I AM HE

THE CHOSEN – SEASON 1 EPISODE 8 • **TIPS:** Start with initial thoughts about the episode. Feel free to spend more than one discussion on any episode as necessary. **NOTES:** Episode time markers and additional content are shown in **BLUE CAPS**.
Please be mindful that episode content is dramatized and at times not directly biblical.

DINNER AT MATTHEW'S HOUSE 8:41–13:35

Read Mark 2:15-17 together. Discuss the atmosphere portrayed in the episode.

- How is Matthew fitting in? What final arrangements does he make with Gaius? (See 34:19–37:38)
- Discuss the reaction of the religious leaders who were passing by. What did Jesus mean when He said, *"It's not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick"*? The pharisee says, *"This is not about me, but what God wants."* Why did Jesus respond with the words of Hosea 6:6? Later in the episode, Schmuel says, *"The law is God."* What do you think of this? Do you think Nicodemus agrees?

THE HARD ROAD 13:36–17:13 | 32:13–34:18

As we watch Jesus call His disciples, we see that their lives are drastically changed. In this season, Jesus "heals" situations in each of their lives, and perhaps this makes it easier for them to answer His call: Mary is freed from demons, Andrew and Simon's debts are paid off and his mother-in-law healed, and Matthew is beginning to feel welcomed into a group. But Nicodemus is a different story. Nicodemus has status and wealth, he is established in the synagogue and his community, he has an extended family back home, and he is regarded and honored by the people and his peers. In this episode, we see his struggle with Jesus' invitation to *"give up who I am"* (see episode 7).

- What effect do you think Nicodemus' wife has on his decision? **Read Genesis 16:1-15.** What does Nicodemus mean when he says that sometimes God *"calls us to the hard road"*?
- What would it have meant for Nicodemus to become a student of Jesus? What do you think of Jesus' actions and words at the departure? Why does Nicodemus cry?
- Have you ever felt called to do something that felt impossible? Many people in the Old Testament were able to do impossible things because God worked through them: Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3), Jacob (Genesis 46:2-4), Moses (Exodus 33:12-17), and David (1 Samuel 17:20-49).

AT THE WELL 41:30–END

Who is the Samaritan woman at the well? This episode portrays a traditional, and perhaps misconstrued, interpretation of her backstory. **Read John 4:1-26, 39-42.**

Notice, **the Bible does not...**

- **Say she is divorced or promiscuous.** *(Five husbands is a high number, but widowhood was a common experience in a culture where women married very young, often to older men.)* The Bible also doesn't record Jesus mentioning the names of her husbands.
- **Say she was an outcast, rejected by others, or unclean.** It also gives no reason for her going to the well in the middle of the day. *(Living with a man who is not her husband could be the result of being a concubine or "second wife," and was common at the time.)*

What the Bible ***does*** record is the longest conversation between Jesus and a woman from Samaria.

- Based on what the Bible does and does not say, what do you think of the Samaritan woman?
- What are Jesus' intentions based on the history between the Samaritans and the Jews?

A SPRING OF WATER: Jesus tells the woman that everyone who drinks from Jacob's well will thirst again.

- Have you ever felt empty? What causes you to feel that way? What do you fill those empty spaces with?
- What do you thirst for in life? Is it possible to be fully satisfied? Do you believe you'll ever be fully content?
- *"The water I give will become in a person a spring of water..."* **When you receive Jesus, you will become a spring for others.** How was the Samaritan woman a spring for her community? How could you become one?

THE CHOSEN: At the opening of this episode (0:00–4:25, see also Genesis 33:18-20), Jacob tells the visitor that the Israelites didn't choose God, ***God chose them***. Towards the end of the show, the woman at the well tells Jesus that He *"picked the wrong person. "*

- **Skim through Psalm 106 together.** List all ways the people were unworthy and disobedient. Yet, God chose them in spite of all that.
- Now, at the end of this season, why do think this show is called "The Chosen"?

THE SAMARITANS

The conflict between the Jews and Samaritans is a long one. Israel had broken into two kingdoms after the reign of Solomon's son, 10 tribes in the north and 2 tribes in the south. Around 700 BC Assyria invaded the northern kingdom in Samaria and took many of the people into exile, importing peoples from other tribes into the land. The Israelites that remained, intermarried with the other tribes and became known as the Samaritans.

Eventually, Babylon invaded the southern kingdom of Judea and took many there into exile as well. When the Judeans were allowed to return to Jerusalem around 450 BC and started to rebuild the temple, the Samaritans offered to help. However, the Judeans rejected their help because of their intermarriage, not considering them to be Israelites any longer. In time, the Samaritans built their own altar on Mount Gerizim, further separating them from the Judeans. **This history forms the backdrop for the Samaritan woman's conversation with Jesus at the well of Jacob** (a shared ancestor).