

telling our story

life of Andrew

AIM

This is an activity based around the life of Andrew for small groups

INTRODUCTION

In the booklet, Exploring Evangelism you will find the question 'Who is your favourite disciple?' on page 27. This material supplements the booklet material with more suggestions about exploring discipleship in respect of Andrew, one of the 12 disciples of Jesus.

STRUCTURE

Stage 1: This is a short guided meditation

See if anyone has been to the Sea of Galilee. I have several times – and always feel the desire to return there as it is very tranquil and when I read some Bible passages centred there I can easily picture the scene. But if not people might have visited a similar place: a large body of water.

I invite you to close your eyes and picture the scene. Imagine a calm sea – Jesus is walking along and he sees Andrew and Peter throwing their fishing nets into the sea – Jesus sees them and calls them. They IMMEDIATELY leave their nets and do as they are bidden – then Jesus sees another set of brothers – James and John and requests them to do the same – they are in a boat with their Father – and they too immediately follow Jesus. All this, as far as we are led to believe, without a backward glance.

How can they leave their Father and family like that? – Jesus must have had something very compelling about Him.

Stage 2: Remembering Andrew: in small groups remember together what you can about the life of Andrew. Who was he and what did he do as you remember it? Write the responses on a flipchart for later.

Stage 3: Remembering our discipleship: If I see someone on the street corner or in the centre of any city standing on a soap box shouting at me about being saved I am sorry to say I am put off as I am sure others are too. I apologise if this offends any one but my feeling is that Jesus called His followers quietly and with dignity.

Some people can say that they have been born again and seen the light when they find God. I have often wondered if I have missed something. I was not born again. I believe I am lucky that I was brought up in the Church, the same one I go to today. God too has always been in my life. Unfortunately my sister turned from the Church when she married and had children. So why did I not turn away? Why did you not? What keeps us following?

Encourage people in the group to share their stories of discipleship. Perhaps like the writer you do not think you were 'born again' or perhaps you do. Perhaps you have a story of growing up in faith in one place or perhaps you have been to many? Share these stories to get a fuller picture of the discipleship experiences of your group.

Stage 4: More on Andrew. What Bible readings are there about Andrew. Use a concordance to look some up. Remember that even if he was not named individually, if the passage is about the 12 disciples he could be included. Equally passages like John 6:1-15 suggest particular times when Andrew played an important role.

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Here are a couple of other suggestions:

The Sea of Galilee can certainly be troubled and restless as I know from experience and as we know from the time when Jesus was asleep in the boat and the disciples woke Him to calm the storm (Matthew 8:23-27). If you are on the calm enclosed Sea of Galilee it is actually easy to see how the wind can blow a storm up very quickly. Was Andrew in the boat? What might his role have been?

There is also the example of the scene of Jesus walking on the water after feeding the five thousand. Jesus went to the aid of the disciples who were struggling to keep their boat afloat during yet another storm - Jesus got into the boat and immediately the waters calmed (Matthew 14:22-33). Again what was Andrew's role do you think?

You might also like to look at John 1:35-51 and see what you think Andrew's role was in this part of the story.

Make a list on the flip chart of the things you have learnt about Andrew. Compare it to your remembered list. Consider what the two lists have to say to us about discipleship.

Stage 5: And afterwards.... Think about what happened to Andrew after Jesus' Ascension. Andrew was not only a follower but he was a doer as well. When Jesus had died and risen again Andrew travelled to Greece and Asia Minor and was proclaiming that Jesus was alive and he was spreading the good word. What he said convinced many people to become followers of Jesus. Andrew also worked miracles and one of the people he healed was the local Roman ruler's wife. The brother of the Roman ruler was so impressed that he declared that he wanted to follow Jesus and for this Andrew was put to death. The Roman ruler believed that everyone should worship the Emperor only and so he decreed that Andrew be crucified - upside down - on an X shaped cross and tied on rather than nailed so that he would suffer longer.

Andrew's friends wept at what they saw but Andrew said he could see the blue sky and was looking forward to being heaven. This is just one of the old myths about the origins of the white cross on a blue background for the flag of Scotland!

Andrew's link with Scotland came much later. One story states that in 345 a monk named Regulus was told by an angel to take the remains of Andrew - and the news about Jesus - to the ends of the earth. Scotland was the furthest place Regulus could reach. He set up a monastery and we know this fishing port as St Andrews.

How do you respond to Andrew's story? Can you connect with it in your life or the life of other people who have inspired you? Share some stories that have inspired you in your group.

Finishing off

As Andrew recognised that he must follow Jesus, may we too follow what is good and right. As Andrew kept his faith in time of trouble, may we not let evil defeat us.

You might like to close with the hymn "Jesus calls us! O'er the tumult of our life's wild restless sea," which reminds us of Andrew's discipleship and our own. Or alternatively the hymn 'Will you come and follow me' might be preferred.

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Prayer

Collect for the Feast of St. Andrew from the Book of common Prayer

Almighty God, who gave such grace to your apostle Andrew that he readily obeyed the call of your Son Jesus Christ, and brought his brother with him: Give us, who are called by your holy Word, grace to follow him without delay, and to bring those near to us into his gracious presence; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

EVALUATION

Please try to answer these questions for yourself and for others who will use this material:

1. What was the most helpful thing?
2. What was the least helpful thing?
3. What would you like to try now?

THE NEXT STEP

If you want more materials for Evangelism Year please re visit the website. Other characters will be suggested for 'life of' studies in the INSPIRE section of the website.

Acknowledgements

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HOW TO FEEDBACK TO VISION4LIFE?

If you wish to offer any feedback – brickbats and bouquets are equally welcome! – you can do so in various ways.

You can email the Vision4Life steering group and the coordinator about general issues via the website or at admin@vision4life.org.uk

Website issues can be dealt with through web@vision4life.org.uk

If you want to make contributions or ask questions about other V4L years you can email: Year 3 – Transformed for Evangelism: evangelism@vision4life.org.uk