

The Gospel Project for Adults, Fall 2017
Interactive Teaching Tips for Adults, Session 12

Introduction: *Connect with a past experience.*

What made that job so difficult? How did you feel once you finished the task?" Discuss responses.

Point out that we tend to take pride in a job well done and well finished. Say something like this: "And we hope that others will notice—maybe even remember it long after we're gone." Then share that in today's lesson, Jesus had come to the end of His earthly work. Say, "He had completed everything the Father had given Him to do and now it was time for Him to return to heaven as the Risen King."

Emphasize that today's lesson reminds us that while Jesus went back to heaven, His work on earth really wasn't finished. Note that He simply began working through His disciples as His hands and feet on earth.

Point 1: *Point to Further Commentary.*

To dig deeper into the nature of the Spirit's baptism—and how it differs from water baptism—read the following quote from John Polhill in the Further Commentary box on page 143:

Unlike John's baptism, the new converts would also receive the presence and power of the Holy Spirit (2:38b). Throughout Acts new converts experienced repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Spirit.

Explain that baptism by immersion is an outward statement to the world that an individual has died to their old way of life and begun a new life with Christ. Meanwhile, the Spirit's baptism is an internal work performed by the Holy Spirit that establishes His presence and leading in the lives of new believers. Talk about why each form of baptism is important to sharing the gospel with the world around us.

Point 2: *Establish that no one knows the time of Jesus' return.*

Write the following names on the board: Charles Taze Russell, Herbert W. Armstrong, Harold Camping, and David Meade.

Encourage learners to discuss what each of these individuals have in common. If it's not mentioned, share that each of these men has incorrectly predicted the end of the world at least once.

Encourage a volunteer to read Acts 1:6-7. Ask, "What does Jesus say about predicting His return?" Discuss responses.

Affirm that Jesus did not want His followers to focus on when He would come back but to know that He would. Ask the following question: "Where did He want our focus to be?" Discuss responses.

Read Acts 1:8 aloud and share that He challenged His followers to focus on spreading the gospel—starting close to home and spreading around the world. Remind learners that fulfilling His mission on earth should still be our main focus today.

Point 3: *Consider other passages about Jesus' authority.*

Share that Jesus' authority in heaven—as designated by His sitting at God's right hand—is not limited to Acts 1. Place learners into four groups and give each group one of the following passages:

- Ephesians 1:20-22
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Colossians 2:9-10
- 1 Peter 3:18-22

Encourage learners to work in their groups to read the passages and to identify what each one says about the authority of Jesus. After a few minutes, allow learners to share what they learned. Emphasize that while Jesus uses us to fulfill His mission, He rules the world and intercedes for us in a place of authority in heaven.

Conclusion: *Learn your role in the Risen King's work.*

Remind class members that while Jesus' first coming and His ascension to heaven are incredibly important, we also need to focus on His second coming. Allow a volunteer to read Titus 2:11-13. Share that the initial appearance of God's grace (through Jesus) points us to His second coming—the blessed hope.

Challenge the members of your class to think about what they should be doing for the kingdom between His ascension, as recorded in Acts 1, and His return. Encourage them to find a place of service in their church or broader community if they have not already. Remind them that we are called to continue serving the Risen King faithfully until He comes back again.