

The Chosen – An Interactive Bible Study

Based on the TV Series: The Chosen, created by Dallas Jenkins



Week 1, Season 1, Episode 1

I Have Called You By Name

Overview of Episode 1: Enter into the story of the ordinary people who surrounded Jesus. Sinners who spent time with the one Man who understood them and would eventually die for them. These are stories of rebuke and hope, of sin and forgiveness. Yes, their story is ours. You'll meet the people who loved Him, served Him, and followed Him, seeing the Savior through their eyes as you consider who He is and why He came. And the questions meant to help you move forward in your faith are challenging enough to do just that.

Introduction: Every follower of Jesus has a not-so-great “before”: A rash, brash fisherman. A pious religious leader, a thieving indifferent-to-suffering tax collector, a demon-possessed woman so insignificant that her “before” is not even recorded, so we are left to surmise what it might have been. And yet God calls people in the “before” – when they are not even aware that they’re simply broken versions of themselves. God calls people before He begins His transformative work of redemption because He sees past the “before” to what He has purposed and planned. He sees past the “before” to those He loves enough to call His own.

Read and briefly describe:

Isaiah 43:1-7; (I have called you by name: you are mine.)

Luke 8:1-3; (Mary Magdalene delivered from seven demons)

Mark 16: 6-11; (Mary Magdalene at the tomb of Jesus)

Reflection Questions:

- What parts of your “before” has God redeemed, and which are you most grateful for?
- In what ways are you different now?
- How does “I have called you by name, you are mine” impact you today?
- What do you fear, and how does Isaiah 43:1 – this declaration made by God to His chosen ones – affect your fear?

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for the gift of storytelling and the way The Chosen visually brings the Gospels to life. As I reflect on this episode, I ask that the truths it portrays strike a deep chord in my heart. May the depictions of Jesus' compassion, authority, and deep love for his disciples remind me of his active presence in my own life today.

Please use the emotions and insights stirred by this episode to strengthen my faith, renew my devotion, and transform how I love others. Help me to not just be a viewer of your grace, but a living reflection of it.

Amen.

Week 2, Season 1, Episode 2,

Shabbat

Overview of Episode 2: How did Jesus worship God as a young adult Jewish man? Find out in this episode as we see Nicodemus pursue the woman who was miraculously healed after his failure. We meet two disciples of Jesus in this episode, at the Shabbat dinner at Mary's home. James and Thaddeus. These are two disciples about whom almost nothing is known – this James is not “James, the brother of John” (we'll meet him later). This James is presumably “James, the son of Alphaeus”, although that is not clear in this episode. Thaddeus is mentioned in Mark 3 and Matthew 10, but he's replaced by “Judas, the son of James” in Luke's list of disciples – these are likely the same guy, called by a different name. All of the Jews observe the weekly Shabbat dinner, which features a surprise visitor to Mary's house!

Introduction: All too often we forget that Jesus was born into and raised in the traditional Jewish culture of the 1st Century. He certainly would have observed the Sabbath. Shabbat is the way Jews say “Sabbath”. For Jews this is from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday. Shabbat begins with the Sabbath meal on Friday evening in Jewish homes. No work is to be done on the Sabbath.

Read and briefly describe:

Exodus 20:8-11; (The 3rd Commandment)

Exodus 31:14-17; (The 3rd Commandment explained)

Proverbs 31:10-31; (Who can find a woman of worth?)

Luke 14:1, 7-11; (Healing on the Sabbath; places of honor)

John 1:45-46; (Can anything good come from Nazareth?)

John 9:1, 6-12; (Healing of the man blind from birth on the Sabbath)

Reflection Questions:

- What did you notice about the various (as many as six, if you can find them) different Shabbat meals that we saw depicted in this episode?
- Did you catch Jesus winking at Barnaby???
- How did Jesus appear to you? Like you thought? Different?
- What will you take home with you and ponder further?

Closing Prayer

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Week 3, Season 1, Episode 3,

Jesus Loves the Little Children

Overview of Episode 3: Children are simple. They are appropriately awestruck by the world around them. They're wide-eyed and expectant, moldable and trusting. By nature they are not jaded or judgmental – those qualities come with age, along with self-focus, self-reliance, self-protection, self-promotion, and self-praise. On the contrary, children – most of them anyway – are willing to defer and to receive, to climb up on the Savior's lap and be cared for to be led and to be loved. The children approach Jesus in a way all of us should emulate.

Introduction: The children went to Jesus without anything of value to offer Him except their love and their excitement to be there. He wanted to spend time with them, to hug them, to heal them. He wanted to. And we are precious to Jesus too when we recognize our need for his help, when we're willing to defer, to receive, to be led, and to be loved. We are precious when we come to Jesus with the simple expectation that because of who he is and how He loves, we are welcome, wanted, forgiven and restored.

Read and briefly describe:

Deuteronomy 6:4-5; (The Shema: [hear] Jewish confession of faith)

Isaiah 61:1-2; (He sent me to bring good news...)

Luke 4:18-19; (The spirit of the Lord is upon me)

Luke 18: 15-17; (Jesus called the little children)

Mark 10: 14; (Let the children come to me)

Matthew 6: 9-15; (The Lord's Prayer)

Matthew 18:3-5; (Become like the children)

Reflection Questions:

- Is it strange for you to think of Jesus as personable?
- How does this portrayal of Jesus' prayer life encourage you?
- How did Jesus appear to you, in this episode? Like you thought? Different?
- What will you take home with you and ponder further?

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Week 4, Season 1, Episode 4

The Rock on Which It is Built

Overview of Episode 4: Jesus is calling for change of heart. What He asks is for radical inward transformation; it is the price of admission to His kingdom. Nothing more. Nothing less. For a headstrong fisherman who experiences a disastrous night of fishing at a time when things seem like they could not get worse, Simon encounters someone and something he never expected. It signals the start of something life changing. Introduction: Simon and his brother Andrew are at the brink of disaster, and despite the prompting from his wife to return to God, Simon continues to try and fix things himself. In his own way, Simon does turn back, but doesn't realize just what is in store for him.

Read and briefly describe:

Matthew 13:47-52; (The Parable of the Net)

Matthew 4:18-22; (The call of the first disciples)

Matthew 3:1-7; (John the Baptist)

Luke 8:10; (Knowledge of the kingdom)

Luke 5:1-11; (The call of Simon Peter)

John 1:29-34; (John the Baptist's testimony of Jesus)

Reflection Questions:

- How would you describe your first “Follow Me” moment with Jesus?
- What incident in your life incited radical inward transformation?
- Would you regard it as a miracle?
- Repentance fosters humility and surrender, so what can you repent of?

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Week 5, Season 1, Episode 5

The Wedding Gift

Overview of Episode 5: Jesus is invited to a wedding with his disciples; Mary, Jesus' mother, was also there. The wine runs out – an embarrassing problem for the hosts – but it is Mary who brings the matter to Jesus, asking Him to solve the problem. She then tells the servants: “Do whatever he tells you.” The disciples are there to see this miracle unfold, which means Jesus chose a party to “kick-off” his public ministry.

Introduction: Mary had deep concern for the hosts of this wedding feast, so she asks Jesus to step in and help – and he does it. By performing this miracle, Jesus shows us that nothing is inconsequential. Every predicament, large or small, is an opportunity to seek divine intervention. Not to mention continued reasons to celebrate! The issues that cause us worry – both great and small – are the issues that Jesus is concerned with too, because of the opportunity they present to us – but we must do our part. Following Mary's example, we must first ask Him for help, in faith; and then we must do whatever He tells us!

Read and briefly describe:

John 2:1-11 (Jesus turns water into wine)

Luke 2:41-52 (Jesus is found in the temple)

Proverbs 30:4 (What is his name, or that of his son)

Reflection Questions:

- Do you struggle with anxiety? What things do you tend to worry about the most and why?
- Do you ask Jesus to help with the seemingly small stuff? Why or why not?
- Jesus used an everyday occasion to reveal his glory. How would you describe a common event in your life through which He revealed His glory? How did this increase your faith?

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Week 6, Season 1

Episode 6, Indescribable Compassion

Overview of Episode 6: Following the Wedding at Cana miracle, the news about Jesus spreads. Others begin approaching him, having heard from those who have witnessed or heard about Him changing water into wine. Other miracles will follow, but not everyone is as welcoming or excited about the explanation Jesus gives regarding where He gets the authority to perform these deeds.

Introduction: A leper approaches Jesus and makes the request to be cleansed. His faith is obvious, and his request is bold, considering the laws regarding purity by which the leper is bound. Jesus touches the leper before he is cleansed and His healing touch has an awesome effect, on both the man's body and soul. Although Jesus instructs him to "tell no one," about the miracle, news of this awesome power is soon being heard by and attracting many others.

Read and briefly describe:

Matthew 6:1-18; (Giving to the needy and prayer)

Matthew 8:1-4; (Jesus heals a leper)

Mark 2:1-12; (Jesus heals the paralytic)

Luke 12:36-48; (The parable of the servants awaiting their master)

Reflection Questions:

- Who living in today's time would be equated with a "tax collector" from the time of Jesus? Or a "Roman Soldier?" or a "leper?" or a "Jewish Rabbi?"
- Which scene from this episode was depicted much differently than you imagined when reading about it in Sacred Scripture?
- The "leper" in this episode demonstrated a bold faith. What is holding you back from having a faith like his?
- The friends of the paralytic took extreme measures to get that man noticed by Jesus. What do you think they believed about Jesus?

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Week 7, Season 1

Episode 7, Invitations

Overview of Episode 7: Jesus forms a core group of people He will prepare for fantastic works ahead. Jesus loving calls them with the simple request: *“Follow Me.”* But some of His choices cause those who are already following to wonder what He is thinking and doing. Following Jesus comes with a cost to anyone who answers His call – a cost some find easy to pay, while others struggle to make the sacrifices necessary to become His follower.

Introduction: The episode begins with a flashback to Moses and Joshua discussing the “bronze snake” that has been ordered by God as the cure for those bitten by the fiery serpents during the Exodus. As Jesus begins teaching his core group of followers and they are given different assignments, insights into their characters begins to develop further. This is also seen in those who are not yet following Him. The Roman officials now have noticed Jesus and as we know, this will lead to trouble. Jesus agrees to take a private meeting with Nicodemus. Matthew is called to follow Jesus; this does not make sense to those already following Him.

Read:

Numbers 21:4-9; (Moses and the bronze snake)

John 3:1-21; (Jesus teaches Nicodemus)

Matthew 9:9-13; (Jesus calls Matthew to follow Him)

Luke 18:18-23; and Luke 19:1-10; (Two contrasting invitations)

Reflection Questions:

- What surprises you when you hear the story of the bronze serpent? If you were there and bitten by a serpent, how would you react to the announcement of the 'only' cure?
- Have you ever answered a difficult call from Jesus? If yes, how so?
- Were you surprised at how quickly Matthew agrees to follow Jesus? In comparison to how timid Nicodemus is?
- When considering obedience and faith that God demands in the story of the bronze serpent, what daily habits can you develop and/or strengthen, to help you to become as quick to obedience as Matthew was?

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Week 8, Season 1, Episode 8

I Am He

Overview of Episode 8: Jesus and his disciples are taking a trip – one which causes much concern among His followers. Simon is worried about leaving his wife and her mother (who is ill) behind as he prepares for the journey. Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law, before leaving on the journey. Nicodemus considers Jesus's invitation "follow me," as the others prepare to leave Capernaum. This journey takes Jesus to Jacob's Well, and the meeting with the Samaritan woman.

Introduction: The episode begins with Jacob and his sons digging a well on some newly purchased land. At an encounter with his neighbor, we learn something about how the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is perceived by others. Jesus is now wanted by the Romans for questioning. Matthew is trying to "fit in" with the others, and Jesus's decision to eat with his disciples at Matthew's house raises more than eyebrows among those of the Sanhedrin. The rough edges of the disciples are still very much apparent.

Read:

Genesis 33:18-20; (Jacob arrives in Shechem)

Mark 2:13-17; (Jesus eats with sinners)

Matthew 9:9-13; (Jesus eats with Matthew [aka Levi])

John 4:1-42; (The Samaritan woman at the well)

Reflection Questions:

- Obedience at the risk of ridicule and opposition from others, or that threatens our usual way of life may seem to be impossible. In what ways do the different characters (Simon, Eden, Nicodemus, Matthew, Andrew, etc.) react to Jesus's directions? How is this true in our own lives?
- Jesus tells Shmuel to "go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' I did not come to call the righteous but sinners." What does this mean to you?
- Jesus mentions several times that He has not come to make life 'easy' for His followers, nor is He here to deliver them from their oppressive government. What is His purpose in coming and in bringing His disciples to follow Him?
- Jesus specifically seeks out the Samaritan woman at the well: What was significant about Jesus choosing to talk to her? How can you model that today?

- Reflecting on the excitement about Jesus the woman at the well portrays, was there a time in your life when you were as excited about Jesus as she was? How can we bring back some of that excitement?

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