

The Gospel Project for Adults, Winter 2016-17
Interactive Teaching Tips for Adults, Session 10

Introduction: *Engage your group by directing them to God's agenda.*

When your group members arrive, you should already have two sides of the room decorated with pictures of empty bricks. On top of the first side, write "God's Agenda." On top of the second side, write "The World's Agenda."

As people arrive, ask them to write words in the bricks. Some examples for "God's Agenda" might include the following: love, joy, peace, patience, and kindness.

Some examples for "The World's Agenda" might include the following: greed, pride, competition, power, moral ambiguity, and independence.

Remember the words of Jesus: "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). Ask the following questions: "Is what you're building your life on hurting or helping the building process in view of God's kingdom? Why?"

Point 1: *Encourage your group with reflecting on Scripture.*

In the Book of Nehemiah, the Israelites acted wisely in the face of conflict: "When Sanballat, Tobiah, and the Arabs, Ammonites, and Ashdodites heard that the repair to the walls of Jerusalem was progressing and that the gaps were being closed, they became furious" (Neh. 4:7).

Their response to this threat was prayer. The people of Judah prayed and asked God for help, and the Lord gave them wisdom to know how to fight the battles presented before them and continue to build. Tell your group, "When we are facing conflict that is when we must seek the Lord to help us act wisely."

Before your group arrives, write the biblical citations regarding wisdom on index cards. Ask your group members to look up the verse on their respective cards and read aloud the following verses:

- Proverbs 1:7
- Proverbs 3:7
- Proverbs 13:1

- Ecclesiastes 2:26
- 1 Corinthians 1:25
- James 1:5
- James 3:17

After reading all the passages, you can say to your group, “Part of acting wisely is understanding where wisdom comes from and who can receive it. What did we learn from the passages we just read?”

Point 2: *Engage your group by addressing the social issues of the day.*

Nehemiah shared with the people the injustices they were committing against each other. As the people of Judah faced his rebuke, they were transformed. In the same way we should be aware to the injustices of our day.

As a group, write down injustices you see in our world. Ask the Lord to help us face these matters and for clarity as to where you and your group should focus. As a group, plan a mission project to help your group advocate for these people, issues, or areas of concern.

Some examples might include the following: food pantries, world hunger, race relations, orphans, widows, or an educational experience about slave trade. Pick an area or opportunity that your group seems passionate about and work toward a project to address the issues together.

Point 3: *Stimulate your group with a historical example.*

William Carey is often called the father of Protestant missions. His life is an example that helps us understand that even during tough life situations and circumstance we can trust God and give Him glory.

Carey’s mantra—similar to Nehemiah’s—is based on trusting and serving the Lord. His slogan was, “Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God!”

Carey’s greatest legacy is the worldwide missionary movement he inspired in the 19th century. His inspiration challenged and encouraged missionaries like

Adoniram Judson, Hudson Taylor, and David Livingstone among others. Read more about William Carey's story to your group using this *Christianity Today* article: <http://www.christianitytoday.com/history/people/missionaries/william-carey.html>

Conclusion: *Challenge your group with a time of rebuilding.*

In the rebuilding of the wall, the people of God were cleansed and renewed as a covenant community. It was also a time of restoration and alignment. In closing, read Psalm 30 to your group and ask the Lord to restore His people in preparation for the day when He will come and dwell among His people (cf. Rev. 21:1-3). Close by offering a prayer that looks forward to the final restoration and rebuilding of God's people when Christ brings His kingdom to earth in its fullness.