

The Apostle Andrew in Scripture and Tradition

by

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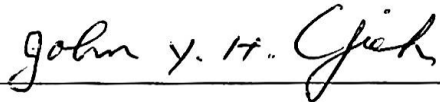
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In memory of
The Rev. John Carsten Harper, D.D.
1924-2002

Rector of St. John's Church Lafayette Square
Washington, DC
1963 – 1993

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”
John 1:1

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THE APOSTLE ANDREW IN SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION

Introduction

The name of Andrew the Apostle appears thirteen times in the Gospels and Acts, and he is the generative character in four crucial episodes of Jesus's ministry. But his role as an apostle is muted in the New Testament, in the Church, and in institutions named for him. The important Andrew episodes in scripture are very familiar. He was the first person to recognize and proclaim Jesus as Messiah (John 1:41); he introduced Jesus to his brother Simon, upon whom Jesus built His Church (John 1:42); he identified a lad with bread and fish, which Jesus multiplied to feed five thousand followers (John 6:8-9); he brought to Jesus a group of inquiring Greeks, which initiated the glorification of our Lord (John 12:20-22).

The Synoptic Gospels are silent on Andrew's role in Jesus's ministry except for being called by Jesus and included in lists of apostles. In the Synoptics, Andrew is not included in the innermost circle of Jesus's disciples, and he is never mentioned in the Epistles. Nevertheless, legends and traditions about Andrew abounded in early Christianity. He is often portrayed in Christian art with an X-shaped cross, and his Feast Day is observed throughout the world. He is a central figure in the Eastern Church.

Contemporary theologians have often dismissed Andrew. De Boer concluded that in scripture Andrew is a "one-dimensional 'type.'"¹ Peterson wrote that "Andrew as disciple....was historically a person of no importance whatsoever."² The Anchor Bible

¹ Martinus C. de Boer, "Andrew: The First Link in the Chain," in *Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel*, eds. Steven A. Hunt, D. Francois Tolmie, Ruben Zimmerman (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013), 149

² Peter M. Peterson, *Andrew, Brother of Simon Peter*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958), 2

Dictionary entry for Andrew reads: “The NT shows little interest in Andrew....Andrew is little more than Peter’s shadow and Jesus’ occasional interlocutor.”³

This essay is a close review of Andrew’s narratives in scripture and tradition, and an illumination of his contribution to our faith. The objective of the paper is to provide worthwhile insights for persons assigned to preach about Andrew and to offer a resource for institutions who bear Andrew’s name so they may meaningfully celebrate their connection with him and his witness to Christ. With God’s grace, perhaps an enlarged appreciation for Andrew will enhance our vision of God’s revelation in the world.

³ Dennis R. MacDonald, “Andrew (Person),” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Editor-in-Chief, David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 242-43.

CHAPTER I: ANDREW IN SCRIPTURE

Andrew the Apostle was a Jewish fisherman who lived and perhaps was raised on the northern coast of the Sea of Galilee (John 1:44). His name (Ἀνδρέας, Andreas) is Greek in origin, and means manly,⁴ or strong and courageous. The Gospels tell us that Andrew was one of the Twelve apostles of Jesus, and that he was the brother of Simon, the leader of the Twelve. They also record that Andrew and Simon Peter were fishermen from the town of Bethsaida (literally, ‘house of fish’), that they shared a house in nearby Capernaum, and that they owned a boat and hired assistants, from which we can infer that they were modestly prosperous.⁵

Andrew’s name appears thirteen times in the entire New Testament: five in John (1:40, 1:44, 6:8, 12:22 [*twice*]); four in Mark (1:16, 1:29, 3:18, 13:3); two in Matthew (4:18, 10:2); once in Luke (6:14); and once in Acts (1:13). In contrast, the name of Andrew’s brother Simon⁶ appears 197 times in the Gospels, The Acts of the Apostles and Epistles. The number of times a name appears in scripture, of course, is not determinative of that individual’s role or importance. To assess the relative importance of individuals in scripture we must consider the content of their narratives and compare them with the narratives of others.

Scholars are cautious not to infer too much from scripture about the roles or relative importance of individuals portrayed. Raymond Brown reminds us that “the Gospels offer limited means for reconstructing the ministry and message of the historical Jesus.” He acknowledges the view that the Gospels convey more about the situations in which they

⁴ Peterson, *Andrew*, 1.

⁵ Stewart Lamont, *The Life of Saint Andrew*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1997) 11-12.

⁶ Simon, son of John; Simon Peter; or simply Peter or Simon, all of which refer to Andrew’s brother and the leader of The Twelve.

were written than about their *prima facie* subject. For Brown, the Gospels primarily provide insight into an evangelist's concept of Jesus. "Only secondarily" do they tell us about "the situation of Jesus."⁷

Additionally, an absence of narrative does not necessarily justify an adverse conclusion about an individual named in the Gospels. Four of the Twelve apostles have no narratives at all: Bartholomew,⁸ James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean (or Zealot). Nevertheless, as members of Jesus's inner group of disciples, they were present whenever a Gospel episode calls out the Twelve as present or participating, so they were *ipso facto* important for Jesus's ministry.

In sum, the frequency, absence, or even content of narratives involving an individual in the Gospels are inconclusive for discerning their merits or significance for our faith. Nonetheless, an evaluation of the narratives relating to an individual, and a comparison of one person's narratives with the narratives of others, must certainly be the starting point for an attempt to illuminate a person named in the Gospels.

A. Narratives of Disciple Encounters with Jesus.

The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles record narratives involving many specifically identified individuals in encounter with Jesus. Most of those individuals appear in only one narrative episode, although that episode may be repeated in more than one Gospel. Many of the individuals are peripheral characters, such as the one leper among ten who returned to thank Jesus after he had been healed (Luke 17:11-19). But there are

⁷ Raymond E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple, The Life, Loves and Hates of an individual Church in New Testament Times*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 17.

⁸ Bissel argues that Nathanael was the same person as Bartholomew. Tom Bissel, *Apostle: Travels Among the Tombs of the Twelve*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 2016), 42. There are two Gospel narratives about Nathanael: "No deceit in you" (Jn 1:45-51); and on the fishing boat prefiguring Jesus' post-resurrection appearance on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias (Jn 21:2).

seven individuals whose Gospel narratives in encounter with Jesus are sufficiently developed that we may employ them in attempting to discern their significance and contributions to our faith: Simon Peter, the Zebedee brothers (James and John), Andrew, the Beloved Disciple, Philip, and Thomas.⁹

Clearly, Simon Peter's narratives are the most significant in the New Testament canon aside from Jesus Himself. He figures in twenty-five discrete Gospel episodes, often as a generative figure and frequently in dialogue with Jesus. The number of narratives for the other six are as follows:

- Zebedee brothers together (James & John) – 9 episodes
- Andrew – 6 episodes
- Beloved Disciple – 6 episodes
- Philip – 4 episodes
- Thomas – 3 episodes
- John (son of Zebedee) separately – 2 episodes

Simply counting the narratives, however, cannot yield meaningful insight. A review of their content is required. Peter's narratives are the most numerous and often very meaningful. Andrew's narratives are fewer, but all are meaningful. A review of the content of the narratives of the other five yields some surprises.

⁹ Scholars may argue that I have been arbitrary in selecting these seven individuals and should have included, others, e.g., Martha or Mary Magdalene or Nicodemus or Nathanael. The seven I chose have status as members of Jesus's chosen Twelve. Narratives in the Epistles also are profoundly important to our faith. But they do not contribute to the objective of this paper because all we can know about Andrew in connection with them is that he is absent.

The Zebedee Brothers. The first surprise is that neither of the Zebedee brothers, James and John, have narratives that would recommend them as models for our faith.¹⁰ In the only two episodes in which they together speak to Jesus (it is unlikely that they spoke in unison and impossible to know which one of them actually spoke), they ask for high positions in his kingdom (Mark 10:35-40), and ask whether he wished them to command fire from heaven to consume a Samaritan village (Luke 9:51). When John spoke to Jesus apart from James, it was to tell him that they tried to stop someone from casting out demons in his name (Luke 9:49).¹¹

It is also surprising that despite their elevated status as part of Jesus's inner-inner circle in the Synoptics, the brothers Zebedee make only one appearance in the Gospel of John. In that episode near the shore of the Sea of Tiberias, they are identified only as the unnamed sons of Zebedee (John 21:1-3). Chapter 21 is the last chapter of John's Gospel and many scholars believe it was added as an epilogue by a redactor (although to our knowledge the Gospel was never circulated without it).¹² In sum, except for the Synoptic identification of James and John as part of the inner circle of three disciples, the Zebedee narratives do not seem to justify the high regard in which they - particularly John - are held by the Church.

¹⁰ To be sure, the Synoptics report that James and John were selected by Jesus (along with Peter) to be an inner-inner circle of disciples present with him for three important episodes in his ministry: the Transfiguration (Mt 17:1, Mk 9:2, Lk 9:28); raising Jairus's daughter (Mk 5:37, Lk 8:49-51); Gethsemane (Mk 14:33, Mt 26:36). The Gospels do not report that the brothers spoke in any of these episodes.

¹¹ There is another episode in which John appears separately from James. In that episode he is with Peter, and "they" ask Jesus where He wants them to prepare the Passover meal (Luke 22:7-10). As in the episodes in which James and John appear together, it is impossible to know whether it was Peter or John who spoke.

¹² Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, AB 29A, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970) 1077-82.

Beloved Disciple, Philip, Thomas. It is noteworthy that all the narratives of the *Beloved Disciple* (BD), *Philip* and *Thomas* are found only in John's Gospel.¹³ The *Beloved Disciple* is reported to have said only four words to Jesus: "Lord, who is it?" (John 13:25). John also reports without dialogue that the BD identified the risen Lord to his companions on the boat near the shore on the Sea of Tiberias (John 21:7). In none of his other four narratives does he speak.

Philip speaks to Jesus in two of his four narratives (in a third it is not clear whether he or Andrew spoke), and he is not portrayed as a disciple whom Christians might particularly want to emulate: "six months wages would not buy enough bread" (John 6:3-7); and "Lord show us the Father and we will be satisfied" (John 14:8). In the latter episode Jesus responds to Philip:

Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father?' Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. (John 14:9-10)

The Evangelist names *Philip* as the generative character for this important statement by Jesus about his relationship with the Father, and it surely would be devastating to be called out as he is here to be the object of Jesus's evident exasperation.

Thomas's three narratives are more commendable: he proposes that the disciples should accompany Jesus to face possible death in Bethany (John 11:16); he expresses concern that the disciples do not know where Jesus is going (John 14:5); and he declares "My Lord and my God" when he sees the risen Jesus's wounds (John 20:24-29). These

¹³ In Acts 8:5-7 a Philip proclaimed the Messiah and performed signs in Samaria; in Acts 21:8 another Philip provided lodging for Paul the Apostle. We cannot be sure whether either of these were the Apostle.

narratives cast Thomas in a more favorable light than any of the others except Peter and Andrew.

Andrew. Except for Simon Peter, only Andrew is reported to have made profitable comments in the Gospels that advanced Jesus's mission: "We have found the Messiah" (John 1:41); "There is a boy here who has five loaves and two fish" (John 6:9); telling Jesus (with Philip) that some Greeks wanted to meet him (John 12:22).

It is also noteworthy that in Mark's Gospel, Jesus delivers His "little apocalypse" (describing the destruction of the Temple and the eschaton) to Peter, James, John, *and* Andrew (Mark 13: 3). This episode appears in all three Synoptic Gospels, but in Matthew it was "his disciples" who were privy to Jesus's sermon (Matt 24:1-3), and in Luke it was "some [who] were speaking about the temple" (Luke 21:5-7). The four disciples in Mark, who heard it "privately," seem to have self-selected, in contrast to the three Synoptic episodes in which Jesus is said to have chosen Peter, James, and John to the exclusion of all others (see fn. 11).

Although Andrew's narratives portray his helpfulness to Jesus, Jesus never speaks to Andrew directly except at the outset to ask him and his unnamed companion "What are you looking for?" and tell them to "Come and see" (John 1:38-39). We should also keep in mind that in the first two substantive Andrew narratives in John's Gospel, the author identified Andrew as Simon Peter's brother (John 1:40, 6:8). We cannot know whether this identifier was merely the author's style, or whether the author intended it to overcome Andrew's obscurity, or to remind readers of Andrew's high status.

B. Brief Excursus on Gospel Contexts.

If, as Brown observes, the Gospels tell us more about the authors and their community than about Jesus's ministry, a brief review of the authorship, audience, purpose, and context of them is required in our effort to discern the significance of the narratives of the disciples. It is not possible in the scope of this paper to undertake a thorough exegesis of the Gospel contexts, but we must consider whether there are inferences relating to the disciple narratives which must not be overlooked.

Gospel of Mark. There are clues that Mark was written for a Syrian community adjacent to Palestine, largely Gentile, and suffering severe persecution by non-Christian Jews for not supporting the Palestinian revolt of 66-73 C.E.¹⁴ Perhaps this context influenced Mark's frequent portrayal of the Twelve apostles as thick-headed, timid, and blind to Jesus's person and message. For example, in 4:13 Jesus asks them how they will understand any parables if they do not understand the parable of the sowers. Even Peter does not come off well in Mark, with Jesus calling him "Satan" (8:33) and predicting that he would deny Him three times (14:30), as Mark records he ultimately did (Mark 14:66-72).

There are three Andrew narratives in Mark,¹⁵ and the apostle does not speak in any of them. Because of the thinness of his narrative in the Gospel, Andrew avoids the direct rebukes that Mark levels on others, but it would be an unwarranted stretch to infer that Mark had a more favorable attitude toward the apostle.

¹⁴ Joel Marcus, *Mark 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB27 (New York: Doubleday, a division of Random House, Inc., 2000), 25-39.

¹⁵ 1:16, the call; 1:29, Jesus enters Simon & Andrew's house; 13:3 Andrew is one of four to hear privately the "little apocalypse".

Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Scholarly consensus is that Mark was the source for a substantial portion of both Matthew and Luke. Brown notes that eighty percent of Mark's verses are found in Matthew, and sixty-five percent are found in Luke.¹⁶ Some scholars also hypothesize a "Q" source that provides Matthew and Luke with much of their text not found in Mark.¹⁷ The two hundred verses that appear in both Matthew and Luke but not in Mark consist of sayings of Jesus and short discourses with minimal narrative setting.

Brown places the Matthean community at Antioch,¹⁸ and most scholars perceive the same sense of foreboding resulting from civil strife that affected the Marcan community.¹⁹ Luke, on the other hand, is an elegant Greek text that appears to have been "addressed to a largely Gentile area evangelized...by the Pauline mission."²⁰ Neither Gospel has narrative for any of the Twelve except Peter, James, and John. The absence of narratives in Matthew and Luke for any of the other disciples, including Andrew, may simply reflect the paucity of narrative in Mark, which was their primary source, and the absence of narrative in their other sources.

Gospel of John. The Gospel of John is dramatically different from the Synoptics. Much scholarship focuses on the Gospel's Palestinian complexion and the significance of the Old Testament in the text. Some passages read as if they are concrete memories of an

¹⁶ Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 111.

¹⁷ Mark and Q account for only two-thirds of Luke. For the remainder, some scholars hypothesize a third source unique to Luke. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 28 (New York: Anchor Bible Doubleday, 1970), 82-85.

¹⁸ Brown, *Introduction*, 172.

¹⁹ W. F. Albright and C. S. Mann, *Matthew, Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, AB 26 (New York: Doubleday, 1971), lxxiv.

²⁰ Brown, *Introduction*, 270.

eyewitness, and others appear to be the product of long meditation, suggesting the author was concerned “with transcendental truth.”²¹

Some scholars contend that John’s Gospel was not the work of one man from memory. The earliest known fragments of the Gospel date to the beginning of the second century,²² and it was not until about 200 CE that the tradition appears of John, son of Zebedee, as author of the Gospel.²³ Brown hypothesizes four phases in the incubation of the Gospel, beginning with an originating group of Jews in or near Palestine who developed a high Christology which offended orthodox Jews, forcing the community to disperse among the Greeks and causing schism with other Jewish-Christian communities.²⁴

Despite the uncertainties of authorship, date, and context of John’s Gospel, there seems to be no basis for disputing that it was, as it claims, “written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31). We may reasonably infer that all the narratives which appear exclusively in John’s Gospel, including those of Andrew, were intended to advance that objective.

C. Andrew and The Beloved Disciple

We cannot with certainty know the identity of the Beloved Disciple (BD) or whether the claim of BD authorship of John’s Gospel can be accepted. Bauckham²⁵ and

²¹ C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John, An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*, (Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1978), 3-4.

²² Ernst Haenchen, *A Commentary on the Gospel of John Chapters 1-6*, Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible, trans. Robert W. Funk (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980) 6.

²³ Haenchen, *Commentary*, 14. Haenchen writes that the earliest patristic mention of John the apostle occurs in Eusebius’s Church History quoting Papias that he did not know John as the author of a Gospel.

²⁴ Brown, *Community*, 22-24.

²⁵ Richard Bauckham, *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple: Narrative, History, and Theology in the Gospel of John*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 85.

Charlesworth²⁶ argue that the BD was the unnamed “other disciple” who was with Andrew when he followed Jesus.

Charlesworth observes that John’s Gospel seems to indicate there is “something symbolically significant about the relation between the Beloved Disciple and Peter.”²⁷ Raymond Brown also argues that although it is not clear whether the other disciple was the BD, “an affirmative answer is suggested by the fact that the [unnamed] disciple...is associated with Peter, an association which seems to be a mark of the BD.”²⁸ But if an association with Peter is a mark of the BD, then surely Andrew is the most likely candidate.

Nearly two hundred years ago, German theologian E. C. J. Lutzberger argued that Andrew was the BD. Charlesworth admits that this hypothesis “is not impossible,” but he argues that “if the anonymous disciple of [John] 1:35-42 is to be identified with the Beloved Disciple, then the one hypothesis dismissed would be Andrew, since he is identified as the other of the two.”²⁹ But Charlesworth’s argument is based on his *presumption* that the anonymous disciple was the BD, which in fact would render Lutzberger’s hypothesis to be *impossible*. Charlesworth’s presumption that the BD was the other disciple is unwarranted, as is his contention that a hypothesis that Andrew was the BD must be “dismissed.”

If Andrew was the BD, then he would be the “disciple who is testifying to these things and has written them” in John’s Gospel (John 21:24). Consequently, we must ask why the Gospeler would substitute “BD” for Andrew’s name throughout the second half

²⁶ James H. Charlesworth, *The Beloved Disciple: Whose Witness Validates the Gospel of John?* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1995) 336-30

²⁷ Charlesworth, *The Beloved Disciple*, 32

²⁸ Brown, *The Gospel According to John* AB29, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1966), xciv

²⁹ Charlesworth, *The Beloved Disciple*, 180

of the work. James Patrick surmises that the evangelist was faced with a conundrum. “Petrine Christianity” was “increasingly considered normative” in the years following Jesus’ death and resurrection, and while the Johannine Community wanted to honor Andrew’s “particularly close relation to Jesus,” it did not want to undercut the central importance of Peter. Patrick observes that *any* name substituted for the BD in John’s Gospel, including even Andrew, would yield a distracting conflict among Christian communities because of the BD’s relationship with Jesus. The decision to replace Andrew’s name with the anonymous BD title was a brilliant solution.³⁰

In my view, Andrew is a strong candidate to have been the BD. Identifying him as the BD helps explain other matters, for example, the close connection with Peter. At the Last Supper Peter “motions” (νεύει) to the BD to ask Jesus who would betray him (John 13:24).³¹ The sense of the verb is the type of non-verbal communication most available to intimates, like brothers. If Andrew was the BD, that would also illuminate the episode on the morning of the Resurrection, when Mary Magdalene, “ran and went to tell Peter and the other disciple” [identified shortly thereafter as the BD] (John 20:2). The implication is that they were residing together, or at least nearby, just as Andrew and Peter resided in the same house in Capernaum (Mark 1:29, Luke 4:38-39). It is reasonable to surmise that the brothers continued to lodge together during their discipleship.

Additionally, the solicitude displayed by Peter for the BD on the seashore at breakfast with the Risen Christ can be best understood if the BD was Peter’s brother. Peter had just suffered a scolding from Jesus who questioned his love. Even after this scolding,

³⁰ James Patrick, “Andrew of Bethsaida and the Johannine Circle, The Muratorian Tradition and the Gospel Text,” in *Studies in Biblical Literature*, General Editor, Hemchand Gossai (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2013), 69-70.

³¹ Other translations use “beckon” (KJV) or “gesture” (NAS) or “make a sign” (INT).

when he saw the BD following him and Jesus, Peter stopped to ask Jesus, “what about him?” (John 21:21). Peter’s particular concern for the BD was manifest even as he obeyed Jesus’s command to follow. It is reasonable to think that such solicitude is characteristic between brothers.

Finally, there are no disciples other than Andrew or Philip identified as present for the Andrew episodes.³² Since the Andrew narratives are exclusive to John’s Gospel it is not unreasonable to surmise that they were from his first-hand memories which the authors of the Synoptics did not possess, thus qualifying Andrew as (in some manner) the “author” of John’s Gospel identified as the BD (John 21:20,24). Considering these fact sets, a hypothesis that Andrew was the BD must be moved from dubious to at least plausible. To be sure, there are centuries of contrary tradition, and the identity of the BD can never be confirmed. But if it were possible to verify Andrew as the BD, his significance for our faith would be monumentally increased.

D. A Closer Look at Andrew’s Narratives

John 1:24-42. To unpack Andrew’s initial encounter with Jesus, we must begin an examination of the episode a few verses earlier than the episode itself. John the Baptist was baptizing in Bethany (John 1:28), a community probably located a short distance east of Jerusalem.³³ That the Baptist was in Bethany rather than at the Jordan River where he customarily baptized (Mark 1:5); that Andrew, Simon and Philip were in the vicinity of Bethany at that time rather than in their hometown of Bethsaida (John 1:44); and that Jesus

³² Philip is not identified as present for the initial encounter with Jesus, but since Jesus “found” Philip the next morning (John 1:43), it is plausible that Philip was the “other disciple,” particularly since Philip and Andrew are frequently linked. (cf. fn. 43)

³³ Metzger writes that the location of the town is a matter of some dispute, and that it might have been in a town actually near the Jordan River. Ultimately, the Committee favored the town of Bethany, which means “House of Obedience” and is near Jerusalem. Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1994), 171.

from Nazareth also was in the vicinity, suggests that this might have been the occasion of a festival pilgrimage.³⁴

On the day after the Baptist was challenged by the Jewish religious authorities to establish his identity and authority (1:19-27), he saw Jesus coming toward him and vividly declared “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (1:29). On the following day Andrew and his unnamed companion were standing near the Baptist when Jesus walked by and John again exclaimed: “Look, here is the Lamb of God!” Impetuously, and unbidden, the pair followed Jesus.

What might the author of the Gospel have intended to portray to his readers with this narrative? Andrew and his companion could have forthrightly walked up and introduced themselves to Jesus. Instead, the text says they followed (ἠκολούθησαν) him – a timid, possibly even furtive behavior.³⁵ As disciples of John, they had heard the Baptist deny that he was himself the Messiah (Luke 3:15-17, John 1:23-27), and predict the imminent arrival of an unknown One who would baptize with fire and spirit. Such a One would be frightening and intimidating. If Andrew and his mate thought the Baptist’s declaration meant Jesus was indeed this One, it would be no surprise that they were timid.

When Jesus perceived they were following, and He turned and asked “What are you seeking?”³⁶ The two were clearly were caught off guard and did not muster a very sensible response. Indeed, they did not know what they were seeking. They stammered a superficial reply: “Teacher, where are you staying?” Awkward as it was, their response

³⁴ There are three such annual festivals for Jews: Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles.

³⁵ The Greek verb employed here does not have negative connotations in other scriptural contexts.

³⁶ The Aramaic verb for “seek” means both ‘to seek or search for’ and ‘to want’.” Brown, *Gospel According to John*, AB29, 74, n.38. The Greek word (ζητεῖτε) used here is the same word ominously used by Jesus in the garden addressing the soldiers, etc. who came to arrest him (John 18:4,7).

might have been an indirection, borne of their fear or confusion - a 'placeholder' to preserve an opportunity to return to him after they had decided exactly what they sought.

Whatever might be imagined about their behavior, Jesus allowed Himself to be vulnerable to these two strangers. They could have been a threat. Were they hostile? When the pair stammered their response, he may have realized they did not know what they wanted. They were confounded and blind even to their own desires, so he invited them, right then, to come with him to where He was staying.

We cannot know how long Andrew and his companion remained with Jesus. We only know their time with Him began around four in the afternoon (John 1:39). Nor, despite our fondest desire, can we know what transpired during that time. All we can know is whatever happened caused Andrew to seek out his brother Simon first thing the next morning³⁷ and declare, "We have found the Messiah." (John 1:41)

John 6:8. The feeding of five thousand is the only miracle performed by Jesus that is reported in all four Gospels. Consequently, Brown observes that "the problem of the dependence and the value of John's tradition comes to a head" in this episode.³⁸ Brown concludes that "the evangelist did not copy from the Synoptics but had an independent tradition."³⁹ Oddly, Brown is dismissive of the notable role of Andrew and Philip in the narrative, writing that they were "among the more obscure members of the Twelve."⁴⁰ Such disregard for Andrew is not atypical for contemporary scholars, but in connection with this episode it seems particularly misplaced, because if Brown is correct that the

³⁷ Metzger writes that one early text reads that Andrew was the first follower, not that he first found his brother, but the Committee preferred the usual reading based on other early texts. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 172.

³⁸ Brown, *John*, (AB29), 236.

³⁹ Brown, *John*, (AB29), 239. Brown's conclusion is disputed by other scholars.

⁴⁰ Brown, *John*, (AB29), 246.

Johannine tradition of the miracle originates from a different source than the Synoptics - then respectful attention to Andrew's unique appearance in this tradition seems warranted.

In John's version of this miracle, Jesus takes the initiative to be concerned about the need to feed the large crowd that had followed Him up the mountain on the shore of the Sea (John 6:5).⁴¹ The location for this episode was remote from the normal sources of food for the crowd. Jesus turns to Philip and asks, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" Philip laments that "six months' wages would not buy enough bread" (John 6:7), but, of course, he had not answered the question. Jesus asked "where" not 'with what' might they buy bread.

Without being asked, Philip's friend Andrew,⁴² intervened. He pointed out to Jesus that there was a boy nearby who had "five barley loaves and two fish" (John 6:9).⁴³ That may have taken some courage. That amount of food would be laughable for such a large gathering. Had Andrew been timid before Jesus, and afraid that he might scoff at the offering of such meager fare, he might not have come forward. But Andrew must surely have come to trust Jesus's patience and love. Jesus did not scoff at him. Andrew's intervention on behalf of Philip cannot have escaped Jesus's notice. An "obscure member of the Twelve," Andrew was there for Philip, for Jesus, and for the crowd of followers.

⁴¹ Metzger notes that the Greek text is clumsy, reading *the Sea of Galilee – of Tiberias*. He contends the "smoothest reading" would be 'across the Sea of Galilee to the regions of Tiberias'. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 181. The NRSV solves the problem by saying the Sea of Galilee is "also called the Sea of Tiberias. Brown reviews the unresolved issue of where the multiplication occurred, and surmises it was where Luke placed it near Bethsaida (9:10). Brown, *Gospel of John* (AB29), 232.

⁴² Philip and Andrew are frequently linked in the NT. Cf. Mark 3;18; John 1:44; John 12:22; Acts 1:13.

⁴³ If the site for the multiplication was near Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew, Simon, and Philip, then Andrew might have been acquainted with the boy.

We, of course, know what is about to happen, but no one present at the event, including Andrew, could have dreamed it.⁴⁴ Without the tiny resource Andrew identified, there would have been no material from which Jesus could create a surplus. Bread is made from the substance of the earth: from seed to grain to bread. God supplies *ex nihilo* the seed which sprouts and grows “we know not how” (Mark 4:27). “So also the fish” (John 6:11).⁴⁵ Humans supply only the labor to transform the grain into bread and bring the fish to table. Jesus took the small supply of loaves and fish and gave thanks to God, perhaps reciting a common Jewish blessing: “Blessed are you, O Lord, king of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.”⁴⁶ With the meager resources supplied, doing “only what he sees his Father doing,” (John 5:19) Jesus fed five thousand, we know not how.⁴⁷

John 12:20-23. The final Andrew episode in John’s Gospel is the most profound. Although he does not speak in the episode, Andrew is the one whose action provides the occasion for Jesus’s monumental announcement of the impending fulfillment of God’s plan.

The episode begins with a dinner for Jesus in the home of Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. It proceeds through his triumphal entry into Jerusalem for Passover, then to the gathering of persons “who went up to worship at the festival” (John 12:20). Among those who gathered were some Greeks who wished “to see Jesus” (John 12:21), and they approached Philip for an introduction.

⁴⁴ Was this event unique? Or was it one of two feeding miracles as reported in Mark and Matthew? Brown reviews the evidence and concludes that it was likely a unique event and that Mark and Matthew “gave us two accounts.” Brown, *John* (AB29) 237.

⁴⁵ Cf. Rom 4:17, “He calls into existence the things that do not exist.”

⁴⁶ Brown, *John*, (AB29), 234, n.11.

⁴⁷ Cf. Mark 4:27, “the seed would sprout and grow, [we do] not know how.”

Once again, Brown is oddly dismissive of Andrew and even of the entire episode. Although Brown acknowledges that “Truly this is a climactic scene,”⁴⁸ he nevertheless, writes that while “there is nothing intrinsically improbable in the basic incident,” it was most likely just a “poorly known” tradition used by the evangelist to advance his theology.⁴⁹ Moreover, he writes “Why Philip should consult Andrew is not clear, except that those two disciples work as a team.”⁵⁰ In contrast, even de Boer pointed out that Andrew “is given pride of place in the process, for the text literally reads ‘Andrew comes, also Philip, and they tell Jesus’.”⁵¹

Jesus’s response is a towering declaration of God’s plan: “Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (John 12:24).⁵² Further: “When I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all people to myself” (John 12:32). Even if Brown’s hypothesis is correct that the episode was a “poorly known tradition,” it is nevertheless significant that Andrew and Philip were the generative personae for this important pronouncement. Presumably, Andrew and Philip were standing directly before Jesus. They could most clearly hear his mysterious response. There is no indication that any other of the Twelve disciples were nearby or even present.

⁴⁸ Brown, *Gospel of John*, (AB29), 469.

⁴⁹ Brown, *Gospel of John*, (AB29), 470.

⁵⁰ Brown, *Gospel of John*, (AB29), 470.

⁵¹ Martinus C. de Boer, “Andrew: The First Link in the Chain,” in *Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel, Narrative Approaches to Seventy Figures in John*, eds. Steven A Hunt, D. Francois Tolmie, Ruben Zimmermann, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013), 147.

⁵² How can we fail to hear a faint echo of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes into the bread of life for which Andrew also was a facilitative character?

It is also significant that the evangelist quotes Jesus using the term “lifted up” (ὑψωθῶ).⁵³ The same term is used with the same meaning in two prior episodes of John’s Gospel.⁵⁴ In both of those episodes, the term means to be “lifted up” physically from the earth. What might Jesus’s hearers in this episode have understood him to mean by “lifted up?” It seems likely that the evangelist intended to convey that the term was understood by hearers in this episode with the same meaning as in the prior two uses: physically lifted up from the earth, and most likely on the cross. Only after events of the Resurrection unfolded over the next few days could anyone have understood the larger meaning of the term.

On the morning of the Resurrection, John’s Gospel records that the BD ran to the tomb with Peter. Peter entered the tomb first, but “Then the other disciple, [the BD] who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead” (John 20:8-9). Scholars have pondered just *what* the BD “believed” when he saw that Jesus’s body was missing, since he “did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.” The odd ellipsis in the chain of logic between Vss. 20:8 and 20:9 in John’s Gospel could be another clue that Andrew was the BD.

If, as seems likely, 1) the author of the Gospel was writing in expectation of the imminent Eschaton when all things would be made clear; and 2) if he also was writing with the expectation that his readers knew Andrew was the BD who had most clearly heard

⁵³ From the root ὑψόω. This term appears only in GJohn with this translation. The root appears in other iterations in the Synoptics, but is translated “exalted” (cf. Matt 11:23, Luke 1:52, Acts 2:33). <https://biblehub.com/greek/5312.htm>, accessed 1/4/22.

⁵⁴ John 3:14 – Jesus meets with Nicodemus at night and teaches him that “Just as Moses lifted up (ὑψωθῶ) the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up.” John 8:28 – Jesus’s confrontation with the Pharisees in the treasury of the temple: “When you have lifted up (ὑψωθῶ) the Son of Man, then you will realize I am he.”

Jesus say he must be “lifted up”; and 3) if it was Andrew who “saw and believed” when they found the tomb empty – then the evangelist could have expected his readers to understand that what the BD (Andrew) “believed” was that “lifted up” meant more than simply lifted up from the earth on the cross. Over the ensuing days after they found the tomb empty, the disciples would realize that Resurrection and Ascension also were what Jesus meant when He said that He must be “lifted up.” In the years following, the disciples would begin to correlate those events with the Old Testament and “understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.”

CHAPTER II: ANDREW IN LEGEND AND TRADITION

After the Resurrection, and before his Ascension, Jesus told his disciples, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). When he had gone, the disciples experienced the Holy Spirit come upon them at Pentecost and they undertook to fulfill his commandment (Acts 2:1-12). What did they do?

A. The Apocrypha

As far as we know, no written record was kept during Jesus’s earthly ministry to preserve his words and deeds, so after he ascended, accounts of his ministry could be validated only by the witnesses who had been close to him. Consequently, the apostles and their testimony assumed greater and greater importance for believers. Around 50 C.E., Paul, who became an apostle only after his encounter with the Resurrected Jesus on the road to Damascus, began to write his Epistles to the churches in the diaspora. By the end of the century the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles also were written, and these, along with the Epistles, eventually became the Scriptural Canon of the Church depicting Jesus’s ministry and the missions of his disciples. But there is little information in these texts about the missions of the Twelve.

In addition to the Canon, the first centuries of Christianity saw a flowering of other texts, known as apocrypha or pseudepigrapha. The terms “apocrypha” and “apocryphal” are commonly understood to mean spurious or untrue, but M.R. James claims they were originally terms of respect.⁵⁵ James surmises that the texts were written as a Christian

⁵⁵ Montague Rhodes James, *The Apocryphal New Testament, Being the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts Epistles, and Apocalypses, with other Narratives and Fragments, Newly Translated*, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1924), xiii-iv.

alternative to pagan fiction.⁵⁶ At a minimum, they were clearly useful to the early Church. Other scholars surmise that the texts were polemical works written to either support or to contend with emerging heresies such as Gnosticism and Docetism.⁵⁷ The writings have come down to us as hundreds of ancient fragments in multiple languages. Scholars have sorted and compared and pieced them together as best they can, but many questions about origins and emendations remain. Amidst all the uncertainties, the works nevertheless warrant close and respectful reading. They identify mission areas of the apostles, depict miracles through which they imitated Christ, affirmed their faithfulness to the point of martyr's death, and preserved the moral lessons they taught.

Given the immeasurable importance of the original witnesses, it is no surprise that stories flourished and traditions about them developed, some with mythical proportions. Andrew is named, or is a primary subject, in at least twenty such writings. What do they reveal about how Andrew figured in the imaginations, hopes and fears of early Christians?

*Acts of Andrew and Matthias. (ActsAndrMat)*⁵⁸ *ActsAndrMat* was a popular story in the early Church⁵⁹ describing how the apostles drew lots⁶⁰ for mission locations with Matthias assigned to a land of “cannibals” identified by some as Sinope or Scythia on the southern coast of the Black Sea.⁶¹ Andrew is called by Jesus to sail across the Sea⁶² to rescue Matthias from impending death. Andrew arrived in time and through prayer, thaumaturgy, and tearful appeals to the Lord, he saved his fellow apostle. The text reveals

⁵⁶ James, *Apocryphal NT*, 475.

⁵⁷ Lamont, *The Life*, 4-5.

⁵⁸ Matthias was the apostle “enlisted...in place of Judas” (Acts 1:26), Eusebius, *History*, 71.

⁵⁹ James, *Apocryphal NT*, 338.

⁶⁰ The disciple's use of this method for making important decisions is affirmed in the selection of Matthias to replace Judas among the Twelve (Acts 1:26).

⁶¹ Lamont, *The Life*, 27; Dennis R. MacDonald, “The Acts of Andrew,” in *Early Christian Apocrypha*, vol. 1 *The Acts of Andrew*, (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge Press, 2005), 3.

⁶² The Black Sea if he was missionizing in Scythia; the Aegean Sea if he was missionizing in Greece.

how the apostles were assigned mission areas and connects Andrew with the area of Sinope and Scythia.⁶³ The assignment of apostolic mission areas is further affirmed in Eusebius's Church History (written ca. 300 C.E.),⁶⁴ and according to Dvornik, there are indications that missionary activity in Scythia did indeed begin early.⁶⁵

Acts of Andrew. Most important among apocrypha relating to Andrew is a lengthy composition known as the *Acts of Andrew (ActsAndr)*. The text has been labeled Gnostic by some scholars (i.e., purporting to offer secret knowledge only available to the initiated few),⁶⁶ but it is not like typical Gnostic texts, because it does not “affirm the secret character of the sayings and the privilege of an esoteric doctrine.”⁶⁷ It has been dated from as early as 120 C.E. to as late as the second half of the third century, with the most likely date no later than the end of the second century.⁶⁸ We have only fragments of the original Greek text of *ActsAndr*, but many scholars believe it was the “most voluminous” of the apocrypha.⁶⁹ It is not possible to know who authored *ActsAndr*, or where he lived and worked, although one scholar places the writing in Achaia (Greece) and others speculate it

⁶³ There is an “ancient stereotype of Scythians as cannibals” but the mythology relating to the area may have originated with a Greek myth. MacDonald, *Acts of Andrew*, 4.

⁶⁴ Eusebius, *Church History, A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Second Series, Vol I*, Philip Schaff and Henry Wace Editorial Supervisors, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), 132.

⁶⁵ Francis Dvornik, *The Idea of Apostolicity in Byzantium, and the Legend of the Apostle Andrew*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), 199.

⁶⁶ M. Hornschuh, translated by E. Best, “Act of Andrew” (introduction and text) in *New Testament Apocrypha, Vol II*. in Wilhelm Schneemelcher, ed., R. McL. Wilson English translation ed., (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964, English Translation, Lutterworth Press, 1965), 392-94; Peterson, *Andrew*, 26; Peterson, *Andrew*, 26.

⁶⁷ Francois Bovon, “The Words of Life in the Acts of the Apostle Andrew,” *Harvard Theological Review* 87 no. 2 (1994), 153.

⁶⁸ Hornschuh, *NT Apocrypha*, 396-97. MacDonald, *Acts*, 9.

⁶⁹ James, *Apocryphal NT*, 337; Hornschuh, *NT Apocrypha*, 397.

was the work of the Encratite sect⁷⁰ which emerged in Achaia around 117-138 C.E.⁷¹ This would explain the anti-marriage and anti-sexuality tone of the text.

The most complete representation of the entire text is an “abstract” or “epitome” of the original written in Latin by Gregory of Tours (538-594 C.E.).⁷² It depicts Andrew’s mission, miracles and martyrdom in Achaia, and is one of the central sources of the legends and traditions about the apostle. The text tells a three-part tale: 1) an adventurous journey from Achaia to Byzantium and back; 2) Andrew’s conversion of the wife and brother of the Proconsul of Patras; and 3) Andrew’s martyrdom.⁷³ The journey takes Andrew to Byzantium, then north into Thrace, returning by ship to Macedonia, where he visits the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth, eventually returning to Patras.⁷⁴

At the outset of his journey, Andrew performs many miracles, invoking the name of Christ, curing the sick and blind, driving out demons, defeating armed opponents, and raising the dead. When he converts Maximilla, wife of the Proconsul, he persuades her to refuse marital relations with her husband. He also converts the Proconsul’s brother, Stratocles, who became an ardent disciple. The Proconsul himself, however, refused to hear Andrew’s message of salvation, and Andrew’s interference with the Proconsul’s marital prerogatives proved fatal.

⁷⁰ “Encratism is the advocacy of a harsh discipline of the body, especially in regard to sexual activity, diet, and the use of alcoholic beverages.” Little is known about the sect of Encratites. O.C. Edwards, Jr., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol 2, David Noel Freedman, Editor-in-Chief, Encratism, (New York: Doubleday, 1992) 506-07.

⁷¹ Hornschuh, *Act of Andrew*, 396; Peterson, *Andrew*, 29. Other scholars place the origin in Alexandria. MacDonald, *Acts of Andrew*, 9.

⁷² James, *Apocryphal NT*, 337. (In his prologue to the text, Gregory confesses that he deliberately abbreviated the document’s “excessive verbosity.”)

⁷³ The importance of Andrew’s martyrdom for early Christians is affirmed by its appearance in several other textual forms including a letter of the presbyters and deacons in Latin. James, *Apocryphal NT*, 357.

⁷⁴ J. K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament, A collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 245 ff.

In the final part of the tale, just before Andrew is crucified by the seashore in Patras, he speaks to the cross upon which he is to be hung as if to a living creature, lauding it as the instrument of salvation and a trophy of the victory of Christ. Hanging on the cross, he addresses a gathering crowd of thousands for three days before his death on November 30, “the day before the kalends (first day) of December.”⁷⁵ Maximilla retrieved his body and buried him by the Patras seashore.⁷⁶

Some scholars believe the entire Andrew mission in Achaia was invented by an Andrew cult to enhance his stature in the Church. To support their theory, they point to the fact that Origen makes no mention of Andrew’s mission to Achaia. Similarly, although *ActsAndr* reports that Andrew’s “fame went through all Macedonia,”⁷⁷ the Apostle Paul, who evangelized in that same arena, does not mention Andrew in his Epistles. Arguments based upon silence, such as these, are not typically accepted by scholars as dispositive. A more persuasive argument is made from the fact that the Proconsuls identified in *ActsAndr* have Greek names rather than Latin, as would be expected for an occupying power.⁷⁸

We cannot resolve these inconsistencies and we will never know with certainty whether Andrew missionized in Achaia. But we do know that Andrew is revered as the Patron Saint of all Greece,⁷⁹ and that there has been a St. Andrew’s Church in Patras from the early centuries. St. Andrew’s Basilica in Patras today is the largest Orthodox church in Greece.⁸⁰ Whether the narrative was contrived to serve some cultic or chauvinistic

⁷⁵ November 30 has been observed as St. Andrew’s Feast Day from the early centuries of the Church. Peterson, *Andrew*, 10.

⁷⁶ Elliott, *Apocryphal NT*, 266.

⁷⁷ Elliott, *Apocryphal NT*, 276

⁷⁸ Dvornik, *Apostolicity*, 211-12.

⁷⁹ Thomas Carlisle Bissell, *Apostle: Travels Among the Tombs of the Twelve*, (Pantheon Books , Penguin Random House LLC, 2016, Kindle Edition), 147-176.

⁸⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathedral_of_Saint_Andrew,_Patras.

objective is interesting but incidental. The theological significance of the text for Christians today would be the same wherever the narrative is located. (See Chapter III.)

Other Significant Apocrypha Involving Andrew. The *Acts of Peter and Andrew* portrays Andrew being carried by a cloud of light to a mountain upon which Peter and three other disciples are seated. Jesus appears and sends the group off to evangelize in a city of barbarians. The city chiefs object that the disciples belong to “the twelve Galileans who go about separating men from their wives,”⁸¹ but through Andrew’s prayers and Peter’s vivid enactment of a miracle, a thousand souls of the town were baptized.⁸² The text depicts Andrew and Peter as mutually supportive partners in mission, and we might infer that the early churches honored Andrew’s alliance with his brother.

In the *Gospel of Bartholomew*, the apostles Bartholomew, Peter, Andrew, and John were with Mary, the mother of Jesus in “the place.” Mary tells them about the Annunciation, with Peter sitting close beside her on her right, and Andrew close on her left.⁸³ Perhaps the text was intended to fill gaps in John’s Gospel regarding Jesus’s nativity or to acknowledge Mary as the only possible source for the Annunciation and Nativity narratives in Matthew and Luke. Whatever its purpose, it affirms again that the early Church honored the closeness between Andrew and Peter.

The *Gospel of Peter* depicts the twelve disciples weeping about the crucifixion and departing to their own homes, continuing: “But I, Simon Peter, and Andrew my brother, took our nets and went to the sea....”⁸⁴ This text may be a gloss upon, or a pre-figuring of, the story of the risen Jesus appearing to the disciples on the seashore (John 21). If this

⁸¹ Elliott, *Apocryphal NT*, 300 Note the Encratic opposition to marriage alleged about the Apostles.

⁸² Elliott, *Apocryphal NT*, 300-01.

⁸³ Elliott, *Apocryphal NT*, 659.

⁸⁴ Elliott, *Apocryphal NT*, 158.

apocryphal text is at all reliable, it would strongly suggest that Andrew was one of the two unnamed disciples among the seven on the boat in that episode (which would further support his possible identification as the BD, since the BD was also one of the unnamed disciples on the boat).

In the *Acts of Andrew and Paul* the two apostles travel together by ship to an unnamed city. Andrew goes to the city while Paul dives into the sea to visit the underworld where he meets Judas Iscariot and Jesus comes to rescue Judas's soul from Satan. Andrew retrieves Paul from the underworld, and the two of them confront "the Jews" who refuse to allow them to enter the city. Paul strikes the city gate with wood that he had brought from the underworld; the gates open, Andrew exposes "the deceits of the Jews" and twenty-seven thousand Jews are converted.⁸⁵ It is possible that the text was crafted to establish that there was an acquaintance and connection between the two apostles. Might it have been to elevate Paul's stature among Jewish Christians through Andrew's status as brother of Peter? Might it have been to overcome Paul's silence about Andrew? Perhaps it was written to serve some other unknown objective. We cannot know.

The Muratorian Fragment. A papyrus discovered around 1740 by Lodovico Antonio Muratori (1672-1750) is a fourth century translation from an original Greek text dated around the end of the second century.⁸⁶ It consists of eighty-five lines listing the New Testament canon accepted by the Church at that time. Lines nine to sixteen purport to depict the origins of the Gospel According to John:

The Fourth Gospel is of John, one of the disciples. With the encouragement of his fellow-disciples and bishops, he said, "Fast with me for three days and whatever will be revealed to us, let us tell to one another." The same night it was revealed to

⁸⁵ Elliott, *Apocryphal NT*, 302.

⁸⁶ Geoffrey Mark Hahneman, *The Muratorian Fragment and the Development of the Canon*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 5-33.

Andrew, one of the apostles, that with the acknowledgement of all John should write everything down in his name.

Many scholars are skeptical about whether Andrew had a role in writing or supplying reminiscences for John's Gospel. Raymond Brown does not reference the Muratorian Fragment in his *Anchor Bible Commentary on John* (1966), nor in his subsequent essay (1979) on the origins of the Gospel.⁸⁷ We cannot know whether Andrew had any role in the development or writing of the book. Nevertheless, setting aside the historical questions of source and authorship, the Fragment is extra-canonical affirmation of Andrew's importance for the Gospel According to John.

B. Church and State Traditions Involving Andrew

Constantinople and the Orthodox Traditions. Andrew traditions have been important pillars for Church and secular State narratives throughout history. A prominent example is the tradition that Andrew founded the See (Bishopric) of Byzantium and consequently the entire Eastern Church tradition. The narrative behind it appears in several documents that are difficult to date. *Pseudo-Dorotheos*, which is dated by some to the first half of the fifth century, is a prime source. It is attributed to Dorotheus, Bishop of Tyre, and records that Andrew, "while navigating in the sea of Pontus [Black Sea], instituted as Bishop of Byzantium.....Stachys – of whom mention is made in the Epistle to the Romans."⁸⁸ Proponents of the tradition point to Andrew's relics (bones), which are said to rest in the Church of the Holy Apostles in Byzantium. According to Dvornik, however,

⁸⁷ Brown, *The Gospel*; Brown, *The Community*.

⁸⁸ Dvornik, *Apostolicity*, 156-57. Whether this was the same "beloved Stachys" to whom Paul sends greetings in Rom 16:9 cannot be known. If the two are the same individual, it would be further evidence of a connection between Paul and Andrew. The narrative in the Dorotheus document has been shown to be legendary, and it is not certain that there was a Bishop of Tyre named Dorotheus. Another prime source is *Pseudo-Epiphanius*, for which some scholars claim priority. Cf. Peterson, *Andrew*, 18-19.

Emperor Constantine's son transferred the relics from Patras to Byzantium early in the fourth century so he could inter his father beside them.⁸⁹ How or when the relics arrived in Byzantium is irrelevant to the Dorotheus narrative.

Some scholars contend that the Church in Byzantium invented the Stachys tradition to provide for its See an apostolic origin equal or superior to that of Peter in Rome. Andrew is known by the Eastern Church as *Protokletos* or "First-called" among the apostles, based upon the scriptural account of Jesus calling Andrew and his companion to "come and see" where He was staying (John 1:39). Andrew introduced his brother Simon to Jesus, so the primacy of Andrew's discipleship arguably trumps Peter (John 1:42). The validity of the Stachys story seems unimportant. What is important is that the Eastern Orthodox Church acknowledges the apostle Andrew as fundamental to its profound faith and traditions.

We think of Byzantium/Constantinople as the cradle and great center of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. But at the time Andrew is depicted as "instituting" Stachys as Bishop, Byzantium was a relatively unimportant pagan city surrounded on three sides by water, focused on sea trade between Egypt and areas around the Black Sea.⁹⁰ It wasn't until Constantine transferred the capital of the Empire to Byzantium in 324 C.E. and renamed it Constantinople that it began to rival other centers of power and wealth. We may accept as tradition from a variety of sources that Andrew evangelized in and around Byzantium as part of his mission. More than two hundred years later, his effort bore consequential fruit. He planted the early seeds that eventuated in a great flowering of faith and development of monuments of Christian thought, including the Councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon, and the

⁸⁹ Dvornik, *Apostolicity*, 3, 139.

⁹⁰ Wendy Mayer and Pauline Allen, *John Chryostom, The Early Church Fathers*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 14

works of great Patriarchs such as Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory Nazianzen, and John Chrysostom.

Russia. In the tenth century, Prince Vladimir of Kiev in Ukraine undertook an ambitious mission to consolidate and expand the areas in his control. He married the sister of Emperor Basil in Constantinople and embarked on a campaign to make Christianity the state church of his country with Constantinople its spiritual capital. The Apocrypha depicting Andrew's mission in Scythia was useful for his effort to inspire a unifying faith among the people.

According to a foundational text known as the *Russian Primary Chronicle*, Andrew sailed more than four hundred miles north from the Black Sea on the River Dnieper to Kiev, where he planted a cross in the surrounding hills and proclaimed that a great Christian city would arise there. He then traveled nearly a thousand miles further north to Novgorod.⁹¹ None of this can be historically verified, of course, but the legends are embraced as genuine by leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church to this day.⁹² Scholars surmise that Eastern Orthodox Christianity was passed along to the Slavs primarily through liturgy. "The Russians learned very well the lesson that liturgy is the very expression of faith."⁹³ The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, the central liturgy of Orthodox worship even now, penetrated deep into Russia.

The legacy of Andrew's mission in Scythia and Russia has recently been used as justification for hostility and conflict between Russia and Western nations. In July 2021, Russian President Vladimir Putin wrote: "I would like to emphasize that the wall that has

⁹¹ Lamont, *The Life*, 52-53.

⁹² Lamont, *The Life*, 54.

⁹³ John Meyendorff, *The Byzantine Legacy in the Orthodox Church*, (Crestwood, New York: T. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982), 126-27.

emerged in recent years between Russia and Ukraine, between the parts of what is essentially the same historical and *spiritual space*, to my mind is our great common misfortune and tragedy. (My emphasis).⁹⁴

The Western Church. While reverence for Andrew was flourishing in the Eastern Church, he was by no means ignored in the West. Andrew was honored and his feast day was celebrated in Rome as early as the fourth century.⁹⁵ A basilica and other monuments dedicated to the apostle were erected in Rome in the fifth century,⁹⁶ and by the end of that century Pope Simplicius made Andrew his patron saint.⁹⁷ As noted above, Gregory, Bishop of Tours wrote a Latin abstract of the Acts of Andrew, and another Gregory, Pope Gregory the Great (590-604 C.E.), venerated him in his homilies and converted his family's palace into a monastery named for Andrew.⁹⁸ Eventually, Andrew's significance worked its way north in Western Christendom as well.

Scotland. Christianity in Scotland dates to evangelism by St. Ninian (d. 432), but Scotland wasn't evangelized "on a national scale" until St. Columba, the Abbot of Iona (d. 597).⁹⁹ Andrew's importance in Scotland did not emerge until the 8th century. Legend has it that Angus (729-61 C.E.), King of the Picts in western Scotland defeated his rivals in the east with a large army but while wintering in place he was surrounded by the enemy who claimed St. Peter for protection. Angus reached out to Andrew for help.¹⁰⁰ A divine light and the voice of Andrew came upon him and promised him victory if he would dedicate a

⁹⁴ <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181>, accessed 2/14/22.

⁹⁵ Lamont, *The Life*, 65-66.

⁹⁶ Dvornik, *The Idea*, 150-53.

⁹⁷ Lamont, *The Life*, 65-66.

⁹⁸ Dvornik, *The Idea*, 158-59.

⁹⁹ G.D. Henderson, *The Claims of the Church of Scotland*, (London, Hodder and Stoughton, Limited, 1951), 7-8.

¹⁰⁰ J.H.S. Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 35

tenth of his inheritance to God and the memory of Andrew. When Angus succeeded, he wondered what part of his kingdom he should dedicate as promised. At this point, the monk Regulus arrived by ship near a monastery called Kilrymont having sailed from Constantinople with some of the apostle's relics. Angus pitched his tents nearby, dedicated the place to God and Andrew, and declared Andrew to be head of all the churches in the kingdom.¹⁰¹ Kilrymont is the town we know as St. Andrews in Scotland today.

The origins of the legend of Andrew's crucifixion on an X-shaped cross are clouded, but an account of a battle fought by a later Pictish King Angus is a primary candidate. This is not the same King Angus noted above, but they may be related through literary or legendary license. Andrew appeared to this second King Angus on the eve of a battle in 832 C.E. In this appearance, Andrew was crucified on an X-shaped cross from which he promised the king victory. The next morning an X-shaped cross of clouds emerged in the sky, and Angus was victorious.¹⁰² Consequently, a white diagonal cross on a blue field, called a saltire, became Scotland's national flag, and is incorporated to this day in the flag of the United Kingdom.

There are other versions of the legends by which Andrew became the patron Saint of Scotland and known for his X-shaped crucifixion. But the important point is that Andrew entered the imaginations and has remained fixed in the minds of the people in the northern regions of Great Britain.

¹⁰¹ William F. Skene, D.C.L., LL.D., *Celtic Scotland: A History of Ancient Alban*, 2nd ed., (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1886), 296-97.

¹⁰² Lamont, *The Life*, 82-83.

Chapter III: Andrew and Theology

Scripture provides a compact but consequential portrait of Andrew. Legend and tradition enlarge Andrew's legacy, adding dimensionality and renown for the apostle in history. But what may we discern about the theological significance of Andrew for the Church and for us today? What lessons of faith may we discern from Andrew?

St. John Chrysostom on Andrew. St. John Chrysostom (349-407 C.E.) was called (kidnapped, really) in 397 C.E. and brought by Emperor Theodosius from Antioch to Constantinople to become Bishop of the See. He was selected for the position (without his knowledge or acceptance) because of his reputation as an eloquent teacher and a vigorous advocate for Orthodoxy in opposition to the Arian heresy.¹⁰³ He immediately “cleaned house” in the Church, terminating transgressive clergy, eliminating lavish banquets and preaching tirades against wealth and power from his pulpit in the Hagia Sophia.¹⁰⁴ Not surprisingly, he became very unpopular among the elites, but he was extremely popular among the poor and middle-class. He preached to massive audiences, was frequently interrupted with applause, and was eventually nicknamed Chrysostom, or Golden Mouth, because of his dazzling oratory.¹⁰⁵ He was a central figure in the development of the Eastern Church. What did this pious, Orthodox, electrifying Bishop preach about Andrew?

Chrysostom referred to Andrew as “the other Peter.”¹⁰⁶ In his homily on Andrew's “call” (No. 18), Chrysostom looks closely at Andrew's conversion to Jesus. He starts by asking: “Why in the world...did [the Baptist] not travel everywhere in Judea proclaiming

¹⁰³ J.N.D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 104-05.

¹⁰⁴ J.N.D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 113-20.

¹⁰⁵ Mayer, *Chrysostom*, 39; J.N.D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom – Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 4.

¹⁰⁶ Dvornik, *Apostolicity*, 145.

Him, instead of taking up his stand beside the river, waiting for Him to come and waiting to point Him out when he did come?”¹⁰⁷ When finally the Baptist pointed Jesus out to his disciples, he had to do so on two successive days, because on the first day no one paid attention (John 1:29-34). So, the Baptist publicly repeated his declaration the following day (John 1:36), and we know that on that day Andrew and his companion were standing nearby.¹⁰⁸

The Baptist did not send Andrew and his companion to follow Jesus, they did that on their own. Chrysostom notes that: “John...had still other disciples, but they not only did not follow [Jesus] but even were jealous of him. ‘Rabbi’ they said [later to the Baptist], ‘he who was with thee beyond the Jordan, to whom thou hast borne witness, behold, he baptizes, and all are coming to him.’” (John 3:26).¹⁰⁹

Chrysostom illuminates the divine nature of Andrew’s call to follow Jesus, who said: “No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me” (John 6:44). Andrew’s heart was open to be drawn to Jesus. Jesus’s call is for everyone, but only some accept it; only some perceive its profound significance; only some are drawn by the Father.

François Bovon on Theology in Acts of Andrew. Proclaiming the gospel has always been a central mission for Christianity. Swiss Theologian François Bovon,¹¹⁰ sees the *Acts of Andrew* contributing to this mission through a “theology of the ‘words’.”¹¹¹ *ActsAndr*

¹⁰⁷ Chrysostom, *Commentary on Saint John The Apostle and Evangelist, Homilies 1-47, The Fathers of the Church, A New Translation*, Vol. 33, Bernard M. Peebles, Editorial Director, Translated by Sister Thomas Aquinas Goggin, S.C.H. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1957), 178-79.

¹⁰⁸ Chrysostom, *Homilies*, 174.

¹⁰⁹ Chrysostom, *Homilies*, 179.

¹¹⁰ Bovon (1938 – 2013) was a Swiss biblical scholar and historian of early Christianity. He was Frothingham Professor Emeritus of the History of Religion at Harvard Divinity School.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/François_Bovon, Accessed 2/14/22.

¹¹¹ François Bovon, “The Words of Life in the Acts of the Apostle Andrew,” *Harvard Theological Review* 87 no. 2 (1994): 152.

commences with the usual apocryphal account of miracles, but the majority of the text is a recitation of the teaching and preaching of Andrew. Andrew's speeches in *ActsAndr* have profound effects on the persons they reach. The forceful text is clear evidence that the author aimed to capture the salvific power of Andrew's speech.¹¹²

Through his speech, Andrew moved Maximilla, wife of the Proconsul of Patras, to dedicate her life to Christ, saying to her:

Blessed is our [humanity] for someone has loved it. Blessed is our existence, for someone has shown it mercy...We do not belong to time, so as to be dissolved by time...We belong to the one who indeed shows mercy.¹¹³

Through his speech, Andrew also converted the Proconsul's brother, Stratocles, who declared that Andrew's words were "like fiery javelins" and that he had "received...the words of salvation" from Andrew.¹¹⁴

When he is brought to the cross upon which he is to be crucified, Andrew speaks to it as if to a living creature:

Greetings, O cross!...I know well that, though you have been weary for a long time, planted and awaiting me, now at last you can rest...I recognize your mystery...So then, cross that is pure, radiant, full of life and light, receive me.¹¹⁵

Hanging on the cross for three days, he "nourished" a crowd of thousands by his words before his eventual death.¹¹⁶

There was no "secret character" to Andrew's speech,¹¹⁷ but his words were not for everyone. They were "to remind those who are related to these words that they are living among foreign evils."¹¹⁸ There were two types of hearers of Andrew's words: those like

¹¹² Bovon, *Words*, 140.

¹¹³ Elliott, *Apocryphal NT*, 255.

¹¹⁴ Elliott, *Apocryphal NT*, 258

¹¹⁵ Elliott, *Apocryphal NT*, 262.

¹¹⁶ Elliott, *Apocryphal NT*, 264.

¹¹⁷ Bovon, *Words*, 153.

¹¹⁸ Bovon, *Words*, 148.

Stratocles, who heard, and those like the Proconsul, who refused to hear. In that same way, not everyone who heard Jesus accepted his words. When, after a difficult lesson, Jesus asked the Twelve whether they also wanted to leave him as others had: “Simon Peter answered, ‘Lord, to whom can we go? *You have the words of eternal life*’” (John 6:67-68). In the same way, Andrew heard Jesus’s words, and he proclaimed them, as commanded, “to the ends of the earth.”¹¹⁹

Theology of the Cross. When Andrew and Philip brought the Greeks to Jesus, they became the fulcrum for the pivot in John’s Gospel from Jesus’s public ministry to the “theology of the cross.”¹²⁰ The Evangelist here recites the theme of Christian martyrdom through Jesus’s announcement of his impending glorification in death: “Unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (John 12:24). “When I am lifted up from the earth [on the cross], I will draw all people to myself” (John 12:32). In John’s Gospel there is no path to glory for Jesus except through death on the cross, and glory is reserved only for God and the divine Jesus:¹²¹ “It is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name” (John 12:27-28).

But amid the announcement of his impending crucifixion and glorification, Jesus utters a numinous summation of his call to discipleship:

He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am there shall my servant be also; if anyone serves me the Father will honor him. (John 12:25-26)

¹¹⁹ Andrew’s words to the cross and his dialogues with the Proconsul in *ActsAndr* are the text for the Office of St. Andrew in the Church of Scotland.

¹²⁰ “The classic theology of the cross (*theologia crucis*) is an ancient system of Christian thought conveying the message of the cross of Jesus Christ, that in it alone all...creaturely attempts to know and be as God are overcome, [so] that the proper glorification of human knowledge and being may proceed.” Rosalene Bradbury, *Cross Theology, The Classical Theologia Crucis and Karl Barth’s Modern Theology of the Cross*, (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 2.

¹²¹ Cf. John 17:4-5 – “I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.”

Christ admonishes his disciples to live their lives, and to live in commitment to him. He teaches that the path to eternal life is to follow and serve him, hating the pain and suffering that must be endured, but fully alive in mission. To attain eternal life, Jesus's disciples must hold nothing back. They must be fully committed to following Jesus, even to death, but only if a martyr's death is what God wills. Whoever loves their life so much in this world that they guard it from all threat, will never obtain the "eternal life" of fully committed service.¹²²

¹²² Haenchen, *John 2*, 97.

Conclusion

In the apocryphal *Epistle of the Apostles*, the resurrected Jesus accompanies Mary, her sister Martha, and Mary Magdalene to where the apostles were hiding after the crucifixion. They fear he is a ghost, but Jesus says to them:

I am he who spoke to you concerning my flesh, my death, and my resurrection. And that you may know that it is I, lay your hand, Peter, (and your finger) in the nailprint of my hands; and you, Thomas, in my side; and also you, Andrew, see whether my foot steps on the ground and leaves a footprint. For it is written in the prophet, ‘But a ghost, a demon, leaves no print on the ground.’¹²³

The text is consonant with Luke 24:37-40, and John 20:27 wherein the risen Jesus appears to the apostles, and they are terrified, but he reassures them, saying “Look at my hands and my feet. See that it is I, myself.” It is fitting that in this apocryphal text Jesus also told Andrew to look at his feet to see whether they left a footprint, for Andrew left his own deep footprints on our faith and on the Church.

Scripture and tradition portray Andrew as one of the first two disciples called by the Father to follow Jesus, and he fully committed to him in that first encounter. The depth and power of Andrew’s commitment to Christ emerges at once, for on the next morning he persuaded his brother Simon that “we have found the Messiah.” Fittingly, the Collect for St. Andrew’s Day in the Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church reads:

Almighty God, who gave such grace to your apostle Andrew that he readily obeyed the call of your Son Jesus Christ, and brought his brother to him: Give us, who are called by your Holy Word, grace to follow him without delay, and to bring those near to us into his gracious presence; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

¹²³ Hugo Duensing, “Epistula Apostolorum,” in *New Testament Apocrypha*, Volume One, Gospels and Related Writings, Edited by Wilhelm Schneemelcher, English translation edited by R. McL. Wilson, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963), 197. The prophetic text referenced by Jesus may be lost to the ages, but cf. K. Schäferdiek, *Acts of John*, in *New Testament Apocrypha*, Volume Two (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964), 227.

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