



Why Can't We Talk?: Christian Wisdom on Dialogue as a Habit of the Heart

John Backman

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Learn How to Contribute More Effectively and Compassionately to the Conversations that Shape Your Life

"Anything could happen when we start to talk. Nothing will happen if we don't. That alone makes the way of dialogue a journey worth taking."

?from the Epilogue

Think of an issue that makes your blood boil. Now imagine lunch with a friend who is just as passionate about it?on the other side. How can the two of you even broach the issue, let alone hear each other with curiosity and compassion?

The answer begins long before the lunch does, by learning to engage dialogue as a habit of the heart?an inner transformation that the ancient practices of Christian spirituality can address. This highly readable and timely guide to restoring dialogue shows you how to cultivate this transformation while preparing you to approach your adversaries with curiosity, civility and compassion. With dialogue expert John Backman leading the way, you will:

- Examine the obstacles that keep you from dialogue: black-and-white thinking, a “distraction lifestyle,” the fear of change and negative impressions from others.
- Explore the strength of character from which healthy dialogue springs?and the work of the soul that cultivates them.
- Learn practical guidelines for dialogue and how they work in an imperfect world.
- Encounter anecdotes of dialogue in action, from resolutions of interpersonal conflict to difficult dialogues on some of the most divisive issues of our age.
- Use provocative questions at the end of each chapter to stimulate group discussion and individual reflection.

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