

Group Leaders:

The easiest way to show these movies to your group is to go to www.vidangel.com and follow the instructions there. OR download the app (The Chosen – Angel Studies), and then cast it to your roku or appleTV.

Some episodes have also been put on youtube – search, for instance, for “The Chosen Episode 1” and so forth. If you use youtube, for many episodes you will find “The Chosen Global Livestream” which includes introductory material at the beginning or the end – feel free to watch that if you’d like, but know that you are seeing more than just “The Chosen” episodes themselves.

The 20 minute Christmas Show “The Shepherd”, which gave birth to The Chosen, can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4y9rNSKuk3I>

It is recommended that you use subtitles as you watch in order to catch all the nuances, especially since the characters speak with a generic accent.

This is an 8-session course. Each of the sessions should take about 90 minutes to complete, depending on the length of the movie for that night (the episodes vary in length from about 40-60 minutes). Each study session is composed of three parts:

Read prior to watching the movie:

Watch the movie

Discussion and Learning:

It is set up this way so that some of the Scripture referenced in the episode for that session is read prior to watching the movie. This will be of great help to any in the group who are not extremely well versed in various Bible stories – it will help group members pick up on some of the nuances and intricacies of the writing. Because of the length of time it takes to do all of this, **if at all possible it is recommended that this “Read Prior” section be done even before arriving for the group study.**

Groups that are on zoom, or who have members who will be zooming in, have found it helpful to gather on zoom at the beginning for prayer and introducing the episode. Then get off zoom and have each member/couple watch the episode in their own home. Then, at an appointed time, get back on zoom for the Discussion and Learning.

Groups have found it helpful for the 8 sessions to be printed out and given to the group members, so that they have the notes and Scripture references handy both during Group time and also at home afterwards for further study.

After you watch the episode, there is Discussion and Learning section. As you lead the discussion, if there are multiple questions in one paragraph, **do not ask them at all at the same time.** Ask each one individually. Give time for discussion, and then move to the next question.

If people in the group are not familiar with the Bible, the Bible is divided into 66 books. Each book is named, and then divided into chapters and verses. So, for instance, Isaiah 43:1-7 means that you should look in the Table of Contents for the book of Isaiah. Chapter 43 (usually large numbers) and verses 1 through 7 (usually small numbers). It would be good to make sure everyone understands this prior to starting.

An easy way to read the Bible is to download the Youversion Bible app on your phone. Click the “Read” button at the bottom of the page. Chose “NIV” from the dropdown menu at the top of the page. Search on the Book / Chapter / Verse from the dropdown menu at the top left of the page.

Because of the unique way this series presents biblical material, it is recommended that at least one person in the group watch at least episodes 1-5 prior to the group beginning. Why? Some who have not watched the series at all may get discouraged during episodes 1-3 ... it would be good to have a cheerleader in the group who can, with excitement, keep the group hanging with it until episode 4. Once the group gets that far, the opposite will occur ... it will be hard to keep the group from binge-watching the rest – it is just that good!

A final note – might be obvious but here it is anyway – begin and end each session with prayer, that God’s Holy Spirit would move mightily in our hearts as we read His word and contemplate the beautiful life of Jesus. Shalom! (“God’s peace” in Hebrew)

As you lead your group, if you find things that work or don’t work, are helpful or unhelpful, please let Pastor Jeff Scheich know so that he can improve the study. If you have ideas on how to make it better, by all means, let him know. Thank you! God’s blessings!

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The Chosen Season Two Episode One “Thunder”

As we begin, you need to know a few background pieces of information.

Jesus and His disciples are in Samaria (between Nazareth and Jerusalem). Jews and Samaritans do NOT get along at all! Usually Jews would avoid Samaria, but Jesus has gone there at the end of Season One to share the good news with a woman at the well of Sychar (John 4), and now because of the woman’s testimony and invitation, they are spending a few days in and around Sychar. The woman, by the way, has been married 5 times, and the husband she’s now with is an older guy who is very mean to her (at least that’s how The Chosen portrays him). You’ll see him watching Jesus teach from a balcony.

Read (but no need to discuss now):

Luke 15:3-7

Luke 10:30-37 *NOTE: this is a story Jesus told, although being robbed along this road happened all the time.*

The Episode begins after Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. It’s in the future, in other words. The Apostle John talking with Jesus’ mother, Mary. He is talking with her about how to begin the account of Jesus’ life that he wants to write.

Then the episode transitions back to the present day, Jesus has had two brothers, James and John, hoe and plant a field in Samaria, although they don’t know why He asked them to do this. Read John 4:39-42 – that’s the setting for today’s episode.

WATCH EPISODE

Read Genesis 1:1-5 and John 1:1-5

Any thoughts on how The Chosen portrays what John obviously did in his Gospel, namely, use Genesis 1 as a template as he begins?

NOTE: Jesus healing the guy with the broken leg in Samaria is not in the Bible. But it very well *could* have happened.

How does Jesus use the parable of the lost sheep to teach His disciples what He’s doing in Samaria? How does Jesus illustrate that parable in the life of the guy with the broken leg? Who is the “Samaritan” in your life and how do you need to change your view of him/her?

Read Mark 3:17 ‘Is that a good thing?’ ‘Today it was not good.’ When Jesus calls James and John the “Sons of Thunder” he says that fiery passion can be both a gift and hindrance. Share about a personality trait that is an asset, but that sometimes gets you into trouble. How do you want Jesus to eliminate that trait in certain areas? How do you want Jesus to use that trait in other areas?

The Chosen Season Two Episode Two “I Saw You”

In this episode we’ll focus on a few key characters. One is Nathanael. There’s a fictional backstory of Nathanael being an architect who has been fired. He was so proud of what he had accomplished and of being a rising star in his career. All he ever wanted to do was serve God, or did he??? But now his life is over.

Meanwhile we are also introduced to Philip. Philip was a disciple of John the Baptist (Jesus’ cousin) – a strange guy who lived in the desert and ate locusts and wild honey and wore clothing of camel’s hair. John the Baptist is called by God to be a prophet and point people to Jesus. And so he points Philip to Jesus – in this episode Philip shows up and he takes a liking to Matthew (the tax collector and outcast of the group).

WATCH EPISODE

Philip says “I *was* something else once too. Once you have met the Messiah, *am* is all that matters.” Sometimes people want to define us by our past or sins. Is there anyone in your life who does that to you right now? How hard is it to believe that Jesus does not do that to you?

The Chosen puts these words in Philip’s mouth: “Everybody in your old life is playing a different game than you now.” True in your life? False? Why? Thoughts?

Matthew draws a circle of all the people who have ever lived. Where then does he put himself? Read I Peter 2:11. How does that shed light on how God intends the lives of followers of Jesus to be?

Read John 1:43-51 to see what we really know about Philip and Nathanael. How does The Chosen present the Bible well, and what are some misses or things that the Bible presents that The Chosen presents differently, if you see any?

While there’s no evidence in the Bible for Nathanael’s burning his architectural drawings prior to meeting Jesus, The Chosen presents that scene as a way of showing us that it is important as we follow Jesus to “burn the ships”, so to speak. Check out For King and Country’s video by that name:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pOVrOuKVBuY>

What is there in your past that you need to ‘burn’ in order to follow Jesus well?

The Chosen Season Two Episode Three “Matthew 4:24”

The setting for this episode is Matthew 4:24-25. So read that Scripture. Talk about what that might have been like, as you imagine it.

WATCH EPISODE

What line from this episode struck you or stood out to you? Why?

What were some things about Jesus and His ministry that were surprising to the disciples?

Try to picture yourself as a person who does not know God. And then you meet him – what would you expect it to be like to be a follower of the Creator of the Universe?

How does being a Christian differ from those expectations? Which of those differences are because of you and which are because God acts differently than you thought?

What struck you as Mary shared her story about being Jesus’ mom?

NOTE: We don’t know whether Joseph died prior to Jesus’ earthly ministry (which began when Jesus was about 30) ... but we presume he died because he is not mentioned in the Scriptures after the story of Jesus being lost in the temple when Jesus was 12.

Matthew was a tax collector in Capernaum; Peter and his brother and friends were fishermen in Capernaum. Matthew was a traitor, a collaborator with the hated Romans who were occupying the area and taxing people to death – Matthew got rich off of Peter and his friends. So is Peter right to challenge Matthew like this, or not? Why or why not?

How would you describe the reaction of the disciples as Jesus returns to camp from a long day of healing? Why do they react this way?

Who in your life is Matthew (if you imagine yourself as Peter) – that is, who has wronged you terribly? If you imagine Jesus present in your life as He was in the life of the disciples, how will His presence change your heart towards your “Matthew”?

The Chosen Season Two Episode Four “The Perfect Opportunity”

The Pool of Bethesda is introduced to us in John 5:1-5. Many significant copies omit part of verse 3 and all of verse 4 – most translations have those verses in the footnotes, if at all. As you’ll see in the episode, what’s going on in the pool is very confusing. Here is John 5:1-5 in its full text:

John 5:1 After these things there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ² Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep *gate* a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porches. ³ In these lay a multitude of them that were sick: the blind, lame and paralyzed, *waiting for the moving of the water.* ⁴ *for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever stepped in first after the troubling of the waters was made whole, healed from whatever disease.* ⁵ And a certain man was there, who had been an invalid for thirty and eight years. (John 5:1-5 ASV)

One of Jesus’ followers is called Simon the Zealot. The Zealots were a group of radicals committed to the overthrow of the Roman occupation of Israel. The idea that the two guys are brothers isn’t biblical – The Chosen is just putting these two stories together in an intriguing way. As the story begins, “Jesse” is the older brother who is paralyzed from a fall as a young boy; Simon is his younger brother.

Meanwhile the disciples are about to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles – that will be explained in the episode.

Read Zephaniah 3:19 – it’s a prophecy that figures prominently in this episode.

WATCH EPISODE

Lots of stuff going on. Feast of Tabernacles. Simon the Zealot. The guy by the pool. The Pharisees getting mad at Jesus. Jesus intentionally stirring the waters. What made the biggest impression on you? What will you remember / ponder? Why?

You’ll recall the disciple, John, writing down what was going on as Jesus healed this man. That’s because the biblical account is in the Gospel of John. Read John 5:1-18 to get the “story behind the story”.

If you have time, you can discuss some of the things that happened at the dinner with Jesus and His disciples.

Read Zechariah 14:16 – the prophecy quoted by the disciple at the dinner

Jesus says, “things will have to change for that to happen”. What will have to change?

What will have to change for you to welcome someone not like you at your lunch table?

“Everyone has wandered through the wilderness at some point.” What’s been your wilderness thus far? How has God rescued you?

“It will not be Jerusalem as we know it now.” What does Jesus mean by that?

TEACHER NOTE: Old Testament prophecies of God bringing the nations (Gentiles) to Jerusalem to worship, and so forth, are said to be fulfilled in the New Testament by what was going on, and by what is now going on, in the Church. Gentiles from all over the world are now worshipping “in Jerusalem”. Jerusalem was where “God lived” – in the Temple. But now God has burst forth from the Temple (remember the curtain torn in two at the crucifixion of Jesus (Matthew 27:51) and lives throughout the world, so that wherever two or three are gathered in His name, there He is in the midst of them. That, that place, is “Jerusalem”.

The Chosen Season Two Episode Five “Spirit”

To review where we are, Jesus has healed the paralyzed man at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5). The Chosen portrays this man as being named “Jesse”, and as the brother of Simon. Simon joined the zealots, a group of fanatical warriors who wanted to overthrow the Romans by force. Jesus and His disciples are pictured as being near Jericho – the things going on in this episode are by and large not in the Bible, but reflect some Biblical events such as casting out demons, the calling of a disciple, the struggles of following Jesus, and so forth.

At this point we should distinguish between three types of people / events that we are seeing in The Chosen.

Type A: Biblical events / people. In this category would be people like Simon the Zealot, the paralyzed man at the pool, Mary Magdalene, and so forth.

Type B: Events or people who are not in the Bible, but not opposed to or against what is in the Bible. In this category would be the idea that the guy healed by the pool is named “Jesse”, or that Mary Magdalene’s father died when she was young / that she was raped by a Roman soldier. There’s no evidence for or against any of these type of people or events – The Chosen is imagining what might fill in the blanks of the biblical accounts.

Type C: Events or people in The Chosen that specifically contradict what is in the Bible. It would be good if there were nothing in this category, but sadly, from time to time there is. For instance, Mary Magdalene is generally portrayed as a fairly poor person, and yet we know from the Bible that she had significant wealth (see Luke 8:1-3). We will likely see more of this type in the future, and it is always important to point these out when they occur.

WATCH EPISODE

What strikes you most about the conversations between Jesus and his cousin, John the Baptist (John was six months older).

Read Luke 3:1-20

Jesus wasn’t living up to John’s expectations. What did John want Jesus to do?

How was the actual real Messiah different than what Simon expected?

When has Jesus not lived up to your expectations?

Read Psalm 139:7-10

How do these verses make their appearance in this episode of The Chosen? How does Mary react to them? Why do you think Jesus quotes them to Matthew?

The Chosen Season Two Episode Six: Unlawful

As the episode begins, there is a flashback to about 1000 BC. Read Leviticus 24:5-9. I Samuel 21 & 22 tell the story of a time when David (who had been secretly anointed as the next king, but was not yet king) was fleeing from King Saul. King Saul was trying to kill David. David was hungry, and went to the priest in the city of Nob, and the priest helped him. When King Saul found out, he killed 85 priests in that town, along with all the other people in the town. Only one person escaped.

There is a whole story-line today about Mary Magdalene. This is not in the Bible. And yet it is a storyline that may very well have happened to not just Mary, but to all the disciples – Mary sinned and doubted and strayed from Jesus.

WATCH EPISODE

Jesus' mother Mary quotes Scripture: Read Psalm 20:7. Why was she quoting this Scripture?

In what situation do you need to apply that Scripture?

This storyline of Mary Magdalene straying / doubting is one that's not in the Bible ... and yet happens to all of us. What were you thinking / what struck you as you watched Matthew and Simon Peter interact with Mary?

Which one, Matthew or Simon Peter, would you want to deal with you when you stray?

Jesus has some great lines (not in the Bible, but certainly they fit with the Jesus we meet on the pages of Scripture):

“That's not much of a redemption if it can be lost in a day”

“Did you really think that you'd never sin or struggle again”

Which of these phrases hit you the most as you watched? Why?

Who is there that you know who right now needs a Matthew in their lives?

Read Matthew 12:1-14. What did The Chosen get right from this account in Scripture? (hint: a LOT!)

What did The Chosen change?

Geographical Changes. The Chosen places a number of events out of sequence or out of location. Sometimes that's easy to understand; other times it is egregious. The Chosen places this episode in the Wadi Kelt. But the Wadi Kelt likely had no synagogues and certainly had no fields of grain. Here's a great picture of the real Wadi Kelt:

[https://img.fotocommunity.com/wadi-kelt-c8a6df96-203f-45cd-bcbd-](https://img.fotocommunity.com/wadi-kelt-c8a6df96-203f-45cd-bcbd-a41994d8cfd3.jpg?height=1080)

[a41994d8cfd3.jpg?height=1080](https://img.fotocommunity.com/wadi-kelt-c8a6df96-203f-45cd-bcbd-a41994d8cfd3.jpg?height=1080) It is the setting for Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan -

people would travel back and forth from Jerusalem to Jericho all the time at the bottom of this wadi.



The Chosen Season Two Episode Seven: Reckoning

Earlier we talked about the different kind of events portrayed in The Chosen. To review:

Type A: Biblical events / people. In this category would be people like Simon the Zealot, the paralyzed man at the pool, Mary Magdalene, and so forth.

Type B: Events or people who are not in the Bible, but not opposed to or against what is in the Bible. In this category would be the idea that the guy healed by the pool is named “Jesse”, or that Mary Magdalene’s father died when she was young / that she was raped by a Roman soldier. There’s no evidence for or against any of these type of people or events – The Chosen is imagining what might fill in the blanks of the biblical accounts.

Type C: Events or people in The Chosen that specifically contradict what is in the Bible. It would be good if there were nothing in this category, but sadly, from time to time there is. For instance, Mary Magdalene is generally portrayed as a fairly poor person, and yet we know from the Bible that she had significant wealth (see Luke 8:1-3). We will likely see more of this type in the future, and it is always important to point these out when they occur.

This episode veers very close to being completely filled with Type C events. It is highly unlikely that Jesus was captured by the Romans prior to Holy Week. The Romans had a very light footprint in Galilee, which is where the events of this episode supposedly take place. If the Romans believed that Jesus was a problem, they would have captured Him and crucified Him. If they didn’t believe He was a problem, they would have left Him alone. Nevertheless it is technically possible that the events we watch today may possibly, maybe might have taken place – they might be Type B events.

Reminder of who’s who:

Quintus: Roman governor of Capernaum (although the scene in the episode between Jesus and Quintus supposedly takes place in Jotopata (about 20 miles from Capernaum).

Atticus: A Roman “CIA” type guy who’s been following Jesus around

Shmuel: a Jewish Pharisee from Capernaum who is trying to get Jesus arrested

WATCH EPISODE

What did you think of the exchange between Jesus and Quintus?

Who won? Why?

NOTE: The whole idea of Jesus preparing for this huge “sermon” (which we find in Matthew 5-7) and enlisting the disciples to be guards and have other “roles” is quite fantastical. It’s a foretaste of what’s to come in Episode 8, which will be a great lesson for us in how in this particular case the creators of The Chosen lose their moorings and try to make Jesus into a 21st Century hero rather than a 1st Century Messiah. More on that in the next episode.

When Jesus returns to the camp there are some great lines that we need to pay attention to.

The disciples have been all mixed up while Jesus was away. Jesus says, “Did I not tell you that I would be back?” It’s a scene that reminds us of many of the parables of Jesus. Let’s read some:

Matthew 25:1-13 “The foolish and the wise”

What’s the point that Jesus is making in telling this story?

Luke 12:34-46 “Be ready”

What’s the point that Jesus is making in telling this story?

How do these stories relate to what the disciples did while Jesus was away talking with Quintus?

How can you “be ready” for Jesus to return?

We find Jesus teaching His disciples how to pray. Check out Matthew 6:5-13. It’s part of the “Sermon on the Mount” from Matthew 5-7, which will figure prominently in the next episode.

Close your time together by saying the Lord’s Prayer together.

The Chosen Season Two Episode Eight: Beyond Mountains

The first season of The Chosen was absolutely awesome in its portrayal of many biblical events. The second season could hardly live up to the first, but it too has been good. However in this last episode of the second season, for some reason, the creators completely deviate from anything remotely resembling what the actual so-called “Sermon on the Mount” looked like or felt like. We should know that going into the watching of this episode.

Nevertheless there are some good nuggets that we can try to find in the midst of the fantastical story-line.

If you’re interested in what Israel looks like, on the plus side, the view of the Sea of Galilee at the very end of the episode is very realistic-looking! On the minus side, there is no snow-capped mountain range in Israel (the one you see in the video is in Utah – ha!) – there is only one snow-capped mountain (Mt. Hermon) and that is in the far far north (on the border of Syria today).

WATCH EPISODE

Reminder: The Sermon on the Mount was not “Rocky Balboa meets Jay-Z Concert and has a baby”. There were no flyers passed out advertising the “sermon”; there was no stage; and I can’t imagine Jesus had a crew of five women picking out His clothes! Jesus wasn’t into earthly glory; He was headed to the cross. Theologians call this difference “Theology of Glory” vs. “Theology of the Cross”. We today are tempted by the same challenge – we all are attracted by fame and success and large worship attendance and so forth. But if we want that more than we want to follow Jesus and more than we want to be faithful to Him, even if that means death ... then we are following a false god.

Very likely Jesus gave the teachings recorded for us in Matthew 5-7 many times, in many settings and in various ways (including no doubt on a hillside in Galilee) – sometimes as a whole ‘message’ and sometimes as individual teachings. Matthew then collected these simple teachings together and wrote them down only once for us – in Matthew 5-7.

Begin your discussion by checking out the beginning of the message of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 5:1-12.

While they are working through the message, Matthew says, “There’s lots more bad news than good news” in the message. Theology of the cross. And an emphasis on God’s Law rather than God’s Gospel. If you read through Matthew 5-7, you’ll find that Matthew is right. How do you think Jesus wants people to react to Matthew 5:48?

TEACHER NOTE: Jesus wants people to realize that they are not perfect, that they need a Savior.

The Chosen has Jesus respond to Matthew’s concern by saying, “Hey everyone, just keep doing what you’ve been doing for the last thousand years since it’s been going so great.” What thoughts did you have as Jesus said that?

Jesus said that Matthew 5:13 has a number of different layers of meaning. Can you remember what some of them were?

The Chosen also has Jesus saying, “I don’t want passive followers – those who are truly committed will peer deeply into it looking for truth”. What is your reaction to that? What steps can you take to “peer deeply into the teachings of Jesus”?

How do you think you would react to having been there to hear Jesus teach? To being part of that early group of disciples? What joys would you have had? What challenges would you have faced?

What will you remember from Season Two of The Chosen?