

“Second Place”  
John 1:35-40  
(Preached at Trinity, February 1, 2017)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Last time we saw some of the earliest followers of Christ. John the Baptist had burst on the scene preaching repentance and the arrival of the Kingdom of God. He was a charismatic figure and began attracting disciples to his ministry. But as soon as Jesus arrived on the scene he immediately began pointing them to Him.  
**John 1:36 NAU** - "Behold, the Lamb of God!"
2. We find in this passage John pointing two of his disciples to Jesus. They immediately followed Him. One is identified as Andrew. The other was most likely the Apostle John. Andrew immediately announced to his brother that he had met and was following the Messiah. His brother was Peter.  
**John 1:41-42 NAU** - "He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah " (which translated 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 is translated Peter)."
3. Last time I focused your attention to the nature of discipleship. It is described in three simple ways. They heard, they followed, they told. A disciple is a person who has heard the message of the Gospel, believed it to be the only way of salvation, and follows Jesus. And then, as the disciples of Jesus Christ we seek to point others to Him.
4. Tonight, I want to narrow our focus a little tighter before we move on. The first disciple mentioned by name is Andrew. We don't know a lot about him, but this doesn't mean he wasn't a great man.
  - A. He was a fisherman by trade. This means he would have been a rugged man with strong arms from rowing the boat and calloused hands from hauling nets. His name fit him well—the name “Andrew” means “manly.”
  - B. He was strong and bold. Tradition tells us that he was martyred upon an X shaped cross which has been classically referred to as St. Andrew's Cross. He was scourged and tied to the cross where he was left to die of thirst and exposure.
5. One of the most noticeable things about Andrew was his humble character. What we know most about Andrew is his brother Peter. Most of the time when Andrew is mentioned it is in the context of his being Peter's brother.  
**John 1:40-41 NAU** - "One of the two who heard John *speak* and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. <sup>41</sup> He found first his own brother Simon"  
**Matthew 4:18 NAU** - "Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen."

- a. We see it when Andrew brought the boy with the loaves and fish to Jesus prior to the feeding of the 5000  
**John 6:8-9 NAU** - "One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, <sup>9</sup> "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish"
- b. Even as we read the list of the Apostles Andrew is described as Peter's brother  
**Matthew 10:2 NAU** - "Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;"
6. It seems Andrew was always in the shadow of Peter; always in second place. Everyone knows Peter. Over and over it would seem that Andrew was mainly known because he was Peter's brother.
7. How hard this must have been. After all, Andrew knew Jesus before Peter. In fact, he was the one who introduced Peter to Jesus. And yet, it was Peter who quickly rose to the place of preeminence. Peter quickly became the leader and spokesman for the Apostles. He was one of the inner circle chosen by our Lord—Peter, James, and John. (Although, you might say he was number four)
8. Andrew became identified only as being Peter's brother. Many children grow up in the shadow of their older siblings. They are known as so-and-so's kid brother. This is hard. The natural thing for all of us is to claim recognition for ourselves. We love the place of preeminence. This was sometimes a problem for the Apostles.  
**Matthew 20:20-24 NAU** - "Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, bowing down and making a request of Him. <sup>21</sup> And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Command that in Your kingdom these two sons of mine may sit one on Your right and one on Your left." <sup>22</sup> But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They said to Him, "We are able." <sup>23</sup> He said to them, "My cup you shall drink; but to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father." <sup>24</sup> And hearing *this*, the ten became indignant with the two brothers."  
**Mark 9:33-34 NAU** - "They came to Capernaum; and when He was in the house, He *began* to question them, "What were you discussing on the way?" <sup>34</sup> But they kept silent, for on the way they had discussed with one another which *of them* was the greatest."  
 Even at the Last Supper the topic of greatness became a matter for debate:  
**Luke 22:24 NAU** - "And there arose also a dispute among them *as to* which one of them was regarded to be greatest."
8. Yet, with Andrew there doesn't appear to be tension regarding his second place position with his brother, Peter. There seems to be the absence of jealousy and envy. We read nothing of resentment that is so often present when one sibling is so dominant over the other.
9. Tonight I want us to consider this subject for a few minutes. It is most important because it hits at our very heart. I title the sermon, "Second Place."

- I. The desire for preeminence is a struggle for all of us
- A. We all want the chief position
1. This is why we struggle so hard against authority. We feel we should be the one in power. We are offended that we should submit to someone else.
  2. This is why it's hard for husbands to deny themselves for the sake of their wives. They feel they deserve to be served.  
And this is why it's so hard for wives to submit to their husbands.  
And this is why it is so common for employees to complain about their superior's at work. Deep down they think they should have the position and would do a better job.
- B. This desire for preeminence and recognition is firmly entwined with our fallen nature.
1. Business marketing knows this well and seeks to capitalize on it often
  2. I received this email a few weeks back. Keep in mind, these people don't know me and know nothing about my ministry:  
Hi Dale,  
You may not wear a cape or scale skyscrapers, but you're still a hero. And you're the driving force of why we do what we do. You're an inspiration to us and to all those around you, and its time you were recognized for the work you do in ministry each day. We have exciting news!  
You were individually handpicked to join our exclusive, invitation-only community for our best, most valued clients- because you're a real hero.
  3. It used to be a hero was someone who courageously risked all for the sake of others. Now modern marketing and our politically correct environment call you a hero for merely getting out of bed.  
And modern man loves it. We've all convinced ourselves that we are heroes and deserving of the title.
  4. It is very difficult to come down from our throne to be a servant to others.
- C. One of the greatest challenges is taking the position of second place after occupying first place.
1. This is what happened with John the Baptist. He had the place of recognition. Multitudes were coming to be baptized by him—even the scribes and Pharisees. He had disciples following him. And yet, when Jesus arrived he pointed them to Jesus.  
**John 1:35-36 NAU** - "Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples, <sup>36</sup> and he looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"  
**John 3:30 NAU** - "He must increase, but I must decrease."
  2. This is what happened with Andrew. He was in the know. He was a disciple of John the Baptist and he was brought to Jesus by John the Baptist. He was the one who introduced Peter to Jesus.  
**John 1:42 NAU** - "He brought him to Jesus. "  
And yet, it was Peter who became a part of the inner circle. Andrew merely became "Peter's brother."
  3. This sometimes happens when a younger brother or sister excels over the older children. This is why the brothers of Joseph reacted so strongly.  
**Genesis 37:8 NAU** - "Then his brothers said to him, "Are you actually going to reign over us? Or are you really going to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words."

- II. What is the solution for dealing with feelings of jealousy or resentment?
1. Keep the right perspective. Of all human beings you have been chosen to eternal life.
    - a. Jesus said,  
**Matthew 7:13-14 NAU** - "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. <sup>14</sup> "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it."
    - b. Andrew may not have been a part of the inner circle but he WAS an Apostle. He was the constant companion of Christ for three years. He was taught personally by Christ. And Jesus loved him deeply.
    - c. What wonderful advantages we have as children of God. We are the beloved. He is continually working for our good. We have the hope of eternity. Why would we become jealous of some small differences of position in this life?
    - d. What a blessing if we can have the mind of Andrew. His great objective was not to be elevated in the eyes of men. His great objective was simply to be near Jesus.  
**John 1:38-39 NAU** - "And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi (which translated 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."
  2. Remember, whatever advantages we have upon this earth come directly from the hand of God. We must never boast of what we have or complain of what we don't have.  
**1 Corinthians 4:7 NAU** - "What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?"
  3. We must never forget; God sees things as they truly are.  
**Mark 9:33-35 NAU** - "They came to Capernaum; and when He was in the house, He *began* to question them, "What were you discussing on the way?" <sup>34</sup> But they kept silent, for on the way they had discussed with one another which *of them* was the greatest. <sup>35</sup> Sitting down, He called the twelve and said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."
    - a. The greatest person in the sight of God is probably the smallest in the sight of man.
    - b. Now whose opinion do you treasure more?

#### Conclusion:

1. What a blessing it would be to have a church full of Andrews. Men and women who are content to labor in the background, passionate for Christ, and zealous for leading others to Christ.
2. What a blessing for all of us to serve others without resentment, even if they excel above us. What a wonderful blessing to live a quiet inconspicuous life. Too often the temptation is to desire, "Look at me." May God grant us the grace to say rather, "Look at Jesus."