INVITATIONS

THE CHOSEN – SEASON 1 EPISODE 7 • **TIPS:** Start with initial thoughts about the episode. Feel free to spend more than one discussion on any episode as necessary. **NOTES:** Episode time markers and additional content are shown in **BLUE CAPS**.
Please be mindful that episode content is dramatized and at times not directly biblical.

FAITH NOT REASON

Read Numbers 21:4-9 together. Discuss Moses' conversation with Joshua at the beginning of the episode (0:10–3:00). A bronze serpent is an odd cure for serpent bites. Paradoxically, all who looked upon this symbol of death found healing and life. Moses says: *"How do you explain the Red Sea? The pillar of fire? It's an act of faith, not reason."*

- How does this phrase "faith, not reason" apply to this episode as a whole?

Discuss Matthew's visit with his mother (14:50–18:30).

- What is Matthew struggling with?
- Earlier Matthew says: *"When you realize that no one in the world cares what happens to you, you think only about yourself"* (4:00–6:00). How does this describe his relationship with his family? Why do you think he came to visit them?
- **Read Matthew 7:24-27.** Compare this to Matthew's comment that *"everything is like sand in a flood."* Have you ever felt like Matthew? What is the sand? (Security... in money, education, relationships, good health?) **Read Colossians 2:6-7.** How can we root and establish ourselves in Christ?

GET USED TO DIFFERENT 31:32–35:10

Let's be honest, Matthew didn't fit in (according to the interpretations of this series). Maybe we have felt the same - we hear that little voice in our heads telling us that we don't measure up, that we're not accepted. Maybe we've even been embarrassed and laughed at by others.

But then Jesus says, *"Follow Me,"* and everything changed (Matthew 9:1-13). Who does Jesus choose to hang out with? **You. He chooses you.** He knows your self-doubt, He hears those little voices, He sees the tax collector booth that you have built to hide in. Simon says, *"Do You even known him?"* Jesus responds, *"Yes."* **He knows you and He chooses you.**

- What is your personal tax collector booth? Why is it hard to leave behind?

GET USED TO DIFFERENT CONTINUED

- Have you ever put yourself in Simon's position - thinking it was your responsibility to judge other followers of Christ? Jesus responds by telling him, *"You didn't get it when I chose you either... Get used to different."* What does that mean to you?
- **Read Proverbs 16:1-7.** How does this relate to Matthew? To Simon?

THE NIGHT MEETING 20:34–31:30

Nicodemus finally meets Jesus face to face. **Read John 3:1-21**, then think back to the episode. What did you think of the depiction of their conversation? What emotions does Nicodemus express? What does he believe about Jesus?

- **Read John 1:1-9** (the John referred to in these verses is John the Baptist). Discuss the themes of light and darkness in the episode and in these two readings of John.
- What does Jesus mean about being "born again"? Discuss Jesus' analogy about the wind.
- Why did Jesus refer to the bronze serpent of Moses?
- In the episode, Jesus asks Nicodemus to follow Him, although this is not in the explicitly mentioned in the Bible. What do you think about this invitation? What does Nicodemus feel? Will he accept?

Watch the ROUNDTABLE and discuss the following:

- What do you think of Nicodemus' profession that *"we know that You are a teacher come from God"* (John 3:2)?
- Why would the meeting need to be secret?
- Discuss the multiple ways that Nicodemus is "on the fence."
- How might Nicodemus try "to change the system from within"? Do you think he expects all the religious leaders to eventually follow Jesus?

Nicodemus says, at the end, his *"heart is swollen with fear and wonder."* **Read Psalm 2:10-12.** These are the words that Nicodemus and Jesus quote to each other. How are the words "fear and wonder" themes in these verses and how do they summarize the encounter of Jesus and Nicodemus?