

FIRED UP CONVERSATIONS

Study Guide

Winter 2012 Sermon/Study Series

<http://www.rbcpc.org/fired-up-conversations/>

“Disturbing Spiritual Conversations”

Week #2

January 14/15, 2012

Next week: January 21/22: *“What About Other Religions?”*

Scripture References
Fired Up Conversations – Week 2
“Disturbing Spiritual Conversations”

Read and reflect on the following scriptures.

Ruth 1:15-18

¹⁵ “Look,” said Naomi, “your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her.”

¹⁶ But Ruth replied, “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. ¹⁷ Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.” ¹⁸ When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.

Notes:

Acts 17:1-9

¹ When Paul and his companions had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. ² As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³ explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. “This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah,” he said.

⁴ Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women.

⁵ But other Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason’s house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd.^[a] ⁶ But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials, shouting: “These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, ⁷ and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar’s decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus.” ⁸ When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil. ⁹ Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

Notes:

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Scripture

1. Read the Ruth scripture. What kind of a “religion” does Ruth belong to?
2. At the start of the conversation, what value does Ruth have to Naomi?
3. What does Ruth say in order to change Naomi’s opinion of her?
4. How might hearing these words from Ruth be spiritually disturbing for Naomi?
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5. Read the Acts scripture. Paul was welcomed into the synagogue. Why was Paul’s teaching about the Messiah so disturbing for the Jews?
6. Why did the Jews round up some “bad characters” to start the riot? Why didn’t they just start the riot themselves?
7. Why do you think the city officials let Jason and the others go?

Sermon

1. How do you define “spiritual conversation?”
2. With whom would you usually expect to have a spiritual conversation?
3. Why do the words “spiritual” and “disturbing” seem counter-intuitive?
4. Pastor Bruce shares the example of the missionary and the monk in the temple. Why were the dogs disturbed?

“Our job is not to create the disturbance, but rather to offer the life and love of Christ in their disturbing places.” Bruce Humphrey

5. The Buddhist temple appeared to be serene and peaceful, was it really?
6. Why would Jesus try to destroy that peace?
7. What was Jesus trying to accomplish in the Buddhist temple?

Life Application

1. Why do you think Jesus would want you to have a spiritual conversation?
2. What things might you do to prepare yourself?
3. Within your group, what things could you do to help each other prepare?
4. Practice role-playing within your group, addressing difficult conversations around comments like: I’m spiritual but not religious; I believe in God but I don’t like church; religions are too institutional for me.

Prayer

Ask Jesus to strengthen your faith and commitment to Him so that when faced with a difficult, or disturbing, conversation, you can offer His love to others.