

II. Project Andrew: Bring Them to Him
“Andrew Bringing A Young Boy... and More”
John 6:1-15
Dr. Harry L. Reeder, III
January 22, 2023 • Sunday Morning Sermon

This is God’s Word which is inspired, inerrant, infallible and sufficient. Praise God He has revealed to us the glory and majesty of His Name. John 6:1-15 says [1] *After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. [2] And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. [3] Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. [4] Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. [5] Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?” [6] He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. [7] Philip answered him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little.” [8] One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, [9] “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?” [10] Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. [11] Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. [12] And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, “Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost.” [13] So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. [14] When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, “This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!”*

[15] Perceiving then that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by Himself.
The grass withers, the flower fades, God’s Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy His Word be preached for you.

About ten years ago, I received a phone call. There is this exquisite piece of art at the Battlefield of Gettysburg, that’s called a cyclorama and it covers the three-day Battle of Gettysburg. It is over a hundred years old. It was painted by a French artist who, by the way, never visited the Battlefield of Gettysburg but it’s just wonderfully done. There were actually three paintings that he made. This phone call I received was someone offering me one of them. I said to my wife, ‘Cindy, do we have room for this?’ She said, “What size is it?” I said, ‘It’s 110 yards long when it is rolled out.’ She said, “Honey, I don’t think we’ve got a wall that is that size.” Seriously, the real deal was to try to get it into this wonderful blessing we have near us called the American Village, but it didn’t work out. So if you want to see this one, you need to go to the University of Wake Forest for they have it there.

Why do I bring that out? It is because a cyclorama is a very interesting painting. It gives you the full scope of the subject of the painting, but it’s given in segments so that you work your way through it. There’s one over in Atlanta, also, that covers the history of those battles. The cyclorama of the Battlefield of Gettysburg shows there were three days of battle. As you stand in the middle and go all the way around it and you get turned around, you see the first day battle, you see the second day battle, and then you see the third day battle and just work your way around it. But then you look a little closer and you realize it not only is a panorama of the entire battle with a focus on the three days in segments, but even in those three days, there are

small vignettes like, for instance, the first day the battle at the railroad cut, the battle at McPherson's Ridge, the battle at Seminary Ridge, the battle at Oak Ridge, all of those things that took place on that day. Then you go to the second day and there was the battle of the wheat field, the battle of slaughter pen, the battle of little round top, etc. So in this cyclorama you continually look closer and closer to see the details of what went on.

What is true in art is also true in literature. There's the metanarrative of the panorama story. Meta – means the big story. The Bible has the big story. It's the glory of the Triune God as Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer and Judge. Then it has these segments called 66 books whereby He progressively unfolds it by the Holy Spirit, working through 40 plus human authors. Then as you get into those books there are these smaller vignettes and you see what God is doing as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Yet each of these 66 books also have a big story – a metanarrative.

John has a big story in his book. In fact, this is really, really interesting about John. The reason we are in John is because of our series Project Andrew where we are looking at Andrew and how he would bring people to Jesus and learning lessons. There are three events in the Gospel of John where Andrew is bringing people to Jesus. So as we look at the Gospel of John and we look at it's content we want to make we have it in its context. We don't want to misuse it. Now, John is just a part of the big panorama, the Bible, but in the big panorama of John itself, John has a very clear purpose of what he's writing. He wrote somewhere around 15 to 20 years after Matthew, Mark and Luke had been written. He's probably in his ministry at Ephesus, and he's probably in the latter years of taking care of Jesus' mother Mary, which would have been his aunt.

Matthew, Mark and Luke, have covered the life of Jesus with a focus on chronology. John doesn't do that. John is topical and geographical. He is constantly giving you the geographical locations and he has a very focused, selective grid that he's working with. He clues you in on it by what he says three times in the gospel – these things have I written. Why have you written these things? I write these things that you may know that Jesus is the Son of God, the Christ, and knowing you might believe and believing you might have everlasting life. That's his grit. So in the opening chapters of his Gospel, he covers the first week of the public ministry of Jesus.

John then picks Jesus up after He's been baptized, spent 40 days in the wilderness and has returned back to the place that He had been baptized – Bethany across the Jordan. John the Baptist is there, and the week unfolds. The first day John the Baptist sees Him and says, “Behold the LAMB of God who takes away the sin of the world.” The second day John sees Him again and says, “Behold the Lamb” and this time two of John the Baptist's students start following Jesus – their names are Andrew and John who writes this Gospel, three epistles and the Book of Revelation. John and Andrew then go out and get their brothers James, older than John, and Andrew gets Peter, and then they go get Philip and Nathanael. So we get six of the Apostles gathered together in that week of ministry and then they're off to turn water into wine in Cana.

Then at the last part of the book, he finishes by focusing on the last full week of Jesus' ministry, the Passion of Jesus. That is found in John 12 through the end of the book. In between, he picks seven sayings of Jesus – I am the Door, I am the Light, I am the Resurrection, etc. John picks seven signs or seven miracles and he picks seven encounters where people believe in Jesus. For instance, there is Nicodemus, the woman at the well, etc.

All for what purpose? He is being very selective. How is he being selected? He is being led by the Holy Spirit. This is what the Holy Spirit's leading him to do with this Gospel.

I couldn't help but think about this when I was studying the last couple of weeks on this. I was thinking about the moment where of the preacher says, "I know that it went longer than expected, but the Holy Spirit just came upon me" and the elder comes up to him after and says, "Tell me, preacher, does the Holy Spirit ever shorten it? Does He ever edit?" John says, "If I wrote everything that Jesus said and did, the whole world couldn't contain the books" (John 21:25). He has this metanarrative and then there are these narratives linked to weeks of His ministry with seven sayings, seven signs, and seven encounters and there are some vignettes right in the middle of them.

With that framework in mind, we are going from a metanarrative down to a narrative. It's at a place called the wilderness, and it is an interesting event. This is the second event where Andrew brings someone to Jesus. In the last study, we were in John 1 where Andrew gets converted and Andrew intentionally created a lifestyle of bringing others to Jesus. He starts with his brother, Peter. We learned then to bring them to Him you must bring Him to them. Andrew goes to Peter and says, 'Let me tell you about Jesus. I want you to come. I'm going to bring you to Jesus' but he brings Jesus to them first. To bring them to Him, you must bring Him to them, but to bring Him to them you first have to come to Him.

Why does Andrew want to go bring his brother to Jesus? It is because he has come to Jesus and it's the new believers that are the most effective evangelists. Here we see it again. Here's the key. We will not, we cannot bring them to Him until we come to Him. It's only when you come to Him that you want to and you will and you can bring them to Him. Then we notice something else. When you bring them to Him, that doesn't stop with them for they bring others to Him. Andrew brings Peter and what is Peter going to do? He's going to bring 3,000, but praise God for Andrew, right? Peter is going to preach again and bring 5000, but praise God for Andrew. That's what we call these multiplying Gospel threads.

I shared one of these multiplying threads with you in the last study that started with a shoe salesman, Edward Kimball, that led the teenage boy that was working with him to Christ. I tied that in for you on personal story to show you how these threads interweave and how that shoe salesman went all the way to Mordecai Ham who came to my hometown in the 1930s for an Evangelistic Crusade from a prayer meeting that was being held at a dairy farm owned by a man named Franklin Graham. My grandfather and his two brothers were there, and right after that Mordecai Ham comes to hold meetings and Billy, the son of Franklin Graham, comes to Christ. His name is Billy Graham. Then 12 years later, they bring Billy back for his first crusade in Charlotte in 1948. When he comes, and gives the invitation my dad and my mom, 18 years old, come forward, give their life to Christ, and they're holding me a two-month-old baby. So I thank God for who? I thank God for Edward Kimball – there's the thread.

The same thing is happening right here in the book of John with Andrew – there is Jesus, John the Baptist, Andrew, Peter and 3,000, because we want to bring them to Him. I went back over the illustration I gave in the last Sunday because a deacon came up to me after the service to tell me something. Before I tell you what he said my wife Cindy and I have these fellowship dinners. This fellowship dinner is where a couple of elders and their wives, a couple of deacons and their wives and staff person and their wives, we just get them in just for fellowship and I just ask some question. One of the questions I ask is, how did you get to Briarwood? I had a really interesting answer a couple of months ago. One of the ladies said, 'Well, when we moved here about 30 years ago, we were thinking about coming to Briarwood

but we didn't because one of our neighbors told us not to go there because they make you talk about Jesus when you go to work.' I haven't seen that in a membership vow yet, but I plead guilty because I believe when you go to work, you're supposed to tell people about Jesus. Then she said 'Later on we get to be Christians and then we see getting hungry for the Word and now we go to work to tell people about Jesus.'

So this deacon said to me 'Harry, isn't it wonderful how you listed all those preachers in that multiplying thread, but do you realize where it started? It started with Edward Kimball leading that young man who worked with him to Christ. It started in a shoe store and then he took him to church.' You bring them to Him and now we get to see Andrew again. Let's look at these little vignettes that are happening right here in John 6. I want to give you a little context here before we get into this passage. Jesus had been here months before but He was run out after He had healed the two demoniacs. He left and went to Tyre and Sidon, which was the only time He went outside the borders of Israel, then He went back down to Jerusalem and now He's back in the same place some months later to that same place called Galilee of the Gentiles, because it was so thoroughly apostate and Hellenized from the Greek culture. He is in an area on the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberius.

Why does John do that? John tells us this because while Jesus was ministering, there was a city being built by the Romans called Tiberius, and he's letting us know that Sea of Galilee comes from the Jewish heritage and the Sea of Tiberius comes from the Gentile heritage. The Gospel is going to Jews and Gentiles. Now why is there a large crowd following? We find out that crowd is 5,000 men. Now that's a round number – 5000 men, likely means the crowd is likely somewhere between 14,000 to 20000. I think one of the reasons Jesus was run out of this area is that a couple of demoniacs got saved and were transformed and they wanted to go with Jesus but Jesus told them to stay there so they could tell people about the great things Jesus had done for them and do those people in that area. I think they were bringing them to Him. They've had an effective missionary ministry. At least they've had a part of this, and so they're bringing them to Him.

We see in John 6:2 that the large crowd was also following Him because He was healing the sick. So if nothing else, there's curiosity. The mountain that Jesus goes up onto is known as the Golan Heights which is on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. Remember John uses geography, theology and sometimes he'll put it in a chronological moment and here it's near the time of the Passover. This would have been Jesus' second Passover during his three year public ministry. The Passover, is the feast of the Jews. It's not the only feast for there are seven Feast of the Jews, but this is the main one. When it was time for the Passover the Jews went to Jerusalem. So the book of Exodus, the Pentateuch is on their mind and now they've come to see Jesus. Jesus is in a wilderness and the Passover is coming so just tuck that away in your mind in the vignette. Let's continue in the text.

John 6:3-7 says [3] *Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples.* [4] *Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand.* [5] *Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?"* [6] *He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.* [7] *Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little."*

We have a little vignette here. I don't want you to miss this for it's pretty important right now. The closest city to where they are is Bethsaida. Which disciple of Jesus is from Bethsaida? Philip, Peter, Andrew – that is their hometown. There's nothing but emptiness,

rocks, grass, side of a mountain, nothing – all the way down the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. That's why it's called a wilderness. In fact, this is the only miracle in the Bible that's repeated in all four of the Gospels. We get a lot of information from Matthew, Mark and Luke. There it's identified as the wilderness and the Disciples are kind of reacting like 'how dare they show up without a packed lunch' instead of seeing them as to how are we going to minister to them? To them it was more like these people were a bother so send them away.

Now we see a little conversation that takes place between Jesus and Philip, who's got a hometown nearby. Philip, how much would it cost, do you think, to feed all these people? Well, I mean, 200 denarii which is three fourths of a man's wage for an entire year which wouldn't even give them just a little bit. Jesus doesn't say, to take up an offering and let's do a trip over the Bethsaida to the big box grocery store and see what we can come up with. No, in fact, He wasn't asking this from Philip to get information. He was asking this from Philip to give Him some information. Jesus loves to use questions in evangelism and discipleship.

The text says Jesus questioned Philip to test him. What is a test for? I learned this from my algebra teacher who gave me a test in order to show just how stupid I was, but actually that's not what she was doing. A test is to let you know what you know, what you don't know, and what you need to know. Philip immediately thinks they need to go find some food or take up an offering. We're not exactly sure what he thought but Jesus says 'No, that's not My plan.' Now, we have another little vignette. Guess what? Jesus is sovereign. He's already has the plan and the power to pull it off. Now, will he let others participate? Yes, but not because He needs them, but because they need Him and He is allowing them to participate. He doesn't need us, but He can sure use us and we can be blessed to be used.

So that little conversation ends and now another conversation starts. Another hometown guy comes up and his name is Andrew. Andrew tells Jesus that there is a boy here that has five barley loaves and two fish. The fish were probably dried fish. Dare I say this but Andrew could have said something like 'I have a boy here who has five po'boy sandwiches.' The reason I say that is because barley was the bread of the poor people. It also tells us what time of year it was. Those who had wheat were well to do, well off. How did Andrew know what this boy had? Andrew had had a conversation with this boy. How did the boy get here in front of Jesus? Andrew brought him to Jesus. When you bring somebody to Jesus, they meet Him and He saves them, they'll bring what they have to Jesus. They will not only bring others to Jesus but they will bring their resources to Jesus, not to be saved by Jesus, but because they've been saved by Jesus. So they'll bring that to Him and that's what is happening here.

Andrew says to Jesus 'What are these five loaves and two fish for so many?' What does Jesus do with it? There was a song my grandmother taught me that says 'little is much when God is in it.' And we're about to find this out here. John 6:10 says [10] *Jesus said, "Have the people sit down."* Now **there was much grass in the place.** So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. There is an underlying reason for why John says what is in bold here. The people are told to recline on grass in this wilderness area and they have a need that seemingly can't be met – how can all these people be fed in this wilderness as they recline on this grass? Let's continue.

John 6:11 says [11] *Jesus then took the loaves, and when **He had given thanks**, He distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted.* He gave thanks. Why? Who do you think He thanked you? Who supplied the barley loaves and the fish? Thanks be to God, for every good gift comes from above (James 1:17). So, the boy gives to

Jesus what God had already given to him even before he had come to Jesus. Now he's giving it to Jesus and Jesus gives thanks for it. As He gives thanks for it, they begin to ministry.

John 6:12 says [12] *And when they had eaten their fill, He told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost."* I'm really excited to see this because I know some of my Celtic DNA is in the line of Jesus for we don't waste anything. When a fly goes into the soup of a Scotsman, he'll squeeze the fly to tell him to cough it up before he throws him out. Jesus basically just said, "We're not going to lose anything." They have 12 fragments left over so the need was greater than the resources. God makes the resources greater and then abundantly, but not to be thrown away or to be used inappropriately, but to be saved. I think there is something else here also. They're in the Galilee of the Gentiles with enough for 12 baskets and this is reminding us that the Gospel of the deliverance of God is not only going to the Gentiles but it's going to the Jew first, the 12 tribes. Let's continue in the text.

John 6:13-14 says [13] *So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. [14] When the people saw the sign that He had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!"* What would the people say that? Here's is why I think they say this. They are headed to the Passover and they have on their mind the Pentateuch. What did the Passover do? It saved Israel by the blood of the lamb so that they could have an exodus into a wilderness. Exodus 16 tells us they were in a moment that they were starving and needed bread. God brought manna from heaven and gave them more than they needed, which they saved up so they would have it on the Sabbath. Then in Numbers 11, they're starving. They say "We need meat." God brought it abundantly to them and they realize there was an exodus, a temporal exodus to get us out of the bondage of slavery and oppression.

Now we have one greater than Moses, who gives us an eternal exodus from the bondage of sin to everlasting life and He is with us in the wilderness on the way to the new heavens and the new Earth. We can trust him. He is the Bread of Life. He is the sustenance that we eat. We embrace Him. By the way, they didn't miss this; lie down in green pastures (Psalm 23). Your Shepherd will feed you and take care of you. They see the sign and still don't get it savingly, but they're getting it theologically. This is the One greater than Moses with a greater exodus, a greater bread, a greater sustenance and this is the One who causes us to lie down in green pastures by quiet waters, even in the shimmering Sea of Galilee nearby.

Here is the takeaway. When you bring them to Him, watch what He does with what they bring to Him, which He first gave to them. When we saw Andrew the first time, think of all the people he brings and all they bring. Those are threads of redemption multiplication. Now, in this text he brings a boy and this young boy brings five barley loaves, which by the way, God had given him. But now that he has met Jesus, he gives to Jesus all of it, and Jesus uses it. Now we see this extraordinary sign to show that Jesus is the Messiah, that they may believe in Him and put their trust in Him. This becomes one of the seven miracles that John recounts in this moment. As John does this something begins to obviously be said to us for when God saves somebody, guess what happens? They no longer own anything, but they're stewards for God of everything He has given to them.

I remember one time as I was in Charlotte preaching at this little church that we were able to plant, Christ Covenant, God was growing it to thousands and praise the Lord. I have so many stories that happened out of that but I'll just give you one. As I was preaching there was an older man sitting in the audience who had a young lady sitting next to him and three boys. To me that looked like a grandfather with his daughter and her three kids. I'm glad I kept my

mouth shut when they went by the door and greeted them because that was not his daughter. It was his wife, his third wife, i.e. trophy wife, as they called it in those days, and their three kids. He let me know that. I said to him, "I'd love to get together and talk if we can." He said "Sure," I said, 'Can we meet at a restaurant or something? I'll buy you lunch.' He said "No, you won't, I'll buy your lunch. Some people told us to visit and I'm glad we did. I'd like to talk to you about some of that." When we had lunch I pulled out a napkin. I asked him two questions and wrote down three things – our situation, God's solution, and your salvation. Then I shared with him the Gospel and those three points.

Then I said, 'Do you understand?' He said, "Yes." I said, "Do you see any reason why you should not receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior?" He said, "No, I need to do this. Man, I need to do this." I found out this guy actually used to live in Pensacola because he was a Blue Angel pilot. He was decorated in the Korean conflict and the Vietnam conflict. He now is a real estate man. His wife recommitted her life to Christ. They got involved in the church. Then one day it just struck me, we're about to do a short missions trip to Jamaica, and we have this missions organization there called Jars – Jungle Aviation and Radio Service, which was part of Wycliffe Translators. We would use their planes to go on our short missions trip and they had a plane known as a DC-3. In the 1990's the DC-3 was already 60 to 70 years old.

I went to this man that flew jets and I said, "Hey, how'd you like to go on a DC-3 somewhere? It's free and I'll take care of the cost." He said, 'Really?' I said, "Yeah and we have a short missions trip. We're going to take off from Monroe Airport, we're going to go to Jamaica. JARS has given us a DC-3, so why don't you go?" He said, "I'm just a new Christian." And I said 'Don't worry, we'll use you. It'll be great.' So he went, got back and I received a phone call from him asking if I could meet with him. We got together and he said 'I have three questions for you, Pastor. Question number one, I just closed on a real estate deal in Tampa, Florida. They didn't have the money, so they threw in a twin engine Aztec. I now have two planes and I can't fly, but one at a time. This JARS thing is awesome. I would like to park it down at JARS to let them use it to credential their pilots and any special things that they need to get done if they'll just keep it up. Are you okay with that?' I said, "Sounds great to me. We support them and that's another good support piece."

He said, 'Praise the Lord. Here is question number two, could I volunteer for the World Missions Global Team?' I said, 'Yeah, I think that'd be okay.' I called the mission's pastor and within 36 hours, he was a member of the missions team as he got a taste of world missions and now he was ready to help get other people there. He said, "My third question is, do you ever get breakdowns whenever you're doing missions conference ministry where commercial airlines don't work out?" I said, 'yeah.' He showed me this paper of this plane and said, "I have first use of this plane and if there's any time you can't get somewhere, we're going to use that plane and I'm going to fly you where you need to go." I had no idea I was going to have my own plane and pilot when I needed one although that's not quite had worked out.

My point is for you to see how when God got a hold of his heart he was ready to use the resources God had given him for the Lord. Not only when you bring them to Him, they bring what they have been given by God to Him and watch how God uses it. It's so exciting. I have one more thing I want to share with you in this regard. When I first started preaching at Christ Covenant this young lady came up to speak to me and her husband had left her. She said, 'I really need this church to shepherd me through this divorce.' She had biblical grounds for the divorce and she had with four boys. I never recommend divorce, but this one was pretty obvious that something needed to happen. I said to her, "We're going to do this, but I want you

to know I'm going to take a shot at your husband. Is that okay?" Basically, she told me "better men than you have tried this" so me and an OPC Presbyterian pastor went after him. Guess what? Long story short, I led her husband, Steve, to Christ, and then I saw him sitting in the back row. Later he came to me and said, "Do you think that Marnie would let me remarry her?" I said, "I don't know. You have no rights of expectation. Why don't you court her?" Me and the other pastor disciplined him and he began to court her. She eventually said "yes" to marrying him again. So we did their wedding. It was a remarriage.

Steve was way up there in the financial world full of CEOs and all and had all kinds of things going on. At this time in our church we're meeting in a gymnasium whereas before we were in a doublewide trailer. Realize people don't give their best chairs to church plants. We had chairs that we nicknamed the widow makers. I would be preaching and people would just disappear. I thought they were slain in the Spirit, but actually the legs had given out. I said, "Would like to have your wedding somewhere else since I know the upper quest of Charlotte will be coming to your wedding?" He said, 'Nope, we worship here and they come get along with us too.' They had all four of their boys stand up front with them, they gave their testimony and had their marriage.

The next thing I know I get a phone call from this man names Harvey who said to me, "I've been talking to Steve and Steve's been want me to come to church and he's been telling me about Jesus. I did go to his wedding and I've never seen a wedding like that. Can I talk to you about it?" I said 'sure' so we met at a restaurant and I pulled out a napkin like I did with Steve. I had two questions. I wrote down three things and eventually said, "Is any reason why you shouldn't come to Jesus?" He said, 'No' and so Harvey became a Christian. He went back to his apartment where he had a relationship that we used to call 'living without the benefit of clergy' and he told her, 'You have to move out. I'm Christian.' She said, "Are you in some cult?" He said, 'No.' She said, "Well, you move out. I'm not moving out. Where does this place meet?" So she showed up the next Sunday, red hair, red faced, mad from the moment she walked in and she told me later, "I was convinced you were a cult and when I got where you were meeting I was convinced even more. I was waiting for you to bring out a box of snakes at any moment." No, that didn't happen but she was mad. That first time she was there she walked right by me and wouldn't talk to me.

There was a sweet lady in our church who I got to talk with her and Miriam led Beth to Christ. Then Harvey and Beth started courting, started discipling them and then married them. At their marriage, all those CFOs and upper crested people were all back again. At their marriage they shared their testimony. I received a phone call the next day from a man named Dan and Dan said, "I work with Steve and Harvey and they've been telling me about Jesus and want me to come to church but I did go to the wedding. I've never seen weddings like that before. Can I talk to you about that?" I've done three remarriages and one of them was my dad and mom, and that was a happy day but it was also a perplexing day especially when I was officiating my parents and had to say "Dad, would you take Mom to be your wife?"

Anyway, Dan and I meet at a restaurant and I pull out a napkin and by the end Dan gave his life to Jesus. His wife had left him but in the course of the next months, God brought this wonderful Christian lady into his life and they got married, praise the Lord. After Dan and Chris' marriage I received a phone call by a man named Joe who said to me "I work with Dan, Harvey and Steve, and they've been telling me about Jesus and they've been wanting me to come to church, but I did come to those wedding. Never seen weddings like that before. Can I talk to you about it?" We also met at a restaurant where I showed him the napkin and he came

to Christ. He brought his sweet wife, Betty to church and she became a Christian. I can take this further, but I'm not but I do want to tell you what happened.

Steve, a very gifted man, became vice president of Reform Theological Seminary in Charlotte. Marnie, his wife, a very gifted woman became the superintendent of Covenant Day School. Their son is president of Covenant College right now. Another son of theirs is the youngest tenured professor in history at Princeton University with a witness for Christ. Harvey became an elder and he and Beth oversaw our evangelism explosion ministry leading people to Christ. Chris and Dan helped us plant our first church and brought in Bethany Adoption agencies because Lifeline wasn't available then, so Bethany Adoption Agencies and Crisis Pregnancy Center helped us plant our first church. Joe became president of the Men's Ministry and Betty became president of the Women's ministry. Do you get the picture? You bring them to Him, they come to Him, and they bring others to Him, but they bring all that they have to Him and watch what God does with it. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to share that with you so let's pray.

Prayer:

Today, if you want to give your life to Jesus, please call us at Briarwood at (205) 776-5200. We would love to bring you to Him and He will save you. It will be a glorious deliverance, not from just the oppressions of this world, but from sin's guilt, shame and power. If you have come to Him today, bring others to Him, like Andrew. How did Andrew know about that boy? He had had a conversation with him and he brought him to Jesus and then that boy brought what he had to Jesus. Jesus, thank You for what You did with it and what You're teaching us through it. We declare with those that are there, You are the Messiah, the Christ, the Prophet, the Son of God, our Savior. So here we are. Help us to bring others and then with them we bring all that we have. We not only anticipate how many more are going to be brought to You, but how much more You're going to do with what we have from You when we give it to You and we'll give You praise, in Jesus' Name, Amen.