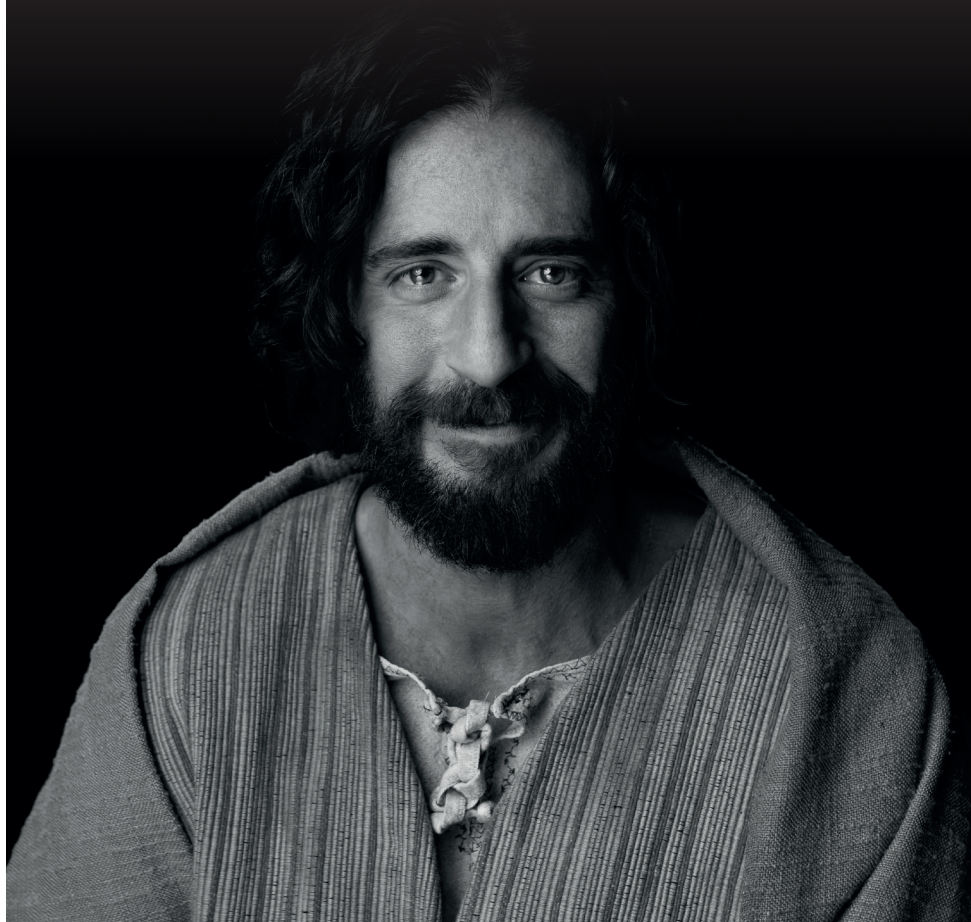


# The CHOSEN



# The Chosen

## Watch & Discuss

## Group Guide

*Welcome to our 'Watch & Discuss Group Guide', written to help groups unpack some of the stories portrayed in The Chosen.*

### ABOUT THE CHOSEN

The Chosen is a ground-breaking historical drama based on the life of Jesus, seen through the eyes of those who knew him. Set against the backdrop of Roman oppression in first-century Israel, the show shares an authentic and intimate look at Jesus' revolutionary life and teachings.

If you want to hear more download The Chosen App or head to **[watch.thechosen.tv](http://watch.thechosen.tv)**. There's a series of bible roundtables discussing each episode in detail to help you unpack what is portrayed in the episodes.

### THE CHOSEN IN GROUPS

We've broken down Season one of The Chosen into six sessions. When you meet, there's the opportunity to catch up together, watch an episode (or two), read a few bible passages relating to the episodes and have a chat about them.

Each session has 'try outs' opportunities to learn more or put into practice what you discuss as a group.

### READ THROUGH JOHN'S GOSPEL

On the back page, we've sectioned out John's Gospel to cover the seven weeks you meeting together. As you watch along, give reading through the account of Jesus' life and teachings a go.

## INTRODUCTION FROM OLLIE BAYLEY

I don't know where you are on your faith journey – if you're completely new to faith, you've grown up around church, or if Jesus has been a part of your life for a long time – for me personally, I'm quite new to Christianity. I've been a Christian for a year and I was baptised last month (June 2024). When I first set out on my faith journey I decided I needed to read to see for myself. I thought: 'I'm going to read it from cover to cover, starting at Genesis and working all the way through'. So, I downloaded the KJV Bible and laid in bed every night for a good two weeks trying to read as much as I could before drifting off to sleep. I didn't get that far – every other sentence I was asking Alexa 'what does this mean?' or 'what does that mean?' I was a bit stuck and thought 'this book is impossible to read'. When I finally learnt of other translations like NIV or NLT I decided to start again. I was introduced to the *Bible in One Year App* and things began to fall in to place. I found parts of the bible very matter of a fact and I struggled to picture what was really happening. I wanted something to help me picture Jesus as the personable man he was.

I now imagine God must have been thinking 'Help is on the way dear!' – just like Robin Williams as *Mrs Doubtfire* (you know the bit where she rushing across a restaurant to save a choking man (please don't ask me to do an impression))!

3,945 miles away on a farm in Illinois USA a failed film director named Dallas Jenkins decided to film a small short story for his church on a shoe string

budget. *The Shepherd* portrayed the birth of Jesus, but from the shepherd's point of view (you can view it on the Chosen website if you'd like). It went viral and resulted in the him crowd-funding the series we're about to watch, raising over \$10,000,000 and sharing it with the World for free.

Since then, *The Chosen* has been translated into 50+ languages and is available for free around the world. There are now four seasons, making it the first ever multi-season show about Jesus – spreading his message far and wide, in an entertaining gripping format – I love the show even more so because of this!

When I watched season one, and first encountered Jesus on screen, I suddenly understood what being a follower of Jesus was all about. Here was a show that stuck closely to the narrative of the Gospels (with some respectful poetic license thrown in) – a show that showed the highs and lows of Jesus' time on earth, but at the same time made me smile. I'm a bit of a Dallas fan boy now. This is what he had to say about *The Chosen*: '*When I started creating a TV show that explores Jesus through the eyes of the people around Him, I found myself getting moved and excited. I was experiencing Him in the way they did.*'

My hope is you too get to explore the back stories of the people who would become Jesus' disciples and see their transformation as he answered his call to 'follow me'. That the words of Jesus from the pages of the gospels would come alive for you as we work through Season one of *The Chosen*.

I hope you enjoy.

# Who's Who

*You'll be introduced to lots of the people who met and followed Jesus, as we watch along. Here is a little bit of background about a few significant people that we'll meet throughout Season One.*



**MARY MAGDALENE –  
“LILITH”**  
**Elizabeth Tabish**

There are many Marys in the Bible, but this Mary was distinguished by her hometown of Magdala – a fishing village on “the Sea of Galilee. What we know of her from the New Testament is that prior to meeting Jesus, she was a tormented woman, possessed by seven demons. That's why she is given the name “Lilith” in episode one, which derives from an ancient Middle Eastern term for “female demons” or “wind spirits.” In a culture that viewed women as less valuable than men, Mary became one of the significant followers of Jesus who travelled with Jesus and financially supported his ministry (Luke 8:1–3). She was present at his crucifixion and burial (Matt. 27:56–61). She was the first to witness the empty tomb (John 20:1) and meet the resurrected Jesus (John 20:11–18; Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1–6).



**NICODEMUS**  
**Erick Avari**

Nicodemus was a Pharisee and member of the Jewish ruling council (John 3:1) at the time of Jesus' ministry. While most other religious leaders rejected Jesus' teachings, Nicodemus seems to be one of the few influential Jewish teachers that recognised his miracles and teachings as ‘from God’ (John 3:2). He's only mentioned a few times in John's gospel – so much of the storyline in *The Chosen* is assumed, but is recorded to have met with Jesus in private, argued for Jesus to have a full hearing before his arrest (John 7:45–52) and he brought an extravagant amount of burial spices after Jesus' death (John 19:38). Nicodemus was a wealthy, powerful and highly honoured Jewish teacher who (as depicted in Season One) appears to have been convinced by Jesus' teaching and who may have been a secret follower of Jesus.



### **SIMON PETER**

**Shahar Isaac**

Simon was a Fisherman from Capernaum who decided to give up

everything so that he could follow Jesus. He became one of the twelve disciples along with his brother Andrew and is described in the New Testament as being overly confident, quick to act and keen to prove himself. Still, Jesus named him 'Peter' which means 'rock' and entrusted him to build his Church (Matthew 16:17-20). Peter spent his life teaching people about Jesus and performing miracles until he was crucified in Rome.



### **MATTHEW**

**Paras Patel**

Matthew collected Taxes for the Roman Empire which would have

made Him wealthy, but hated by the Jewish people. He would have been treated like a traitor and an outsider, spending his days working from his tax collector's booth in Capernaum. Matthew became one of the twelve disciples after Jesus invited him to "follow me" using his Hebrew name 'Levi' (Mark 2:14). He is the author of a gospel (which is like a biography of Jesus) in the New Testament.



### **JESUS**

**Jonathan Roumie**

The Main Character! 2,000 years ago a man named Jesus came

from the town of Nazareth in what is now called Israel. He travelled about the region and gained a large following, yet he spent most of his time with a few close disciples. After a few years, the religious leaders in Jerusalem falsely accused him of crimes and handed him over to the Roman authorities. They executed him by nailing him to a cross. A short time later, his followers preached in the name of Jesus Christ, whom they said rose from the dead. More and more followers were added to this movement which has become the Christian church of today.

Where he came from, what he did on earth, his teachings and what he can do for us now is all revealed in the Bible. The New Testament contains the only record of Jesus and was written by the generation of people who knew him, heard him teach and saw his deeds.

# Session One

## Episodes One & Two

### EPISODE PASSAGES

Luke 8:1-15 & Mark 16:6-11.

Deuteronomy 5:12-14, Matthew 17:24-27 & Matthew 18:15-17.

### SHARE

Spend some time getting to know those in your group (if you don't already know them).

Have you watched The Chosen before?

What drew you to watch with us?

What are you looking forward to?

Describe your spiritual journey so far.

### WATCH

**Episode 1 – I have called you by name**

### DISCUSS

We have been introduced to four back stories so far – Mary, Matthew, Simon (Peter) and Nicodemus. Which do you relate to the most? Why?

### READ

**Isaiah 43:1**

*But now, this is what the Lord says—  
he who created you, Jacob,  
he who formed you, Israel:*

*“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have summoned you by name; you  
are mine.”*

### DISCUSS

In this episode, Jesus calls Mary Magdalene by name. It was a very personal encounter. Have you ever experienced Jesus on a personal level? How so?

How does "I have called you by name" impact you today?

### WATCH

**Episode 2 – Shabat**

### DISCUSS

Like Peter in this episode, when have you tried to solve your own problems without Jesus? How did it go? Do you find it easy to invite God into your problems?

Since trusting in Jesus, how have you noticed him at work in your life?

### READ

**Revelation 3:20**

*Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.*

### DISCUSS

If someone said to you "I couldn't go to God, not after all I have done", how would you answer in light of this passage and episode?

### TRY OUT

- Spend some time this week intentionally inviting Jesus into your everyday life.
- Spend time to write a timeline of key events in your life where you experienced Jesus pursuing you. Turn this into prayers of thanks for God's work in your life.
- Read through the bible passages that give background to the episodes from this session or continue reading through John's Gospel.

# Session Two

## Episodes Three & Four

### EPISODE PASSAGES

Luke 18:15-17, Mark 9:42 & Mark 3:13-19

John 1:19-28, John 21 & Luke 5:1-11.

### SHARE

How did you find last week's episodes and try outs?

When you think of Jesus, how do you picture him?

### WATCH

#### Episode 3

*Jesus Loves The Little Children*

### READ

#### Matthew 18:1-5

*The Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven*

### DISCUSS

Why do you think Jesus welcomed these children? What does this say about how much He desires to welcome you?

Jesus uses a child to demonstrate what qualities his followers should take on. What does it mean to '*change and become like little children*' or have a child-like faith? What does this look like for us as followers of Jesus today?

### WATCH

#### Episode 4

*The Rock On Which It Is Built*

### DISCUSS

In this episode, Simon Peter becomes more and more frustrated as he works hard to 'fish' himself out of debt. Do you tend to feel you must "fix" things first before seeking God's help? Are there ways you find helpful that help you seek God in hard times that you can share?

Do you think it's "ok" to express your anger and disappointment to God? How do you imagine God responds?

You can find the gospel account of the miracle in Luke 5:1-11. It's the first time we see the dramatisation of a biblical event – how does this meet with your own perception of this story?

### TRY OUT

- We've seen that Andrew met Jesus through John. He longs for Peter to know Jesus too. Are there people who you long to know Jesus? Commit to pray for them this week.
- Reflect on the attitudes of children you know. What qualities do they have that embody what it is to follow Jesus – how can you embody or emulate them?
- Read through the bible passages that give background to the episodes from this session or continue reading through John's Gospel.

# Session Three

## Episode Five

### EPISODE PASSAGES

Luke 2:41-52 & John 2:1-11

#### SHARE

How did you find last week's episodes?  
How are you finding the 'try outs'?  
Which characters stood out to you most? Which do you most relate too?

#### READ

**John 2:1-11**

*Jesus Changes Water Into Wine*

#### WATCH

**Episode 5**

*The Wedding Gift*

#### DISCUSS

In this episode, Mary was quite content with not knowing where Jesus was leading them – how do you deal with not knowing where Jesus is leading you? Or do you have a clear sense of God's guidance?

The request for more wine seems quite trivial at first, What can be learnt from this story when asking God for help? What does this show us about Jesus and his character?

Thomas witnesses a miracle and starts his faith journey. How much seeing do you need in order to believe?

The servants in this episode had to obey Jesus and draw the water before they saw the miracle – what are ways you can step out in faith, because of God's Promises? Any examples you can share?

In John's Gospel, we are told this miracle took place 'on the third day'. What do you think he was hinting at?

#### TRY OUTS

- Read through the bible passages that give background to the episodes from this session or continue reading through John's Gospel.
- This miracle signifies that Jesus came, as he says later in John 10:10, that we might have life in all it's fullness. Spend some time reflecting on this story, with your own disappointments or failures in mind – remembering that transformation only came when the servants took Mary's words seriously: 'Do whatever he tells you.'



# Session Four

## Episode Six

### EPISODE PASSAGES

Mark 2:1-12, Matthew 8:1-4, Luke 12:35-48 & Matthew 6:1-18

#### SHARE

What were you like before following Jesus? How has choosing to follow him changed your life?

What might people mean by saying they're lost?

#### WATCH

##### Episode 6

*Indescribable Compassion*

#### READ

##### Luke 5:17-26

*Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralyzed Man*

#### DISCUSS

What does it say about the paralysed man and his friends that they were so determined to get to Jesus?

Jesus says the man's sins are forgiven: why is this a shocking claim? What indirect claim was Jesus making?

In this episode, Jesus' amazing healing of the Leper and Paralyzed Man are quite understated – almost as if to say their problem ran deeper than their physical condition. What do you think about this?

Jesus makes some big claims in these encounters with others. Why

do you think people who reject the controversial claims that Jesus made about his own identity still call him a great teacher or leader?

Matthew clearly had not found meaning in his wealth and position. He answers 'yes' when a child asks 'are you lost?' What made Jesus so attractive to Matthew?

Throughout the gospels, and in this episode, we observe the radically transformed lives of those who place their faith in Jesus. God's love is offered to two sick, poor and outcast men and to Matthew – a wealthy tax collector. What might Jesus be trying to do or say with these encounters? Why do you think some people choose to resist a God like this?

#### TRY OUTS

- Read through the bible passages that give background to the episodes from this session or continue reading through John's Gospel.
- Each day this week, think of ways you can share the joy, kindness and compassion of Jesus with others this week. Find inspiration at [randomactsofkindness.org/kindness-ideas](http://randomactsofkindness.org/kindness-ideas)

# Session Five

## Episode Seven

### EPISODE PASSAGES

John 3:1-21 & Numbers 21:4-9

#### SHARE

Share a time when you received an invitation to something you didn't want to attend. Talk about a time you were excited to receive an invitation to something.

#### WATCH

##### Episode 7 – *Invitations*

#### READ

##### John 3:1-21

*Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him."*

#### DISCUSS

Nicodemus was amazed by his encounter with Jesus. His perception of God changes as he talks to him. How has your perception of Jesus changed the more you've gotten to know him?

Have the encounters with Jesus depicted in the series and the power of God made you look at things differently?

What is the new birth Jesus is describing?

If you feel comfortable sharing, have

you experienced being born again?

Do you struggle to believe that Jesus would invite you to help him build his Kingdom?

In the episode, Nicodemus struggled with leaving a life of status to follow Jesus. Matthew struggled with leaving a wealthy lifestyle, but quickly left it behind to follow Jesus. When have you felt this type of tug of war when you sense Christ's invitation to follow him?

#### TRY OUTS

- Like for Nicodemus and Matthew, It's clear that to follow Jesus is costly for us all. Spend some time this week reflecting on the costs in following Jesus for you. It might be helpful to consider this in terms of your time, money, relationships and priorities. What might Jesus be asking you sacrifice in order to follow him and trust him more deeply. Pray for God's help in handing this over to him.
- While many Christians enjoy knowing they have eternal life, the question remains, are they following Jesus – here and now. How could you follow Jesus more closely this week? What habits can you put into place to help you?
- Read through the bible passages that give background to the episodes from this session or continue reading through John's Gospel.

# Session Six

## Episode Eight

### EPISODE PASSAGES

Mark 2:13-17 & John 4:1-42

#### SHARE

Who has been your favourite character in this series and why?

What do you think the underlining message of the Chosen is? Is there significance to the title?

#### WATCH

**Episode 8 – "I am He"**

#### READ

**John 4:4-30**

#### DISCUSS

What is the significance of Jesus talking to a Samaritan women?

What does Jesus say about this "living water" that makes it so appealing to her (V13-15)?

What does Jesus teach about true worship (V22-24)? What does it tell us about his ultimate mission? What do you think it looks like to worship in '*spirit and in truth*'?

The women heads off to share what she had learnt with the whole town. What was it about her encounter with Jesus that freed her to be so transparent about her life?

The religious people of the time, would have regarded this woman as a lost cause. What did Jesus see in her and her predicaments that no one else did? How does it affect your attitude to others, or even yourself, to know that Jesus considers no-one a lost cause?

#### TRY OUTS

- Who has God place on your heart to share your story and the love of Jesus with? Pray for them. You could even challenge yourself to tell a friend about *The Chosen*.
- Who could you invite to 'come and see' for themselves - could you invite them to try church one Sunday?

# John's Gospel Read Through

## READ THROUGH JOHN

We've sectioned out John's Gospel to cover the seven weeks we're meeting together. Read along and once we've finished watching Season One, you'll have read an account of Jesus' life and teachings!

As you read these verses, you may find it helpful to use the below symbols to mark what stands out, what questions this raises and things you can apply to your life.

### WEEK 1

- **Thu** John 1:1-25
- **Fri** John 1:26-51
- **Wknd** John 2:1-12
- **Mon** John 2:13-25
- **Tue** John 3:1-18
- **Wed** John 3:19-36

### WEEK 2

- **Thu** John 4:1-26
- **Fri** John 4:27-54
- **Wknd** 10 John 5:1-23
- **Mon** John 5:24-47
- **Tue** John 6:1-35
- **Wed** John 6:36-71

### WEEK 3

- **Thu** John 7:1-27
- **Fri** John 7:28-53
- **Wknd** John 8:1-30
- **Mon** John 8:31-59
- **Tue** John 9:1-20
- **Wed** John 9:21-41

### WEEK 4

- **Thu** John 10:1-21
- **Fri** John 10:22-42
- **Wknd** John 11:1-28
- **Mon** John 11:29-57
- **Tue** John 12:1-25
- **Wed** John 12:26-50

### WEEK 5

- **Thu** John 13:1-18
- **Fri** John 13:19-38
- **Wknd** John 14:1-15
- **Mon** John 14:16-31
- **Tue** John 15:1-14
- **Wed** John 15:15-27

### WEEK 6

- **Thu** John 16:1-16
- **Fri** John 16:17-33
- **Wknd** John 17:1-13
- **Mon** John 17:14-26
- **Tue** John 18:1-20
- **Wed** John 18:21-40

### WEEK 7

- **Thu** John 19:1-21
- **Fri** John 19:22-42
- **WkEnd** John 20:1-15
- **Mon** John 20:16-31
- **Tue** John 21:1-12
- **Wed** John 21:13-25



#### A LIGHT BULB:

Something that 'shines' from the passage or stands out – whatever resonates or draws attention. Reflect on why you like it and what it tells you about God.



#### A QUESTION MARK:

Something that's difficult to understand or a question that it raises. Reflect and write down what you find difficult in this passage and why? Perhaps you could ask your table at the next session what they think.



#### AN ARROW:

Reflect on what God is saying to you or how it affects your life: Is there a truth to believe? How might I live differently and be different in the light of what I have read? What habits or attitudes might help me live this out?