANOINT MY BODY FOR BURIAL.**

{9} Verily I say unto you, **WHERESOEVER** this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done

shall be spoken of for **A MEMORIAL** of her."

WITH THAT STATEMENT JESUS PRESENTED A GREAT PRINCIPLE BY WHICH TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

- **"WHAT I CAN DO TO GLORIFY GOD, I SHOULD DO."**
- **(Mat 5:16)**, **"LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE** before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

ANDREW is a good example of someone who did what he could to glorify God. He was from the town of **BETHSAIDA** near the Sea of Galilee. Andrew was a **FISHERMAN** by trade. HE HAD A BROTHER NAMED **PETER**. Jesus called him to be **ONE OF THE 12 DISCIPLES**. His name is mentioned **13X'S** in the BIBLE (12X's in the Gospels and 1X in Acts). **FROM THE 13X'S** he is mentioned in Scripture, WE CAN COME TO **TWO FIRM CONCLUSIONS** — one **negative**, and the other **positive**.

#1. ANDREW WAS NOT THE MOST TALENTED AMONG THE DISCIPLES:

- 1) Andrew is often called **PETER'S BROTHER** (John 1:40; 6:8; Matt 4:18; 10:2). It is interesting that Peter is never called Andrew's brother. Andrew's personality did **not seem to shine as bright** as his brother's did.
- 2) Peter was in the **INNER CIRCLE** of the 12 disciples, while Andrew was not. For example, **Peter, James and John** were at the **TRANSFIGURATION** and at **GETHSEMANE**, but Andrew was not. IT SEEMS the **charisma** and **leadership skills** rested most heavily upon Peter. **NOTHING IS WRONG WITH THAT**. The PARABLE OF THE TALENTS clearly reveals that talents **VARY** from Christian to Christian. THAT VARIATION IS **BY DESIGN**. God gave to some people **five** talents. To others He gave **two**. Some only have **one** (Matt 25:14ff).

ANDREW DID NOT HAVE AS MANY TALENTS as did some of the other disciples. YET **WHAT IS NEAT** is, he used the talent he did have to glorify God. He invested what he had in the Kingdom of God.

#2. ANDREW WAS A WONDERFUL SOUL-WINNER

- S EVERY TIME YOU TURN AROUND** Andrew was bringing someone to Jesus. Andrew has gone down in the Scripture as a man with a heart for bringing folks to Jesus. **FOR EXAMPLE:**
- 1) **ANDREW BROUGHT A LITTLE BOY TO JESUS IN JOHN 6** (John 6:5-9). It was that little boy's two fish and five loaves that Jesus used to feed the five thousand.
 - 2) **ANDREW BROUGHT SOME GREEKS** to Jesus in **JOHN 12** (John 12:21-22). Those foreigners first went to Philip and said, **"Sir, we would see Jesus."** Philip took them to Andrew, and Andrew and Philip brought them to Jesus.

3) ANDREW BROUGHT HIS BROTHER **PETER** TO JESUS. THE ACCOUNT IS **WORTH READING**:

- **(John 1:41-42 NIV)**, “**THE FIRST THING** Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). {42} **AND HE BROUGHT HIM TO JESUS . . .**”

S **ANDREW WAS A SOUL-WINNER.** Do you know what the Scripture says about soul-winners? “. . . He that winneth souls **IS WISE**” (Prov 11:30). **THAT MEANS** that Andrew was a “**WISE**” MAN.

S **THE MESSAGE FOR US IS, IF GOD COULD USE ANDREW** to bring folks to Christ, **THEN GOD CAN USE YOU AND ME.** It does not matter who we are. We may not be as gifted as someone else, but God can use us any way. God wants to use **ORDINARY PEOPLE IN EXTRAORDINARY WAYS.** When God does it **THAT WAY, HE GETS THE GLORY!**

S **CONSIDER THREE THINGS** REGARDING ANDREW’S LIFE:
I. **ANDREW — A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE**
II. **ANDREW — A FAITHFUL WITNESS**
III. **ANDREW — A REWARDED SERVANT**

I. A LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE

(**TWO SEPARATE ENCOUNTERS WITH JESUS PROVE THE POINT**)

FIRST ENCOUNTER — JOHN 1:35-44 (OUR TEXT)

ANDREW WAS WITH JOHN THE BAPTIST because he was a disciple of John’s. Our text is so detailed that we are told it was about **THE TENTH HOUR** (v. 39). **If John used Roman time**, as some suppose he did, it would have been 10:00 a.m. **If he used Jewish time**, it would have been 4:00 in the afternoon.

ON THAT PARTICULAR DAY, JESUS SHOWED UP. When John the Baptist saw Him, he said, “. . . **BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD!**” (v. 36). **TO A FOREIGNER** that statement might not have meant much, **BUT TO A BELIEVING JEW** like Andrew, John’s statement meant Jesus was the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

AS A RESULT OF JOHN’S STATEMENT, ANDREW FOLLOWED JESUS. While following, **JESUS** stopped and **ASKED ANDREW** and the other disciple what they wanted. **They** asked Jesus where he was staying. **JESUS SAID,** “. . . **COME AND SEE . . .**” (v. 39).

ANDREW DID JUST THAT. HE SPENT TIME with Jesus. **WHAT ANDREW HEARD THAT DAY FOREVER CHANGED HIS LIFE. IT IS POSSIBLE** that Andrew **WAS THE FIRST OF THE 12 DISCIPLES TO HEAR** and **BELIEVE** IN JESUS.

RIGHT AFTER THAT EVENT Andrew went and found his brother, Peter, and brought him to Jesus.

SECOND ENCOUNTER — MATTHEW 4:18-20

Jesus was **WALKING BY THE SEA OF GALILEE** and saw two men casting a net into the sea. **THEY WERE** Simon called Peter, and **ANDREW** his brother. Jesus issued a call to both of them. **JESUS SPOKE TEN WORDS:**

(V. 19), "... FOLLOW ME, AND I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MEN.'

(V. 20), "AND THEY STRAIGHTWAY LEFT THEIR NETS, AND FOLLOWED HIM."

S LET'S BREAK THOSE TWO VERSES INTO **THREE PARTS**:

PART #1 — "FOLLOW ME"

(V. 19), "... FOLLOW ME, and I will make you fishers of men."

S **JESUS WAS SAYING**, "I want you to go wherever I go. When I go to Galilee, I want you to go to Galilee. FOLLOW ME in **PRAYER**. Follow me in **MINISTRY**. FOLLOW ME **IN WITNESSING**."

S **18X'S JESUS SAID TO various PEOPLE , "FOLLOW ME."**

• **TO MATTHEW**

(Matthew 9:9), "... He said unto him, **FOLLOW ME**. And he arose, and followed him."

• **TO PHILIP**

(John 1:43), "... Jesus ... findeth Philip, and said unto him, **FOLLOW ME**."

• **TO PETER & ANDREW**

(V. 19), "... **FOLLOW ME**, ... "

• **TO RYR**

(Mark 10:21), "... Come, take up the cross, and **FOLLOW ME**."

• **TO US ALL**

(John 12:26) "If any man serve me, let him **FOLLOW ME**. . ."

(John 10:27) "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they **FOLLOW ME**:"

S **WE ALL FOLLOW SOMEONE. JESUS SAYS, "FOLLOW ME."**

S **FOLLOWING JESUS REQUIRES OVERCOMING ALL THOSE OBSTACLES THAT SATAN THROWS IN OUR FACES.**

1) FINANCES — "If I follow Jesus, how will I pay my bills?

How will I survive?"

2) FRIENDS — "They might think I have become a religious fanatic."

3) FAMILY — "What will dad think if I quit the fishing business?"

4) FEAR — **Jesus said**, "If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18).

THE FIRST TIME I WATCHED SOMEONE WITNESS COLD-TURKEY to some strangers, I REMEMBER **HOW FEARFUL I WAS**. They witnessed to someone they did not know. It was my first semester in college and a big group of us were in a huge cave singing Christian songs. While we were singing, three or four people came into the cave. An older student and the leader of our group went over and started talking to those strangers about Jesus. I remember sitting on that rock thinking to myself, "I will never be able to do that.

I will never have enough courage.”

SOME WEEKS LATER I decided to go **DOWNTOWN** and pass out **TRACTS** to anyone that would take them. It was in the middle of the day and no one else I knew wanted to go with me. So I grabbed some tracts and set out. I still remember the numbing fear I felt standing among all those people. While passing out the leaflets a certain turn of events almost scared me spitless. A lady stopped and took a tract and then asked me what it said. I did not know how to tell her. I had only been a Christian for a little more than a year. I did not know what to say to her. I rescued myself by telling her, “Just take it and read it and you will find out.” Though I was so inept, I remember the sense of joy that filled my heart as I headed back to my dorm. There was a sense of joy unspeakable.

- S **KNOW HOW TO OVERCOME ALL THOSE FEARS?** The same way Andrew did. **YOU CLAIM THE PROMISES OF GOD.**
- **(Rom 8:31)**, “What shall we then say to these things? **IF GOD BE FOR US**, who can be against us?”
 - **(Mat 28:20)**, “. . . **LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS**, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (**IT IS SIGNIFICANT** that that promise is addressed to the witness. Jesus has promised to be with you when you witness. When you knock on that door and you are scared to death, remember that Jesus is there with you.)
 - **(Heb 13:5)**, “. . . I will **NEVER LEAVE** thee, nor forsake thee.”
 - **(1 John 4:4)**, “. . . **GREATER** is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”
 - **(John 10:29)**, “My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and **NO MAN IS ABLE** to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.”

S I AM THANKFUL FOR **JESUS’ RESPONSE TO A WORD OF FEAR IN JOHN 11**. WHEN word came to Jesus that **LAZARUS WAS SICK**, Jesus decided to go to **JUDEA**. The disciples quickly **WARNED JESUS** that the Jews **TRIED TO STONE HIM** the last time He was in Judea. They were reading to Jesus **THE FEAR-ACT**. Jesus’ answer was marvelous. He asked the disciples a question, **“Are there not twelve hours in a day?”** If you walk in the light, you will not stumble. It is when you walk in the dark that you stumble (John 11:9-10). **Don’t you like that? JESUS WASN’T AFRAID!**

S **JESUS GAVE DETAILS** to His disciples regarding what **would happen to Him IN JERUSALEM**. He told them that He would **suffer** at the hands of the priests and be **killed**. **PETER** tried to talk Jesus out of going to the cross and suffering. Peter said, “Be it far from you.” Jesus addressed the source of that fear-filled request when He said, “Get thee behind me Satan.” (Mat 16:23).

S **“FAITH” DIRECTED JESUS, NOT “FEAR.”** THE INFLUENCE OF **JOY** in his life WAS MORE POWERFUL than the influence of **SUFFERING**.

(Heb 12:2), “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; **WHO FOR THE JOY** that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

- S **WITH LEARNING HOW TO SHARE OUR FAITH IN MIND, JESUS SAYS, “FOLLOW ME!” TRUST ME! BELIEVE ME! WALK WITH ME! PUT ON** the shield of faith and let God be your defender.

PART #2 — “I WILL MAKE YOU”

(V. 19), “. . . Follow me, and **I WILL MAKE** you fishers of men.”

- S The Greek word for **“MAKE”** (“poy-eh'-o”) is very significant. IT **DESCRIBES THE CREATIVE WORK OF GOD**. That word is found in two separate New Testament verses describing God’s act of creation:
- **(Mat 19:4)**, “. . . He which **MADE** (“poy-eh'-o”) them at the beginning **MADE** (“poy-eh'-o”) them male and female,”
 - **(Acts 17:26)**, “And hath **MADE** of one blood all nations of men . . . ”
- S **JUST AS** God *CAN MAKE ADAM & EVE* and **ALL HUMANITY**, God *CAN MAKE ANDREW a fisher of men*. **AND JUST AS** God *CAN MAKE ANDREW* a fisher of men, He *CAN MAKE US WITNESSES*.
- S **WHEN A PERSON SAYS, “I CAN’T BE A WITNESS,” they ARE DISCOUNTING THE CREATIVE POWER OF GOD!**
- **(Phil 4:13)**, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”
 - **(Phil 4:19)**, “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”
 - **(Mat 17:20)**, “. . . If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto **THIS MOUNTAIN**, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and **NOTHING SHALL BE IMPOSSIBLE UNTO YOU**.”
 - **(Luke 18:27)**, “. . . The **THINGS** which are **IMPOSSIBLE WITH MEN** are possible with God.”
- S **IF WE WILL BUT LET GOD** do His *creative work* in our lives, we will **BE SURPRISED** what He can do.

PART #3 — “FISHERS OF MEN”

- S **THOSE THREE WORDS** DESCRIBE **THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH GOD CALLED ANDREW**. Andrew **HAD BEEN** taking his net down to the Sea of Galilee and throwing it in the water and catching fish. Jesus told him, “Now, Andrew, you are going to start doing that to people. You are going to start casting the spiritual net and drawing people to Me. **INSTEAD OF** filling your boat with fish, you will fill the Kingdom of God with men. Instead of bringing meat to the market, you will bring men to the master.” I will make you, **“FISHERS OF MEN!”**

S **THOSE THREE WORDS** also describe THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH **GOD HAS CALLED ALL OF US**. God has called us all to be *fishers of men*. **SOMETIMES** a person counters by stating that God has only called the **STAFF**, or the **GIFTED**, to witness to others. That is not true, for God has called us all to be witnesses.

- **(Acts 8:4)**, “Therefore **THEY** that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.” (**WHO IS THAT “THEY?”**) **(Acts 8:1)**, “. . . They were **ALL SCATTERED** abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, **EXCEPT THE APOSTLES**.” (“**They**” were all the Christians. The preachers stayed in Jerusalem.)

S God’s purpose for our lives **HAS BEEN SPELLED OUT CLEAR AND PLAIN**.

- **(Acts 1:8)**, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”
- **(Mat 28:19-20)**, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: {20} Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: /// and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
- **(Luke 19:10)**, “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
- **(John 20:21)**, “. . . As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”

S **THE QUESTION IS — WILL I FOLLOW?**

- WILL I present my body **A LIVING SACRIFICE** so that others might hear? (Rom 12:1)
- WILL I PLACE my **desires**, my **longings**, my **goals**, my **aspirations** on the altar of sacrifice and obey God?
- WILL I LET GO OF MY **NETS** and **FOLLOW** Jesus?
- WILL I LET GOD’S **PURPOSE** become my purpose?
- WILL I LET GOD DO **A CREATIVE WORK** IN MY LIFE SO THAT I MIGHT SHARE CHRIST WITH my **family**, and my **friends**, and my **community**, and my **city**, and my **state**, and my **world**?
- **THAT QUESTION REALLY DOES DESERVE AN ANSWER — WILL I LET GOD MAKE ME A FISHER OF MEN?**

S **WITNESSING** NOT ONLY BLESSES **THE LOST** by their coming to know Christ, it helps **THOSE WHO ARE SAVED TO GROW**. When a person learns to share their faith, it is so **THRILLING** and **MAGNIFICENT** because God’s **CREATIVE POWER** is at work in their lives. **GOD TAKES SOMETHING THAT “ISN’T,”** and makes it into SOMETHING THAT **“IS” — A FISHER OF MEN**.

S **EVERY TIME** a Christian learns how to share their faith, they become **A TESTIMONY** to GOD’S LIFE-CHANGING POWER.

I. A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE

II. A FAITHFUL WITNESS

(Mat 4:19-20), "And he said unto them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.' {20} AND THEY **STRAIGHTWAY** left their nets, and followed him."

- THAT WORD "**STRAIGHTWAY**" (eutheos) DESCRIBES what happened to a man's **LEPROSY** when Jesus touched him in Luke 5:13, "**IMMEDIATELY** the leprosy departed from him." His leprosy left **AT ONCE**.
- THAT WORD "**STRAIGHTWAY**" (eutheos) DESCRIBES what happened to **THE MAN** by the pool of Bethesda who had been **UNABLE TO WALK FOR 38 YEARS**. When Jesus told him to get up and walk, **THE SCRIPTURE SAYS, "IMMEDIATELY** the man was made whole" (John 5:9). The man took up his bed and walked. That man did in a moment what he had been unable to do for 38 years — HE WALKED!
- "**IMMEDIATELY**" (eutheos) also describes what happened to **ANDREW** when Jesus said "Follow me." Andrew left his nets "**IMMEDIATELY.**"

THE GOOD NEWS IS THE WAY ANDREW RESPONDED, IS THE WAY ALL OF US CAN RESPOND. God can take **any person**, in any **place**, at any **time** and make them a witness. We **MUST SIMPLY BE WILLING TO DROP OUR NETS** AND FOLLOW JESUS. IT DOESN'T MATTER **WHO** A PERSON IS, **ANYONE CAN BECOME A FISHER OF MEN**. It doesn't matter **HOW MANY** talents a person has, God can make them a **FISHER OF MEN**.

G.W. TRUETT WAS PREACHING ONE DAY WHEN HE SAID SOMETHING LIKE:

"Anybody ought to be able to bring someone to Jesus Christ,"

A LITTLE SEAMSTRESS, a poor woman somewhat upset, approached the pastor after the sermon and said:

"Pastor, I don't believe that you were **fair** tonight. I don't believe that you were **considerate** when you said that anyone could bring somebody to Jesus Christ, I **can't** do that. I don't have the **opportunity**. I have no way out of the house. I **don't meet** any unsaved people. I have to stay here and sow and eke out a mere living. Sure, most people can, but I can't. I don't have any opportunity."

The Pastor responded, "Madam, let me ask you, 'Does the **MILKMAN** ever come to your apartment?'"

She said, "**O, yes, every day,**"

The Pastor asked, "Does the **GROCER** ever come?" "The **BUTCHER?**" "The **BAKER?**" "**POSTMAN?**" "**OTHERS?**"

She said, "**O, yes.**"

He said, "**A word to the wise is sufficient.**" That is all he said. That word **struck deep** into her heart. She returned to her little home

and began to pray regarding the new burden God had placed upon her heart.

THE NEXT MORNING she did something she had never done before. She got up early and met the **MILKMAN**. She startled him because she was not normally up that time of day. He said, "Maim, why are you up so early?" She started to witness to him until **a case of cold feet** overcame her. Her courage blew away with the early morning breeze. She started to let the opportunity pass by completely when all the sudden the Holy Spirit gave her the strength she needed. She said "**Pardon me, but I am here to talk to you about something very important.**" She simply recounted the experience she had at her church. She told how God had spoken to her. She told of **the burden** that God had placed on her heart. Then she began to talk to him about his soul.

Once she finished, she was **astonished** with what the man had to say. He looked at her so startled and said,

"Madam, this is the most **remarkable** thing. **I have been unable to sleep** for two straight nights because God has been dealing with my soul. I've been so hungry to know God and surely God laid it upon your heart to speak to me."

THAT YEAR that little lady, according to Dr. Truett, went on to win **SEVEN PEOPLE** to Jesus Christ. That was the same lady who had said, "I have no opportunity to bring anyone to Christ."

FOR YEARS I HAVE **SHARED A STORY** ABOUT A MAN NAMED **ARLIS MOTLEY**. While I was pastoring my first church, he helped me learn how to witness. He was a member of a sister church over the state line in Hollis, Oklahoma.

Arlis and I went to **THE HOSPITAL** in my town and witnessed to a man. That man had almost had his leg cut off in a cotton gin accident. His name was **JACK KELLISON**. That afternoon, Jack prayed to receive Christ while lying in the hospital bed. Approximately two years passed before Jack ever set foot in our church building. An evangelist and I went to visit him one afternoon during a revival. Jack agreed to come and make his profession public. He did just that. I remember a statement that Jack made the night he was baptized. He said, "You probably did not think I meant the prayer that day you and Arlis prayed with me in the hospital, but I did. My life began to change from that day forward." Once Jack joined the church, he became MR. FIX-IT. If you wanted something done, you could just call Jack Kellison. He was there almost every time the doors were open.

Let me tell you the story of **ARLIS MOTLEY**. I have shared his testimony for years. His story is so amazing that I have often wondered whether my recollection hadn't become exaggerated and embellished over the years. I have told folks he had personally led hundreds, perhaps thousands, to Christ, not as a preacher, but as a witnessing layman. To make sure my details were accurate, I called Arlis this past Tuesday morning, August 7, 2001. He still lives in Hollis, OK. He is **77 YEARS OLD**. This is Arlis' story and I can assure you the details are accurate.

Arlis had been a Sunday school teacher for young boys and young men for **26 YEARS**. He had never led anyone to Christ in all those 26 years. He had taught a lot of Sunday school lessons, but had never led anyone to Christ. **AT 52 YEARS OF AGE**, he took a mission trip to a foreign country where he personally led several folks to Christ. He came to the firm conclusion that if he could lead folks to Christ in a foreign land, he could lead folks to Christ at home. He went back to Oklahoma and began witnessing at **52 YEARS**

OF AGE.

For the first two or three year Arlis and his wife **KEPT THE NAMES** of those who had prayed to receive Christ. They stopped recording those names in 1978 or 1979. At that time, they had led **1,860** people to Christ. That was **22 YEARS AGO**.

Do you know what else Arlis had to say? The Thursday before my telephone call, that 77 year old witnessing layman made his weekly visit to **A PRISON IN CHILDRESS, TEXAS**. He had the privilege of leading **13** young men to Christ. One young man told him he would never have accepted Christ had he not been in prison. He was thanking the Lord for being there.

GUESS WHAT ELSE! Arlis was at **A PRAYER BREAKFAST** the other day with two past members from my first church. Those two members are still faithful servants of the Lord. The name of one of those men at the prayer breakfast was **JACK KELLISON**. Jack is still faithfully serving the Lord.

I wrote down a particular comment Arlis made. He said, **"Every time I get a little discouraged, God sends someone to encourage me."** He was referring to the phone conversation. I had told him that I had used his witnessing testimony often to encourage others.

QUESTION — IF GOD CAN MAKE A GODLY LAYMAN SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER into a fisher of men, and **IF GOD CAN MAKE A POOR SEAMSTRESS** into a fisher of men, **CAN'T GOD MAKE ALL OF US FISHERS OF MEN? Couldn't God do that for YOU? — ME?**

S WE MIGHT BE **SURPRISED** WHAT GOD COULD DO through us if we **DROPPED OUR NETS** and **LET GOD DO HIS CREATIVE WORK IN OUR LIVES** and **OUR MINISTRIES**.

- I. **A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE**
- II. **A FAITHFUL WITNESS**

III. A REWARDED SERVANT

LISTEN TO JESUS

(Rev 22:12), "And, behold, I come quickly; and **MY REWARD IS WITH ME**, to give every man according as his work shall be."

S SOMETIMES PEOPLE ASK ME, **"HOW LONG ARE WE GOING TO KEEP GOING OUT AND SHARING THE FAITH?"** My answer is, **"TILL JESUS COMES!"** Sharing our **FAITH** is **NOT AN OPTIONAL PROGRAM** in the ministry of the church. It is **AN OBEDIENT RESPONSE** to the command of God.

S DO YOU KNOW **HOW LONG ANDREW WITNESSED** FOR THE LORD? **TRADITION SAYS** that **ANDREW WENT TO THE SCYTHIANS** AS A MISSIONARY. According to **Josephus**, the historian, the Scythians were little different from the **wild beasts**. Tradition indicates they nailed him to a cross in **Achia**.

S **ANDREW** continued to witness to **HIS LAST BREATH**. JUST AS Andrew **NEVER QUIT** TELLING PEOPLE ABOUT JESUS, **NEITHER SHOULD WE!**

S Yes, sometimes WE GET **TIRED**. Sometimes the **FRUIT IS LESS** THAN WHAT WE DESIRE. Sometimes we get **DISCOURAGED**. BUT JUST **REMEMBER** — NEVER FORGET — **THERE IS COMING**

A DAY OF REWARD.

- **YOUR LABOR IS NOT IN VAIN** in the Lord (1 Cor 15:58).
- YOU WILL NOT GIVE **A CUP OF COLD WATER** in Jesus' name except you receive a reward (Matt 10:42).
- WHAT A **JOY** it will be in heaven someday **TO HEAR JESUS SAY**:
 "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mat 25:21).
- WHAT A **JOY** it will be to **SEE THE PEOPLE** who went to heaven because of your witness.
- **THAT COMING JOY** MIGHT BE PART OF THE REASON GOD SAYS:
 "He that winneth souls is wise" (Prov 11:30).
- WISE PEOPLE **LET GO** of their nets AND GO FISHING WITH JESUS. WISE PEOPLE **MAKE LIFE'S DECISIONS BASED ON** the eternal impact.

ARE YOU WISE? Didn't ask, "Are you were **rich?**" Didn't ask, "Are you were **popular?**" Didn't ask, "Are you a church **member?**" Didn't ask, "Do you **work hard?**" Didn't ask, "Are you **successful** in the eyes of the world?" Didn't ask, "Are you **gifted?**" I asked, "**ARE YOU WISE?**" Are you wise as God defines wisdom? Another way to ask it is, "Are you a soul-winner?" Our witness for Christ gives us the answer.

CONSIDER A STORY ABOUT A WISE MAN. (Dr. Roy Fish, professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, shared this story while in the Tri-Cities.)

OVER IN ENGLAND was a **godly Baptist pastor** by the name of **FRANCIS DIXON**. Francis Dixon had a man in his church by the name of **PETER**. They asked Peter, a faithful church member, to give his testimony in church one night. Peter stood and he said, "Folks, I want to tell you how I was saved." He said "I was stationed with the **Royal Navy** in **SIDNEY, AUSTRALIA**." He said "I was walking down **GEORGE STREET** in Sidney one day when out of nowhere came a **little white-haired man**. He stopped me on the street and he SAID:

"**EXCUSE** me sir, but I'd like to ask you a **QUESTION. I HOPE** you won't be offended, **BUT TELL ME SIR, IF** you were to **DIE** today, where would you be in **ETERNITY?** THE BIBLE SAYS it will be **EITHER** heaven or hell, **THINK** about it, wouldn't you, sir. **THAT'S ALL!** God **BLESS** you! **TOO-D-LOO,**" and he was gone.

PETER said, "That question came like an arrow shot out of the bow of God at me." He said, "I was **miserable** for **six months** and I didn't know what to do. Finally we sailed back to England where I had one Christian friend. I sought that Christian friend out and he led me to Christ."

Well, in that church in which Francis Dixon was pastor, they had **A REVIVAL**

MEETING. A person on the team was a young man named **NOWELL**. As a part of the team Nowell gave his **testimony**. Nowell stood and said, "Folks I want to tell you how I became a Christian, "I **lived** for a period time in the beautiful Australian city of **Sydney**. I was downtown walking down **GEORGE STREET** when out of nowhere came a **little white-haired man**, who stopped me on the street and said:

“**EXCUSE** me sir, but I'd like to ask you a **QUESTION. I HOPE** you won't be offended, **BUT TELL ME SIR, IF** you were to **DIE** today, where would you be in **ETERNITY?** THE BIBLE SAYS it will be **EITHER** heaven or hell, **THINK** about it, wouldn't you, sir. **THAT'S ALL!** God **BLESS** you! **TOO-D-LOO,**” and he was gone.

Nowell said "I **KNEW ENOUGH** gospel to get saved. I went to the **HOME** where I was staying **that very afternoon**, I got on my knees and I trusted Jesus Christ as my savior."

When the service was over, **PETER** went up to **NOWELL** and said, "Man, you've got my testimony — I mean it happened to me just like that. A little old man on George Street in Sydney." THE PASTOR, **FRANCIS DIXON**, heard them talking to one another.

NOT LONG AFTER THAT, **FRANCIS DIXON**, THE PASTOR, was preaching at **ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA**. Adelaide was in far south Australia, at least 500 miles from Sydney. Pastor Dixon was **IMPRESSED TO TELL** the story of the two men in his church and the little man on George Street. While he was telling it, **A MAN BEGAN TO WAVE HIS HAND** in order to get the attention of the preacher. The preacher said, "Sir, do you want to say something?" He said "Yes sir, I do, **I want to tell you HOW I BECAME A CHRISTIAN**. I was walking down George Street in Sydney one day when out of nowhere came a white-haired man . . ." (The story was the same)

WELL, WHEN **FRANCIS DIXON**, that Baptist pastor, arrived at **PERTH, AUSTRALIA** to preach in a Baptist church there, he knew he had a story. He told the story in that church. When the service was over, **A BAPTIST DEACON** came up to him and said to him, "Sir, I am another. I was walking down George Street in Sydney, out of nowhere came a white-haired man – **that's what led me to Christ.**"

Well, when Pastor Dixon got back to his church **IN ENGLAND**, he was excited to tell the story that had grown even more magnificently. When he finished sharing the story with **HIS CONGREGATION**, **A YOUNG WOMAN** came up to him and said to him, "Sir, I am another. I was walking on George Street in Sydney, this little man led me to Christ."

Francis Dixon preached at **KESSEK, ENGLAND**, at the **DEEPER LIFE** conference held there where he told the story again. And wouldn't you know it, **AN ELDERLY MAN** came up to him and said, "Sir, I am another. I was walking on George Street in Sydney. Out of nowhere came a little white-haired man and that's what ultimately led me to Christ."

FRANCIS DIXON preached **ALL OVER THE WORLD**. They invited him to **INDIA** to preach **TO MISSIONARIES**. They wanted to be challenged in personal evangelism. He again told the stories of the many people who had been led to the Lord by the little man on George Street. **A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN MISSIONARY** said to him, "Sir, I am another. I was walking on

George Street in Sydney."

He told the story again on an island in **JAMAICA** on the way home. **AN EIGHTH PERSON** came up to him and said "Sir, I am another." Francis Dixon said, he needed something to hold onto to keep from getting translated out of that place.

THE MAN WHO GAVE **DR. FISH** this story was named **GENE WAR**, a godly layman from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. **GENE** was telling this story to **A GROUP OF CHAPLAINS** at **FORT BENNING, GEORGIA**. One of those **CHAPLAINS** said, "Mr. War **you're not going to believe this**. I want to tell you how I became a Christian. I was walking down George Street in Sydney. Out of nowhere came a little white-haired man. That's what led me to Christ."

Well Francis Dixon, that Baptist pastor said, "**I WANT TO SEE THAT LITTLE OLD WHITE-HAIRED MAN**." He made sure that Sydney was on his **ITINERARY** the next time he went to Australia. When he got to Sydney, **he didn't know what to do** so HE CALLED **A CHRISTIAN FRIEND**. He said to him, "Have you **EVER HEARD OF** a little old man who stands on George Street asking people where they'd go if they died, where they'd be in eternity?" "Sure," came the voice on the other end of the phone, "He's **MR. JENNER**." "Mr. Jenner, you know him?" He said, "All of us know him. He doesn't get out on the street much any more. He's a bit infirm. He's quite aged. He doesn't see very well." "Do you know where he lives? "I can take you right to his house." **THE TWO WENT** to the house of Mr. Jenner. They knocked on the door, and sure enough, just like he'd thought, there was a little white-haired man. After introductions were made, Francis Dixon told that little man of all of those who had come to Jesus Christ through his winsome word of witness and warning. That dear little old man **BROKE DOWN AND COPIOUSLY WEPT**, and he said:

"Sir, I have shared the gospel with thousands of people on George Street in Sydney, but this is the first time in my life I have heard of anybody who came to Christ through my witness."

LET ME GIVE YOU **TWO REASONS WHY** we need to learn how to share your faith. Consider two reasons why we should all **DROP OUR NETS** and follow Jesus.

#1. GOD COMMANDED IT

(Acts 1:8), "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . "

S Being a witness is **NOT AN ELECTIVE** course in the Christian life. JESUS SAID, "**FOLLOW ME!**" It is a command. I assure you if we follow Jesus, we will be witnesses, because Jesus is a witness (Luke 19:10).

S DR. L.R. SCARBROUGH

"To refuse to witness the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world day by day, is **nothing less than high treason** against the King of Kings."

#2. WE WILL MISS OUR OPPORTUNITY IF WE REFUSE

S **WE WILL NEVER KNOW** THE PERSONS God might have reached

through our witness unless **WE ARE FAITHFUL TO WITNESS.**

Perhaps you will **ONLY REACH ONE** person for Christ. Yet never discount a person just because they are one. You were just one. That one person you reach might be your **GRANDSON** (and you might only be a young person right now, but someday you will be old and have grand kids that need to know Jesus). It might be your **FATHER?** Your **MATE?** Many folks have learned how to share their faith with one purpose in mind — **REACHING A LOVED ONE.**

S **ANDREW REACHED PETER, AND PETER REACHED THOUSANDS.** Peter preached the first sermon on the day of Pentecost and **THREE THOUSAND** people were saved. **THE NEAT THING** about that is **ANDREW HAD A PART** in every decision at Pentecost because Andrew brought Peter to Jesus.

CONSIDER THIS

- **MR. KIMBALL** led a **Boston shoe clerk** by the name of **DWIGHT L. MOODY** to the Lord. But that one was in reality **a multitude.** Moody rocked **two continents** for God.
- IN 1879, **D.L. MOODY** awakened evangelistic zeal in the heart of **F. B. MEYER**, a pastor of a small church in England.
- **F. B. MEYER** came to America and preached on **A COLLEGE CAMPUS** and led a student named **WILBUR CHAPMAN** to Christ.
- **CHAPMAN**, participated in **YMCA WORK** and employed a **FORMER** baseball player named **BILLY SUNDAY** to do evangelistic work.
- **SUNDAY** held **REVIVAL SERVICES** in **Charlotte, North Carolina.** **A GROUP OF LOCAL MEN** became so enthusiastic after the revival that they **planned another** evangelistic campaign. They brought in a man by the name of **MORDECAI HAMM** to preach.
- In that revival service, a young man by the name of **WILLIAM** accepted Christ as his savior. William is better known as **BILLY — BILLY GRAHAM.** Billy Graham went on to be a man God used to lead millions to the Lord Jesus. (From *GO TELL* by Freddie Gage, pg 12)

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT THAT **MR. KIMBALL** has a part in all those people Billy Graham has to lead to the Lord?

HOW MANY PEOPLE MIGHT YOUR WITNESS win to Christ. You might be the person God has chosen to lead the **"BILLY GRAHAM"** of the next generation to the Lord. **HOWEVER, YOU WILL NEVER** know **UNLESS YOU** let God make you a fisher of men. Chances are good there are more blessing than you could ever imagine. Will you drop your **NETS AND FOLLOW JESUS?** The Lord asks you to do just that — Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Mat 4:19).

S **EVERETT HALE** (one time chaplain of the U.S. Senate wrote in *THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY*)

I'm only one - but I **AM** one.

I cannot do everything - but I can do something.

What I can do, I should do, and what I should do, by the grace of God, I **WILL** do."