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## Discipleship in 4 easy steps

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Over the next couple of weeks, we will hear several stories regarding the call of the first disciples. This past Sunday started this off with the calling of Andrew and Peter. Since then, the calling of Andrew has stuck with me. While the passage may be titled *The Calling of the First Disciples*, it seems to me that Andrew provides a wonderful lens through which we can view our own journey of discipleship. Instead of the impatient bravado of Peter or the deep insight of John, in Andrew, we see an example of what discipleship might look like in ordinary, everyday life. Andrew's discipleship comes about in four steps.

### The first step: inquiry.

After hearing John the Baptist declare, "Look, the Lamb of God," Andrew and an unnamed disciple begin to follow Jesus. It is important to know that at this point, Andrew has a whole lot of questions. Andrew asks, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" This isn't a question about Jesus' address or the location of his bed; rather, the question means, "Can I talk to you further? Can I interview you? Can I investigate?"

It can be easy to think that we can only come to Jesus once we have everything figured out. We believe that when we have answered all our questions, solved all our problems, and jettisoned all seeds of doubt, *then* we will follow Jesus. But is that a realistic picture of the life of faith? Just like there is never a perfect time to get married, or a perfect time to have children, there is really never a time when doubts, struggles, and questions will be completely absent from our lives.

Andrew doesn't have everything figured out, but he journeys with Jesus all the same. Jesus invites our questions and welcomes us to come and investigate him further. In fact, it was Andrew's inquiries that brought him to Jesus in the first place. So instead of allowing our questions or doubts to keep us away,

Jesus actually invites us to bring those things to him. “Come and see,” he responds to us all. Can we allow our questions to take us closer to Jesus?

## **The second step: spending time with Jesus.**

Having been invited to come closer to Jesus, we read that Andrew and the unnamed disciple “went and saw where Jesus was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour.” The 10<sup>th</sup> hour came, which was around 4:00, was the time when people began to retire for the evening. The implication here is that Andrew began to follow Jesus in the morning, spent the day with him, and might even have remained with him throughout the night. He spent a significant amount of time with Jesus.

How do you spend your day with Jesus? Do you see the hours of your life as being lived in his company? Is your life one of companionship with Jesus? Do you talk with Jesus, and also let Jesus talk with you? Sometimes, we get into this curious habit where we come to faith in Jesus, but then treat him like he isn’t there. It would be like ordering your food at a restaurant and then refusing to eat it: you know it’s there, but you refuse to engage. When Jesus invites us to “Come and see,” this is a gracious invitation to experience his presence. To be a disciple of Jesus is to be one who spends time with Jesus. There simply is no way around this fundamental fact.

## **The third step: commitment.**

The time will come to all disciples when we need to make a declaration of our commitment to Jesus. The path of discipleship necessarily leads all us to the revelation that Jesus is the Lamb of God – the means of forgiveness, justice, peace. This is not something we think our way to. This is something revealed by God, in God’s own time. But, the challenge will come; “Who do you say I am?” Jesus asks all disciples.

## **The fourth step: sharing the news.**

When we spend time with Jesus, and come to the realisation that Jesus is Lord of heaven and earth, we recognise that this news has to be shared. Disciples are called to share Jesus’ presence, love, and grace with others. We see this time and again. The first thing that Andrew does is find his brother Simon. The first thing that Philip does is find Nathaniel. The first thing that the woman at the well does is run into the village declaring, “come and meet the one who told me about my life,” and the last thing that Jesus does before he ascends is to give the command, “Go and make disciples.”

We are more than happy to tell others about that great new restaurant, or the place with the biggest deals. And social media being what it is, we share even the most mundane parts of our day. Yet when it comes to that which defines the deepest part of who we are, and even frames all of life itself, we often remain silent. Why is this so? Why are we so shy to speak about the person who reframes both our earthly and eternal existence?

So where do you find yourself? What step are you on? Importantly, in all these steps, Jesus never turns to Andrew and declares he is not far enough along. Jesus accepts Andrew’s place and invites him to journey further. “Come and see,” Jesus says. This is an invitation to journey with Jesus, and a promise that in Jesus, we will find our life. That being said, although Jesus accepts us where we are, he does challenge us to move deeper. He stretches us and calls us in faith.

So ask yourself, “what would it look like for me to journey into the next step of discipleship?” What would it look like to live with Jesus more? Would you read the Gospels? Could you pray that Jesus reveals himself to you? If you are living with Jesus, what would it look like for you to be stretched to share him with a family member or a friend? Could you live with Jesus in a more intimate and intentional way? Is Jesus asking you to allow him to have a greater role in your life?

For each and every one of us, the path of discipleship may look a little different. Still, I believe Andrew's journey has some relevance in our own. May Jesus bless you on whatever step you may be on, and the step you are journeying toward. Amen.



## About Kyle Norman

I am a Priest in the Diocese of Calgary, serving the wonderful people of Holy Cross, Calgary. I watch reality television, I drink Starbucks coffee, and I read celebrity gossip columns. I am also a magician and often use magic tricks to teach the children at church the lessons of the Bible. I believe that God is present in the intricacy of our lives, and thus I believe that Pop Culture can provide intriguing lessons, examples, and challenges for our lives of faith. Connect with Kyle on [Google+](#)

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