

The Gospel Project for Adults, Fall 2017
Interactive Teaching Tips for Adults, Session 10

Introduction: *Comment on making adjustments in real time.*

Prior to the Bible study, obtain a GPS (or use one on your smartphone) and a roadmap. During the lesson, show both the GPS and the map to the members of your group. Encourage them to take about 30 seconds to think about how these two items are the same and how they are different.

When time is up, allow a few volunteers to share their responses. If it is not mentioned, emphasize that one thing that makes a GPS superior to a map is that you can adjust to traffic as it's happening.

Say something like this: "While both of these tell you how to get from one place to the next, the map only shows you possible routes. The GPS also gives you traffic information and can provide a detour to help you avoid delays."

Encourage class members to think about their spiritual lives. Point out that one of the great things about following Jesus is that He offers forgiveness — not just at the point of salvation, but also anytime we need to make an adjustment in our walk with Him. Share that today's lesson demonstrates how that forgiveness plays out in real life and helps us walk with Jesus more effectively each day.

Point 1: *Exhort members to see Jesus in the familiar.*

Encourage class members to read through John 21:1-14 silently.

Ask something like the following: "What words or phrases in this account stick out to you? Why?" Discuss responses. Direct attention to the part where Jesus suggests throwing the nets on the other side of the boat. Ask, "What was the result? How did that help the disciples recognize Jesus?" Discuss responses.

Point out that this was not the first time this sort of thing had happened to Peter and his fishing buddies. Direct a volunteer to read Luke 5:1-10. Talk about how the prior experience with Jesus could help the disciples in their faith in John 21.

Note that when we are struggling to reconnect with Jesus, He often minister to us through something familiar. Say something like this: "Take a minute a quiet reflection to think of a time when Jesus did this for you." Encourage

class members to avoid looking only for spiritual fireworks and to allow Jesus to speak to them in ways that are more familiar.

Point 2: *Remind class remembers that there is life after failure.*

Write the following sentence on the board: “My failures are not fatal.”

Allow a few volunteers to share their thoughts about the statement. Explain that this phrase is one of the key points in Max Lucado’s book *Six Hours One Friday*. Share the following quote from the book:

It’s not that [God] loves what you did, but he loves who you are. You are his. The one who has the right to condemn you provided the way to acquit you. You make mistakes. God doesn’t. And he made you.

[Source: Max Lucado, *Six Hours One Friday* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1989), 25.]

Point out that this quote includes three key ideas about forgiveness, restoration, and ministry: God loves you despite what you’ve done; God could exile you from service but chooses to forgive you; and God plans and purposes are always perfect—even if you are not. Talk about how Peter experienced these realities in his conversation with Jesus.

Emphasize that as long as we have breath, Jesus is ready to restore us so we can get back to following Him.

Say something like the following in your own words: “God has a plan for us, and He includes us in this plan, offering forgiveness and restoration to us when we repent.”

Challenge learners to remember that failures may knock them down, but failures never knock them out.

Point 3: *Help group members find the right role.*

Ask the following questions: “What do you do for a living? What makes that job satisfying for you?” Discuss responses.

Point out that sometimes jobs aren’t all that great because we’re not operating with our strengths. Say something like this: “We’re trying to do something we’re not skilled to do, or we’re too busy comparing what we do to someone else. But when we find our ‘sweet spot,’ it can make all the

difference.”

Show the group the video clip from the movie *Leatherheads* called “The Right Role”: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/leatherheads/the-right-role> (1 minute, 53 seconds).

Explain that the leader of the football team, Dodge, has to help one of his teammates stop thinking about the past and find his place on the current team.

Instruct a volunteer to read John 21:20-23. Ask: “How did Jesus help Peter focus on his perfect role in the kingdom?”

Point out that comparisons are not always bad, but they can distract us from being who God made us to be and doing what God has called us to do. Challenge learners to find their fit in the kingdom and to pursue it with a passion—rather than focusing on what other people are trying to do.

Conclusion: *Challenge for application.*

Take a few minutes for class members to talk about the parts of this lesson that meant the most to them. Then encourage a volunteer to read John 21:15 aloud again.

Write the following phrase on the board: “More than these.”

Explain that interpreters have different opinions about what “these” Jesus was emphasizing. Say something like the following: “Some believe He was talking about the other disciples because Peter was known to demonstrate a superior attitude toward his friends—at least before he denied Jesus. Others think Jesus was referring to the fishing nets, challenging Peter to think about whether he was truly committed to following Christ.”

Point out that either way Jesus wanted Peter to focus fully on the task ahead of him. Share that Jesus didn’t pull any punches—he let Peter know just how difficult the road would be. History tells us that Peter never denied his calling again. He was faithful to the end.

Remind the group members that Jesus has a calling for them as well—and that they will have to choose between that calling and things that might distract them. Say, “At some point, you’ll have to sacrifice what’s good for what’s best.” Encourage them to follow Peter’s example of finding restoration and following Christ with passion.