

every church who do the basic work but never are heard in public. John 1:40-42 is about the biggest job Andrew ever did.

It was a little Andrew that brought me to Christ, Phate Cannon, a devout believer who never preached a sermon and who has never heard me preach. As I write today after 40 years, I still remember that night when he came and laid hands on me and led me to the "mourners' bench" where I found Christ. Do not forget the little Andrews who go out and find men for Christ. The church and the community need them. Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. Andrew must have been elated—to see the fruits of his labor doing such a great job.

Have you ever brought anyone to Christ? Have you ever had courage to tell one of your friends about Je-

sus? Try it today. Become an Andrew and go get Peter. These two brothers stand at opposite poles.

Debate

Resolve: That the Andrews are more useful to the church than the Simon Peters.

Resolve: The twelve were common ordinary men that did an extraordinary job.

Research Project

The influence of Peter upon the formation of the early church.

The man Peter, his weakness and strong points.

Name the first twelve and give reasons for their selection.

Regroup the twelve on the basis of their contribution to the New Testament Church.

Study V

May 4, 1952

James and John, Sons of Thunder

Luke 6:12-16

In our last study, we studied Simon Peter and his brother, Andrew. Not that Andrew and Peter were of equal caliber but because they were brothers.

Today we take up James and John, sons of Zebedee. Jesus shows great wisdom in the choices He made of these two brothers.

James and John were among the "big three" of the inner circle who saw more of Jesus than the others for what reasons, the group can find out. Were they better fitted for

deeper insights than the others? Were they better equipped mentally or emotionally than the others. What is implied by sons of thunder? (Be sure and have the group to distinguish between the Johns and the Jameses in the New Testament.)

Peter had frequent outbursts of words but James and John had the upperhand in temper. It was they who wanted to call down fire from heaven and burn up a Samaritan city because it refused to declare a holiday for Jesus. Luke 9:51-56 will

give the information. They seem not to have imbibed the charitable spirit of Christ. Here they are the symbol of the green, crude and uncouth, before they grow up in grace and mature in love. In this case they still needed the ripening influence of the Son of righteousness. Here they displayed their thunder characteristic. Men still need the light of wisdom and the heat of love to transform them from "sons of thunder" into sons of righteousness. When he had become tenderized in later years, he is not so ready to call down fire to destroy those who oppose what he thought was the right.

The desire to call down fire from heaven met with stern opposition from Jesus who again and again had taught that He had not come to destroy men's lives but to save them. How often such desires have been expressed by so-called good people, which if granted, would mean disaster and ruin. Sons of thunder are dangerous sons. What looked like holy zeal in James and John in reality was a mixture of bitter, carnal passion, anger, pride and self-will. Such a spirit and feelings needed to be trained in the righteous uses of such urges.

Let us take another look at these two brothers as First Place Seekers.

One day James and John reached the conclusion that the kingdom of God was an earthly kingdom and that they must get their application in for prominent places, regardless to their fitness for the positions. So they approached Jesus and requested that one be allowed to hold the right-hand position (Secretary of State) and the other be given the left-hand position (Secretary of the Treasury in our form of government) Mark 10:35-46. Here we have ambition at its best or highest point—desiring to take over the two high-

est positions in the kingdom. Was there anything wrong with their request? Is this not the trend today in our churches and democratic society? How did the ten take this request when they heard it? Is not this request in keeping with the law of "ask and it shall be given?" Would it not have been better for them to have said, "Lord, do with us and use us where you see best" than to have said "give us both of the first places?"

In the light of later discovery these two brothers were not of the same caliber or size in capacity or ability or mental range. Incompetency is ever-looking for the first place and feels that it is the best fitted for it.

Here is a good lesson for leaders of groups today. First, hear what the request is before you make the promise. You may be ensnared like Herod was who promised the damsel anything she asked even to the half of the kingdom but she asked for the head of John the Baptist. Worldly honors are still attractive to good people. Here we must learn that our desires must be refined, filtered and screened. If James and John are to help save the world, their ambition needed training in the art of restraint.

Listen to the prayers you hear in public and count the number of selfish requests. I, me, my and mine dominate the prayer. Most of the public prayers are for personal favors. Give us our daily bread. Rethink the Lord's Prayer and nowhere will you find a first personal pronoun. Pride and ambition are a bad combination against Christian personality.

He would be great in the truest sense of the term must be the floor mop, the door mat, the servant of all. Sons of thunder with their de-