

Sunday Evening Program Grades 9-10

Session 8

Witness of Faith

Opening Prayer

Begin with a prayer, thanking God for loving us no matter what and asking Him to speak to us and change us during this time.

"The Chosen" Overview

Read:

- Last session we watched episode 4, which was called "The Rock On Which It Was Built." With his life and family under threat from Rome, Simon spends one last night fishing in a desperate attempt to catch enough fish to pay off his debts. He and his friends fish all night and catch nothing. Peter has lost all hope.
- In the morning, Andrew spots a familiar face waiting for them on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. The person waiting for them was Jesus! He asks Peter to throw down his fishing nets. Peter is hesitant because he just fished all night and caught nothing. However, he listens to Jesus and ends up catching so many fish that the boat starts sinking.
- Peter realizes that Jesus is the Messiah. He drops to his knees and tells Jesus he is sinful and doesn't deserve His compassion. He says that he will do anything Jesus asks. Jesus simply asks him, along with Andrew, James, and John, to **follow Him**. This is how Jesus gathered his first four disciples. At the end of the episode, Nicodemus, the religious Pharisee, visits John the Baptist, who is in prison for preaching a radical message.
- Today, we're going to watch the second half of episode 5. This episode focuses on the wedding in the city of Cana and is based on John 2:1-11.

- Let's talk about what happens in the first half of this episode.
- One of the key scenes is when Simon goes home and tells his wife, Eden, that the Messiah asked him to follow Him. Instead of being afraid to let Simon go, Eden is so excited for Simon. Meanwhile, Nicodemus is visiting John the Baptist in prison and asks him what he thinks about Mary's miracle. Nicodemus can't figure out who cured Mary because he doesn't know who has enough power to cast out several demons. John rejoices and tells Nicodemus that God's Son, the Messiah, has come to earth, but Nicodemus doesn't believe John and calls him crazy.
- Before we start the second half of the episode, let's read the wedding story in the Bible.

Find John 2:1-11 in your Bible and read it.

- Have you read this Bible story before? This is the story of Jesus' first miracle for the public. Before this miracle, only Jesus' disciples knew that He claimed to be the Messiah. In the episode, you'll hear Jesus say, "My time has not yet come," meaning He is waiting a little longer before He starts His public ministry. His public ministry officially begins when He turns the water into wine.
- You'll watch a scene that contains a discussion between the bride's wealthy parents and the groom's parents. The groom's parents are very concerned about impressing their son's in-laws.
- In Jesus's day, wine was a staple at most meals and a must at every celebration. But at this wedding, the wine had run out - a humiliation of epic proportions for the groom's family who was hosting.
- Jesus's mother, Mary, took it upon herself to find Jesus and bring Him up to speed. "They have no wine" were her words, but her sense of urgency was clear - help!
- Jesus's newly recruited disciples watched as He instructed the servants to fill jars with water. They did as they were told, which included taking a

glass of water to the master of the feast. At some point in this process, Jesus turned the water into wine.

- The party and reputation of his friends were saved and those who witnessed the miracle realized that Jesus was the Messiah. In the episode, Thomas, who becomes one of Jesus' disciples, was a witness. Simon was a witness as well. No doubt, witnessing the water change into wine on top of the miraculous catch of all those fish confirmed Simon's newfound faith that Jesus was the Messiah. For the next three years, Simon solidified his allegiance to Jesus, along with his willingness to boldly take God's message of salvation to the ends of the earth.
- Do you know what witness means? (Allow for responses) To witness is to see, hear, or know through personal experience. It also means to testify; to give evidence for something. Jesus' disciples witnessed, or "observed," His miracles and acts of love. Then, as witnesses, they shared the Good News of Jesus throughout the world. They're the reason we're Christians today. Their witness was so powerful that Christianity is the most common religion in the world. It's our job to witness too. Jesus wants us to share the Good News with the world just like His first disciples.

Watch "The Chosen"

Watch Episode 5 of "The Chosen" from 28:19-52:34 (stop right before the end credits).

Teaching - We are Jesus' Witnesses

- If you believe that Jesus is Lord and begin to understand the depths of His love and sacrifice for you... what kind of responsibility comes with that kind of knowledge?
- As God's chosen people, we have the privilege and responsibility to share our knowledge and experience of God with others. We have to tell others that Jesus is the key to happiness, peace, and most importantly, eternal life.

- Can you imagine if a group of people discovered the cure to cancer but kept that knowledge to themselves? We Christians know the cure for sin and death. A relationship with Jesus is the medicine. So why do so many Christians keep that knowledge to themselves?

Discussion

Ask a family member or friend to discuss these questions with you.

- What did you learn or notice about Jesus and His personality in this episode?
- To be a witness is "to see, hear, or know through personal experience." Describe your personal experience with Jesus.
 - What's one thing that Jesus has done for you or given you?
 - How has Jesus impacted your life?
- If you've accepted Jesus as your Savior and know that He is the only one who can save people from sin and death and is the only way to true joy, what kind of responsibility comes with that knowledge?
- Even in his search for the truth, Nicodemus remained resistant to the truth that Jesus is God's Son. What are some factors that cause people to resist Jesus? In what area(s) of your life and to what degree are you resisting Jesus?
- How can you be a witness for Jesus? How can you share the Good News?
 - Answers (for more ideas once you've discussed the question for a minute or two): Sharing your faith with others doesn't mean throwing Bibles at people and telling them to go to church more. Sharing Jesus' love can be as simple as following Jesus' example by loving others: opening the door for someone, volunteering at a nursing home, or complementing someone. Have you heard of the famous motto "They will know we are Christians by our love"? We can also share Jesus with others by inviting a friend to church or youth group. Or if a friend

is facing a hardship, tell them you're praying for them or share an encouraging Bible verse with them. There are so many ways to witness for Jesus.

- Take a minute or two to write down one way you can share Jesus with someone this week. You will get a prize and a Mega Prize entry if you follow through with what you write down.

Closing Prayer

- This week, I encourage you to pray for 1 minute (or more if you already pray in the morning) when you wake up each day. Thank God for the Bible and for His intervention in your life and in the lives of those around you. Give thanks for Jesus, God's only Son, who was willing to exercise God's power and love on earth - not for His sake, but for ours. Ask God for courage and opportunities to tell others what you've come to know, believe, and understand about Him.

Closing Prayer

End in prayer. During the prayer, ask God for the courage to be Christ's witnesses and to share His love with others.