

The Andrew Plan for Outreach & Assimilation

From www.AndrewPlan.net by former ELS/WELS pastor, Jim Lillo

I. The Andrew Plan

The Andrew Plan gets its name from the Apostle Andrew. We are told that after Jesus called Andrew, he went to his brother Peter and brought him to Jesus. Andrew didn't spend a lot of time arguing or trying to prove that Jesus was the Christ; he simply told him, "We have found the Messiah." And then we are told, "He brought him to Jesus." Andrew didn't evangelize Peter; he simply brought him to Jesus and Jesus did the evangelizing.

And that, in a nutshell, is what the Andrew Plan seeks to accomplish. The Andrew Plan, however, is not only a plan to bring the lost to saving faith in Christ, but also a plan to keep those who are brought to faith by assimilating them into the life of the congregation. The Andrew Plan is a simple three-part plan in which all active confirmed members of a congregation are encouraged to do the following three things:

- Attend their pastor's Bible Information Class,
- Bring a FRAN (friend, relative, associate, or neighbor) along with them (just like Andrew brought Peter) and when the FRAN completes the class and joins...
- Sponsor that individual until he or she becomes assimilated into the life of the congregation.

Let us now look at...

II. The Advantages of the Andrew Plan

1. It's Simple

There is nothing complicated about this plan. You could easily explain it to anyone in a matter of minutes. In fact, it was this feature that one of our elders found most attractive. After I presented it to our congregation a few years ago he remarked, "You know, I really like this plan. But what I really like about it the most is that it is so simple."

2. It's Effective

Calls by pastors, evangelists, canvassing, media advertising, phone surveys, tracts, etc. are all useful in reaching the unchurched, and I would urge congregations to make use of as many of these as they possibly can. But surveys show that

between 70% and 90% of people that are brought into the church are brought in through this method. It's what we call "Friendship Evangelism;" people, like Andrew, bringing their FRAN (friends, relatives, associates & neighbors) to meet Jesus.

3. It Requires No Additional Resources

This plan does not require any additional funding, staffing or facilities. It simply utilizes the pastor's Bible Information Class, which most pastors already offer. For logistical reasons, pastors may want to have more than one class per week to handle the influx of students. Additional classes would also reduce the number of make-up lessons, since students would have more than one opportunity to attend the class.

4. It Involves Everyone

The Great Commission was given to the Church, that is, to all Christians. Now, to be sure, many Christians probably think this is too difficult for them. But how hard is it simply to decide to repeat the Bible Information Class and bring a friend with you? The results of a recent survey should be a big encouragement to anyone who might think that inviting someone is a really hard thing to do. This survey, conducted among several hundred unchurched people revealed that 96% of them would be at least "somewhat likely to attend church or a Bible class, if invited." And let us not forget the promises our God has given to us who seek his help through prayer. And if our FRAN doesn't come the first time, maybe he will the 2nd, 3rd, 4th or...

5. It Will Bring Joy

It first and foremost brings GREAT JOY to our FRAN. Indeed, what greater joy is there in life than to know with certainty that, through Jesus your sins are forever gone and that you are going to spend an eternity with your God in heaven? There is no greater joy than that. But there is also much joy to the "Andrew" who brought that person to Jesus. Indeed I count it one of my greatest joys in life to be able to come to church and see those who I had the privilege of bringing to the Pastor's class.

6. **It Will Be Spiritually Beneficial**

A good review of the basic teachings of the Bible is always spiritually rewarding. In fact, many pastors—ours included—encourage all confirmed members to repeat the Bible Information Class every five years. And even though I am theologically trained, I feel that I have greatly benefited from repeating this class a number of times.

7. **It Accomplishes Assimilation**

Surveys show that if new members are not assimilated into the congregation in a relatively short period of time, there is a high probability that they will not remain active members. This plan calls for the person who brings the new member to the pastor's class to sponsor that person until he/she becomes assimilated into the congregation also. Now surely the congregation can do much to help the new member become assimilated, but a truly concerned sponsor can add greatly to the efforts of the congregation. Some of the things they can do are: introduce the new member to other members of the congregation (especially those with whom they may have something in common), encourage them to come to church and Bible study regularly, invite them to other congregational events, and be available to answer any questions they may have.

So give it a try! Who can you invite to “Come and See”?