

Connecting People To Jesus

Andrew introduces his brother Simon - Andrew was a connector

John 1:40-42 King James Version (KJV)

40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

John 1:40-42 New International Version (NIV)

40 Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus.

41 The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ).

42 And he brought him to Jesus.

- In the business world it is called Networking
- In the church we call it is called Soul Winning

What compelled Andrew to reach out to Simon?

- He says in verse 41, "We have found the Messiah."
- You don't find something unless you have been looking for it.
- He was excited about what he found.

Andrew was excited.

- Andrew wanted to share what he had found.
- Andrew wanted those closest to him to have what he had.

The saddest person in the world is a stingy person.

- They don't share what they have.
- They don't share who they are.
- They don't share their talents.
- They don't share their love.

Andrew was not a stingy person.

- As soon as he found who he believed to be the long awaited messiah, he went running home to tell his brother.

In his book, *The Turning Point*, Malcolm Gladwell describes the work of the connector.

The connectors he explains are important to social epidemics.

- The reason why a new restaurant would become the new hotspot in the community might well depend a great deal on the work of the connector.
- You see a connector is the person in the market place who tells all their friends about the great deal they just got at Wall Mart.
- Or the fantastic food they ate at a new restaurant.
- Every church has connectors in them.

I have identified my wife as being a connector.

- Should Natalie find a bargain at say Wall Mart, she will immediately call her mother and sister on the phone and tell them about the great deal and why they should head over to Wall Mart as soon as they get off work.
- My wife is a connector.
- She loves telling people about everything from the newest restaurant, to the store that has a sale on paper napkins.

My life was changed by a connector

- I was 17 years old when I came into contact with this person.
- 95% of the relationships I have today are a direct result of this one connector in my life.
- Mike was his name.
- Had this person never told me about and invited me to his church, I never would have met most of the people who I now know as my family, close friends and colleagues.
- He was not a preacher.
- He was a connector.

Something excited him about his church and he could not help himself to share it with someone else.

- Mike is not an orator.
- He is not a teacher of God's word.
- But he connected me to the people who would eventually change my life.

We all have had the work of a connector in our lives.

- They introduced us to the church.
- They introduced us to our spouse.
- They told us the kind of car we should buy.
- They work behind the scenes to promote projects, products and agendas and they do it every day without pay or recognition.
- You might say it's their personality.
- I would say it's more of an obsession with some people.

My wife can't help herself.

- She has to share her good fortune.
- I have told her in the past to keep some bargains to herself.
- Like the beautiful new dress she just got off a clearance rack for a few bucks.
- I tell her let people think you paid a little something for it, but no, she has to tell the world where they can get the same deal.
- She loves to be the connector and quite frankly she can't help

herself, it's her personality.

Every church has connectors in them.

We often fail to appreciate the work they do.

Neither do we appreciate the fact that they do their work with great diligence and without anyone noticing them.

- The connector in the church may not be on the leadership team.
- They may be the little grandmothers who don't say much, but when she does, people listen.

Connecting people to Jesus should come as natural to us as telling someone about the latest restaurant in town.

- It should be as easy as telling them about the great deal we got at Wall Mart or some bargain we got at the grocery store.

We brag on the Bears...

- And we tell people about coolest video or post on Facebook, but do we ever consider connecting people to Jesus.

An easy 5-step plan to follow when it comes to being a connector

- a. First of all, how is our relationship with God?
 - When everything is truly right with God in our lives, we will want to invite people to our church!
- b. Keep a positive testimony before others.
 - We all have our own little "world" that we come in contact with everyday.
 - In our schools, on our jobs, in our neighborhoods and in the everyday places we go, we should make sure that we keep a positive testimony.
 - This will greatly affect our attempts at connecting people to Jesus!
- c. Pray that God gives us a deep burden for the lost.
 - We must truly love people to reach out to them.
 - Pray that God gives us hunger and desire to win the lost.

- Pray that soul winning is something that will always stay on our minds throughout the day.
 - Every person we come in contact with has a soul.
 - That person will spend their eternity in Heaven or in Hell.
 - Their final destination is in your hands.
 - That truth should motivate us to reach out to everyone we meet!
- d. Every day, pray that God would lead us to hungry souls and that we would have the opportunity to invite them to our church.
- Before we leave our houses in the morning, pray that God would open doors for us to meet people who are hungry and desiring more for their lives.
 - God will lead you if you are willing to be led!
 - Also, pray to be sensitive to His leading.
 - God knows who is hungry and will order our steps to meet these people.
 - When that opportunity arises, make sure you listen to the person and pick up on "life clues" that you can use to ask them to come to church.
 - Life issues, traumas, sicknesses, or others can be key issues in getting that person to visit your church.
 - You can say something like this: "My church is a place that will help you right now in your time of need.
 - Will you be my guest this Sunday?"
- e. Have faith that God will bless your efforts!
- We can be assured that God will bless our efforts every time!
 - We can only plant and water, but it's God that gives the increase (1 Cor. 3:6).
 - If we do our part, He will definitely do His!

“You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.”

— Dale Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*

Andrew was a connector.

- He didn't know it the day he went home from church and told his brother that they had found the Messiah,
- But that same brother would soon stand to his feet on the day of Pentecost and preach the salvation message.
- We know him as the Apostle Peter who also brought that same message of hope to the Gentiles who unless you are 100% Jewish tonight, is you.

Andrew didn't know who Simon would become.

- But what if Andrew never would have told his brother about Jesus?
- The book of Acts wouldn't read the way it does and neither would much of the New Testament.

When you connect your friends/ family/neighbors/ or colleagues to Jesus, leave the results up to Him.

- He is the one who saves and transforms.
- Don't be so worried about the result; let Jesus take care of that.
- You just connect them.

Just because someone has had a bad experience with some other church, don't be afraid to invite him or her to yours.

- Hey, I was literally grabbed by the scruff of the neck, drug down the aisle and thrown out of the front of the front door of a church when I was only 9 years old. I remember that usher furiously shouting at my two brothers and I, "And don't you ever come back here again."

I'm not sure someone can experience much worse than that on his or her first visit to a church.

- But I'm glad God put a connector in my life.
- I'm glad they weren't ashamed to say to me, "Come visit my church!"
- Come see what I have found.
- Come check out this amazing bargain I am enjoying in my life.

This church is getting ready to shift gears.

- This church is about to step up to the next level of where God wants it to be in this community.
- It's going to be pretty hard to be a part of our church and not involved in the ministry here.
- What I'm saying is, we're going to be taking it up a notch or two here very quickly.
- Change is in the air.
- Growth is in the air.
- What got us here is not going to get us to new place that God is taking us.
- And the Andrews of the church are going to make it happen.

There's some people here who are not satisfied with going home day after day and seeing their family or their neighbors or their friends and not telling them about Jesus and the amazing church that's changing their lives and helping their families.

- The connectors are not going to let us stay here.
- If you like it like it is, hang onto your seat, because there is an Andrew spirit that is about to take over this church.

I remember a story an old missionary to communist Russia told one time.

- He told about a small church he went to there where the people would quietly sing songs, but could not clap their hands respond outwardly in worship because it would cause their location to be found out.
- If they were found out, they would all be shot on the spot. So these precious believers would sit on their hands so they would not be tempted to accidentally clap their hands in worship.
 - Thank God we are still living in a country where you can tell people at the grocery store about Jesus,
 - Thank God we can still talk about Him in our work place and in our neighborhoods.

- Thank God we can connect people to the One who can and will change their life and save their soul.

Here we are out on the corridor of Valparaiso.

- Here we are right out front of everything that is going on in this city.
- Right on the Highway.

- Thousands of people pass in front of this church every single day.

But how many of them know this is the church you go to?

- Most everyone you and I know will pass by this church this year if not this week, but how many of them know this is where you worship?

“I thought this was a Bible Study!”

- I’m sorry, let’s read that text again...

40 b - Andrew, Simon Peter's brother...

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

42 And he brought him to Jesus.

Now there’s a Bible Study.

We can talk about evangelism, church growth, you name it, but it really all boils down into that statement. “He brought him to Jesus.”

Wow!

If this Sunday, which by the way is Friends Day, we would all invite just one person who came, we would double the size of the ministry potential this church.

- Only God knows who is going to fill an empty seat this Sunday morning.

- We have no idea what God might use them for in this church and in this community.

Right now, He's just Simon who nobody has taken the time to tell about Jesus, but look out! He's about to become Peter, the Rock of the church.