

September 10th

Fear Not! You Are Mine

Isaiah 43:1-5a; Luke 8:1-3

In the first episode of The Chosen “I Have Called You By Name”, we are introduced to several main characters: Matthew, Nicodemus, Simon and Andrew, and Mary. Fear is evident in all of their lives. Jesus encounters Mary first, healing and changing her into a different person than what she was. He uses Isaiah’s words, “I have called you by name. You are mine.” Jesus calls each of us by name and claims us as his own. How does belonging to Jesus change the way you react to fearful situations?

September 17th

Shalom Shabbat

John 14:27; Exodus 20:8-11; Exodus 31:12-17

Shalom means peace and wholeness which is exactly what Mary experienced after meeting Jesus in this second episode “Shabbat.” She tells Nicodemus that while she doesn’t know the name of the man who healed her, she will know him the rest of her life. She then goes home to host her first Shabbat dinner when a surprise guest shows up. Shabbat is the beginning of Sabbath on Friday at sundown when the Jewish people remember who and whose they are. The Sabbath brings them closer to God with worship, rest, and renewal. What brings you closer to God?

September 24th

Follow Me

John 1:40-42; Luke 5:1-11

Most of this fourth episode “The Rock On Which It Is Built” is about Simon and his desperation regarding his overwhelming debt. His wife asks him, “Where is your faith?” Simon had allowed his faith to take a backseat to his problems. He relied only on himself to fix his problems at all costs. Even when his brother Andrew told him about the Messiah, Simon only scoffed at the news. It took a miracle to get Simon’s attention. What does Jesus have to do to get your attention?

October 1st

The Wedding Gift

John 2:1-11

Jesus and his 7 disciples, six male and one female, travel with him to a wedding in Cana where they meet his mother in episode five “The Wedding Gift.” Though not in scripture, Thomas is the coordinator of the wedding along with a daughter of a vineyard owner. When the wine runs out, Jesus’ mother asks for her son’s help. Thomas is one of the few that sees (but doesn’t understand) the miracle that takes place. Jesus tells Thomas, “Join me and I will show you a new way of counting and measuring.” How has this episode given you a new perspective of this miracle?

October 8th

If You Are Willing...

Mark 1:40-2:12

In episode six “Indescribably Compassion,” both the leper and the friend of a paralytic plead with Jesus to heal, if he is willing. Their strength of faith is evident. In both instances Jesus is willing. In the first instance he tells the leper not to say anything to anyone about his healing. Why? The second time he heals in front of a crowd. Do you believe Jesus still heals today? What is the role of faith in healing? Is there ever a time Jesus is not willing to heal?

October 15th

Get Used to Different

Matthew 9:9; John 3:1-21

Jesus speaks to Nicodemus about being born again, wind, Spirit, serpents, and other spiritual mysteries in the seventh episode “Invitations.” He refers to a kingdom not of this world and saving not from Rome but from sin. This Jesus was different than any other rabbi Nicodemus had met. But as Jesus would later tell Peter, “Get used to different.” Matthew left everything to follow Jesus: money, a comfortable life, a steady job, protection of the Romans. Nicodemus also had a lot to lose if he followed Jesus: an honorable reputation, family, wealth, success. In the series, he too is invited by Jesus to follow him, but he is unable.

October 22nd

Let the Little Children Come to Me

Matthew 18:1-5; Luke 18:15-17

Before Jesus begins his formal ministry, The Chosen series depicts Jesus living in the woods where a group of children find him in episode three “Jesus Loves the Little Children.” These “first students” of Jesus ask questions about who he is and what his work is. Jesus welcomes them, teaches them, and provides a foreshadowing of his future ministry.

October 29th

In Spirit and Truth

John 4:1-42

In the final eighth episode “I Am He,” Jesus goes out of his way to make sure he is at a specific well at a specific time to meet a specific woman. He chose her to reveal himself publicly for the first time. Why? They have a lengthy discussion about worship where he says that worship is not about place but about the heart. Worship is about spirit and truth, not about logistics of time, place, and style. How might his teaching still resonate with us today? But only when he specifically tells her about her past does she come to believe. What is it that leads us to believe?