

# **Sermon: A Model for Evangelism**

**Text: [John 1:35-42 ESV](#)**

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**Introduction:** How many of you know what the Restoration Movement is? Around the early 1800's the Restoration Movement was the fastest growing religious group in America. It was originally formed by Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists who wanted to go back to the Bible and be called simply "Christian."

Let's set some goals personally & corporately in the area of evangelism. I want us to develop models for our own personal witness based on Scripture. We will be effective if we follow the scriptural patterns found in the Bible.

All of us are on different paths listening to different voices. Many people today are searching for God in their lives. Even some here today may be looking for someone to show them God whether that be the minister, a teacher, or a friend.

The mark of a good witness for God is one who gets out of the way so as not to be confused with the object of the search. John the Baptizer did everything he could to point his disciples to Jesus ([v 35](#)). John says, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

**[John 1:35-42 ESV](#)**

**Jesus Calls the First Disciples**

<sup>35</sup> The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, <sup>36</sup> and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" <sup>37</sup> The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup> Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" <sup>39</sup> He said to them, "Come and you will see." So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.[a] <sup>40</sup> One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus[b] was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. <sup>41</sup> He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ). <sup>42</sup> He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas" (which means Peter[c]).

**Footnotes:** [a] [John 1:39](#) That is, about 4 p.m.

[b] [John 1:40](#) Greek him

[c] [John 1:42](#) Cephas and Peter are from the word for rock in Aramaic and Greek, respectively

**John, the writer of this gospel, always seems to say more than what you might think at first. There usually seems to be something under the surface ready to be revealed to those who would take time to look.**

**The title for my sermon is taken from the very first words of Jesus in John's Gospel: "For what are you seeking (looking)? i.e., for what are you searching?"**

**R. Bultmann says "It is clearly the first question which must be addressed to anyone who comes to Jesus."**

**To the question Jesus poses (the NIV renders it:) "What Do You Want?" our response ought to be:**

**I want to follow Christ**

**I want to find new life (Baptism/Lord's Supper, e.g. Road to Emmaus)**

**I want to tell (confession and evangelism)**

**This morning as we explore this question and develop a workable model for evangelism – I would like for you to remember three words, follow/find/tell.**

## **I. Follow**

**In the other gospel accounts we may recall Jesus saying follow me – but in John's gospel the following comes out of the natural result of revealed knowledge such as "Behold, (Look) the Lamb of God."**

**These first two disciples in our story Andrew and ??????, maybe John had not irresponsibly left the family business and everything when approached by Jesus. John, the Baptizer, had prepared them to understand who Jesus was and could be for them.**

**The idea of following has to mean more than walking in the same direction like follow the leader or *Simon Says*.**

**"Follow" is a term of dedication/a commitment to discipleship, to suffering and sacrifice, if need be. A disciple is to be a constant follower/learner/student. As we mature in the faith we should never leave behind being a disciple, a learner, entirely even though the tendency may be for some not to study once we find.**

**Following should always be well thought through - never a blind leap of faith or as a last resort. Jesus is the best choice out of a myriad of others. These other options, while sometimes appealing, will lead to spiritual death and disappointment.**

**E.g. I knew some people who have practiced every faith imaginable. Bill & Mary Harrison from Deming, NM (dear friends) were at one time Rosacrucians, into metaphysics, New Age, Church of God, Cleveland, Tenn., Mormonism, and I met them at First Christian Church where they told me there were angels in the sanctuary one Sunday (that one might be true).**

**We have an advantage over the early disciples. We have the OT and NT Scriptures to follow aided by God's Holy Spirit. And God's Spirit helps us all along the way if we want Him to.**

**There does need to be a pattern to our following. It would be impossible for us to find God before we followed otherwise we would not know who or what we had found. There is an order to things.**

**Illus. Do you remember Lt. Col. Henry Blake, "Hot Lips" Hullihan, Frank Burns, Radar O'Riley? They were giving instructions to B.J. Honeycutt and Haweye Pierce. I will always remember a MASH episode where they were trying to defuse a bomb that had been discovered in the compound, and were giving instructions (step by step) and at one point after a couple of things had been done said: (SHOW VIDEO CLIP HERE) "Oh, but first!" Just like baptism should never go before faith; following Jesus can never come ahead of seeking a relationship with God.**

**There is that time in all our lives where Jesus will issue an invitation to follow, to "Come and See," as a result of our vague questions like "Where are You Staying?" (v.38).**

**This question: "Where are You Staying?" is man's attempt of asking Jesus to live with us/in us. What these early disciples wanted was time with Jesus.**

**I ask questions that way. Do you want to have some coffee?**

**When Jesus said "Come and See" they had come to the place in their relationship that when asked the question "For What Are You Looking?" they said we want to FIND.**

## **II. Find**

**There is another question that is asked of Jesus. “Where are you staying?” These soon-to-be disciples wanted to get closer to Jesus. You understand in any crowd around Jesus (even today!) there are three different groups.**

- 1. Periphery - those who are only curious, possibly even fault finders**
- 2. Crowd - those who are hungry for something, people who are interested in changing if it doesn't cost too much.**
- 3. Disciples - these were the true followers (only 120 after three years were found on Pentecost). Within this group you had the inner circle (Peter, James, John).**

**Finding comes at the end of following and even in the middle of following as a reward for accepting the invitation to “Come & See.” The idea of coming to Jesus describes faith -- and seeing is also a perception of faith (in John's gospel, seeing=believing)**

**Once we find God, we must decide whether we will suffer with Him, and follow Him all the way knowing that following will cost a person everything he has.**

***Craddock Stories*, p.90 - One summer I was teaching at Princeton. In the refectory (fancy name for cafeteria), I found a place at a table. There was a young woman there.**

**“You a student?”**

**“Yes, I'm a graduate student.”**

**“In what field?”**

**“Theology.”**

**“Oh, really?”**

**“yes.”**

**We talked more. She was a Roman Catholic nun--she had not been one for long. She said, “I was a buyer for Macy's in New York. I had a nice apartment, and everything was just really going my way.” She said, “In fact, I was engaged to be married. About two months before the wedding , I had prayed, I had thought, I had prayed, I had thought, I called him. He came over, and I gave him (back) the ring. He didn't understand, but he took the ring and he left.**

Some time later, I was on the subway in New York. I was wearing my nun's habit, and all the seats were taken. I was standing, holding the strap when I suddenly realized facing me, holding the strap, right in front of me, was he. I said, 'Hello.' He said, 'Hello.'"

She said, "We both cried and said goodbye again."

I said, "Does it still hurt?" And she said, "Very much."

Then why did she do it? She did it because not everybody lives by the principle "If it feels good, do it."

I believe we are able to find God in a number of areas:

1. God's Word reveals Jesus to us. (Show N.T. I bought in N.Y. that helped me rediscover God.
2. Church/God's People e.g. fellowship (κοινωνία), sharing, participation
3. In Baptism (gift of the Holy Spirit) It is in the waters of baptism that our old life is buried and we find God and New Life, eternal life.
4. Lord's Supper. It is in the emblems that we see and remember ( in faith) our Savior, and we find who we long for.

These disciples stayed and spent the day with Him. As a result of this experience they wanted to share what and who they had found by telling others. Do we still have the excitement of finding Jesus? Who have we told lately?

### **III. Tell**

The very first thing in **verse 41** Andrew does, is he tells his brother "We have found the Messiah" (John translated *Messiah* for his Greek audience.) The title Messiah is used only two times in NT, both in John, here and **4:25**. The Jews already thought they would recognize the Messiah when he came. Andrew went and told his brother about Jesus the very first thing. What! No class in personal evangelism? The Biblical model for evangelism is that one disciple brings one disciple, etc. etc. etc. (60-120; 120-240; 240-480; 480-960, in 5 years we could be a church of almost 1000 if we followed this pattern.)

**The challenge is for everyone to win one. And even if only one out of four of you would take the challenge every year we would still be a church of nearly 250 in five years.**

**BUT, telling/witnessing/confessing comes out of a truly converted heart that will trust God in all situations to supply the courage and the words to say to those who are lost.**

## **We must tell people about Jesus!**

**Jesus changes Simon's name to Cephas or Peter which means Rock. Jesus sees who we are in the present, but even more importantly; He sees who we can become.**

**Andrew must have had mixed feelings about his brother's performance over the next few years but even through the mistakes and denial a man of God developed that would be an important force in bringing the Church and Its message to a lost and dying world. Pentecost would change everything!**

**Some people initially do not impress you, but God knows what they might become.**

**Galen Winters-typical jock. He was a great basketball player, but not the best student. He went on to earn his PhD, and later died much too young in a car crash here in Ohio, but not before making a significant contribution to the Kingdom.**

**Stephen (Steve) Collins- (personification of all the Kentucky Jokes when I met him my freshman year) graduated with a Masters of Divinity (120 credit hours) with a 4.0. He heavily promoted a very important mission work in Haiti for years. He became Dean of Students for Lincoln Christian University. The thing that impressed me the most was he asked me for my input on a research paper he was doing on Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Like a lot of people my age Steve is retired and he is living in Texas, but no doubt still a valuable worker in the Kingdom.**

**Conclusion: If you are a Christian, I want you to tell others about Jesus! God can use everyone of us. FB sharing is something you can do.**

**1. LOOK AROUND! By design, God has placed you near people where you live, work, or go to school, who need Jesus Christ. Take time today to list the names of five of these individuals or families.**

**2. LOOK UP!** Because God changes people through prayer. Pray each day for yourself and the people you have listed-that God will give you opportunities to share His love with them.

**3. LOOK OUT!** For ways to build friendships with these people and earn their confidence. Spend time with and invest yourself in the life of at least one of them.

**4. LOOK FORWARD!** Begin inviting each person on your list to join you for worship in person or online on FBLive. Pray for receptive hearts.

**5. LOOK AFTER!** Those who respond to Christ or even begin to show interest in the Gospel will need your encouragement. Continue to love and pray for those who do not respond.

**If everyone of you wins one person through your personal witness this year, we will have a major impact in Weston, Wood County and the world.**

**God sees the potential wrapped up in all of you and following Jesus involves serving.**

**Let's get involved in outreach.**