**STUDY GUIDE THE CHOSEN EPISODE TWO**

**OPENING PRAYER**

**MATTHEW 11: 28 – 30**

(Jesus said,) “Come to me, all who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your soul. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

**PSALM 46**

God is our refuge and our strength, our ever - present help in distress.

Though the earth trembles, and mountains slide into the sea, we have no fear.

Waters foam and roar, and mountains shake at their surging,

but the God of hosts is with us – our stronghold, the God of Israel.

There is a river whose streams give joy to the city of God,

the holy dwelling of the Most High.

God is in its midst; it stands firm. God will aid it at the break of day.

Even if nations are in chaos, and kingdoms fall, God’s voice resounds, the earth melts away.

Yahweh is with us; the God of Israel is our stronghold.

Come! See the deeds of the Most High, the marvelous things God has done on earth.

All over the world, God has stopped wars – breaking bows, splintering spears,

burning the shields with fire. “Be still! And know that I am God, exalted among the nations, exalted upon the earth. ”The Most High is with us, our stronghold is the God of Israel.

**TABLE TALK**

* What character stood out to you most? Which was most interesting? Most moving?
* What impacted you most in this episode?
* There are several different Shabbat dinners shown. What did you notice about the different Shabbat meals that we saw depicted?
* How do you celebrate the Sabbath (Sunday)?
* Why do you think Jesus chose to attend Mary’s Shabbat dinner? What does this tell you about Jesus? What else did you learn about Jesus?
* How do you feel about the development of Simon’s character?
* Why do you think Nicodemus is troubled about the news of Mary’s healing?
* Mary says “I was one way and now I am completely different. And the thing that happened in between was him” Do you have a similar story about Jesus in your life to share? In what ways has your life gone from being one way to being another?
* Mary says, “He called me by my name, I am his.” How does this speak to you? Do you experience yourself as belonging to Jesus? How?

**FOR FURTHER REFLECTION**

Shabbat literally means “He rested” and signifies the day God rested from the work of creation. For the Jews of Jesus’ time the traditional dinner would take place on Friday evening and was a time to honor God and family. It was a day to assemble in synagogue and to gather with family and others for a special meal and was most obviously marked by not working. God’s primary intention for the commandment was to spend the day in God’s presence.

For us, Sabbath is Sunday and is a day for rest, reflection on God’s story, remembering Jesus who redeemed us and is always with us, a time to assemble as the Body of Christ and time to gather with family and friends. A time to cease from normal activities for a day.

* What needs to change in your life or in your mindset to spend the Sabbath as God intended? If you hosted your own Sabbath dinner, who would you invite?
* How do you find rest for your soul? Where / how does Jesus give you rest?
* Think about ways you can celebrate God’s work in your life.
* Jesus invited himself into Mary’s Shabbat dinner. How has Jesus invited himself into your life?

**PRAYER PROMPTS**

* Ask Jesus to teach you how to rest in his presence.
* Thank God for creating and redeeming you. Ask God to help you recognize and celebrate God’s work in you.
* Ask God to help you show others the love Jesus has shown you. Pray that others may come to know, love and follow Jesus in and through your own efforts.
* Thank Jesus that his presence allows you to endure and overcome hard circumstances.

**SCRIPTURE CONNECTIONS**

* Jesus frequently withdrew from the crowds to be alone with God. He turned to prayer in order to attune himself to the voice of his Father. Read Matthew 26: 36 – 46 (agony in the garden) and use imaginative prayer to share this time with Jesus. Where do you go to withdraw to pray? When do you need to go and pray?
* Read Matthew 11:28 – 30. Jesus’ promise in these verses is reminiscent of the promise in Isaiah 43. Jesus doesn’t say there will be no hardships but that he will stay with us and provide a way through. How does this promise impact the way you live with your own hardships? What do you need to bring to Jesus? What burdens are you carrying today?