

St. Andrew

What do you want to be known for when you die? *pause* As Graham and I were driving down a road in Sedona, Arizona on our last vacation, I asked him this very important question. What do you want to be known for when you die?

Graham of course had wonderful answers that I won't share for his privacy, but then he asked me the question... and the first thing that came out of my mouth was "I want to be known as a vessel of wisdom." Not oh I want to be known as a loving or compassionate person, someone who puts others needs above their own, and other beautiful things like Graham said... Nope, I want to be known as a vessel of wisdom. I wanted to be known for my intelligence. I wanted to be known, as someone who people stared at in awe at the wisdom that just so naturally came from my mouth.

I wanted to serve my ego and pride even in death. And I wonder, beloved, if we are honest with ourselves, how many of us really want to be known for something that serves our ego and pride, instead of what really matters.

I mean if we dig deep and cut out the surface answers we would give if asked this on the spot-

If we really get to the core of our desires and wants for what we would want to be known for, would we find that our answer is full of ego and pride...

Me being the first to admit that mine was.

I think that one of the scariest parts of death is the questions in our mind of who will remember us, how will they remember us, and what comes next. The last question could be an entire year long sermon series within itself. However, I think one of the most hopeful things for the first two is that it is not always about us being remembered. Instead, it is how our legacy lives on.

See, Saint Andrew is a good example of this hopeful idea. Andrew is not talked about a lot in the gospels. But the times he is mentioned are significant. Especially here in the book of John, where even though some scholars argue that the author of John took some creative liberties, we do get the most detailed description of Andrew and the kind of person he is.

Andrew starts off as a follower of John the Baptist. One day, he hears John declare that Jesus is the lamb of God, the one they have been waiting for, and without second guessing it, Andrew follows him. Most consider him to be the first disciple, because not only is he one of the first to follow Jesus, but he goes and gets his brother. And his brother is Peter.

Peter, who becomes the head of the church of Jerusalem. Peter, who is famous for opening his mouth when he shouldn't. Peter, who wrote several letters in the New Testament. The impact Andrew has on the Kingdom of God is significant. Andrew may not be known as the preacher Peter was, or the, or have written as many letters as Paul, but his faith was so strong that he went and told his brother. He told his brother that they found the messiah-

The one who would bring about a new way of life.

A way of living that brings hope and peace.

You know when I try to imagine this dialogue between the two brothers, I cannot help but to picture it as if it was my sister and I. My sister leaving our fishing business to go follow John the Baptist, the crazy man that rants about a savior that is to come, while I have to

work with our dad on the boat. I imagine her one day running up to me and saying “Katie, you won’t believe it. We have found the Messiah- you need to come and see!” I also imagine that my reaction would be, “Allison, you have lost your mind. You are just as crazy as that John guy, and you need to be helping us on the boat.”

We know though that is not what happens in the story. In fact, I think it speaks a lot to who Andrew is that Peter didn’t question him or call him crazy, but went with him. Andrew had to have been a person of great integrity. His face also must have shown his deep belief and enthusiasm! “Brother, come with me! We have found the Messiah! The one we have been searching for!”

The important part of Andrew’s story is that he had seen the transformative and liberating love of God, and he wanted to share that with people. Sometimes the greatest thing we can do in this life is show the unconditional love and grace that God has shown us to others. Sometimes the greatest impact we have on this world is not the things we do, but the people we leave behind. The people that we have loved. The people we pour our hearts, time, energy, and soul into caring for. We do not all need to be a Peter, a Paul, a Lydia, or a

Priscilla... Sometimes we just need to be the one who is willing to love others when there is no personal prestige in it for us. The good news is that all we have to do is love.

That is Saint Andrew's legacy. His is a legacy of hope-

Hope that we will all answer the call to the path of love and grace. Hope that we will be empowered to share that love and grace with others. Hope that we can live a life of faith.

And that legacy lives on in the world. Andrew is the patron saint of 12 countries, including Scotland, Russia, and Malta. Legends around him say that he was the first person to preach the good news to Georgia, Romania, Scotland, and the Ukraine... he must have loved to travel.

He is known for being crucified on a cross that was shaped like an X, which is now called St. Andrew's cross. This cross is featured on the Union Jack, the flag of Scotland, Spain's navy flag, and Russia's navy flag. He is known as a patron saint of fishermen.

All of these things are really neat about Saint Andrew and his lasting impact on the world. However, it seems like Saint Andrew would be much more concerned with people knowing the

transformative love of God, as opposed to having a cross on a flag named after him.

So I ask you Church family, what do you want to be known for?

What will you be known for?

Amen.