

## Share What You Love About Jesus

### John 1:29-41 (NIV84)

<sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" <sup>30</sup> This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' <sup>31</sup> I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel." <sup>32</sup> Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. <sup>33</sup> I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' <sup>34</sup> I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God." <sup>35</sup> The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. <sup>36</sup> When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" <sup>37</sup> When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup> Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" <sup>39</sup> "Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour. <sup>40</sup> Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. <sup>41</sup> The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ).

When you hear the word "evangelism," what picture comes to mind? Does the word "evangelism" conjure for you a sight of two people walking down the street in white button up shirts and ties with name tags going door to door cold calling people to ask them if they have heard about Jesus Christ? Is it a picture of people sitting in your living room with a coffee table in between them with a Bible on it? Does evangelism make you think of postcards or doorhangers, things you can drop off at people's houses without necessarily having a face to face conversation? Is it sharing a Facebook post from Your Time of Grace or one of the sermon videos from church with a friend that you think it would really connect with? Is it a face, someone who you know that needs to hear this message and you pray constantly that they would hear this and believe it?

The word "evangelism" literally means "sharing good news." Christians have the understanding that this good news that we share is about Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, who took away our sins so that we can live forever with God in heaven. So, evangelism can look like all the pictures that I just described to you.

Does, then, evangelism – sharing Jesus as your Savior from sin - make your heart race, make you nervous just thinking about it. Do you hear the word and instantly think, "I'm not cut out for that. I'd be no good at it. I don't have all the answers. I would probably mess it up, say the wrong thing, and make it worse."? Do you think, "You know, evangelism, isn't that what we have a pastor for? So, I don't need to do it, right?" Do you think, "You know, I love God. I love coming to church. I love hearing God's Word, but where can I share it, and with whom? I can't at work; they have strict rules against it. My family has heard it from me so many times I'm afraid that they are just tuning me out, maybe that they are on the verge of not talking to me because I keep bringing it up."?

Evangelizing, telling people the saving message of Jesus, is scary. This message is the most important thing you can know in life, and it's also a very personal matter of belief. What if the person I share Jesus with rejects me, wants nothing to do with me? What if they never talk to me again? What if they laugh at me? Yes, the idea of evangelism can be very scary, scary enough that we don't even try it, maybe, or especially, because we don't even know what we would say or how we would bring it up. Examine, though, how two people in our Gospel account for today shared Jesus with others.

Our first case study is John the Baptizer. Last week we heard what had happened when John baptized Jesus. The heavens opened. The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove and the booming voice of God the Father said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:16-17) Soon afterward, maybe even the next day after this event, "John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!... I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.'" (verses 29, 32-34) And then the day after that he did this same thing as Jesus was passing by. "Hey, look! The Lamb of God!" John could not hold in what he had experienced. He needed to point Jesus out to people. He needed to share this message that the one who takes away the sin of the world, your sin, my sin, he is walking among us! You heard about that event when I baptized someone, when the heavens opened? Well, this is the guy! God has made it clear to me that this man who walks among us is our Savior from sin. This is why I am here! I'm here to point him out to you!

That second time when John pointed out Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, two of his disciples got up and followed Jesus. Jesus engaged those two disciples asking them, "What do you want?" or, more literally, "What are you seeking?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" (verse 38) Teacher, we want you to teach us. And Jesus says, "Come." So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. (verse 39) One of those two disciples was named Andrew. Do you know what Andrew did after spending a day with Jesus? The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon [Peter] and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). (verse 41)

What can we learn from John and from Andrew in how they did evangelism? Both John and Andrew shared what they had learned about Jesus, what they loved learning about Jesus. John took every opportunity he had to literally point people to Jesus. He pointed Jesus out to anyone who would listen to him. He wanted to make sure that they heard this, that they knew who Jesus is and what he was here to do. "Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (verse 29) Here is the Passover Lamb in human form, that sacrifice that we remember from so long ago. It is his blood that will cover us to save us from death as was prefigured by the perfect, year old, Passover Lamb's blood that covered the doorposts of our ancestors to save them from the tenth and final plague on Egypt – the death of the firstborn. He is also like the scapegoat that we use on our Day of Atonement festival, the goat that the priest confesses the sins of the entire community on before it's led away never to come back. Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world – my sin, your sin, all of our sins, all the sins of the world, entire world!

Andrew, on the other hand, went up to his brother, Simon Peter, and told him, "We have found the Messiah!" This is what Andrew had learned after spending a day with Jesus. Messiah and Christ both mean, "The Anointed One." People in the Old Testament had oil poured on their heads to signify their appointment for a specific task. Sometimes the anointing with oil was to signify a person as a prophet; other times it signified the appointment of a king or leader. The Anointed One, the Messiah, that they were looking forward to was the one who would come from the line of David, the one who would rule forever, the one who was appointed with the task of crushing the devil and removing their sin. This is the new information that Andrew had learned and he had to share it with his brother and then bring his brother to Jesus to see him for himself, to meet the Messiah.

Sometimes when we think about sharing our faith, evangelizing, we immediately think that it's a process. There's a text book to it. I have to take a class on it. I have to be academic about it. Evangelism is much simpler than that. God says of us that he has made us his people by bringing us to faith so that we may declare the praises of him who called us out of darkness and into his wonderful light. To put it this way, you know when you have something good happen to you, when you have good news, you want to share it. You can barely contain it. You have good news, great news! You heard it from John: Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away your sins. You heard it from Andrew: Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, the one anointed and appointed to crush the devil and free us from the tyranny of sin. They shared with you through God's recorded Word what they learned about Jesus, what they love about Jesus.

So, when you think of evangelism, I want you to think of first and foremost: What do you love about Jesus? What things have you learned about your God that fill your life with joy and happiness, with contentment and satisfaction? What truths about him have you come to realize that you just can't contain? The answer to these questions will be what you share with people about Jesus. Those answers will be how you will evangelize. Did hearing that phrase again today, "Look! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" make you appreciate Jesus all over again as the Savior not of just some, but of the whole world? Then talk about it with people after you leave here today. Did you read a devotion that showed you how God is going to hold you up through all your troubles and that message gave you comfort? Then share it with a family member who needs it. Did you feel the burden of all the guilt that you carry around day to day because you are just not adequate enough but felt it lift as you heard Jesus say, "Cast all your anxiety on me because I care for you," and suddenly you realized that you don't have to carry this around? Tell others about that. Did you learn in Bible class how Jesus faithfully and completely and perfectly kept all of God's commandments for you so that you go to heaven and that knowledge gives you confidence about your eternal life in heaven? Then spread that message.

Whatever you love about Jesus, share it, just like John and Andrew did. When you do this, you are sharing the good news about Jesus; you are evangelizing. And who knows who you will reach by doing so. John pointed Jesus out and at least two of his disciples got up and followed Jesus, one of them being Andrew. Then Andrew goes and tells his brother Simon Peter about Jesus. Think of how many more people got to know Jesus because of them. Thousands of people, if not more! Not every time that you share Jesus will be a home run like this, but sharing what you love about Jesus does takes on a ripple effect. It spreads and reaches more and more, but it all starts with one person telling people what they love about Jesus.

God uses us to show Jesus to people. We show people Jesus simply by telling them what we love about Jesus. Don't keep that good news in. Share it. Share it so that more people can love Jesus for the reasons you love Jesus. Share what you love about Jesus so that more people can know the Messiah, can know the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Amen.