



INTRO & CHAPTER ONE

Embracing the Story

LUKE 24:48
ACTS 1:1-11

Introduction & Chapter 1: Embracing the Story

Luke 24:48 (NRSVue)

⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.

Acts 1:1-11 (NRSVue)

¹In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and teach ²until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait there for the promise of the Father. “This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

⁶So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” ⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

Discussion Questions from the Biblical Text:

1. Jesus tells the disciples they will be his witnesses. This is not something to do, but someone to be. What does it mean to be a witness?
2. Look at a map of New Testament locations (in your Bible or online). Find Jerusalem, which is a city in Judea. Find Samaria, a territory north of Judea. Jesus begins where they are (Jerusalem), and expands the scope of the area to which they are meant to witness. How would you rephrase Jesus’ words for your present geographical location?
3. What do you notice in this story? What wonderings are stirred for you?

Discussion Questions from *Bearing Witness in Acts and Today* by Troy M. Troftgruben:

1. What images come to mind as you hear the word “evangelism”? (page xxvi)
2. In your experience, what are the greatest obstacles for Christians engaging in faithful witness today? (page xxvi)
3. How do you discern the presence of God in your life? (page 13)

Discussion Questions from *Opening Space: A vision for Fresh Expressions of Church and Creative Mission* by Shannon Kiser:

1. Rev. Kiser wonders “what would break loose if our Sunday morning crowd became amazed at Jesus once again” (page 3). When have you been amazed by Jesus?