



Guided Bible Study

# The Twelve Disciples

(Week 1)

John 1 v. 35 – 42

An adapted version of Life Builder Study | Douglas Connelly

# Welcome

For the purposes of our Bible Studies, we will be using Life Builder Study Series (Inter-Varsity Press). Our theme for these studies is: The Twelve Disciples. The studies were originally written by Douglas Connelly, but we will be modifying them in order that they become more usable for home study as we seek to transition between the church building and our homes during the next several weeks.

These studies give us the opportunity to study the Bible in a greater depth and to reflect on what it is saying to us. If you will be doing the studies at home, it is suggested that you do the study on Wednesday morning, for an hour, starting at 10.30 am. Get yourself a tea or coffee, a Bible pen and paper (for any notes you want to make) and begin studying.

Hope that you enjoy it!

**Pastor Ian**

# Context

Jesus had about three years to mould a dozen fearful and faithless men into the pillars of a worldwide movement. Despite this brief window, time spent with Jesus had a transforming effect on each of them; most would be inspired and emboldened to proclaim him as the saviour against great opposition. Through these ten studies, we too can experience the deep change that only time in Jesus' presence can bring.

# Some Thoughts To Help You While You Study

The purpose of the study is to discover what it means to interest others in Jesus as it is modelled in Andrew's life.

Every reference to John by name in this passage is a reference to John the Baptist. John the apostle, the son of Zebedee and the brother of James, is the author of this Gospel, but he never mentions himself by name.

John the Baptist was the forerunner of the Messiah. God told him that he would recognise the Messiah – when he baptised him a dove would descend and remain with him. John's role was to point others to Jesus. Andrew and the other disciples were not abandoning John to follow Jesus, just acting on what John had said needed to happen.

Jesus wants us to reflect on following him in a deeper manner. If we show an interest in following Jesus then he requires us to express what it is that we really want in life. The two disciples respond by calling Jesus 'Rabbi' – a title of honour and respect. Jesus responds by inviting them to where he is staying for a more private and intensive discussion. Jesus is being both friendly and drawing them into a deeper relationship with and commitment to him.

Nothing directly points to any hesitation on Peter's part, but such an announcement would inevitably prompt questions. Andrew's actions and enthusiasm demonstrated that the most common and effective testimony to others is a private witness of a friend to a friend.

Our family members and close friends know us best. They have seen each of our struggles and failures, and it's easy to feel like we are being pushy or preachy. If those closest to us reject Jesus, we can continue to pray for them and strive to model a genuine, Christ-centred life before them. (1 Peter 3 v. 1 - 2)

Andrew's friendship with Jesus began at this point, but it also deepened over the months that lay ahead. Andrews started down the path of discipleship and never looked back. At each new level of commitment, Andrew was ready to say yes to Jesus.

Andrew was willing to live in his brother's shadow if it meant fulfilling God's purpose for him. He is like the children's worker or parents who leads a child to faith and then sees that child grow to become a fully committed disciple and perhaps God's instrument to reach many others with the gospel. Both individuals will share in Christ's reward for their faithfulness.

# Study I - Andrew

## (Bringing others to Jesus)

Andrew was not one of the major players among the twelve disciples. In fact, he always seems to play a supporting role. In most of his appearances, however, he is bringing someone else to Jesus. According to the New Testament, Andrew was the first of the Twelve to follow Jesus. In the early centuries of the church Andrew was called *protokletos* (port-clay-toss), a greek word that means 'first-called' - and the first thing Andrew did after he believed was look for his brother.

Personal Reflection: What qualities would you look for in someone who is truly a 'brother' or a 'sister'? Who are the people you think of as a 'brother' or 'sister' - people you have a close, trusting relationship with? What can you do this week to strengthen (or to cultivate) that relationship?

Andrew was on a search. He had a deep spiritual hunger and wanted the Lord to have the primary place in his heart and mind. Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist and had absorbed this eccentric preacher's message of repentance and preparation. One day Andrew saw John point to a man at the edge of a crowd. 'Look', said John 'the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!' (John 1 v. 29) The next day Andrew and an unnamed disciple (probably John the son of Zebedee) left John the Baptist and began to follow Jesus. Read John 1 v. 35 - 42.

Questions to think about:

From what you read in this passage, give a brief description of each person's role in the story: John the Baptist, Jesus, Andrew, The other disciple, Simon Peter.

How do you think John felt when two of his followers left him and began following Jesus? (John 1 v. 37)

Explain what Jesus meant when he asked, 'What do you want?' Was it a simple question or more than that?

What prompted you to seek after Jesus – curiosity, the faith of your parents, a Christian friend, the testimony of the Bible? Explain the factors that drew you to faith or interest in Jesus.

The first thing Andrew did when he was convinced that Jesus was the promised Messiah was to find his brother, Simon (John 1 v. 41 – 42). As a child, what did it take to convince you that something your brother or sister (or closest friend) told you was true? Why do you think Simon might have struggled with Andrew's announcement?

Why is it sometimes difficult to take to our family members (or closest friends) about a commitment to Jesus?

What can we do if those closest to us reject Jesus' offer of forgiveness and salvation?

Later, when Jesus called Andrew away from his fishing career to full-time discipleship, Andrew dropped what he was doing and followed Jesus (Matthew 4 v. 19 – 20). What does that response to discipleship tell you about the sincerity of Andrew's commitment here in John 1?

Share a time when you sense Jesus calling you to a new level of commitment to him. How did you respond to that discipleship call?

In every later reference to Andrew in the New Testament, he is called 'Simon Peter's brother'. Everyone knew Peter; not as many knew Andrew. What does that tell you about Andrew's character and attitude?

What qualities in Andrew do you admire and why? Which one of these do you want to begin to develop or develop further in your own character?



# Now or Later

Three countries claim Andrew as their patron saint: Russia, Scotland and Greece. Church tradition says that Andrew died at Patrae, Greece. The local governor was so enraged that his wife and brother had become Christians that he condemned Andrew to be crucified. Andrew is said to have asked to be executed on a x-shaped cross, feeling unworthy to die on the same shaped cross as Jesus. The x-shaped cross has been known ever since as Saint Andrew's cross. Andrew lingered on the cross for almost three days, and during hours of consciousness he urged those looking on to believe in Jesus.

Think of one or two family members or friends who have not received Jesus as Saviour and Lord. Begin to pray regularly for an open door of opportunity to talk with them. Then, when God opens the door, courageously walk through it.

Ask the Lord to give you a willingness to continue to say yes to him.

