



SEMI-ORGANIZED LOVE Week 1: *What Are We Doing Here?* @thestoryhouston www.thestory.church

Think about the time in your life when going to church was the biggest struggle for you. What were the circumstances that made it so hard? Or...think about your closest friends who don't *do* church...what are their reasons for spending Sunday mornings at home?

What was Jesus' definition of church?

How does it differ from the way most people define church today?

What do we know about *The Acts of the Apostles*? Who wrote it, when, and for what purpose?

Acts 1:1-11 In my former book, *Theophilus*, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them, asking, "Why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

What did the disciples think Jesus was about to do? How do their expectations of Jesus sound a lot like the expectations many Christians have today about their churches?

What is *evangelism*? What is it not? Why does it matter to be Jesus' witnesses "in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"?

What difference do you think it makes that people know they belong to the family of God?