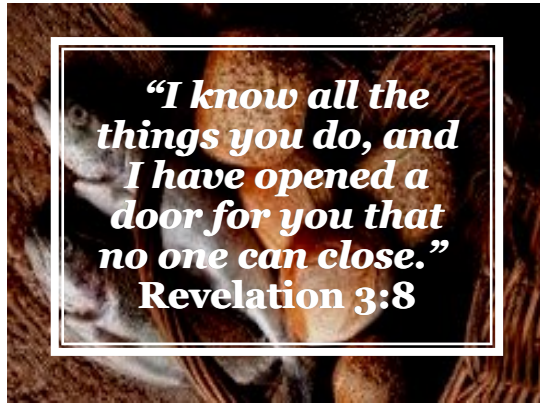


Andrew's Fish

"Ordinary Object, Extraordinary Meanings"



We don't often stop to realize that Andrew was the first disciple called. He had been a follower of John the Baptist and when John proclaimed Jesus as "the Lamb of God," Andrew went and spent time with him. After he had met Christ he immediately went and found Peter. He told him "We have found the Messiah" John 1:41. We don't hear much more about Andrew speaking up, but his faith was strong. Andrew is mentioned when the disciples asked Jesus about His prophecy that the Temple would be torn down. He and Phillip took some Greeks to Jesus who wanted to meet him. The third time is the feeding of the five thousand.

As He questioned the disciples on where they could get some food for the people, they told Him that there wasn't enough money to feed all those people. That is, all except one. That one was Andrew.

Andrew told Christ, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" John 6:8-9 NIV After Christ multiplied the loaves and fish

"When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us."

Helen Keller

the people saw what had happened. They were ready to snatch Him and make Him king.

Andrew trusted. Most of us would have probably said "Thanks kid, but

that isn't a 'drop in the bucket for the people we have to feed." Here again we have a small child with faith that his food could help, and Andrew presented it to Christ. He didn't turn the child away. He thought it was worth giving them to Christ. Christ didn't disappoint Andrew or the child. This gesture of Andrew and the five loaves and two fish feeding over 5,000 people was just another one of those times that helped people realize that this person really was someone special. It is not difficult to see why they were amazed.

We can have that same trust, but with trust comes a responsibility. Are we willing to start with just a little and see if it can help?

I am reminded of a wonderful minister, John Gerstner, who many times preached on "Faith without Works is Dead" using the text found in James 2:19-20. "Do I hear you professing to believe in the one and only God, but then observe you complacently sitting back as if you had done something wonderful? That's just great. Demons do that, but what good does it do them? Use your heads! Do you suppose for a minute that you can cut faith and works in two and not end up with a corpse on your hands?" THE MESSAGE This may sound a little harsh at first, but maybe that is what we need to hear.

"At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents."
Hull

Earlier in John we also get a wonderful message, but it isn't maybe what we want to hear. Again from Eugene Peterson's translation in THE MESSAGE puts it in today's language for us. James 2:14-18 "Dear friends, do you think you'll get anywhere in this if you learn all the right words but never do anything? Does merely talking about faith indicate that a person really has it? For instance, you come upon an old friend dressed in rags and half-starved and say, "Good morning, friend! Be clothed in Christ! Be filled with the Holy Spirit!" and walk off without providing so much

as a coat or a cup of soup—where does that get you? Isn't it obvious that God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense? I can already hear one of you agreeing by saying, "Sounds good. You take care of the faith department, I'll handle the works department." What physical action is required of us? Isn't faith enough?

We don't have Christ multiplying food today, or do we? Can it be done by us when we reach out to help others? There are programs to feed school children who don't have food on their table at home. We hear about food being dropped into areas around the world where people are starving. Missionaries have helped people dig wells so they had water to drink. I think this is our way of helping Christ feed those in need. We can be just like the small boy with the loaves and fish, and the trust of Andrew. Or, we can be like the other disciples who didn't even try. They just knew there was no way to help so many people! Andrew had a great faith and confidence that Christ could do something with just the five loaves and two fish from the young boy.

By the way, there were twelve baskets of food left after everyone had eaten. Maybe that tells us something about doing for others first. Sometimes we are like Andrew. Many times we are like the other disciples.

"Your positive action combined with positive thinking results in success."
Khera



"Knowing there's one thing I still haven't told you: I now believe, by the way, that miracles can happen."
Nicholas Sparks



"Miracles are a retelling in small letters of the very same story which is written across the whole world in letters too large for some of us to see."
C.S. Lewis

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for being there for us at all times. Help us to have the trust that Andrew had and the hope that the small boy had who thought his five loaves and two fish would help feed five thousand people. Help us to see where we can do a little that will help a lot. Amen

1. Do we sometimes "talk the talk", but not "walk the walk"?
2. Do you ever fail to see something that the small child sees and then realize it later when the child has gone on to something else?
3. What is the first step we can take to have the same trust that Andrew had?
4. What are your thoughts about "Faith without works is dead"? Explain.
5. Philip and Andrew seemed to have forgotten all the miracles Jesus had performed before. When you face a crisis in your life, do you remember how God helped you in the past?

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