

Chosen

Welcome to **Week 2 of Screens to Sacred** as we look at some moments in entertainment that can be good reflections and reminders for us to turn our gaze back to the Word of God. What's neat about this type of series is we are looking for impressions of God or godly principles that we find in pop culture. Even though many of the creative entertainment works that we are going to be looking at are secular in nature and in some cases not even produced or written by people of faith, we can still find helpful spiritual principles and see glimpses of God throughout these creative works. And this should not surprise us. In fact, it proves that man (no matter what his or her belief may be) has been created in the image of God and as image bearers we all reflect His glory whether it is through art, music and movie entertainment. Another reason this is a profitable exercise for us is that it gives us a natural bridge by which we can have spiritual conversations and share the Gospel with other people even though they may not be believers or may not have ever read the Bible themselves. These popular movies and shows provide us a platform with which we can cultivate further conversations about God.

Today we happen to be talking about **The Chosen**! Unlike the other shows and movies we are going to look at in this series, this one is produced by a believer. In fact, this show has been completely funded on donations. One of the best biblical pieces of entertainment on screen. 3 seasons out now with season 4 just about to complete filming. You can watch the whole series free on the **Angel App**, or you can watch the whole first season on **Netflix** or **Youtube**. The show has been met with critical success, just this month it was featured on the cover of **TV Guide**, and just last week it received its network debut on **The CW** which more than doubled the CW's regular viewership in that time slot.

Outside of being a beautiful representation of Jesus, *The Chosen* causes us to look a little bit closer at the show's namesake, **The Chosen**. The show isn't named for Jesus, it's named for the disciples He chose to follow Him. It does something that's really great, it causes us to think. So often when we read scripture, we take just the sentence of fact or the point of the message and forget that these people had real lives. Jobs, families, bills, illnesses, feelings, frustrations, and fears. They had to keep up with Jesus and they weren't seminary graduates. In fact, they were people who had their lives turned upside down on a daily basis. *The Chosen* is special because it is making people say "**I never thought of that**" and then following it up by making us think some more.

Scripture 100% has everything we need for salvation and faith, but even scripture says this isn't the whole story.

John 21:25 (NIV) "Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written."

How many of you can name all 12 disciples? We can usually name a few. Then it gets kind of confusing. They all had lives and histories. Problems and pains, but usually it ends up

being Peter, James, John, Matthew, and their backup dancers. **The Chosen** challenges us to at least think about the disciples as real people and to realize, just like us, they had a lot going on in between sermons and verses of scripture. Just like Jesus chose them, He's chosen us, and we're gonna look at what that means for how we are to live our lives. Today, more specifically we're looking at the primary passage from which the scene we just watched was taken, **Matthew 10**. As we take a closer look at Matthew 10 I want us to see **Seven Objectives Jesus has for His disciples**. Btw, those of us who have decided to follow Jesus, we are considered His disciples also and as such these seven objectives apply to us as well.

Matthew 10:1-6 (NIV) **1** Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. **2** These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; **3** Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; **4** Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. **5** These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. **6** Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.

It is here in verses 5 and 6 that we see our First Objective: **Jesus sent them to specific places and people**

Everything that God does He does strategically and on purpose. If He has revealed Himself and called you to Himself He has done that on purpose as part of His strategy to reach the world. He considers our talents, abilities, and personalities and He uses all of these to accomplish His purposes. This was not only for His disciples benefit, but it was also for the benefit of the community they ministered in and for the future church. They had to take care of their own household before they could go tidying up in someone else's. The nation of Israel needed to hear the message first so they could have the chance to believe, and also to become the foundation of what came next. There was so much political and social unrest in their time that they needed healing and repentance before they could take the message of hope and peace to the world.

How many of you know that the Church also needs some repentance and healing before our message can actually impact a greater portion of the world? Jesus wanted His disciples to know that they were part of something bigger than themselves and even bigger than their own nation. He wanted them to know that God had a strategic plan and He was using them to accomplish it.

Matthew 10:7-8 (NIV) **7** As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' **8** Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give

It is here we see our Second Objective: **Jesus told them they would do things beyond their strength.**

Notice, we are called to go to those whom we might be repulsed by and to those we might believe could put us at risk if we reach out to them. In fact, we are challenged not to be stingy with what we have been given but to freely give it away to others. Our reaction might be like that of what the disciples must have been. **"Did I miss something? Was there a ceremony I missed?"** We barely feel qualified to even share the gospel some days, let alone be empowered to do more than that. Yet Jesus told the disciple in **John 14** that they, and we, will do greater things than Him.

Jesus in the Chosen (which we know isn't scripture) tells them **"I don't need you to feel anything to do great things,"** The point being, it isn't really about us at all. It is about Jesus and His power being allowed to work through us by FAITH in Him. Think about it! Jesus when He walked on earth was but one man and He could only be in one place at a time. But imagine how much can be accomplished when the Spirit of Jesus is unleashed through men dispersed into the world. This is what I believe Jesus is talking about when He says, "you will do greater things." In fact, look at all that has happened since Jesus left to go back to the Father. Millions have come to Christ, The church has spread throughout the world, and it is still continuing to grow. **Jesus sent them to specific places and people. Jesus told them they would do things beyond their strength.** Now look with me at verse 9:

Matthew 10:9-11 (NIV) 9 "Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts—**10** no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep. **11** Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave.

It is here that we see our Third Objective: **Jesus told them their needs were not the priority**

If Jesus were to call us today (**btw, which He has**) most of us would have a long list of things we'd have to take care of or deal with before we could follow through. I've got some emails to send. I got this conference I have to be at. I have sleep apnea so I need to make sure I've got my mask. I need to make sure I've got instagram worthy outfits for the ministry selfies. We have this whole mindset of the things that would have to be required or provided for before we could even take a step forward with Jesus. Jesus told them don't worry about money. Don't worry about luggage. Don't worry about clothes. JUST GO! He didn't tell them to prepare a powerpoint presentation on the effectiveness of their ministry to share at churches, start a go fund me, or a car wash, He said, GO.

How much of our ministry are we holding back by holding on to our own comfort and understanding? Are we really trusting Jesus to take care of our needs so that we can be free to do what He has called us to or are we too busy making excuses by focusing on the things that we think we need first? Just GO!!

Matthew 10:12-13 (NIV) As you enter the home, give it your greeting. **13** If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you.

It is here that we see our Fourth Objective: **Jesus told them they were to be a presence of peace**

He told them to speak peace over every circumstance they entered into, that is a greeting, but that's also a prayer and a focus. When our intention is peace, it changes how we do everything else. When we walk in with peace as the foundation, it makes the conflicts that much easier. So much of ministry or church presence today isn't coming from a position of peace, but rather from a position of attack or opposition. When someone is put automatically on the defensive, it's hard to receive anything with open arms. How are the conversations that you are having with others bringing peace to a given situation? How is your tone? How's your attitude? What ever we do, Speak PEACE! **Jesus sent them to specific places and people. Jesus told them they would do things beyond their strength. Jesus told them their needs were not the priority. Jesus told them they were to be a presence of peace.** Now look with me at verse 14:

Matthew 10:14-15 (NIV) 14 If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet. **15** Truly I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

It is here that we see our Fifth Objective: **Jesus told them not to hold on to rejection**

It's not our responsibility to keep fighting until they listen. It's not our responsibility to fight for the right to be heard. It's not our responsibility to demand to be acknowledged. If we aren't accepted or listened to, we keep moving and let God handle the rest. We shake the dust from our sandals because we don't even need to bring a single footprint of reminder of that rejection into the next section and season God has for us. Our job is to be a representative of Jesus and to be faithful to what He has asked us to do, **to Go and speak the truth of the Gospel.** But know this!! We cannot open people's ears to hear the truth, we cannot open their eyes to see the truth, and we cannot make them believe the truth. Only God has the ability to cause the deaf to hear and the blind to see. If He doesn't draw them to Himself they cannot believe. If we are rejected it is only because they are rejecting God and His son Jesus Christ. It isn't about us, so let it go and move on. But don't quit, don't give up and don't give in!!

Jump down with me in the passage to verse 40. Here Jesus makes it clear that it's about Him, not us. **Matthew 10:40-42 (NIV) 40** "Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. **41** Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. **42** And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward."

Ya'll know door dash? Uber eats? Food delivery services? If you get food delivered and you don't like the way it tastes, is that the driver's fault? Should the driver be held responsibility or anguish over how you like your food? Not at all, and neither should we be concerned when

people reject what God is doing in their lives. We are simply the delivery person. Look back up at verse 16.

Matthew 10:16 (NIV) 16 “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

It is here that we see our Sixth Objective: **Jesus tells them that this will take some finesse**

Jesus lets them know that they are going into places, even among their own people where people aren't following and don't have the right heart. He warns them that they are entering into situations where they are prey shuffling through predators, and that they need to be wise. They need to evaluate every situation they are going into and not just go swinging wildly at everyone they consider a target. Paul echoes this picture when talking to the Colossian church

Colossians 4:3-6 (NIV) 3 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. **4** Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. **5** Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. **6** Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Jesus was basically telling His guys to read the room. Be wise/clever, yet gentle. **Jesus sent them to specific places and people. Jesus told them they would do things beyond their strength. Jesus told them their needs were not the priority. Jesus told them they were to be a presence of peace. Jesus told them not to hold on to rejection. Jesus tells them that this will take some finesse.** And now we come to the final objective:

Matthew 10:17-20 (NIV) 17 Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. **18** On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. **19** But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, **20** for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Objective #7: **Jesus told them to expect opposition and consequences**

If you tell me I'm gonna get arrested for something, I'm probably not gonna do it. If you tell me doing something is going to get me physically abused, I'm probably not doing it. But Jesus tells them before He sends them out that not only will they face those things, but that when they do, don't freak out, God will give you what to say. Not that He's going to send you a good lawyer, just that He'll give you the right words. **The consequences were always to be expected, but never to be something to deter the mission**

Jesus picked these twelve for a specific purpose, and we as the church now are also chosen with such a purpose. **We are chosen with a work to do**

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV) “For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Do you believe and accept that Just like Jesus had a mission for those 12, He has a mission for you and me here and now? One He’s already prepared you for without you even knowing it?

Jesus didn’t stop with sending the 12 out

Luke 10:1 (NIV) “ After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.”

Notice we don’t have a single clue who any of these 72 are? They aren’t rockstars with Churches named after them. They were just people faithful enough to actually do what Jesus called them to do, and look how that turned out.

Luke 10:17-20 (NIV) **17** The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.” **18** He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. **19** I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. **20** However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

There was more to the disciples' story, and there is more to ours than people know as well. But if we really want our story to be what it’s meant to be, we have to actually follow through with what Christ has called us to.

Invitation: