

The Gospel Project for Adults, Winter 2016-17
Interactive Teaching Tips for Adults, Session 12

Introduction: *Engage the group with an article on worship.*

Read the following quote: “Americans are fundamentally polytheists, worshipping at the shrines of many gods.”

This quote comes from the article “The Top 7 Gods Americans Worship”:
<http://churchplants.com/articles/6455-the-top-7-gods-americans-worship.html>

Lead your group in reading over this article, which should prove useful in gaining insight about what we worship and how our focus is diverted from the One who deserves our worship.

Malachi, the book of study for this session, is a wake-up call to Judah that can help us focus on our misplaced worship and also their lack of worship.

Point 1: *Encourage the group with a testimony.*

In this part of the lesson, we are encouraged to look over five areas and consider how we are offering them as worship to God:

- Our bodies;
- Our finances;
- Our praise;
- Our works;
- Our witness

Prior to meeting with your group, find a person to share a personal testimony of how he or she is worshipping God and offering up one of these areas to Him. For the testimony, it might also be good if this person has genuinely struggled in the past with a given area but has recently made a change in how he or she worships. An example might be in the area of finance. Find a person who was struggling to give financially to the Lord but felt the Lord drawing them in repentance to give.

Point 2: *Engage the group by reflecting on the Scripture passage.*

Before your group meets, write “The Road Map to Redemption” on a tear sheet and hang it on a focal wall.

In Malachi 3:7-12, Malachi is pointing the people of Judah to their shallow worship by reflecting on the quality and the quantity of their sacrifices:

“Since the days of your fathers, you have turned from my statutes; you have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD of Armies. Yet you ask, “How can we return?” (Mal. 3:7)

Say to the group: “The people of Judah were not interested in changing to return to God. Instead they wanted to continue offering the same sacrifices and expect different results.”

Then ask the question “What can we learn from Judah’s mistakes and what must we do to return to God and give Him all of our worship?”

As they share their answers, write them on the tear sheet placed on the focal wall. Pray that the Lord will change the worship of His people and that we would follow the “Road Map to Redemption.”

Point 3: *Challenge the group to remember.*

Malachi was about to close the book on special revelation and it would not reopen for 400 years. In Malachi 4, we see both the promise of blessing with the Messiah’s coming and the warning of a curse if God’s chosen people did not turn from their sinful ways.

In Malachi 4:4, we are reminded to remember the instructions of Moses: “Remember the instruction of Moses my servant, the statutes and ordinances I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.”

- What were those instructions and why was Judah called to remember?
- What is God calling us to remember about His instructions?
- Why will it help us to remember the instructions of the Lord both old and new?

Say, “In remembering His instruction we are preparing the way for the Lord to work and speak into our lives. It is important to recognize the blessing that comes from obedience.”

Conclusion: *Encourage the group with music.*

Close your group by playing or showing Mark Shultz’s “Remember Me” (4 minutes, 7 seconds): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16YYBoQ3YMI>

Give each group member a piece of paper to write a prayer of remembrance and thanksgiving for all that the Lord has done in their lives. After this time of remembrance, close in prayer for your group.