

# Discussion Guide

**Scripture Numbers 22:20-23 (NIV)**

**Sermon Title: Don't Push Past God's No**

**Speaker: Dr. Engus D. Carter**

**Date: 3/23/2025**

## **Summary**

This sermon discusses the dangers of pushing past God's 'no' through the story of Balaam in Numbers 22. Dr. Carter explains how Balaam, a prophet for hire, was asked by King Balak to curse the Israelites. Despite God initially saying no, Balaam persisted until God gave him permission - but not approval - to go, leading to dangerous consequences. The sermon emphasizes the importance of accepting God's first answer and not letting personal desires override divine direction.

## **Intro Prayer**

Lord, as we gather to discuss Your Word, open our hearts and minds to understand the importance of following Your will rather than our own desires. Help us recognize Your voice and give us the wisdom to accept Your answers, even when they differ from what we want. Guide our discussion and reveal Your truth to us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## **Ice Breaker**

Can you share a time when you really wanted something, but looking back, you're grateful you didn't get it?

## **Key Verses**

Numbers 22:12

Numbers 22:20-22

Psalms 106:15

James 4:3

1 Corinthians 1:27

## **Questions**

What's the difference between God's permission and God's approval? How can we tell the difference?

Why do you think we sometimes keep asking God for something after He's already said no? The sermon mentions that 'permission without peace is a problem.' What does this mean to you?

How can we better discern between opportunities that God is providing versus ones we're forcing?

What are some 'donkeys' (unexpected messengers) that God has used to speak to you in your life?

How can pride or personal agenda prevent us from hearing God's voice?

What are some warning signs that we might be pushing past God's no?

How can we develop the discipline to accept God's first answer, even when it's not what we want to hear?

### **Life Application**

This week, before making any significant decisions, pause and honestly evaluate your motives. Ask yourself: Am I pushing for this because it's truly God's will, or am I pursuing my own desires? Journal about any areas where you might be pushing past God's no, and pray for the strength to submit to His will.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Take God at His first word - stop pushing past His initial answer
- Permission without peace is a warning sign that you're outside God's will
- God will often use unexpected sources to redirect us from destructive paths
- Just because God allows something doesn't mean He approves of it
- Obedience is better than opportunity

### **Ending Prayer**

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your patience with us when we push against Your will. Help us to recognize and accept Your answers, even when they're not what we want to hear. Give us the wisdom to distinguish between Your perfect will and our own desires. Grant us the courage to stop when You say no, and the faith to trust that Your plans for us are better than our own. In Jesus' name, Amen.