

## The Chosen Season 1

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to Season 1 of The Chosen. You have decided to embark on a journey through the bible with the 12 disciples in a way that will make scripture come alive and be unforgettable. The Chosen series has become not only a national phenomenon, but has impacted people all over the globe. Watching the gospels come to life will give you a whole different experience than reading the bible. It will imprint a visual of the stories of Jesus in your mind that will change the way you read scripture and understand the bible. I am so excited you have decided to take The Chosen journey, you won't regret it!

The first couple of episodes can be a little slow so hang in there, if you start to doze off. It will be worth it as you get to know the characters and grow to love Jonathan Rumie as Jesus. There are many bible studies and devotions based off the series. I recommend completing The Chosen bible study for each season, but I wanted to offer an alternative with this study that is quicker to complete and helps you know and identify the similarities and differences of the show and scripture to point out where they took creative liberties.

The best thing about this show is the writers/ creators and director kept the show pretty close to scripture. Most of what you see in the show is portrayed in the bible. I pray that in watching the show it creates a desire in your heart to get into your bible and read scripture. Now that you have SEEN the creators depiction of the gospels, READ it for yourself. Nothing can take the place of actually reading the bible. As you probably know, no movie/show is ever as good as the book and this is the case here too. Get into your bible and read the stories they didn't include in the show, come to your own conclusion on the similarities and differences. God gave us the bible so we will know HIS story and because he wanted us to read it. Make sure you still get into the word! This is not a replacement, but a supplemental resource adding to what you would read in the bible.

I hope you enjoy the show and most importantly I hope you enjoy this study as you get into the scripture supporting each episode. My prayer for you is that the bible comes to life before your eyes and you grow closer to God in spiritual wisdom and biblical curiosity.

## **Background**

You are introduced to many characters this season. It can get a little confusing if you don't pay close attention to who is talking and what they are doing. I recommend putting the subtitles on when you watch the show to help make sure you hear/read every word. I have included in the beginning of each episode a "While You Watch" section that can help you to stay focused and pay attention to each character and what is happening. If you have already watched it, just skip this section and go to the reflection questions.

This season is going to cover scripture references out of the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The show is centered around the disciples and starts when Jesus starts his ministry. We do not see his birth or when he goes into the desert and is tempted by the devil. This season and others to come, bring the viewer an understanding of who the disciples and women followers are that supported Jesus' ministry.

The show also does a great job pulling in some Old Testament references which bring you back into stories before Jesus' time. Revisiting these stories will help you see how it ties into the episode. I have included these Old Testament references and the main New Testament references from each episode for you below:

- Episode 1 – Mary is possessed by seven demons (Luke 8:1-3). Old Testament reference is Isaiah 43:1.
- Episode 2 – Mary hosts Shabbat dinner. Old Testament reference is God's command to recognize the Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-11).
- Episode 3 – Jesus is with the little children (Matthew 19:13-14)
- Episode 4 – Peter, Andrew, James and John are called to be Jesus' disciples (Luke 5:4-11)
- Episode 5 – Wedding in Cana – Jesus turned water into wine (John 2:1-11) also Jesus lost as a boy (Luke 2:41-52)
- Episode 6 – Healing of the leper (*Mark 1:40-43*) and healing of the paralytic man brought through the roof to Jesus (Mark 2:2-12)
- Episode 7 – Matthew called to be a disciple (Matthew 9:9) and Nicodemus talks with Jesus in the night (John 3:1-21). Old Testament reference is Moses with the bronze serpent (Numbers 21:5-9)
- Episode 8 – Matthew hosted a dinner party (Mark 2:15-17), Jesus healed Simon's mother-in-law (Luke 4:38-39) and Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:5-30). Old Testament reference is Jacob's well (Genesis 33:18-19).

## Season 1

### **Episode 1: I Have Called You By Name**

**While you watch:** The first episode can be a bit confusing if you aren't paying special attention to names and what is going on. As you watch this episode, mark off each person and the main events that happen in the show. This will help to keep your focus so you can pay close attention to each character that is introduced.

#### Characters:

- Lilith/ Mary Magdalene
- Nicodemus
- Quintus
- Matthew
- Rabbi Yusif
- Rabbi Shmuel
- Gaius
- Simon
- Andrew
- Eden
- Jesus

#### Events:

- Lilith is possessed by demons
- Matthew gets in a cart to go to work as a tax collector
- Nicodemus tries to exorcise Lilith's demons
- Simon is fighting
- Lilith is on a cliff
- Simon and Andrew talk to Matthew at the tax collector's booth
- Mary meets Jesus

**Reflect on the Episode:** The episode opens up in Magdala in 2BC with a little girl (Mary) who is talking with her father. He shares a verse with her that is quoted throughout this episode. It comes from Isaiah 43. It is also the verse that they named this episode after, I have called you by name.

**Isaiah 43:1 (ESV)** *But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel; "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine."*

Let's revisit this verse later after we learn more about Mary Magdalene and her struggles.

After the flashback is over, we fast forward to 28 years later in the City of Capernaum.

The City of Capernaum is a fishing town with access to waterways where goods are transported. It is a busy town with marketplaces and Roman soldiers are stationed throughout the city.

While we meet many characters in this episode the main story is about Mary Magdalene. Look up the following verses to find out more about her. Write what you learn about her in the space below.

- Luke 8:2
- Luke 8:3
- Matthew 27:55-56, 61
- Mark 16:9

Nicodemus is called to the Red Quarters to help exorcise Lilith's demons. He is not successful and starts to doubt his abilities. Have you ever felt this way, like you didn't have the abilities necessary to do what God is calling you to do? Explain below:

## Bible Reference

Did you catch that the little girl, Mary and her father were looking at a star? With the time period of this flashback, it must have been the same star that led the wisemen to Bethlehem to see Jesus. Bible historians pinpoint Jesus' birth at 6BC - 4BC and he is about 2 years old when the wisemen visit him. <sup>1</sup>

**Matthew 2:1-2 & 9 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." .... <sup>9</sup> After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was.*

### DID YOU KNOW??

Jesus started his ministry when he was 30 years old and it lasted 3 - 3.5 years at which time he was crucified at the age of 33. Since the episode started at 2BC and 28 years progressed to the next scene, the year was 26AD. Most theologians believe Jesus started his ministry after John the Baptist started preaching in 28AD – 29AD. The Chosen seems to have taken an earlier timeline, maybe to develop the other characters more. <sup>1</sup>

After Nicodemus doubts his abilities, he starts to question God. Nicodemus' wife tells him not to question God, but I don't think this is good advice at all. If you have doubts or questions, bring them to God. Write any open questions you have below.

There are so many resources that we can consult to answer our questions about God. I challenge you to research your question and pray to God for answers. Make sure you are consulting a respectable source. I recommend Gotquestions.org which has many answers to common questions that believers/ non-believers have. It is normal to question things, and you should seek an answer, so your doubts do not turn into unbelief.

Lilith is possessed with not just one demon, but 7 demons and they are terrorizing her life. In this episode she turns to alcohol and sex to pacify her pain. She feels hopeless and upset because there isn't a solution to her situation. Many people have tried to exorcise the demons, even Nicodemus himself, with no luck.

It becomes clear that Lilith feels like her situation is hopeless and while she is on the cliff, you think she might actually jump. But God intervenes by redirecting her focus to the birds in the sky above. She starts to wander away from the cliff— she is not alone, God is with her! Has there ever been a time you felt like things were hopeless? Has God pulled you away from those thoughts? If so, praise God and share the story below.

After Lilith leaves the cliff, she unfortunately doesn't instantly feel like things are no longer hopeless. She made the decision not to jump off the cliff, but goes back to the bar. It is in the bar, at her lowest point that Jesus enters the show. He goes to her and basically says she doesn't belong there. It is when they leave the bar that he calls her by her given name, Mary. He heals her and removes the demons from possessing her life. In the show Jesus quotes **Isaiah 43:1 (ESV)** *But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel; "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine."* Why do you think this is a perfect verse for Jesus to say to Mary?

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*The gospels never refers to Mary as Lilith, the creators of The Chosen probably chose this name because it is associated with demons in the Jewish traditions.*

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While this episode revolved largely around Mary, we were introduced to some other characters as well. Let's consult scripture to better understand a few of them.

#### Nicodemus

- **John 3:1 (ESV)** *Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.*
  - o Circle the characteristics of Nicodemus from the verse above.
- **John 3:2 (ESV)** *This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him."*
  - o Circle what Nicodemus recognizes about Jesus based on the verse above?
- It is in this interaction with Nicodemus that one of the most well-known verses in the entire bible is said. Nicodemus approaches Jesus at night and questions him about being born again. Read John 3:3-21 and write John 3:16 below.
  
- Nicodemus also defends Jesus when he is being wrongfully accused by the Chief Priest and Pharisees. See John 7:45-52.

#### Simon & Andrew

- **Matthew 4:18 (ESV)** *While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.*
  - o Circle their profession and relation to one another from the verse above.
- We will learn more about them in the upcoming episodes.

#### Matthew

- **Matthew 9:9 (ESV)** *As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him.*
- **Matthew 10:3 (ESV)** *Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus*
  - o Circle the profession of Matthew.
- We will learn more about Matthew in the upcoming episodes.

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*Quintus is not a named biblical character but was made up for storytelling purposes for the series. Quintus is a common Roman name. His character portrays a Roman Praetor who represents the Roman authority that is present in the time Jesus was on the earth.*

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## Episode 2: Shabbat

**While you watch:** As you watch this episode, mark off each person and the main events that happen in the show. This will help to keep your focus so you can pay close attention to each character that is introduced.

### Characters:

- Mary
- Simon
- Andrew
- Nicodemus
- Eden
- Matthew
- Quintus
- Barnaby
- Shula
- James & Thaddeaus
- Jesus

### Events:

- Mary is well with no demons tormenting her
- Matthew talks to Quintus about Simon
- Simon is at the bar
- Eden and Simon are at home
- Mary hosts Shabbat dinner
- Jesus arrives at the dinner

**Reflect on the episode:** The episode opens up with a flash back to Chinnereth in 948 BC. The family is celebrating Shabbat and the mother is explaining to her son, Eli, that they celebrate Shabbat to celebrate family, people and most importantly God.

In this episode, we see four different Shabbat dinners occurring with events leading up to their dinner. Let's go through each dinner, who the participants were and what is going on with our lead characters. In Exodus, God tells the Israelites to remember the Sabbath. Read through the scripture below and circle what you are to do on the Sabbath.

- **Exodus 20:8-11 (ESV)** – <sup>8</sup> “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.”

**Mary** - The episode opens up in 26 AD in Capernaum. Mary is well and no longer possessed by seven demons. Praise the Lord! Yusuf sees Mary is healed and tells the Jewish leaders. Nicodemus gets word that she is healed and can't believe it; it must have been a miracle. Mary is going about her day with a new outlook on life. She is happy, helping others, looking forward to the future because she is healed. Have you ever undergone an experience that gave you a new, refreshed outlook on life? Was it a near death experience or some magnificent turn of luck that left you full instead of empty? Reflect and praise God below.

Mary is preparing to host her first Shabbat dinner. She is excited, but also nervous about the dinner. How do you feel about hosting events or big dinners?

We will revisit Mary's dinner at the end the reflection questions.

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*Jewish people celebrate Shabbat, the Sabbath day on Saturday. We celebrate the Sabbath, a day of rest, on Sunday as that this when Jesus rose from the grave.*

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**Matthew** – The last we saw Matthew in episode 1, he couldn't believe that Simon and Andrew's tax debt was forgiven and wanted to verify it with Quintus. Gaius takes Matthew to Quintus to verify that their debt is forgiven, but warns Quintus that he doesn't think Simon will deliver on his word.

Matthew is a tax collector and they are not very popular people. The Jewish people hate the tax collectors as they think they are traitors as they assist the Romans in suppressing heavy taxes on the people. Oftentimes too, the tax collectors would overtax the people and pocket the extra, effectively stealing from their own people. The Romans did not like the tax collectors because they were Jews. As Matthew goes about his day he is enduring slander from the Jews and physical pushing and threats from the Romans.

Unfortunately, Matthew does not go to a Shabbat dinner. It seems like he wants to celebrate Shabbat but has nowhere to enjoy the dinner. He has betrayed his family by going into the tax profession and no one, neither Jew nor Roman wants to be seen with him. He almost went to dinner with a family, but never actually knocked on the door. Matthew doesn't know he will be rejected, he just assumes. Have you ever been in a situation where you were too scared to actually knock? Have you not taken an opportunity due to fear? Or have you knocked and taken an opportunity when you were scared and it paid off?

Instead of knocking, Matthew befriends a dog and goes home. Is there anyone you know who is considered an outcast or might be different from others so they are avoided? What can you do to help them feel included? Do you need to forgive them, look past their flaws and accept them?

**Simon** – Another character that doesn't fully get to celebrate Shabbat is Simon. Simon has gotten himself into a pickle where he needs to deliver the merchant fishermen who are fishing on the Sabbath or he will be in big trouble with the Roman officers. He attempts to butter up the fishermen at the bar to understand who is fishing on the Sabbath and then ends up having to leave the Shabbat dinner to catch the fisherman in the act.

Eden, Simon's wife, knows that something is wrong with Simon, but she doesn't know the full extent. Andrew is mad at Simon for betraying his fellow Jews and ratting them out to the Romans. Simon knows what he is doing is wrong, but he is justifying it by saying the merchant fisherman are taking the fish out of the sea so he and Andrew cannot fish. This is taking food off his family's plate. So he justifies it by saying what he is doing is actually good. There are definitely flaws in his thinking and he doesn't

convince Andrew at all. Have you ever justified something you knew was wrong just so you could still do it?

**Nicodemus** – Nicodemus is so surprised to hear that Mary is healed. He didn't think his exorcism was effective, but doesn't know how else she could have been healed. He asks the Jewish leaders to investigate for himself, finds Mary, sees with his own eyes that she is healed and questions her. She tells him it was not him who healed her, but another man for whom she did not know his name as he did not want to take credit for the healing. Nicodemus is floored, why would someone heal Mary and not want the credit?

Nicodemus' mind is consumed with finding out who healed Mary from the seven demons. He can't focus on the Shabbat dinner he attends. Do you ever find yourself distracted in your faith? Confess to God the areas you have allowed distractions to divert your attention from him.

Let's get back to Mary's dinner!

Once Mary has prepared her dinner, she gets a few knocks on the door. The first is her friend Barnaby who is crippled. Then Shula who is blind. Both of these attendees have not been invited to a Shabbat dinner in many years. The third knock is James and Thaddaeus who Mary didn't even know, but they explained they were told to come to the dinner. The last and final knock was Jesus himself!

Despite how you answered the first question about hosting events/dinners, how would you feel if you were hosting Jesus Christ himself?

## Bible Reference

When Nicodemus and his wife are looking at the tapestry that was hanging before dinner, Nicodemus tells her a little about the Maccabees. There are a couple of books that a Catholic bible has that is not found in any Protestant bible (ESV, NIV, NLT, KJV, etc.) and 1 & 2 Maccabees are two of those books.

Nicodemus explains that in about 200 BC the Greek ruler Antiochus IV suppressed the Jews and their faith. When the Maccabees revolted it welcomed in the Hasmonean dynasty and restored the Jewish ability to worship.

I bet after not being able to worship, you feel so much joy when you finally can! I remember going to a Mercy Me concert after COVID was over and being so filled with joy! I could finally be surrounded by thousands of believers singing at the top of my lungs, praising the Lord, and that was only after 6 months to a year of limiting big crowds. I can only imagine their joy after being suppressed for much longer.

### DID YOU KNOW??

It was during the Maccabean wars that Hanukkah came about. God gave them a miracle of the oil burning for eight days symbolizing light overcoming darkness and religious freedom.

The main characters in this episode experienced very different Sabbaths. Circle below which Sabbath you feel like you have been experiencing lately?

1. Mary – Are you excited about your faith right now. Willing to go all in, even if it is doing things that are out of your comfort zone or make you nervous?
2. Matthew – Have you skipped the Sabbath and are skipping out on growing in your faith because you feel rejected or not accepted by God?
3. Simon – Are you willing to do enough to get by in your faith, but not all that you should or could? Are you more consumed by material and worldly things and it is pulling you away from truly growing in your faith?
4. Nicodemus – Are you distracted in your faith right now and consumed with other activities? Have you not celebrated the Sabbath because you are prioritizing other things?

God calls us to not only rest on the Sabbath, but to grow in our faith. We should be like Mary and be excited and joyful to share our faith with others. Don't be scared to get out of your comfort zone or to say no to activities that are diverting your attention away from God. God rested on the seventh day, and we need to as well. Pull your mind away from the world and all the lies it tells you. Remove those distractions and celebrate the Sabbath and rest in God's peace.

Since God calls us to rest on the Sabbath, what can you do to better celebrate the Sabbath and focus on Him? Think of a couple of actions that you can take and commit to them this Sunday.

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*Barnaby says to Jesus, "Something good came out of Nazareth?". Nazareth is looked down on as a town and people will continually be surprised that Jesus is from Nazareth. This is specifically mentioned in John 1:46 by Nathanael before he becomes a disciple. "Nazareth!" exclaimed Nathanael. "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"*

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### Episode 3: Jesus Loves All The Little Children

**While you watch:** In my opinion, this is the slowest episode of the entire Chosen series, but you can get through it! The entire episode focuses on Jesus with the children, there are no other lead characters in this episode. While it is a very short episode, I think it shows how much Jesus values children. As you watch this episode, mark off each person and the main events that happen in the show. This will help to keep your attention throughout the episode.

#### Characters:

- Jesus
- Abigail
- Joshua
- Crowd of children

#### Events:

- Jesus sleeping in a tent
- Jesus meets Abigail
- Jesus meets Joshua
- Jesus teaches the children
- Jesus leaves a gift for Abigail

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*Did you catch that Jesus said he had to heal his friend Mary? The first part of the episode took place before episode 1 and the second part of this episode took place after he drove out the demons from Mary.*

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**Reflect on the episode:** The episode takes place in the outskirts of Capernaum in 26 AD. Jesus is by himself doing simple everyday tasks when a little girl named Abigail befriends him. The whole episode revolves around Jesus being with the children. He cared for the children, played with them, taught them and told them about his mission.

While this interaction between Jesus and the children is not explicitly stated in scripture, it provides insight so we can see Jesus as an everyday man. We also can see that he loves the little children and makes time for them. Although the scripture below is not a direct depiction of this episode, it shows you that Jesus' love for children is stated in the bible. Read the verses below and fill in the blanks:

- **Matthew 19:13-14 (ESV)** – <sup>13</sup> “The children were brought to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people, <sup>14</sup> but Jesus said ‘Let the little \_\_\_\_\_ come to me and do not hinder them, for such belongs the kingdom of \_\_\_\_\_.’”
- **Matthew 18:3-4 (ESV)** <sup>3</sup> and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like \_\_\_\_\_, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of \_\_\_\_\_.”
- **Mark 10:15 (ESV)** Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a \_\_\_\_\_ shall not enter it.”

What does it mean to you that Jesus spent time with the children and loved them? What does this reveal about his character?

Why do you think Jesus said we should have faith like a child and the kingdom of heaven belongs to little children?

Jesus is emphasizing the qualities of humility, trust and being open to learning, rather than pride, greed and self-sufficiency that we see in adults. A child believes whole-heartedly and doesn't let fear, anxiety, doubt lessen their belief. Are you approaching your faith and spiritual journey with humility, trust in the Lord and an open heart to learning more about God and Jesus?

In this episode, Jesus goes about his daily life. Read the verses below and circle the professions Jesus had.

- **Mark 6:3 (ESV)** *“Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.*
- **John 3:2 (ESV)** *This man (Nicodemus) came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.”*

Do you relate to Jesus more because he was an ordinary man? How did you feel watching Jesus perform normal tasks like camping, cooking, making a fire, singing, playing with the children?

As more children come with Abigail, Jesus starts to use his time with them to teach them about God. They ask Jesus questions, which he honestly answers, and he shares things that he has not yet shared with his disciples or any adults. There were a few things that he said, which came specifically from scripture. Fill in the blanks below:

1. Jesus told the children as they prayed together to remember the following:
  - a. **Deuteronomy 6:5 (ESV)** *You shall love the Lord your God with all your \_\_\_\_\_ and with all your \_\_\_\_\_ and with all your might.*
2. Jesus then teaches the kids the Our Father prayer, not to fight and it is not an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth, but to be different. Fill in the blanks below:
  - a. **Matthew 6:9-13 (ESV)** *<sup>9</sup> Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. <sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come, your \_\_\_\_\_ be done, on earth as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread, <sup>12</sup> and forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors. <sup>13</sup> And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from \_\_\_\_\_.*
  - b. **Leviticus 24:20 (ESV)** *Fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; whatever injury he has given a person shall be given to him.*
  - c. Jesus will address this more in his Sermon on the Mount. Look up Matthew 5:38-42 from his famous sermon. What is Jesus saying that we heard him preview to the children?

3. Jesus talks about the Messiah coming and how the Lord loves justice and it is for the Lord to administer justice and not ourselves. Fill in the blanks below:
- a. **Psalm 33:5 (ESV)** He loves righteousness and \_\_\_\_\_; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.
  - b. **Psalm 103:6 (ESV)** The Lord works righteousness and \_\_\_\_\_ for all who are oppressed.

The last thing that Jesus told the kids was that he was about to go on an upcoming mission and many will not like him. He said he hopes his next students listen as well as the children did and that they tell their friends about him like the children.

The next students Jesus is referring to are the 12 disciples and adults. Have you been listening to what Jesus has commanded in the gospels? Are you living this out? Are you telling other about Jesus like Abigail?

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*Did you catch the Old Testament reference to David and Saul? Jesus told the children that they need to let the Lord administer justice, like David did even though he had the opportunity to kill Saul in the cave when he was hunting David. Revisit the story: 1 Samuel 24*

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#### **Episode 4: The Rock On Which It Was Built**

**While you watch:** As you watch this episode, mark off each person and the main events that happen in the show. This will help to keep your focus so you can pay close attention to each character that is introduced.

#### Characters:

- Simon
- Andrew
- Zebedee
- James
- John
- Matthew
- Yussif
- Eden
- Nicodemus
- Jesus
- John the Baptist

#### Events:

- Simon is on the boat with the Romans
- Matthew talks to Quintus
- Eden's mom is sick
- Simon fishing
- Andrew, Zebedee, James and John help Simon fish
- Jesus teaching and meets Simon
- Nicodemus visits John the Baptist

**Reflect on the episode:** Contrary to the previous episode, this one is not all about Jesus, he actually doesn't enter the scene until the end of the episode. This episode is all about Simon!

In episode 2, Simon is starting to get a bad rap for telling Quintus that he can provide the fisherman who are fishing on Shabbat and not paying taxes on their catch. But when it came down to it, Simon couldn't hand them over. Simon was on the boat with the Roman soldiers, notices that the boat out there was one of his friends and steers the Romans straight into a sandbar. Not only that, but he also comes clean to his friends, Zebedee, James and John about the deal he made with Quintus. Maybe he isn't such a bad guy in the end!

Matthew gets an assignment from Quintus to watch Simon and record everything he does. Little does Matthew know but observing Simon is going to change his entire life. More to come on that later in the episode.

We also get a glimpse of a new character that we don't actually see until the last scene of the episode, John the Baptist. Although we don't actually see these events come to life, we hear about what he did through Andrew and Yussif/ Shumel. See more about John the Baptist on the side panel.

- Read Matthew 3:13-17 and explain in your own words what happened with John the Baptist and Jesus.
- Circle the name that John calls Jesus from **John 1:29 (ESV)** *The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world!"*

Unfortunately, later in the episode Yussif comes to Nicodemus to tell him that John the Baptist has been arrested and is in custody. Nicodemus wants to meet John the Baptist and ask about miracles. He is still trying to figure out who helped Mary as he believes only God himself could have casted the seven demons out of her. See below for scripture that backs up John the Baptist being in prison.

- *Luke 3:20 (ESV)* *Added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.*

## Bible Reference

John the Baptist is introduced in this episode, read below to learn more about him:

- He baptizes people in the water - **Matthew 3:6 (ESV)** *And they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.*
- He called the Pharisees snakes - **Matthew 3:7 (ESV)** *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"*
- He told his followers to share food and clothing - **Luke 3:10-11 (ESV)** <sup>10</sup>*And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?"* <sup>11</sup>*And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise."*
- He also delivered a list of evils done by Herod to his court – **Luke 3:19 (ESV)** *But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done.*

### DID YOU KNOW??

John the Baptist was Jesus' cousin? Mary was related to Elizabeth (John's mom).

Simon is in a very difficult situation. He can't give up the fishermen who are fishing on Shabbat, he can't pay down his debt, he is stuck and will be dead soon if he doesn't figure it out. He finally comes clean and tells Eden the trouble he has gotten himself into. And what is Eden's response, she says "Where is your faith?" "Why are you not pursuing God?" She calls him out for trying to fix his situation on his own. He feels desperate because he is not going to God. Are you facing a difficult situation? Do you need to go to God, instead of fixing it on your own? Do you have a tendency to fix solutions yourself or do you go to God?

The icing on the cake is Matthew tells him Quintus is going to arrest him at sunset the next day if he does not turn over the fishermen or pay off his debt. So, Simon gives it one last try, he is going to fish all night and hope for a miracle. It is during this last-ditch effort that Simon finally does go to God. He expresses his frustrations and disappointment with God. Do you feel comfortable bringing your feelings to God? Is there anything that you want to bring to him now? Write a prayer below:

A specific time I was frustrated and confused comes to mind, because it wasn't until I brought those frustrations to God that I felt peace. Similarly to Simon, my disappointment and confusion was related to work. I'm not a fisherman, but I found myself in a predicament of uncertainty when the company I work for was bought by another company. I was so happy at my job, I loved working for my boss, I hired all of my staff, I fell back in love with my profession because of this job and it was potentially going away. I expressed this frustration to God during a women's retreat. I filled my notebook with my feelings and tears falling on the pages. But in the end, I said "Your will be done". I wrote this phrase over and over in my notebook until I was ready to accept it and I finally did. At the end of that weekend, my daughter received a sticker from a friend of hers, totally unrelated to the retreat that I was at. Guess what that sticker said "Thy will be done". Wow! That was the confirmation I needed. I know God heard me, I know he has my back and is with me and I can trust his will. I am still going through the aftermath of the company being bought, so I'm not sure how it will work out, but I trust God. I trust that he will open and close doors and that he has a plan for me. I wouldn't have felt this way if I wouldn't have brought those feelings to God. So, the next time you are disappointed, confused, angry, bring it to God. You will feel

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*Did you notice that Eden said her mother would have to stay with them? She is sick and she wants to take care of her. Remember this as it will be important later in the season.*

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better and you can trust him.

Did you notice that after Simon brought his frustrations to God, help arrived? Andrew, James, John and Zebedee arrived to help Simon fish. In the end they were not successful at catching any fish, but Simon didn't go through it alone. Do you have a Christian community of friends that support you? Who are they? If you don't, what can you do to create or strengthen Christian relationships and a community that you can support and can help support you?

Now let's get into the scene that made this episode so memorable and impactful!

- Read the scripture below and circle what Jesus said Simon would be doing from now on.
  - **Luke 5:4-11 (ESV)** – <sup>4</sup> And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.” <sup>5</sup> And Simon answered, “Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But as your word I will let down the nets.” <sup>6</sup> And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. <sup>7</sup> They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. <sup>8</sup> But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” <sup>9</sup> For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, <sup>10</sup> and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.” <sup>11</sup> And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.
  - This encounter of Simon and Andrew is also mentioned in Matthew 4:18-20 and Mark 1:16-18.

What does “Being a fisher of men” (catching men) mean? Do you feel like you are a “fisher of men”?

If you think about how Simon's life is going to change. He will not be catching fish any longer. He will be pointing others towards Jesus. Simon (Peter) ends up being one of the biggest influences in the church. He will no longer catch fish, but catch men and bring them to Christ.

At that same encounter of Jesus and the fishermen, James and John are called to be disciples.

- Read the verse below and circle what they did after Jesus called them.
  - **Mark 1:19-20 (ESV)** – <sup>19</sup> And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. <sup>20</sup> And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.
  - In addition to what you read above within Mark and Luke, Matthew also references this encounter in Matthew 4:21.

Are you willing to drop everything and follow Jesus? Reflect on your journey with Christ below.

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*Did you notice that Matthew said the catch that Simon caught was impossible? Check out verse – Matthew 19:26 (ESV) ...With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. I think Matthew is going to learn something from Jesus pretty soon!*

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## Episode 5: The Wedding Gift

**While you watch:** As you watch this episode, mark off each person and the main events that happen in the show. This will help to keep your focus so you can pay close attention to each character and what they do.

### Characters:

- Dinah
- Mary
- John the Baptist
- Nicodemus
- Simon
- Thomas
- Ramah
- Thaddeaus
- Jesus

### Events:

- Mary looking for her child
- Nicodemus talking to John the Baptist
- Thomas and Ramah preparing for the wedding
- Jesus and Disciples arrive at the wedding
- They run out of wine at the wedding
- Jesus makes more wine
- Disciples all dance

**Reflect on the episode:** This is a fun episode all about a wedding. Who doesn't love a wedding and to have Jesus as your guest, wow that must have been amazing! Not only did he save the day, but he brought the party too!

The episode starts out with a flashback to 8 AD in Jerusalem with a mother looking for her child. We have very little in the gospels recorded about Jesus after his birth and before he starts his ministry at the age of 30. But we do get a glimpse into teenage Jesus through one part of scripture when his family lost him for 3 days. Read the scripture below and fill in the blanks.

- **Luke 2:41-52 (ESV)** - <sup>41</sup> Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the \_\_\_\_\_ . <sup>42</sup> And when he was \_\_\_\_\_ years old, they went up according to custom. <sup>43</sup> And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, <sup>44</sup> but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, <sup>45</sup> and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. <sup>46</sup> After three days they found him in the \_\_\_\_\_, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup> And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup> And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." <sup>49</sup> And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my \_\_\_\_\_?" <sup>50</sup> And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. <sup>51</sup> And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her \_\_\_\_\_. <sup>52</sup> And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

Have you ever lost something dear to you? Maybe it was a valuable item, maybe it was a child, just like Mary. How did you feel and what did you do to find the item?

Have you ever felt lost? Not lost in a store, but lost in the direction of your life, lost in the desire for material things, worldly experiences? Explain a time you have felt lost.

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*Did that phrase from Luke 2:51 "treasured up all these things in her heart" sound familiar to you? In Luke 2:19 this similar language is used to describe how Mary reflected on the shepherds telling the people about Jesus' birth in the Christmas story.*

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Jesus' reply was he was in his father's house, it is almost like "duh – I was with God". It makes me think that Jesus' reply should be the reply we all should have. I was at church, I was thinking about God, I was studying my bible, I was telling others about Jesus. When our focus is on God we are not lost. We are focused on him and obedient to what he wants for our lives. The question is are you focusing on God? Are you spending time with him? Are you praying and listening for his direction? Reflect on these questions below.

After the flashback, we are back in the year 26AD, in a town called Cana. Mary is helping her friend Dinah prepare for her son's wedding. And Jesus was invited to this wedding.

- **John 2:1-2(ESV)** – <sup>1</sup> On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. <sup>2</sup> Jesus was invited to the wedding with his disciples.

What an honor to have Jesus and his disciples at your wedding. Can you even imagine?

Before the wedding starts we get to meet two new characters, Thomas and Ramah. Ramah is not a woman that is named in scriptures, but she is added to the show to bring forth some hard situations in future episodes. Although we know Thomas will end up being a disciple, we do not have scripture to back up that he was involved in weddings and wine.

At the wedding, there ends up being way more people than expected and not enough wine to go around. Thomas and Ramah start to freak out and Dinah tells Mary. Luckily, there is someone at the party that can save the day!

- **John 2:3-9 (ESV)** – <sup>3</sup> When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." <sup>4</sup> And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." <sup>5</sup> His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." <sup>6</sup> Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. <sup>7</sup> Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them to the brim. <sup>8</sup> And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it.

## Bible Reference

Simon was dreading telling Eden that he wanted to follow Jesus. He mentioned how Elisha dropped everything to follow Elijah. See the Old Testament scripture reference:

- **1 Kings 19:19-21 (ESV)** - <sup>19</sup> So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him, and he was the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and cast his cloak upon him. <sup>20</sup> And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, "Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?" <sup>21</sup> And he returned from following him and took the yoke of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the yokes of the oxen and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and went after Elijah and assisted him.

### HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND?

Eden was supportive of Simon leaving her to follow Jesus. Would you react the same way if you were Eden?

This story makes me think that when we endure hard things or things don't go our way, we could see a miracle. If there would have been enough wine, Jesus would not have turned water into wine. Are you going through a struggle now? Have you thought of it this way? Or have you gone through a struggle and witnessed a miracle (or at least a sign from God) that got you through it? Share below.

This is one of the first miracles recorded in the bible. Although The Chosen has Jesus healing Mary as the first miracle, the bible does not state when he did this. Many believe the water turned into wine to be the first public miracle. Fill in the blanks below:

- **John 2:9-11(ESV)** – <sup>9</sup> *When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom <sup>10</sup> and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now. <sup>11</sup> This, the \_\_\_\_\_ of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples \_\_\_\_\_ in him.*

To those of us who have suffered, it seems almost trivial that Jesus' first miracle is turning water into wine. But I think it shows that Jesus cares about what we care about. Not having enough wine at a wedding is embarrassing and would hurt the reputation of the hosts. Although it is not a life changing miracle compared to what we will see Jesus do in his ministry, it was important to that couple and their families. Jesus cares about what we care about. How does this make you feel about your daily life and struggles?

## Bible Reference

Nicodemus questions John the Baptist to see who healed Mary Magdalene. John the Baptist starts quoting Solomon. See the Old Testament scripture reference:

- **Proverbs 30:4 (ESV)** - *Who has ascended to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in his fists? Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name? and what is his son's name? Surely you know!*

Nicodemus cries out blasphemy as John the Baptist quotes Solomon in the proverb. Little does he know John the Baptist was not wrong. He was referring to Jesus and he is the son of God.

### DID YOU KNOW?

John the Baptist was sent to be the forerunner of Jesus. He was sent to prepare the way for the Messiah.

At the end of the show Jesus and the disciples are dancing and enjoying themselves. This made me smile to see Jesus so happy because we know the ending. We know that Jesus is going to die and suffer for us, but we also know that Jesus enjoys us. He is with us always and wants to celebrate with us. He is proud of us when we bring him glory, he laughs when we laugh. Seeing Jesus as a normal, humble person brings a smile to my face. How does it make you feel? Write a prayer of thankfulness to Jesus for all he has done for you and don't forget to express how much you enjoy him. Because he enjoys you!

## Episode 6: Indescribable Compassion

**While you watch:** As you watch this episode, mark off each person and the main events that happen in the show. This will help to keep your focus so you can pay close attention to each character that is introduced.

### Characters:

- Matthew
- Leper
- Nicodemus
- Little James
- Quintus
- Tamar
- Simon
- Shumel
- Jesus

### Events:

- Leper trying to sell possessions to a merchant
- Quintus promotes Gaius and takes advice from Matthew
- Jesus meets Tamar
- Jesus heals the leper
- Crowd listens to Jesus speak
- Paralytic is lowered through the roof
- Jesus heals the paralytic
- Shumel questions Jesus's authority
- Jesus sees Matthew

**Reflect on the episode:** Jesus is ready to heal people! Can I get an Amen! He kicks it off by healing a leper and then heals the paralytic man who comes down through the roof. What an introduction to Jesus.

The episode starts with a leper trying to sell his possessions to a merchant. The merchant knows that the leper is in a difficult position with his illness and takes advantage of him by only offering a fraction of the value it is worth. It is unfortunate that the merchant takes advantage of this situation, but luckily the leper's day is about to get so much better.

The leper comes across Jesus and his disciples. He pleads for Jesus to heal him and guess what Jesus does? He clears up his leprosy and changes his life.

- **Mark 1:40-43 (ESV)** – <sup>40</sup>And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, “If you will, you can make me clean. <sup>41</sup>Moved with pity, he stretched his hand and touched him and said to him, “I will; be clean.” <sup>42</sup>And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. <sup>43</sup>And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once. <sup>44</sup>and said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them.”

To be a leper is to be an outcast. You were considered unclean and rejected by society. Have you ever felt rejected by someone or group of people?

Has the fear of rejection held you back in your faith? If so, how has it held you back?

How does knowing that Jesus is with you, give you comfort when you feel rejected? Can changing your mindset by knowing Jesus is the only one that matters, heaven is the only thing that matters, help you with your fear of rejection?

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*Did you catch that Tamar and Jesus both grew up in Egypt? After Jesus was born he was hunted by Herod when he was 2 and then fled to Egypt. He didn't go to Nazareth until Herod died. See Matthew 2:13-15 for the details.*

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As Jesus went back to James and John's house people started showing up asking questions and listening to Jesus speak. The crowd started to get rather large, so much so that it attracted the attention of the Roman guards and Pharisees.

Tamar and four friends arrive to see Jesus, but due to the large crowd, they cannot get close to Jesus to have him heal their paralytic friend. Tamar then takes the group to the roof so they can lower the man into the room with Jesus. If you can't use the door, just go through the roof! Read through the scripture below and fill in the blanks.

- **Mark 2:2-5 (ESV)** – <sup>2</sup> And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was \_\_\_\_\_ the word to them. <sup>3</sup> And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by \_\_\_\_\_ men. <sup>4</sup> And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. <sup>5</sup> And when Jesus saw their \_\_\_\_\_, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."
  - This is also mentioned in Luke 5:17-25
  - The dedication of the friends for this paralytic man is so inspiring. These friends literally ripped off the roof and lowered their friend to Jesus' feet so he could be healed. Do you have people like this in your life? If so, let them know you are thankful for them. Do something nice to show your appreciation. If not, or if you could use more friends like this, consider investing more time in your relationships. Foster closer relationships with people around you so you will have someone who is willing to literally tear the roof off to help you. Reflect on this below.

The Pharisees/ scribes observed the healing of the paralytic man and instead of being in awe, they start to question in their hearts whose authority Jesus has to say "Your sins are forgiven". Read the scripture below and circle where the scribes were experiencing the questioning. (*hint – verse 6 and 8*)

- **Mark 2:6-12 (ESV)** – <sup>6</sup> Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, <sup>7</sup> "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" <sup>8</sup> And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? <sup>9</sup> Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? <sup>10</sup> But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" – he said to the paralytic – <sup>11</sup> "I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home." <sup>12</sup> And he rose immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

As you circled on the previous page, the scribes had these negative thoughts in their hearts. They did not keep a check on their heart. **Proverbs 4:23 (ESV)** – *Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.* What do you have in your heart? Is it negativity or positivity? What you focus on is what is in your heart and it flows into everything that you do. What are some ways you can keep your heart in check?

Have you ever been so concerned with rules or “your plan” that you missed something good happening right in front of you? We can get so wrapped up in our to do list, in our lives that we miss the beauty of God all around us. This is what was happening to the scribes at the healing. They missed the miracle. This could happen to us if we stay too rigid to allow disruptions to our lives and things to happen that differ from our expectations. We miss the wonderful things that are happening around us. Take some time today to thank God for all that you have and all the blessings he has given you. Write a short prayer below:

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*The bible does not reference explicitly that Tamar is part of the healing of the leper and the paralytic man. We do not know if she observed these miracles and if the paralytic man is her friend. We also do not know if Matthew witnessed the healing of the paralytic man, but maybe it is possible since Matthew accepts Jesus invitation to follow him directly after the healing of the paralytic man. (Mark 2:13-14)*

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## Episode 7: Invitations

**While you watch:** As you watch this episode, mark off each person and the main events that happen in the show. This will help to keep your focus so you can pay close attention to each character that is introduced.

### Characters:

- Moses
- Matthew
- Nicodemus
- Quintus
- Gaius
- Mary Magdalene
- Jesus

### Events:

- Moses makes a serpent on a pole
- Quintus talks to Nicodemus
- Matthew visits his family home
- Jesus meets with Nicodemus
- Matthew is in the tax booth and sees Jesus
- Jesus says Matthew is going to host a dinner party

**Reflect on the episode:** The spotlight is on Matthew in this episode. We get a glimpse into his daily routine, his relationship with Gaius and his family all before he makes the biggest decision of his life to follow Jesus.

We finally see Matthew “knock” on the door. If you remember from episode 2, Matthew stood in front of a door, but he didn’t knock. He was afraid of rejection and what was on the other side of that door. Now he goes back to that door and this time he knocks! He visits his mother and learns that their family’s store was robbed and his father is having to travel and spend time away from home. The conversation with his mother doesn’t go great, but you can see Matthew is justifying his profession as a tax collector. He is rich, he is using the gift God gave him - his mind, but as his mom points out he isn’t using God’s gifts for God. He is hurting God’s people. What gifts has God given you? Do you feel like you are using them for God’s glory? What do you need to do to use your gifts for God?

This episode is called “Invitations” and yes that is plural. Jesus extends an invitation to follow him to both Matthew and Nicodemus. Unfortunately, the responses from these men are different. Let’s dive in!

Mary asks Jesus to meet with Nicodemus in the night at a secluded location. Jesus agrees and Nicodemus gets the opportunity to meet with the Son of God. Read John 3:1-21 and then fill in the blanks below for the first three verses.

- **John 3:1-3 (ESV)** – <sup>1</sup> Now there was a man of the Pharisees named \_\_\_\_\_, a ruler of the Jews. <sup>2</sup> This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.” <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is \_\_\_\_\_ he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
- It is in this interaction between Nicodemus and Jesus that the most well known, most memorized verse is stated by Jesus. Write John 3:16 below.

## Bible Reference

The episode starts out with Moses making a pole with a serpent on it. See the Old Testament scripture reference:

- **Numbers 21:5-9 (ESV)** – <sup>5</sup> And the people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food.” <sup>6</sup> Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. <sup>7</sup> And the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you. Pray to the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. <sup>8</sup> And the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.” <sup>9</sup> So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- This is also mentioned in **John 3:14-15 (ESV)** <sup>14</sup> And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

In the show Jesus extends the invitation for Nicodemus to follow him. This is not explicitly stated in scripture, but through Jesus' words in John 3:16 we are all called to be Jesus' followers. If you accept Jesus in your heart, ask for the forgiveness of your sins and proclaim him to be your Lord, you will be saved.

Did you notice Nicodemus was the first one to hesitate and not drop everything to follow Jesus? He talks about all that he has. He questions if he should give up who he is, be nomadic and a new creation. Nicodemus allows fear and his comfort to limit how God could use him. He said "No" to Jesus. Nicodemus will have his part in Jesus' story later on, but he misses out on so much by not following Jesus. He was not a disciple, he did not witness all of Jesus' miracles, he did not hear all of Jesus' teachings firsthand. Don't be like Nicodemus. You don't want to miss out on what God has in store for you. If you have not accepted Christ in your life, don't wait. Do it now! God has great things in store for you. God loves you and wants you to be his adopted child. Take some time to pray the below short prayer and ask Jesus into your heart. If you have already asked Jesus into your heart, thank him for what he has done for you.

### **The Salvation Poem**<sub>2</sub>

Jesus, You died upon a cross  
And rose again to save the lost  
Forgive me now of all my sin  
Come be my Savior, Lord, and Friend  
Change my life and make it new  
And help me, Lord, to live for You.

Something that Nicodemus could not grasp was the concept of being born again. He was wrapped up in the literal meaning of being born again out of the womb, where as Jesus was explaining being born again as transformation into a new creation.

- **John 3:4-7 (ESV)** <sub>4</sub> Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" <sub>5</sub> Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. <sub>6</sub> That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sub>7</sub> Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

Upon accepting Christ as your savior, you have become a new creation. You were born again. The Spirit is inside you and your old life is done. If you just accepted Christ, congratulations, the angels are rejoicing! The first step is to get into the bible, learn and surround yourself with a good church congregation. If you have been saved for some time now, how have you noticed yourself as a new creation? Are there any steps you need to take to further your growth and development as a Christian, a new creation?

Matthew is back in his tax booth when Jesus passes by. But Jesus doesn't fully pass by Matthew, he locks eyes with him and stops. Jesus calls to him and says "Follow me". In the beginning of the episode we see Matthew finally "knock" on his family's door. Now we see him get out of his comfort zone again and accept Jesus' invitation to follow him. It is a big day for Matthew and his growth! Circle below what Matthew did in response to Jesus' question.

- **Matthew 9:9 (ESV)** – *As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me," And he rose and followed him.*
  - This is also mentioned in Mark 2:13-14

You can't grow in your faith unless you get out of your comfort zone and say "yes" to Jesus' calling on your life. Every day is a learning opportunity. Every day you have to choose Jesus and it isn't always easy. Matthew decided to say "yes" to Jesus, where Nicodemus gave excuses and chose not to follow him. Who do you think had the most life altering experience? Who stepped out of their comfort zone? Make a commitment today to say "yes" to Jesus. In the space below, write a commitment prayer to God letting him know you will say "yes", you want him to use your life for his glory, you are ready to get out of your comfort zone and be led by the Holy Spirit. At the end of the prayer, sign your name to make it official.

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*Although we don't actually see the dinner at Matthew's house in this episode, Jesus tells Matthew he will be hosting a dinner for everyone. More on this in the next episode!*

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## Episode 8: I Am He

**While you watch:** As you watch this episode, mark off each person and the main events that happen in the show. This will help to keep your focus so you can pay close attention to each character that is introduced.

### Characters:

- Jacob
- Matthew
- Jesus
- Yussif
- Gaius
- Simon
- Shmuel
- Nicodemus
- Samaritan woman

### Events:

- Jacob and sons dig a well
- Matthew dinner party
- Shmuel talks to Nicodemus about Jesus
- Jesus talks to Eden
- Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law
- Gaius talks to Matthew's parents
- Jesus talks to a Samaritan woman
- Samaritan woman tells disciples about Jesus
- Simon questions Jesus if it is time to tell people about him

**Reflect on the episode:** In this episode we see Jesus and the disciples preparing to leave Capernaum and head out on their missionary journey. But the episode starts out with a party, a Matthew party! Who doesn't like a party, especially when it is with Jesus?

Circle below the people that were at this party:

- **Mark 2:15-17 (ESV)** – <sup>15</sup> *And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.* <sup>16</sup> *And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?”* <sup>17</sup> *And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”*
  - This is also mentioned in Matthew 9:10-13

Jesus was criticized by the Jewish leaders for eating with sinners. But while the sinners and outcasts were rejected by the Pharisees, Jesus accepted them. Already we can see Jesus is different, Jesus loves everyone and accepts everyone no matter what they have done in the past. He wasn't afraid to be seen with sinners. Is there someone you know who might be considered an outcast, or doesn't know Jesus? I challenge you to have a Matthew party! Invite people who may feel like outcasts or not accepted. Share the love of Jesus with them. Who can you invite? What is a good day to have your party?

Jesus referenced Hosea and the desire of God for mercy more than sacrifice.

- **Hosea 6:6 (ESV)** *For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offering.*

God wants our hearts, our love and us to know him. He is less concerned over whether we are following church traditions. Go to God in love because he will give you mercy. Jesus came for us sinners!

Before the disciples go on their trip they have to prepare for it. Simon talks to Jesus about being the only disciple that is married and how he is worried about Eden and his mother-in-law. This isn't news to Jesus, he knows that Simon's mother-in-law is sick, and you guessed it - he has a miracle up his sleeve. Read the passage below:

## Bible Reference

The episode starts out with Jacob digging a well, known as Jacob's well. Given the details he mentions in the scene the reference comes from Genesis 33:18-19. While Jacob's well is not specifically stated in the Old Testament as something that Jacob dug, the fact that he bought the land as mentioned in Genesis 33, would mean he had to have a well.

- **Genesis 33:18-19 (ESV)** – <sup>18</sup> *And Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, on his way from Paddanaram, and he camped before the city.* <sup>19</sup> *And from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, he bought for a hundred pieces of money the piece of land on which he has pitched his tent.*

### DID YOU KNOW?

- The well where the Samaritan woman talked to Jesus was the same Jacob's well that was referred to in the beginning of the episode. Read John 4:5.

### DID YOU ALSO KNOW?

- Some bible translations call Matthew Levi. He was known by both names.

- **Luke 4:38-39 (ESV)** – <sup>38</sup> And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon’s house. Now Simon’s mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. <sup>39</sup> And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.
  - This is also mentioned in Mark 1:29-31

Now that Simon’s mother-in-law is healed, and everyone has said good-bye to their families, Jesus and the disciples are ready to go on their way. Someone even anonymously gave them some money for their journey. Even though he gave it anonymously, we and Jesus know it was Nicodemus.

Nicodemus talks to his wife about Hagar saying “Adonai El Roi – You are a God of seeing” (See Genesis 16:13). It’s ironic that he tells his wife this story then he hides from Jesus. Jesus knows that he was there and he was the one that gave them the money for their journey. Nicodemus chooses to stay hidden and not seen by Jesus. Is there anything that you are hiding from Jesus? Is there sin that you need to repent of?

Nicodemus didn’t follow his heart and accept the invitation to follow Jesus. Have there been times in your life that you didn’t follow the Holy Spirit’s promptings? How did you feel when that happened? Do you find yourself following the Holy Spirit’s promptings for your life on a daily basis? Reflect below:

Next is the encounter that Jesus has with the Samaritan woman at the well. This is the longest recorded interaction that Jesus has with a person in the gospels and it is a woman!

**Read John 4:5-30** for the full story.

- There is so much to unpack here! First, the Samaritan woman is so surprised that Jesus is talking to her, much less wants water from her jar because Jews and Samaritans do not get along. But like we saw from the Matthew party, Jesus doesn’t care about your race, or where you grew up.

- Second, Jesus called her out on her infidelity but did not condemn her for it. Where she felt judged by everyone, the other women in her town, the people at the marketplace, Jesus is not judging her. Do you ever feel like your past is holding you back? Do you feel you can't be loved by Jesus because of what you have done in your past?
  - You should know, and you can see it here in this passage with the woman at the well and at the Matthew party. Nothing that you do can separate you from the love of Jesus Christ. He loves you even though you have messed up, even though you did things in the past that you regret. Jesus loves you and wants to be with you. You just have to accept him. He has already accepted you.
- The third thing I want to point out in this passage is that Jesus reveals who he is to her. He tells her he is the Messiah.

I love the response that the Samaritan woman had from her interaction with Jesus. She didn't just leave casually, she left her water jar and ran to tell others. It says in **John 4:28-29 (ESV)** – <sup>28</sup>*So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people,* <sup>29</sup>*“Come see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?”* I find this response very convicting; I am not dropping everything to tell others about Jesus. However, I think Jesus wants this to be our response. We should be telling everyone about Jesus and be spreading the gospel. Even if it is only with one other person. Is there someone you can tell about Jesus today? Write their name on the line below:

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Do you have your testimony prepared so you can share it with this person? Reflect below and detail what next steps you need to take so you can share about Jesus with someone this week.

The excitement at the end of the episode brought joy to my soul. Simon questions Jesus asking “You told her to tell others”? This was the first time that Jesus didn't say tell no one. Simon is ecstatic and yells “It is time!” Oh, what fun is in store for us as more and more people get to learn who Jesus is. That is the end of the first season and this scene definitely gets you so excited for what is to come in the next season! I hope you will join me in watching and reflecting on Season 2 in the next bible study!

## **References**

This study is based on The Chosen show. Quotes and material from the show are included in this study.

The Chosen Season 1. Directed by Dallas Jenkins, 5&2 Studios, 2019.

References from other publications were noted. See below:

1 – “In what year did Jesus die?” - GotQuestions.org

2 – www.salvationpoem.com

Bible verses are referenced from the (ESV) English Standard Version of the bible.

The ESV Bible. (2001). English Standard Version [Online Version]. Crossway.