**STUDY GUIDE – EPISODE FIVE**

**THE WEDDING GIFT**

**OPENING PRAYER**

**Genesis 28: 13 – 15**  Behold! I am with you. Wherever you go I will keep you. And until I have done what I promised will not leave you

**Jeremiah 7:23** I will be your God and you will be my people.

**John 10:10**  I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.

**Revelation 3:12** I will write on you the name of God.

**MARY’S MAGNIFICAT**

My soul proclaims your greatness, O God!
My heart rejoices in you, my Savior,
because you have showered your servant with blessing!
From now to the end of time,
all generations will know the great things you have done for me.

Mighty One! Your name is holy!
In every age, your compassion flows to those who reverence you!
But all who seek to exalt themselves in arrogance
will be leveled by your power.

You have deposed the mighty from their seats of power,
and have raised the lowly to high places.
Those who suffer hunger, you have filled with good things.
Those who are privileged, you have turned away empty-handed.

You have come to the aid of your people,
in fulfillment of the promise you made to our ancestors—
when you spoke blessing to Sarah and Hagar
and all their descendants, to the utmost generation! Amen

**TABLE TALK**

* What specific details stand out for you in this episode? What character impacted you the most? Why? What do you think it would have been like to be one of Jesus’ disciples at this wedding?
* In this episode, we are introduced to Mary, Jesus’ mother. How does this episode portray Jesus’ relationship with Jesus? Is this how you imagined their relationship?
* How does this episode portray what Jesus was like growing up and what it was like for Mary and Joseph to raise him? What struggles might Mary and Joseph have experienced?
* When Simon goes home to tell Eden he is going to leave his nets behind and follow Jesus, she rejoices and encourages him to do so. What do you think of her response? How do you think you would have responded?
* As the disciples experience Jesus, they exhibit such joy and excitement. Share about a time when you remember feeling especially enthusiastic about Jesus.
* In this episode, we see people waiting for Jesus to go public with his ministry. Do you ever feel like you are waiting on God to do something for you? Explain.
* The request to make more wine seems somewhat trivial. What can we learn from this story about asking God for help? Do you ask for help in small things? Why or why not?
* Jesus reassures Thomas that while it is good to ask questions, we won’t always understand the answers, or even get answers. How do you handle this?

**FOR FURTHER REFLECTION**

* Just as servants were asked to draw water without knowing what the result would be, what are ways you can step out in faith in similar ways?
* Even in his search for the truth, Nicodemus remained resistant to it. What are some factors that cause people to resist? In what areas of your life and to what degree are you resisting? Why?
* Describe to yourself your personal relationship with Jesus and remember what he has done for you. What are concrete things you can do to help this relationship deepen and strengthen?

**PRAYER POINTS**

* Give thanks to God for God’s intervention in your life and the lives of those around you.
* Ask God to right-size your fears, anxieties, and expectations so that you can see the struggles as God does – opportunities.
* Ask God for courage and opportunities to tell others about what you’ve come to know, believe, and understand about Jesus.
* Thank Jesus for listening to your prayers and being with you on the road.
* Give thanks to God for our scriptures – the testimony of God’s action in the world.
* Pray that you will have a joyous relationship with Jesus and occasions to celebrate with him.
* Give thanks for the ways that God has used ordinary things to show us his glory.

**SCRIPTURE CONNECTIONS**

* Read John 10: 30 – 33, 37 – 39. In spite of the miraculous signs Jesus was doing, some people just didn’t believe – some even hated him. How does knowing Jesus experienced both positive and negative reactions impact your willingness to be a witness for Jesus?