

The Gospel Project for Adults, Winter 2016-17
Interactive Teaching Tips for Adults, Session 9

Introduction: *Engage the group with a testimony to connect them to the lesson.*

Prior to meeting, ask your group to come ready to discuss a time when they felt totally dependent on God. Say something like the following to them in advance: “Be ready to share a personal testimony of a time when you felt totally dependent on God and the prayer that you prayed to the Lord in entrusting things in His hands.”

Point 1: *Encourage the group with a video clip that connects the theme.*

Nehemiah is an example to follow when it comes to prayer in response to a burden. Play for the group a video clip, “Nathaniel’s Prayer,” from the film *The Soloist* (2 minutes, 51 seconds): <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/the-soloist/nathaniels-prayer>

As *Los Angeles Times* columnist Steve Lopez and homeless man Nathaniel prepare to sleep on the street, Nathaniel says a prayer for “all of God’s children.” He sees the circumstances all around him and is deeply burdened.

Nathaniel cries out to God just as Nehemiah cries out to God. Nathaniel is praying in light of modern-day concerns and Nehemiah for the concerns of the ancient Israelites. Although the prayers are from different periods in history, the concerns are similar.

Point 2: *Equip your group with the tools to learn to pray.*

In this section, Nehemiah’s prayer challenges us. Ask someone in your group read aloud Nehemiah’s prayer in verses 5-11. Analyze each part of the prayer and discuss what can be learned about prayer.

Instruct group members to write a prayer together about a burden the group shares or is facing together. Some examples might include marriages, church relationships, their respective communities, the nation, family, or mission. After the group writes prayer together, send an email with the prayer to everyone in the group in order to encourage members to continue praying about this collective burden.

Point 3: *Encourage the group to pray while taking action.*

Many times we pray but take no action. We silently wait and yet do not move. Nehemiah's example shows that he prayed while moving.

After reading Nehemiah 2:1-8, lead the group to break into smaller groups of three. Ask them to discuss any actions that the Lord is revealing them to take as they pray over specific burdens. Then, after discussing the Lord's leadership regarding the actions they should take respectively, instruct each of the smaller groups to pray together for one another that they would move in obedience when the Lord calls them to action.

Conclusion: *Challenge the group to pray for one another.*

Challenge your group members to commit pray about one another's burdens during the week. Ask if any members present are willing to share with the larger group about any burdens or steps of action that God has put before them.

If anyone's burden is one that seems to be particularly daunting or cumbersome, you could have ask this person to stand in the circle while others lay hands on him or her and pray.