

The Cloud of Witnesses

Andrew

The man who kept bringing people to Jesus

Lesson 1: Andrew introduced Peter to Jesus

Reading: John 1:35-42

John reveals to us that he and Andrew were already looking for spiritual reality. Yes, they were disciples of John the Baptist.

We understand that John was part of the Essences religious order. They sought purity, truth and righteousness.

However, both John and Andrew were in for a surprise. They were enjoying spending time with John the Baptist when, suddenly, John became enlivened and excited. He stopped talking as he noticed Someone walking by. Yes, John the Baptist knew who He was.

John the Baptist knew his job was very nearly over. He was to point forward to the coming Messiah. He would carry on his ministry only until the Messiah began His. Now the Messiah had arrived. How challenging it must have been for John the Baptist to know that not only was his time drawing to an end but the friendships he had developed with his own disciples would also be coming to an end. Indeed, his job was to facilitate the change. He would point them to the Messiah and encourage them to follow Him.

It must have been as challenging for Andrew and John. They had been following the Baptist and now he was pointing them to follow this new rabbi, the Messiah. John points out that the Baptist had given them sufficient warning that the Messiah was the One they were to follow, and that he, the Baptist, was just the signpost.

So it was that this morning, as the Baptist saw Jesus passing by, he again pointed out the Lamb of God to his followers, which included Andrew and John. This time, instead of just watching Jesus pass by, Andrew and John decided to leave the Baptist and follow Jesus. This appears to have happened out of their curiosity to find out where Jesus was staying, rather than making the decision to become one of Jesus' disciples.

As they walked up behind Jesus, Jesus realised they were following and so asked them what they wanted. They replied that they were interested in learning where Jesus was living at the time. Jesus welcomed them and took them to the place, and Andrew and John stayed with Him for the rest of the day.

How I would have loved to have been there with Andrew and John as Jesus, undoubtedly, shared His heart and vision. I can only imagine the delight both of them experienced as Jesus, gradually, from the Scriptures, revealed who He was and what He had come to do.

I'm sure both Andrew and John plied Jesus with many questions as they grappled with all He revealed about Himself, how they needed to develop their understanding of all that John the Baptist had taught them and try to comprehend how it all related together. How Jesus was indeed the fulfilment of all John the Baptist had prophesied Jesus would be.

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Andrew was so impacted that when he left Jesus, the first thing he had on his mind was to go and tell Peter, his brother, all about it. He was so persuasive that Peter returned with Andrew to see Jesus.

And so it was that Peter was introduced to Jesus and Jesus declared upon seeing him, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas (Peter)."

Peter, the one who would become one of the most prominent of all the apostles, was introduced to Jesus by his brother, Andrew. As we study Andrew's life we see that is the hallmark of his life. When Andrew's name is given in Scripture it is usually associated with his bringing someone to Jesus.

Andrew understood the heart of God. Our life is not all about us and our needs. God wants us to be others centred as He is. Andrew is a great example of what God is looking for in each one of us. Get to know God and then share Him with others.

These events obviously took place in Judea, where John the Baptist was fulfilling his ministry. Later Jesus left for Galilee in northern Israel. Andrew, John and Peter also returned to their homes, family and work.

Andrew would say to us today...

Jesus was not just another man, another prophet. I recognised that, although human, this man was God incarnate. When I realised that I just had to tell others and I started with my brother, Peter.

Prayer

Father, please help me remember that Jesus was not just a man but God. And help me introduce others to Jesus. Amen.

Additional Readings

- Isaiah 6:1-8
- Colossians 1:15-20
- 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

Questions

1. Why did Andrew leave John to follow Jesus?
2. What was Andrew's immediate reaction to the realisation that Jesus was God?
3. Who does Jesus want you to introduce Him to this year?

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Lesson 2: Andrew answered Jesus' call

Reading: Mark 1: 14 – 20

Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist and, as such, had spent most of those discipleship hours in Judea; in the wilderness near Qumran and at the River Jordan where John the Baptist did most of his public ministry.

Whilst John the Baptist was pointing forward to Jesus and encouraged his disciples to follow Jesus as soon as Jesus began His public ministry, Mark suggests that it was after John the Baptist was put in prison, thus finally signalling the end of John's public ministry, that Jesus returned to Galilee to begin His work.

It would appear that Andrew, John and Peter also left Judea for their homes in Galilee at around the same time. John suggests that Jesus returned to Nazareth and, no doubt, Andrew, John and Peter returned to their homes in Bethsaida.

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, and the brothers, Andrew and Peter, were all fishermen. They were probably well known to one another, not only having grown up together in the same village and joined their respective family fishing business, but also through their interest in the influence of the Essenes religious sect.

Having left John the Baptist in Judea, they headed for home and returned to work. I wonder what occupied their minds whilst they were fishing and mending their nets. Were Jesus and His teaching the constant themes of their thinking and discussions? What was going to happen next? Who would make the next move? Would they hear of Jesus and His exploits, and go in search of the truth or would Jesus come and seek them out?

They did not have to wait long for the answer. As they went about their normal life of fishing, Jesus came to them. Mark tells us that Jesus had begun His teaching and preaching, and decided to catch up with Simon Peter and Andrew. The brothers were throwing their nets into Lake Kinnereth when Jesus walked up and invited them to follow Him.

However, the invitation implied more than merely for the afternoon, more than for a few days or weeks. No, this invitation was for a full lifestyle change. The invitation was to give up working for their family, finances and future, and to lay it all aside to follow Jesus and to become "fishers of men". Give up their temporary and material lifestyle for one that was spiritual and eternal. The goal of which was out of this world.

Neither Andrew nor Peter hesitated. They had long lost interest in the status quo. The concept of carrying on life as normal fishermen, or normal anything else, had lost its appeal years before. That is why they had gone seeking something much more meaningful – spiritual answers for human needs. They knew that neither the material world nor the human existence could satisfy the hunger in the human heart. There had to be more and they were not going to stop until they had experienced it.

When Jesus gave His invitation it was the culmination of years of quest and hope. Jesus spoke with an authority no-one else dared to display. His was a quiet authority that shouted authenticity. He was not striving for acceptance, honour or power. He already had them all, with bells on. His whole bearing assured Simon and Andrew that if they were to but submit to His authority and direction, they would find what they were looking for.

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Ironically, as they submitted to His authority they actually found who they were, what their life's purpose was and what their eternal destiny would prove to be. Yes, it was in losing themselves in God that they truly found out who they were meant and designed to be.

Understandably, from that moment on Andrew's life would never be the same. Yes, it was not going to be easy. Yes, it was unpredictable. Yes, there would be many times when he didn't know all the answers, and yes, there would be times of deep challenge, fear and doubt. But it wouldn't be boring and it wouldn't be self-seeking or pointless. Jesus offered assurance, direction, peace, joy, fulfilment and hope.

Jesus offers us the same and He makes the same call to you and me – Come, follow Me!

Andrew would say to us today...

When Jesus calls you, don't hesitate because it will lead to the most exciting life you could ever imagine.

Prayer

Father, help me to live this year as You want me to live and to complete the plans You have for me. Amen.

Additional Readings

- Romans 12:1-8
- Philippians 4:4-13
- 1 Timothy 6:11-16

Questions

1. What things will you have to leave behind in order to fulfil God's call for your life?
2. Why does Jesus always expect a change in our lifestyle once we follow Him?
3. How does Andrew's life show us that God expects us to be others centred?

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Lesson 3: Andrew made an apostle by Jesus

Reading: Luke 6:12-16

Matthew, Mark and Luke all record the names of the apostles chosen by Jesus to represent Him on earth. Those whom Jesus set apart to be with Him in a more intimate relationship. Andrew is mentioned in each list.

Andrew was not only called to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, he was also hand-picked by the Son of God to be one of His apostles.

As we trace Andrew's life as recorded in the Gospels and, indeed, the rest of Scripture, we are amazed to find so little recorded about him. Interestingly enough, he was not included in the three who were Jesus' most intimate companions – they were Peter, James and John. And yet, was it not Andrew who had introduced Peter to Jesus? Why was Andrew not included in that group? He was one of the two – John and Andrew – who came to Jesus first. Andrew was so impressed by Jesus the first thing he did was to go and bring Peter to Jesus.

We never read of Andrew being jealous of John, James and Peter. We don't read that he asked his mother to seek greater prominence for him, either on earth or in Heaven (like James and John did). We don't read, either, that he was ever frustrated at being left out. Usually, he was helpful and encouraging.

Why do we know so little about Andrew? Was it because he was an uninspiring disciple? Was he reluctant? Was he unsure? Why do we read far more about Peter? We can only speculate but I would very much doubt that any of those negative questions applied to Andrew. Rather, I think he is a wonderful example to us of how a Christian should live.

Like John the Baptist, his early role model, Andrew did not think he needed to be in the limelight all the time. The focus was not to be upon him but upon Jesus. Andrew, undoubtedly, came to see his role as one who introduced people to Jesus. He would facilitate a meeting for whoever was interested: young or old, Jew or Gentile.

Andrew was comfortable with his call, his anointing, his gifts, his ministry and his role. That is something we all need to learn. How many people get frustrated because they are constantly comparing themselves with others? We compare speakers, leaders, churches, denominations, ministries, and our gifts, talents and ministry. But it is not God's way.

God made us who we are. He gave us the gifts we would need to complete the full task He has given us to do on earth. He is not interested in making us like anyone else – they already exist. God is not into cloning – He is into creating unique image-bearers of Jesus.

Our job is to find out what our role on earth is. To recognise the gifts He has given to us. To understand the ministry He has called us to and anointed us to fulfil, and then to work at it with all our heart and strength, continuously pointing people away from us and towards Jesus as we do so.

What we can deduce is that Andrew was relaxed about his role and found fulfilment in it. He could spend time learning from Jesus and then take time to really understand it so he was able to put it into practice. He was also discerning enough to know when he could offer advice, and yet, recognise the time when there was no substitute for introducing the person to Jesus.

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We also need to recognise those times – times for a word of wisdom and times for getting out of the way and pointing people to Jesus. Like Andrew, we need to remember that there is no substitution for introducing people to Jesus, for in the end everyone needs their own personal relationship with Jesus as their Saviour and their Lord and Friend.

Andrew would say to us today...

We don't need to seek God's anointing. He will always give us all we need to fulfil His plan for our lives. All we need is to be obedient and available.

Prayer

Father, please help me to be sensitive to Your will and purposes for my life so I don't strive to do something You have not asked me to do. Amen.

Additional Readings

- 1 Samuel 15:12-23
- Luke 1:26-38
- Hebrews 10:1-7

Questions

1. Why do we so often try to be something other than what we are or called to be?
2. Why do we always feel we have to strive to do something for Jesus?
3. What is the result of trying to do something God has not called us to do?

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Lesson 4: Andrew brought a boy to Jesus

Reading: John 6:1-15

Jesus was an astonishing man. Everything He said and did had incredible meaning and impact. I guess one of the most exciting things for us is that no matter how many times we read the account of His life we will never fathom the full meaning of all He did. Here we have the record of Jesus feeding the 5,000. There must have been more than 5,000 if we were to count women and children as well.

John records the fact that the people came to be with Jesus because they had seen the miracles of healing He had performed. Miracles tend to have that effect on us, don't they? We all long to see the power of God displayed in front of our eyes. We long to have first-hand experience.

Let's not forget that these people had very little hope apart from Jesus. Not only were there few doctors, but doctors were for the rich and powerful; not for the common people – and yet, it was to the common people that Jesus came. The people came to see what Jesus would do and, in the meantime, they listened to His sermons. His sermons were based upon His moral code which totally transcended everything they had been taught and yet had that ring of authenticity to it. It made sense. Yes, it was hard to put into practice, but it made perfect sense that if people lived that way, it could bring Heaven to earth.

Jesus was a compassionate man. He realised that the people had hung on His words all day and were thus tired and hungry. Jesus didn't want to send them away starving, and so He asked Philip where they could get food for the group at the end of the day. Why did He do that? He knew the area just as well as Philip. He also knew that the task would be too great for His disciples to accomplish, particularly at that time of the day. He also knew their resources wouldn't run to supplying so many people with adequate food.

No, Jesus knew the answer before He even asked Philip the question. John tells us Jesus asked Philip the question so as to test him. Jesus didn't test Philip to make him feel or appear a fool, but rather to expand his faith and ability to recognise a God opportunity. Naturally enough, Philip replied that having made a swift calculation they would need over eight months' wages for everyone just to get a small bite of food. The challenge was totally beyond human reasoning or resources.

Yet, into that very set of circumstances stepped another disciple. Yes, it was Andrew. What did he have to offer? A small boy with five small barley loaves and two fish. Have you ever asked yourself why Andrew bothered to bring the boy to Jesus? On the face of it, it seems strange at best, and pathetic at worst. What possible benefit could such a small token of a meal be for nearly 15,000 people? Or was Andrew trying to say that they didn't need to worry as everyone had brought their food with them, as some have tried to suggest as a way to explain that what Jesus did wasn't really a miracle at all? All Jesus had to do was to remind everyone to take out their lunch boxes and tuck in, as it was meal-break time.

I believe there was more to Andrew's actions than just showing Jesus what the boy had.

1. Andrew saw the boy and wanted him to meet Jesus.
2. Andrew thought Jesus would have to perform some kind of miracle since there were no other ways of meeting the need.

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3. Andrew wanted the boy to understand that God can take what we have and use it for His glory.
4. Andrew wanted the boy to experience the joy of seeing Jesus take his minimum resources and cause them to join with His unlimited resources to fulfil the plan and purposes of God.
5. Andrew wanted the boy to realise that God wants us to cooperate with Him to perform miracles.

Andrew was beginning to understand how Jesus worked. Andrew had witnessed the changing of water into wine at the Wedding in Cana so, no doubt, he thought – Here we go again – Jesus to the rescue. He performs what we can't by taking what we have and transforming it into a sign that He is indeed the incarnate Son of God.

I have no doubt that Andrew guessed that Jesus was going to perform a miracle and so wanted this boy to have an experience he would never forget for the rest of his life.

Andrew would say to us today..

God longs for us to give Him our challenges so that He can prove again to us who He really is.

Prayer

Father, please help me remember that You long for everyone to come into a relationship with You and it is my job to introduce them to You, regardless of the circumstances. Amen.

Additional Readings

Matthew 17: 14 – 21; Luke 8: 22 – 25; Luke 14: 25 – 35

Questions

1. What is going on in your life that requires a miracle to complete?
2. Does God perform miracles today?
3. What is the biggest and most significant miracle God has performed?

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Lesson 5: Andrew brought some Greeks to meet Jesus

Reading: John 12: 20 – 33

God is an inclusive God. Although God chose Abraham and his descendants to be His own special people, nevertheless, God told Abraham that one of the reasons Abraham would be blessed was so that he would become a blessing to others. All the nations of the earth were to be blessed because of God's blessing upon Abraham.

It is the same today. The Jews are still blessing other nations, and those of us who are Christians and grafted into the Jewish 'olive tree' have the same obligation to bless others.

The Greeks had come all the way to Jerusalem to worship God at the Feast. They would be made welcome. However, it appears they had heard about Jesus and so wished to have an audience with Him. Somehow they managed to find out that Philip was a member of Jesus' team and so they approached him for an introduction. Philip decided to tell Andrew. Why did Philip not go straight to Jesus we will never know. What we do know is that he shared the 'problem' with Andrew, who knew exactly what to do and brought both Philip and the Greeks to Jesus.

Here we see yet another account of Andrew's ministry of introducing people to Jesus. What we notice about each incident is that Andrew's role was to introduce the people to Jesus and then get out of their way so Jesus could relate directly with His new-found friends. Andrew took no credit for the introduction or the results of the encounter. His role was easily defined – introduce people to Jesus and then get out of their way so Jesus can do all that He wants and needs to do.

Andrew didn't mind who the enquirers were – a brother, a small boy in the crowd or visiting Greeks – they all needed to be introduced to Jesus. Andrew just did his job and then let Jesus do His.

I find the message that Jesus gave on this occasion very apposite. He began by referring, once more, to the fact that He, Jesus, was to die. Just as a seed has to die, once sown, before it brings forth the harvest, so Jesus would die as a Saviour before millions could become Children of God.

Then Jesus went on to describe a life of humility and purpose through serving others. Those who are selfish and self-centred waste their lives and have nothing to show for it. Those who are others-centred and spend their lives in the service of others, helping them get to know God, will not only feel fulfilled, but will also be rewarded in Heaven. Jesus added that those who serve Him would also be honoured by God Himself.

Jesus reminded Himself and His hearers that His destiny was to go on to be their sacrifice by dying for them. He exclaimed that He longed for God the Father to be glorified through His life and death and, miraculously, God answered immediately.

This Heavenly outburst prompted Jesus to speak out one of the most poignant statements of all time and eternity. It is both a principle and a promise – "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." And I think it describes Andrew's actions so vividly.

Andrew wasn't satisfied in introducing himself to people, he had to go further. He had to lift Jesus up so high they wanted to be introduced to Jesus. As he introduced them to Jesus, they were drawn excitedly and willingly to Him.

Jesus' words are both a principle and a promise. I shall never forget, years ago, being involved

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with a Christian counselling service. Some of the counsellors would approach me with pride and say, "I have an increasing number of people who keep coming back to me for counsel." I would respond, "What is wrong with your counsel?" Our job is to lift Jesus so high people would go to Him. Our case list should be a constant turn-over! I have proved over and over through the years that as I lift Jesus up, people are drawn to Him. It keeps my case-load very small!

This incident proves to me once more that God can use any event for His glory. Here, Andrew brought some Greek seekers, and Jesus not only met with them but uttered one of His most profound statements – all because Andrew brought them to Jesus.

Andrew would say to us today...

There will be many opportunities given to you for you to introduce people to Jesus; you just need to be open, observant, ready and obedient.

Prayer

Father, please help me realise that You will provide many unusual opportunities for me to witness for You and for me to introduce people to You. Amen.

Additional Readings

- 2 Kings 7:1-20
- Jonah 4
- Luke 8:26-39

Questions

1. Who do you want to introduce to Jesus this year?
2. What plans have you made to do so?
3. Why not pray for God to do something this week to help you?

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Lesson 6: Andrew wanted to know what the future held

Reading: Mark 13:1-13

In the Garden of Eden, God came down to commune with Adam and Eve in the cool of the evening. It's a good time for all of us to settle down after a day full of activities and to wait for God to speak to us. Our problem, so often, is we feel so exhausted and think we have earned the right to sit down and watch T.V. However, at the end of the evening, we don't usually feel refreshed, just frustrated that we have wasted our time, sucked into watching something of no consequence whatsoever. Oh, to be able to return to the good old days, when we had to create some other form of entertainment, and where we actually had time to communicate with our spouse, our children, our friends and neighbours.

Jesus and His disciples had spent the day in the heat, and the hustle and bustle of the city of Jerusalem. The disciples had exclaimed to Jesus their amazement at the huge stones making up the walls of the city. Jesus had replied that even those stones would be pulled down and destroyed. The city was neither impregnable nor eternal.

Jesus was alluding to the fact that He was eternal and anything on earth was temporary. They should keep their eyes on the eternal, not the temporal. The structures of this world may be magnificent but they will all crumble in time and be destroyed. Jesus, on the other hand, is eternal, and so are our souls.

As they sat down in the Garden of Olives and took time out, they found themselves opposite the Golden Gate and the Temple. There it stood in all its impressive glory with the setting sun reflecting off its golden artwork. The contrasting white and gold would have been almost blinding in the full sun. Now in the afternoon sun it shone with magnificent splendour.

The disciples reflected upon their earlier conversation with Jesus regarding the stones of the Temple and their permanence. They remembered how Jesus had responded. Now that they were away from the crowds and away from prying ears, Andrew, Peter, James and John asked Jesus to tell them how the destruction of the Temple would take place.

Jesus then shared with them one of His most intimate and revealing prophecies. He gave a panoramic view of the various menacing elements that would all contribute to Jerusalem's downfall. It came to pass in AD70 when Jerusalem was overthrown by the Romans and the Temple was destroyed. Thus began the time of the Gentiles; that time when pagans would rule over and within Jerusalem.

Jesus re-emphasised the need for His disciples to remember that Heaven and earth would pass away, but that His words would never pass away. Everything in this world will be consumed and pass away, but God is eternal, Jesus is eternal and everything He said will take place. So we need to heed what He says and make sure we are ready for His return.

Many feel that some of Jesus' prophecies will occur again when Jesus returns as King of all kings and Lord of all lords. Israel has been re-established as an independent state and so time is ticking away towards the final fulfilment of Jesus' prophecies.

Andrew and his fellow apostles would undoubtedly never forget that late afternoon chat. When Titus and the Roman army sacked and raped Jerusalem in AD 70, they would have watched in horror as Jesus' words were fully enacted in front of them.

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Andrew was just like us – interested in the future as well as enjoying the present. However, Biblical prophecy was never given to satisfy our human curiosity. It was given so we might live in purity, honesty and righteousness and, above all else, that we would live in the same way as Jesus ended His message to the apostles – What I say to you, I say to everyone: Watch!

Andrew would say to us today...

Never forget, history is His Story – God's plan and the outworking of it. The future also belongs to God. Wait for Him to complete your present and then lead us all into His eternal everlasting future.

Prayer

Father, please help me remember that this is not all there is – I was born for eternity. Help me keep focused on what You want me to do on earth and with one eye constantly fixed on Heaven and Your awesome Presence. Amen.

Additional Readings

- Matthew 24:26-35
- 1 Corinthians 15:50-58
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Questions

- How do we live keeping one eye on Heaven?
- What are you looking forward to in Heaven?
- What will you miss on earth?

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Lesson 7: Andrew waited for the Holy Spirit

Reading: Acts 1:1-14

We have seen that Andrew was one of Jesus' closest disciples – an apostle. Yes, he was not included in the intimate circle of the three – Peter, James and John. However, as we saw from our reading last week, he was one of the four chatting with Jesus when Jesus revealed some of the details of the end of the age and the destruction of Jerusalem which took place in AD70.

Andrew was one of Jesus' first disciples, having left John the Baptist with John, to follow Jesus. Andrew was so impressed, he ran off and found his brother, Peter, and introduced him to Jesus. Andrew was there at the Wedding in Cana when Jesus turned the water into wine. Andrew was there at the feeding of over 5,000; he was the one who introduced the boy with the loaves and fish to Jesus. Andrew was there when the Greeks came seeking Jesus and so introduced them to the Master.

Yes, Andrew had been with Jesus through thick and thin; from Judea to Galilee and from Samaria to Jerusalem. He saw the incredible miracles Jesus performed; He had heard His wonderful teaching and had the amazing privilege of spending three years in His presence. Following Jesus, eating with Jesus, walking with Jesus, and witnessing the support of some and the hatred of others – Andrew had seen it all.

Eventually, the time came for Jesus to become the Supreme Sacrifice. Andrew had fled from the Garden as Jesus was captured. He knew Jesus had been arrested, falsely accused, paraded before Herod and brought before Pilate. Yes, his Lord had been humiliated, scourged, beaten and crucified. Jesus had died, and the hope of all the disciples was shattered.

Andrew had heard that Jesus had risen from the dead on the third day. Yes, he found the other apostles and joined with them once more. And he was there that night when Jesus came and stood in the room with them. He was in Galilee that morning when Jesus helped them catch some fish and had breakfast together. Even so, he still thought there must be more.

Andrew was there when the apostles were together and Jesus finally left them for Heaven and ascended into the sky, never to be seen again. However, Jesus had given them strict instructions. They were to wait in Jerusalem until the Promise of the Father had been given to them. Even then, the apostles were still expecting Jesus to establish His Kingdom on earth at once.

Jesus had to mildly rebuke them and tell them that information was not what they should be concerned about. The timing of Jesus' return to earth was at His Father's discretion. They still had to learn that the Kingdom of God exists within a person once they are filled with the Spirit of God.

Yes, they were to wait until they were baptised with the Holy Spirit. After that they would be empowered to go and be witnesses to all that they had seen and heard. They needed the power from on high. After they had received the Holy Spirit they would spread out from Jerusalem, like the ripples when a stone falls in a pond, through Judea, Samaria until the message had reached the ends of the earth.

Incidentally, isn't it good for us to be living at the ends of the earth! Yes, the message has reached us here in New Zealand, so the coming of Jesus can't be too far away. But our job is not to speculate the day but to watch and continue to spread the Good News to all who, as yet, don't know or have not embraced it.

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Yes, Andrew knew there was more. He longed for more power and assurance. He also wanted to be able to perform miracles in the Name and power of Jesus. So, along with the remaining disciples and the women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, Andrew waited patiently in Jerusalem until that awesome day. The Day of Pentecost, when the sound of a mighty blowing wind filled the room and the disciples were never the same again. The Holy Spirit had arrived and totally transformed them. They took the world by storm and performed miracles that began to change the world.

I'm amazed how it still happens today. Every time we hold a Weekend Away or Healing Night on the Alpha Course, the Holy Spirit comes and totally transforms people's lives. Drug addicts, alcoholics, the lonely, hurting and desperate people are miraculously transformed by the power of God. That's why I carry on with Alpha – God is still at work in this, His world, if we will but open our eyes and invite the Holy Spirit to come and do whatever He wants to do.

Andrew would say to us today...

Please don't plan your life excluding the Holy Spirit, for it is He who will enable you to live life to the full and accomplish all God wants you to.

Prayer

Father, thank You so much for sending Your Holy Spirit to live within us and to give us all the Gifts we need to accomplish Your plans and purpose for our lives. Please help me to be constantly open to His guidance and leading. Amen.

Additional Readings

- Acts 1:8
- Acts 16:6-15
- John 16:5-15
- Joel 2:28-32

Questions

1. Why do we need the Holy Spirit today?
2. What gifts has He given you?
3. What are you doing with them?