

The Gospel Project for Adults, Winter 2014-15
Extended Instructional Approaches for Session 12

Introduction: *Connect to one of the central points of the lesson.*

There is a lot of emphasis in discussions about teaching and learning about what is called ‘modalities’, that is, the three primary modes or ways someone takes in new information. Most people have a preference among the three well-known modalities—*hearing, seeing, or touching/doing*. All too often most of our teaching is *auditory*—most teachers tend to lecture. Researchers have found that *most adults prefer visual or at least a balance between hearing and seeing and doing*.

In the passage for this week, John 15, Jesus used a powerful visual image in one of his famous “I am” sayings. I encourage you to make use of both the modalities of vision and touching in your introduction:

- 1) Since many of you just celebrated Valentine’s Day, perhaps you have a picture of a lovely arrangement of roses or a bouquet of flowers. Select a picture you have taken or a picture from an advertisement and send it to your students electronically so they can visualize the image as they read the Gospel passage prior to coming to class.
- 2) In preparation for the class session, obtain a bouquet of wilting/wilted flowers that are due to be thrown away. Bring those in and ask for a brief comparison between the fresh flowers and those that are wilted—a vivid distinction is that the wilted bunch has been separated from the vine/branch that gave them life.
- 3) Next, distribute small pieces of a broken branch that has been pruned from its tree. After brief examination, ask your students to describe the branch. (Ask them to scratch it with a fingernail and break it into pieces.) Look for responses like “dry,” “brittle,” “lifeless,” etc.
- 4) Ask for a volunteer who does some gardening or yard work to describe when and how he/she prunes the plants or trees. Ask them to explain the results.

Conclusion: *Closing challenge and application*

Say something like the following: “We began today’s study by examining items that were formerly connected to their respective branch or plant. We scratched the bark and found it dead beneath instead of bright green and living. As the Holy Spirit examines your heart today, what do you think He will find? A hard callous covering over darkness? A brittle soul that is dry? Or a soft, lively heart that is in Christ—rich, colorful, and pliable?”