The Chosen Watch Party Series
Season One Episode Seven - Invitations

This Season 1 finale begins with a flashback, this time to Jacob's Well - we will see why at the end! We will also travel to Simon's house for a miraculous visit. Then Jesus and his students leave Capernaum while under pressure from both religious and Roman authorities. The apostles draw together, still confused, yet anxious for what their Master will do next. Nicodemus makes a wrenching decision, and Jesus makes a surprise stop at Jacob's Well for an important encounter. And with this encounter, His "career" finally becomes public.

Here are a few Scriptures to meditate on in preparation for this episode:
Genesis 33:18-20
Daniel 7:13-14
Matthew 9:9-13, 8:14-15
Mark 2:13-17
John 4:1-42

Context and Cultural Notes for this Episode - The Samaritan Woman

The passage regarding the Samaritan Woman is related in John 4:1-42. There is much that can be said about this passage, but for this week's content we will focus on the Samaritan Woman herself. Her name, not given in Scripture but officially affirmed first by the Eastern Rite of the Church, is Saint Photina - which means “light.”

The first thing to know is that ancient Jews believed that the Messiah would regather all the tribes of Israel. A brief primer on what happened to the tribes follows:

● Under King David all 12 tribes were a united kingdom (see map).
● Under his son, King Solomon, the tribes divided. The ten tribes in the north chose their own king, where the two tribes left in the south (Judah and Benjamin) remained under the rightful Davidic King. From that point on in Scripture the tribes in the north are known as “Israel” and the tribes in the south are known as “Judah.”
● When the Assyrians invade Israel, they completely wipe out the northern tribes, and they are never reassembled - they become the “lost” tribes. Their regathering is what the Jews expect the Messiah to do when He comes, and what Jesus DOES do, in establishing a worldwide Church through His 12 Apostles.
● One of the areas seized by the Assyrians was Samaria. The Assyrians did not only force the people to leave their land - they forced some of them to stay there under Assyrian rule. However, they brought in five other
nations and intermingled them with the Israelites. They intermarried and the heritage of those tribes was lost among the nations. This is important for understanding the Samaritan Woman.

Jesus encounters the Samaritan Woman at a well. Wells and wives often go together in the Old Testament - that is where Jacob met his wife along with several other major figures. We see in John 4:4 that Jesus “had to” pass through Samaria. He didn’t physically have to - most Jews went around it when traveling. The Samaritans were viewed as their enemies. The Greek word for “had to” is otherwise used in Scripture to denote something that is God’s plan - a necessity to carry out His will. It is no coincidence that He encounters a Samaritan woman by a well where they discuss her five husbands.

This woman stands as a symbol of those ten lost tribes. When the Assyrians sent other nations in to intermarry with the Israelites in Samaria they sent five nations particularly, and Israel turned her back on her Divine Bridegroom (as God is often portrayed in Jewish Scripture) and married into idolatrous worship. Now Jesus stands at a well, face to face with a woman who represents those tribes, and calls her to repentance with love and mercy. This is the first person that Jesus reveals His Divine identity too, this woman who has made many mistakes, and whose “five husbands” represent the five nations that Israel intermingled with. And what is her response? She “leaves her water jug behind” (symbolic of her burdens) and tells everyone she encounters the Good News about this man who “told her all she ever did.” May we do the same. Saint Photina, pray for us!

**Things to consider as you watch this episode:**

- Watch for changes in Photina throughout. How do you relate the journey we get a glimpse of here?
- Pay attention to Nicodemus’s words about Hagar. How does his journey relate to hers, and to our own?
- How does Simon react to the various events that impact him throughout this episode?