

The Gospel Project for Adults, Spring 2017
Interactive Teaching Tips for Adults, Session 8

Introduction: *Connect the session to the powers of nature.*

Say something like the following: “Let’s watch this short video demonstrating some of the strongest powers in nature.” As a group, watch the video “The Power of Nature” (6 minutes, 56 seconds):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNvsIrrj0JJA>

Ask, “What were some of the powers you saw in the video?” (Answers will include wind, water, fire/lava, etc.) Ask, “Have you ever considered the power of God? Have you ever considered the power of God *in us*? We’ll look at that today.”

Point 1: *Discuss a sermon excerpt to enhance understanding.*

After reading the Scripture passage for Point 1 and then discussing it, read the following quote from John Piper in his sermon “The Free Will of the Wind”:

So what verse 8 is teaching is this: We don’t cause the Spirit to bring about the new birth any more than we make the wind blow. Or to be more specific, the decisive act of will in the new birth is not ours. The Spirit’s will is decisive. To be sure, our will moves in the moment of the new birth. Change happens in us. There are *perceptible effects* of the wind—“you hear its sound.”

The main effect of the wind—the Spirit—is that we are made alive spiritually—born again—and now our wills move. They move to receive Christ and believe on Christ. But our wills move because the *wind* is blowing, not the other way around. We don’t move first. Our wills are awakened and moved toward Christ because the Spirit blows where he wills and gives life to whom he wills.

Discuss this quote and encourage learners to put John 3:8 into their own words.

[The entire sermon is available here:

<http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-free-will-of-the-wind>]

Point 2: *Look to the experts.*

Before class, consider someone in your group who is an expert in a particular area. (Or consider several people.) Jot down a few technical questions that only a person in that area would know the answers. (For example, if you have a pilot in your class, type “Pilot questions and answers” into a search engine.)

Say something like the following: “I don’t necessarily want the answers to this question; I want to know *whom* you would ask.” Ask the questions, inviting the class as a whole to elect one person (hopefully the expert!) to answer. If time permits, do this several times with several people who have expertise in particular areas.

Use this activity to point out Jesus’ authority to answer matters of the Spirit in John 3:11-15. Say, “Just as we knew who could answer these technical questions, we can be sure that Jesus knows the answers to these *spiritual* questions.” Challenge learners to find answers to their spiritual questions in God’s Word alone because Jesus and the Father and the Spirit are one.

Conclusion: *Our Job*

Ask the following question: “According to today’s Scripture passage, what *can* and *will* Jesus do through the Spirit?”

Write these items on a board or large piece of paper as they are mentioned aloud by various group members.

Read John 12:32 to point out that Jesus will also draw all men to Himself. Ask, “What, then, is our job?” Draw a vertical line and write the instructions from Matthew 28:16-20 and other passages that the class offers. Say something akin to this: “When we do our job, the Spirit will do His.”

Teaching Tip of the Week

Today's teaching is not simple nor is it entirely explainable. Help learners understand that the mysteries of God are not always something we can grasp, but the things that we *can* grasp (such as showing love, serving, forgiving, etc.) are our responsibility (see Deuteronomy 29:29). We can *apprehend* certain truths about God, but we as finite creatures can never *comprehend* the full truth about God.