



VINCENT CHURCH

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



EPISODE 7: 'INVITATIONS'

Set the Stage:

The episode opens with a flash-back to the 13th century BC with Moses making a bronze serpent, so that all of the Israelites who have been attacked by venomous snakes can look at it and be healed.

Jesus tells his followers they will start moving from town to town as the miracles he performed attract more and more attention. Mary Magdalene tells Jesus that Nicodemus wants to meet with him, while Simon warns Jesus the meeting could be a trap.

Despite warnings, Jesus meets with Nicodemus anyway as He explains his mission - comparing himself to the bronze serpent and that people must be born again. Jesus extends an invitation to Nicodemus and to Matthew met with different responses.





You must be born again.



Session 8 Discussion Questions:

- What is your initial reaction after watching the interaction between Jesus and Nicodemus?
- Amid criticism for building the bronze serpent, Moses said, “I have learned to do what He says without questioning.” What does this tell us about faith? What are some differences between that kind of faith and how you live your life?
- It can be shocking (and confusing) to read stories like the bronze snake. God demands obedience and faith. What daily habits can we develop and strengthen to become quick to respond to obedience out of faith?
- When Jesus spoke to Nicodemus about being born again, Nicodemus recognized he was in the presence of God. Have you had an experience where God made His presence clear, came over you, and gave you something that resembles new life? If so, please explain.
- Did it surprise you how quickly Matthew gave up his old life and agreed to follow Jesus? How does this contrast the way Nicodemus, despite falling to his knees with faith in Jesus as the Messiah, struggled to follow Him? How do these examples compare to the way we react to the idea of *fully* following Jesus?

Scripture Study: John 3:1-21 (ESV)

Jesus Teaches Nicodemus

1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.” 3 Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” 4 Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?” 5 Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

...13 No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. 16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God....

Bible Exploration:

- Matthew 9:9-13 (Jesus calls Matthew)
- Luke 18:18-23; 19:1-10 (Two contrasting invitations)
- Numbers 21:4-9 (Moses and the bronze snake)

