

FIRED UP CONVERSATIONS

Study Guide

Winter 2012 Sermon/Study Series

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

“Can God Use Anybody?”

Week # 1

January 7/8, 2012

Next week: January 14/15: *“Disturbing Spiritual Conversations”*

Scripture References
Fired Up Conversations – Week 1
“Can God Use Anybody?”

Read and reflect on the following scriptures.

Mark 9:38-41

³⁸ “Teacher,” said John, “we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.”

³⁹ “Do not stop him,” Jesus said. “No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, ⁴⁰ for whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ Truly I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly be rewarded.

Notes:

Numbers 23:1-8

¹ Balaam said, “Build me seven altars here, and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me.” ² Balak did as Balaam said, and the two of them offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

³ Then Balaam said to Balak, “Stay here beside your offering while I go aside. Perhaps the LORD will come to meet with me. Whatever he reveals to me I will tell you.” Then he went off to a barren height.

⁴ God met with him, and Balaam said, “I have prepared seven altars, and on each altar I have offered a bull and a ram.”

⁵ The LORD put a word in Balaam’s mouth and said, “Go back to Balak and give him this word.”

⁶ So he went back to him and found him standing beside his offering, with all the Moabite officials. ⁷ Then Balaam spoke his message:

“Balak brought me from Aram,
the king of Moab from the eastern mountains.

‘Come,’ he said, ‘curse Jacob for me;
come, denounce Israel.’

⁸ How can I curse
those whom God has not cursed?
How can I denounce
those whom the LORD has not denounced?

Notes:

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Fired Up Conversations – Week 1

“Can God Use Anybody?”

Scripture

1. Read the Mark 9 scripture. In the Jewish culture at Jesus' time, only appointed religious leaders were allowed to perform sacred acts on God's behalf. Discuss how the disciples might have reacted when Jesus said, “No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, for whoever is not against us is for us.”
2. What is a miracle?
3. Who makes miracles happen?
4. Read the Number 23 scripture. Balak wanted the shaman Balaam to curse the Israelites. How does God use Balaam for His purposes instead?
5. How does this show God's faithfulness to his people in spite of their sins? (Hint: you might want to read more of this story in the Bible)

Sermon

“When we stop trying to make God our exclusive property, it opens up options for better dialogues and conversations. In fact, it can give us new confidence and take the fear out of our spiritual conversations with others.” Bruce Humphrey

1. Why is “fear” often in spiritual conversations? What is so scary about it?
2. How does the concept of “God can use anybody” change the way you look at people who don't go to church?
3. How does this show the loving nature of God?
4. Is a “fired up” spiritual conversation contrary to God's loving nature? Why or why not?
5. How deep and how wide do you really think God's love is?
6. What could you do to open your eyes to seeing God's presence, or hearing God's voice, from someone not in your church?

Life Application

1. Do you think God wants you to have spiritual conversations? Why?
2. Share the last spiritual conversation you had, was it comfortable?
3. What is one thing you could do to make it more comfortable next time?

Prayer

1. Pray the Lord' Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13). Pause to reflect on the meaning of “your kingdom come” and how God might be speaking to you about His kingdom beyond the walls of the church.