

The Chosen – Season 1 - Episode 1

I Have Called You By Name



You can watch this episode via The Chosen app on your smartphone or tablet, or via your web browser on thechosen.tv [here](#).

Scripture references:

- >“Do not fear for I have redeemed you.”
- [Isaiah 43:1](#)
- >Nicodemus - [John 3](#)
- >The wife of Simon Peter – [1 Corinthians 9:5](#)

Synopsis:

In a sentence: we meet various people in their *before encountering Jesus* existence; most notably Mary Magdalene, Nicodemus, Matthew, Simon, Simon’s wife Eden, and Simon’s brother Andrew.

The episode begins in 2 A.D. in Magdala¹ in the northern territory of Galilee. We are introduced to a scared little girl whose father comforts her with a passage of scripture from Isaiah.

The episode then moves forward some 28 years, to the Galilean city of Capernaum¹. We see the girl again, now as a demon-possessed and tormented adult everyone calls Lilith² (or the nickname *Lily*). Nicodemus travels to Capernaum for his annual visit from Jerusalem. The arrogant Roman Praetor³ Quintus enlists Nicodemus’ help to deal with tax evasion by Jewish fishermen. We meet the tax collector Matthew who is despised by both the Romans and the Jews. We encounter the rough fishermen Simon and his brother Andrew who are involved in fighting matches to make money. Nicodemus’ attempt to exorcise Lilith’s demons fails spectacularly. In desperation, Lilith contemplates

ending her suffering. At her darkest point Lilith has an encounter that changes her life. While she doesn't recognize who the man is, she responds as he calls her by her real name, Mary of Magdala⁴, and speaks to her the verse she learned as a little girl, "... *Fear not for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine*".

Episode review on Patheos.com:

The full review of this episode is available on patheos.com [here](#). The review provides detail on the historical context and basis for this episode in Old and New Testament scripture, and where the episode departs from scripture through artistic license.

Memorable lines of dialogue:

Jesus to Mary Magdalene: *"That's not for you."*

Nicodemus: *"What if it's more beautiful and strange than we could ever image?"*

Nicodemus: *"Only God himself could have drawn them out."*

Watch for this:



Starting at 40:12

Watch for the white dove that flies over Lilith's head as she prepares to end her suffering. The dove appears again starting at 47:55 in the episode as Lilith walks toward the Inn where she will encounter Jesus.

Questions for an informal discussion:

1. What did you think about this episode? Did anything particularly stand out for you?
2. What questions do you have about this episode?
3. What are your initial impressions of the people who will be the key characters in season 1 of The Chosen: Jesus, Mary, Nicodemus, Matthew, Simon and Andrew?
4. Preamble: The opening scene showing Mary's father teaching her the passage from Isaiah is an excellent example of *paying it forward*, as we see Jesus using that verse to reach Mary some 30

years later.

Have you experienced someone *paying it forward* in your life? Where might you do it for others?

5. Preamble: The series begins with the artistic license (i.e. not supported in scripture) of Mary being portrayed as the first person to encounter Jesus.

What might God be wanting to show us / teach us through the series' use of artistic license of focusing first on Mary?

6. Preamble: While not supported in scripture, an impression seems to have taken root starting several centuries back that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute.

Did you see anything in this episode that supports or refutes that idea?

7. Preamble: Similar to question 5 above; while not supported in scripture, this episode (and subsequent episodes) use artistic license to portray Matthew as being on the Autism spectrum.

What might God be wanting to show us / teach us with Matthew being portrayed this way?

8. Preamble: Similar to question 5 above (again!) the first time Nicodemus is mentioned in scripture he is identified as a Pharisee who comes to see Jesus "at night" (John 3:2), yet the series opens with Nicodemus playing a prominent role before his meeting with Jesus.

What might God be wanting to show us / teach us through the series' use of artistic license of focusing on Nicodemus starting in the first episode?

For personal reflection and/or discussion with friends:

9. Preamble: Reflect on the words Jesus spoke to Mary "... *Fear not for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine.*"

What thoughts come to mind during your reflection? This saying may be helpful in reflecting on the passage:

*David's brothers saw a shepherd. **God saw a king.** Let God define you and not others.*

10. Do you have a verse or passage from scripture that is a comfort or has special meaning for you? Would you be willing to share its significance?

11. Reflect on how you can show compassion to other people today, particularly in your family or those you live in closest relationship with. This saying may be helpful for your reflection:

*You may think that you are completely insignificant in this world. But someone drinks coffee from the favorite cup that you gave them. Someone heard a song on the radio that reminded them of you. Someone read the book that you recommended, and plunged headfirst into it. Someone smiled after a hard day's work, because they remembered the joke that you told them today. Someone loves themselves a bit more, because you gave them a compliment. Never think that you have no influence whatsoever. **Your trace, which you leave behind with every good deed, cannot be erased.***

12. Preamble: Near the episode's end Jesus gently lays His hand over Mary's as she goes to drink the wine in an attempt to deal with her torments. Jesus says "That's not for you."

Reflect on where Jesus might be gently saying something similar in your life or that of a loved one. How can you respond to Him?

13. **Over the course of the coming week:** ask Jesus what he wanted to show you or teach you in this episode. If you are comfortable doing so, please consider sharing what comes to mind with the group next week.

Going deeper:

- This episode's Round Table discussion by a group of Biblical Experts can be seen [here](#).
- In this YouTube [video](#) Brandon Robbins shares some surprising details and insights on the episode.
- Read how *The Chosen* arose from the ashes and despair of Dallas Jenkins' Box Office defeat as a movie producer. You can read the story [here](#). (be sure to watch the video at the bottom of the story page).

Music to reflect on:

[You Say](#) (artist: Lauren Daigle)

About This Companion:

This Episode Companion is offered as bread and fish for our Lord's use in spreading the good news of the Gospels. Its author, Peter McCaskell, lives in Guelph, Ontario, Canada and attends [Lakeside Church](#). You are welcome to contact Peter via email to peter.mccaskell@rogers.com

End notes:

1. A map of Israel in New Testament times is [here](#). Magdala was a fishing city on the west bank of the Sea of Galilee, some two miles south of Capernaum. Magdala was considered so morally bankrupt that Rome ultimately destroyed the city (around A.D. 70) for its corruption. Many scenes in season one of The Chosen are set in Capernaum.
2. In ancient Jewish culture Lilith was a name associated with demonic activity.
3. The Praetor was the chief Roman magistrate, responsible for maintaining Roman-style law and order in occupied territories, and the collection of taxes for Rome.
4. In many Bible translations she is called Mary Magdalene. In some translations she is called Mary of Magdala, or simply Magdalene or the Madeleine. This [article](#) talks about why names were so important in the Bible.