

Slide Children's Time – Ask children to come up to the front.

TITLE: Identification Please

THEME: Thomas doubts the resurrection

Second Sunday of Easter

OBJECTS: A driver's license or some other photo
Identification Card

SCRIPTURE: John 20:24-29.



Children, I need to see some Identification. Who has a driver's license? Do any of you have a Student ID card? Well then, how do I know who you are? As grownups we are asked almost every day to show identification to prove who we are – when we buy things at the store or go to the bank. Your parents have to show your birth certificate to prove whom you are when they enroll you in school or when you go out for sports.

On the Sunday that Jesus rose from the grave He appeared to His disciples. They were so happy that Jesus was alive and that this was further proof He was God. But, one of the disciples, named Thomas, was not there. When Thomas returned and the other disciples told him that they had seen Jesus, Thomas replied, “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

A week later Jesus again came to His disciples and this time Thomas was there. Jesus said to Thomas, because remember Thomas had doubted that Jesus had risen and come to the disciple the first time, **Slide** “Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

Many people today will not believe in Jesus because they did not see Him raise from the grave and have not physically seen Him with their own eyes. They are like Thomas they want proof. We have proof all around us – your parents believe, all the plants and trees and the sky and stars are proof of God, we have the Bible which is proven over and over to be true. When you believe and place your life in the nail scared hands of Jesus you will have proof in your heart and soul. This is called faith. When Jesus came up to Thomas and held out His nail scared hands He said to Thomas, “*Because you have seen Me, have you believed?*” But then Jesus spoke for each of us here this morning when He said, “*Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.*”

Heavenly Father, we thank you for sending your Son to die on the cross for our sin. Help us to accept by faith that Jesus has risen from the grave and that He is alive. Amen.

Slide Third and Fourth Days – The First Disciples

Blank Verse 35 begins with “Again the next day.” This is now the third day in the first week of Jesus’ ministry after He had spent 40 days in the wilderness.

Remember the first day John the Baptist denies he is the Messiah and announces that the true Messiah is coming and he is preparing the way. Day two John the Baptist identifies Jesus as the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” John recognizes Jesus as not just his cousin, but as the Messiah when the Spirit of God descends like a dove out of heaven and remains upon Jesus. John now testifies that Jesus is the Son of God.

³⁵“Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶and he looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God!’ ” Now we see it is the third day and John the Baptist sees Jesus walking and again announces, “Behold, the Lamb of God!” Two of John’s disciples hearing this left John and followed Jesus. John’s willingness, without hesitation, to allow his disciples to leave and follow Jesus demonstrates the complete acceptance of his subordinate role to Jesus. John having served his purpose and calling from God as the witness to the true identity of Jesus as the long awaited Messiah, now begins the process of fading from the focus of the people to allow Jesus to take center stage. Apart from a brief mention in the Gospel according to John in chapter 3, verse 23 the rest of this Gospel focuses on the ministry of Jesus. John the Baptist was just like you and me – he had his doubts about Jesus - while in prison as we see in Matthew chapter 11 and Luke chapter 7.

Slide “Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to Him, ‘Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for

someone else?’ ” (Matthew 7:2-3 NASB) The Lord graciously dispelled those doubts by the reporting to John the miracles Jesus was performing.

Slide ⁴“ ... Go and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵*the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.* ⁶And blessed is he who does not take offense at Me.” (Matthew 7:4-6 NASB) This is true today, as well; there are miracles all around us, if we will only pay attention and look. **Blank**

Now, let us return to John chapter 1, verse 37 and see if we can discern who these first two disciples are, ³⁷“The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, ‘What do you seek?’ They said to Him, ‘Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?’ ³⁹He (Jesus) said to them, ‘Come, and you will see.’ So they came and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. ⁴⁰One of the two who heard John *speak* and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother.” When Jesus turned to Andrew and the one with him, He said, ‘What do you seek?’ Jesus did not ask this question for His own benefit. As the God incarnate He already knew what they wanted. We know that since they were disciples of John the Baptist they believed in sin and the need for forgiveness. Jesus asked the question to challenge them to consider what their motive was in seeking Him. Jesus did not ask them whom they were seeking, but what they were seeking. Perhaps, Jesus intimidated Andrew and the other disciple, so instead of answering Jesus directly, they answered by asking a question of their own, “where are You staying?” Andrew and the other disciple were not merely asking where Jesus was staying. They were requesting an extended private interview with Him. Jesus responds by inviting them to come with Him. This encounter is so important that

the Apostle John records not only the day, but the time as well, the tenth hour. In Jewish time this would be 4 pm as 6 am is the 1st hour. The day was late and darkness was approaching. Andrew and the other disciple went with Jesus immediately. The indication is they spent time with Jesus and spent the night. In the morning Andrew runs to find his brother Simon and share with him the testimony of Jesus as the Messiah, meaning the anointed one of God. Who is this Andrew? Who is the other disciple? Who is Simon? Let's take some time to explore who they are, beginning with Andrew.

In the time of Christ the meaning of names are important, Andrew is Greek and means "manly." Andrew is only one of two disciples that does not have a Hebrew names. Even though he had a Greek name he was a Palestinian Jew. We learn in Matthew, **Slide** "And Jesus said to him (*Simon the brother of Andrew*), 'Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.' " (Matthew 16:17 NASB) **Barjona** (*bar-jo'-nah*) means Son of Jona in Hebrew or in the Greek son of John or Jonathan, which means "Jehovah is gracious." Andrew was raised in Bethsaida in Galilee, **MAP** which was located at the north end of the Sea of Galilee, just east of the River Jordan. Those living in Galilee were strongly influenced by the Greek culture and would have undoubtedly spoken both Aramaic and Greek. **Slide** We also know from the Gospel according to Mark that Andrew must have lived with his brother Simon and Simon's wife in Capernaum on the north end of the Sea of Galilee just west of the River Jordan, **Slide** ²¹"They went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and *began* to teach ... ²⁹And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John." (Mark 1:21-29 NASB) Andrew and Simon worked together as fishermen. **Slide** We learn this from the story in Luke about their fishing all night and not catching anything and Jesus telling

them to go out into the deep water and let their nets down and they caught so many fish their nets began to break. At the end of the story we also learn that Andrew and Simon were in partnership with James and John the sons of Zebedee in verse 10. Now, back to John the Baptist, Andrew and Jesus. Andrew had apparently left his fishing business to go hear John the Baptist's preaching of repentance. Upon hearing John the Baptist preach he became his disciple. We do not know how long he followed John before leaving to follow Jesus. Now hearing John identifying Jesus as the Messiah, Andrew leaves to find out more about Jesus. Andrew and the other disciple, which most believe is John, spent the day and then the night with Jesus. Andrew the next morning is so excited he returns to Capernaum to find his brother Simon. He tells Simon that he has met the Messiah. Now by tradition we can surmise that Andrew is the oldest, since he is most often mentioned first. It appears that when his older brother tells Simon that he has met the Messiah there is no hesitation on Simon's part and they go to Jesus so Simon can meet him.

Andrew and Simon then return to their fishing business when **Map** Jesus returns to Galilee and most likely the village of Nazareth about 30 miles to the southwest of Capernaum. In Matthew chapter 4 we read that Jesus later returns to Capernaum to make his headquarters there fulfilling the prophesy of Isaiah who said, **Slide** ¹⁵“THE LAND OF ZEBULON (zab·oo·lone) AND THE LAND OF NAPHTALI (nef·thal·ime), BY THE WAY OF THE SEA, BEYOND THE JORDAN, GALILEE OF THE GENTILES — ¹⁶THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SITTING IN DARKNESS SAW A GREAT LIGHT, AND THOSE WHO WERE SITTING IN THE LAND AND SHADOW OF DEATH, UPON THEM A LIGHT DAWNED.” (Matthew 4:15-16 NASB) It was at this time as we read earlier in Mark 1:16-20 that Jesus calls Andrew, Simon Peter, James and John into full-time training to “become fishers of men.” **Slide** In all the lists of the apostles Andrew is always named in the first four to indicate he was one of the first disciples, but it

appears that he was not part of Jesus' inner circle of Simon Peter, James and John.

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It was Andrew who called Jesus' attention at the feeding of the five thousand to the boy with the basket of fish and bread. Andrew's name is included among those who waited in the Upper Room after the Ascension of Jesus in Acts 1:13. However, after this his name completely disappears from the New Testament. In this Gospel according to John the disciple Andrew is closely related to Philip who is the only other disciple with a Greek name. There are many traditions concerning Andrew; his ministry in Scythia (si-the-a), a region north of the Black Sea, and regarded by the GrecoRoman world as utterly pagan and uncivilized, referred to in Colossians 3:11. According to the non-scripture writings, such as, in the "Acts of Andrew" while he was ministering in western Greece he was martyred at Patras ('pa-trəs) by being bound to an X-shaped cross, which later became known as St. Andrew's Cross. Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland and Russia. But, let me remind you these are traditions and not known fact.

It is believed that the person with Andrew when John the Baptist identified Jesus as "the Lamb of God!" was John who came to be known as the "disciple whom Jesus loved" and the author of the Gospel according to John and whose name means "Jehovah is a gracious giver." John was a disciple of John the Baptist and then became a disciple of Christ. We learn from the scriptures that John had a brother, James and they were the sons of Zebedee a fisherman living near Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. Also, that John and James were partners with Andrew and Simon in the fishing business. The mother of John and James is believed to be Salome (Sal-o-may), whose name is the feminine form of "Salom" meaning "peace." The reason for thinking that Salome was John's mother is inferred in Mark 16:1, **Slide** "When

the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might come and anoint Him.” We compare Mark 16:1 with Matthew 27:56 which reads, **Slide** “Among them was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.” So Mark and Matthew call the third woman “Salome” and John calls her the mother of the sons of Zebedee. In John 19:25 we read, **Slide** “But standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His (Jesus’) mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.” This would mean that Salome is the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus and therefore, Jesus and John (and James) were first cousins. **Blank** Weight is added to this thought by the next verse when Jesus says to John, “Behold, your mother”, as Mary would have been John’s aunt and it would be proper for him to take her into his household. John is the second most prominent member of the Twelve. He and his brother James were given the name “sons of thunder” by Jesus in Mark 3:17. The Apostle John is one of the three who formed the inner circle of Jesus’ disciples. Peter was the leader of the inner circle and followed by John and James. There are a number of non-canonized, non-scripture and unverifiable books attributed to Apostle John: Acts of John where he heals Cleopatra; The First Epistle of John in which he thanks God for his celibate life; the Fourth Gospel of John and the Secret Book of John. As is often the case, these false writings create heretical followings and people live out these strange and false writings. What we do know as fact is that John was part of the inner circle of Jesus’ disciples and he was one of the three present on the mountain when Jesus was “Transfigured” as found in Matthew 17, Mark 9 and Luke 9. John and his brother, James created problems in their relationship with the other disciples by requesting a favored position in the future Kingdom of Christ as seen in Matthew 20. At the Last Supper it was the son of Zebedee, the disciple whom Jesus loved that reclining close

to Jesus and learned the identity of the betrayer, Judas. After the disciples are scattered from Jerusalem very little is known about John. Church tradition, which is supported by the writings of several witnesses, states that John became the Bishop of Ephesus. As bishop John championed orthodoxy. In the last decade of the first century Domitian (*də-ˈmi-shən*) exiled John to the Island of Patmos. **MAP** It was on Patmos that John under the direction of the Holy Spirit and the resurrected Christ penned the fourth Gospel, his three epistles and the last and final book of the Bible, The Revelation of Jesus Christ. John's writings had these consistent themes; belief in and loving Christ as the Savior and living a Christ-like life, and his strong warnings against heresy and sin. John was a constant beacon of the truth of Christ in the early church. **Blank**

Back again to our passage of study this morning we will read now beginning at verse 40, "One of the two who heard John *speak* and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which translated means Christ). ⁴²He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called **Cephas**' (which is translated Peter *meaning stone*)." On the fourth day Andrew finds his brother Simon (Simon is the Greek form of Simenon his Hebrew name meaning "God has heard") and takes him to meet Jesus and Jesus renames him Cephas, the Aramaic name meaning, "Rock" and in the Greek is Peter. He is often referred to in scripture by several names; he is called Simon 64 times, Simon Peter 65 times or Peter 150 times and only nine times is he called Cephas. In his book *Twelve Ordinary Men* by John MacArthur, he wrote, "*Simon was a very common name. There are at least seven Simons in the Gospel accounts alone. Among the Twelve were two-named Simon (Simon Peter and Simon the Zealot). In Matthew 13:55, Jesus' half brothers are listed, and one of them was also named Simon.*"

The Simon of our concern, we have already seen is the brother of Andrew and the son of Barjona, now lets take a closer look at whom Simon Peter was. It appears while Andrew became a disciple of John the Baptist, his brother Simon continued in the family fishing business. It was not until Jesus relocated his ministry to Capernaum that Andrew and Peter were called into full-time ministry after Jesus instructed Andrew, Peter, John and James to recast their net and they caught a large number of fish. It is Peter who in Luke 5:8, **Slide** "... fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, 'Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!' ... ¹⁰ Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men.' ¹¹When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him." **Blank** Peter is listed first in a number of the gospels among the twelve. Peter is bold and finds himself in trouble at times for his bold and quick action; Peter stepped out to walk on water with Jesus only to lose faith and sink, he cut off the ear of the Temple guard, which Jesus repairs and heals, and he vows allegiance to Jesus which is followed by his three denials. The fact that the Temple tax collectors approached Peter in Matthew 17 is indicative that Peter was recognized for his leadership role among the twelve. The first three Gospels give Peter a more prominent leadership role than does the Gospel of John. It was in Peter's house in Capernaum that Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law in Mark 1. Peter's bold faith and willingness to speak out is seen in his confession found in Matthew 16, **Slide** ¹³"Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' ¹⁴And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.' ¹⁵He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' ¹⁷And Jesus said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸I also say to you that you are

Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.’ ” **Blank** Jesus was concerned with His Church once He had left this earth and returned to heaven. Jesus uses a play-on-words since Peter means “rock” and on the “rock” or solid foundation of the teachings of Christ and the inspired scriptures is what the true church is to be built upon. Peter is a man of passion and contrast; just a few verses later after telling Peter Jesus would build the church by Peter, Jesus rebukes Peter when Peter invokes the name of God and says, **Slide** “God forbid *it*, Lord! This shall never happen to You.” (Matthew 16:22 NASB) Peter does not want Jesus to suffer and be put to death, but since this is the will of God – Peter was wrong, even though he meant well. Jesus responds saying, **Slide** “Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s.” (Matthew 16:23 NASB) Anything that might cause someone to stumble in the service to God is sin, even if it is well meant. Peter’s strong passion led him into trouble occasionally, but it was also what God used for Peter to do great things in the name of God. I love Peter because I can relate to him in my own behavior. The exchange between Jesus and Peter in the Upper Room is one that shows Peter’s concern and love for Jesus, but also that he could be rash and not see the larger picture right away. In John chapter 13 beginning in verse 6 Peter’s heart and passion are seen, **Slide** ⁶“So He (Jesus) came to Simon Peter. He (Peter) said to Him, ‘Lord, do You wash my feet?’ ⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter.’ ⁸ Peter said to Him, ‘Never shall You wash my feet!’ Jesus answered him, ‘If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me. ⁹ Simon Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, *then wash* not only my feet, but also my hands and my head.’ ” Let

me reword this exchange. Peter says, Jesus you are the master, you are the Messiah, there is no way on God's green earth you are going to wash my dirty feet. Jesus looks Peter in the eye and says we are all called to serve, if you do not let me do this you are not obedient and you are not my disciple. Well in that case, replies Peter, wash my feet and my head and my hands for I want to be your servant. Peter calm down, Jesus answers, you don't need a bath but an example of servant hood.

Blank Then a little later Peter not having been told who the betrayer was by John asks, "Surely not I, Lord?" Peter figures he better double check since he was wrong about the foot washing. Don't you just love Peter? How grieved Peter was when he denied Jesus three times. But, God used this grieving process to strengthen Peter and in his remorse and grief Peter grew to become a towering man of faith that stood the trails that were to come.

There is not clear evidence in the post resurrection scripture writings of all of Peter's travels and ministry. There are indications he might have been in Corinth found in 1 Corinthians 1:12, **Slide** "Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, 'I am of Paul,' and 'I of Apollos,' and 'I of Cephas,' and 'I of Christ.'" **Blank** Early Christian literature speaks of Peter having a residence in Rome. In a letter written by the Clement, Bishop of Rome, dated between 88 and 97 AD, he cites the suffering and martyrdom of Peter and Paul under the persecution of Nero. It appears the Peter was martyred in about 64 to 68 AD. Eusebius (yü-'sē-bē-əs), Bishop and historian of early Christianity (260-339 AD) and was ordained at Caesarea in Palestine dates Peter's execution in either late 67 or in early 68 AD. Church tradition and writings of the early church fathers in the second and third century report that Peter insisted on being crucified head-downward. The Catholic Church insists that Peter's bones and tomb is located in the catacombs of St. Peter's Church in Rome. In 1968, Pope Paul VI announced that the bones of Peter had been positively identified. The reality is

that this would be impossible. No one outside the Vatican has been able to verify this. The problem with these efforts is that relics become idols – worshipping bones instead of Jesus. Even the Cross of Christ has become an idol to replace Christ for some. This would cause Peter to turn over in his grave, if that were possible.

In two weeks, God willing, we will finish the fourth to sixth days of the first week of Jesus' ministry and chapter one of the Gospel according to John. **Slide** Now let us take time to pray to our Lord that He would use us to reveal Himself to others. That we would be servants like Andrew, John and Peter. Let us pray that the Lord would graciously use our personalities, strengths and weakness to reveal His glory to the lost. Come let us lift our heart in prayer. Come let us pray together.

Psalm 67

- 1 God be gracious to us and bless us,
And cause His face to shine upon us — Selah.
- 2 That Your way may be known on the earth,
Your salvation among all nations.
- 3 Let the peoples praise You, O God;
Let all the peoples praise You.
- 4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy;
For You will judge the peoples with uprightness
And guide the nations on the earth. Selah.
- 5 Let the peoples praise You, O God;
Let all the peoples praise You.
- 6 The earth has yielded its produce;
God, our God, blesses us.
- 7 God blesses us,
That all the ends of the earth may fear Him.