

Catching Up With The Radical Rabbi Sermon Series

"The Radical Rabbi Who Was Always Disappearing"

by Rev. John C. Tittle

Scripture: Acts 1:6-11 NRSV

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But 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." ⁹ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹ They 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:

1. What jumps out at you about this passage?
2. Was there ever a time in your life where you got separated from your parents or from a group? What feelings did you experience?
3. Imagine you were able to meet with Jesus after his resurrection and before his ascension back to heaven. What questions would you ask Jesus?
4. Why do you think the disciples asked if Jesus would restore Israel? What does this mean? What was Jesus' response?
5. Jesus appeared and disappeared a lot in the Scriptures. Can you think of some examples? Also Christ-figures in literature do this too (i.e. the lion Aslan and the wizard Gandalf). Why would Jesus do this? Isn't he forsaking his people?
6. What does Jesus promise will be given after his departure?
7. Why do you think this power from above wasn't given right away? Why did the believers have to wait and pray for a while before it would be given?
8. God is often revealed in a cloud in the Scriptures. When God reveals himself, why are there also elements of concealing at the same time?
9. How can waiting be good for us? The disciples not only waited together, they prayed together. Why is prayer also so important?
10. What tasks does the Holy Spirit empower us to do?
11. Why does the Spirit call us to witness everywhere—near and far?