

Mark 10:34 (ESV) "they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise."

1. Rejection of Jesus.

On the Cross Jesus felt like a rejected person. Psalms 22:1. "Rejection" was not new to Jesus. Luke 4:18, 21 and Mark 6:4-5a – rejection! Judas betrayed Him, Peter denied Him, some jeered. To Pilate's question, "what evil has he done?" they shouted... "Crucify him." In Gethsemane: "they all left him and fled." Jesus mocked by soldiers, scorned by the mob, who "derided him, wagging their heads... the chief priests... scribes mocked him..." "Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Jesus experienced "rejection" deeply. Jesus understood "rejection", but it did not alter His focus, damage His proclamation of truth, nor disrupt His knowledge that He was loved. He did not need the world's approval - He had the Father's.

2. Our Rejections.

We experience rejection - put downs, turned backs, ignoring, stupid hurtful remarks, childhood experiences, parents, family and friends. Job: "My friends scorn me. Job 16:20 and Psalm 55:12-13

Rejection occurs both intentionally and unintentionally, without thinking or reason. Having accepted it as a statement of our unworthiness, it plays havoc with emotions, helping to destroy relationships.

We feel undervalued, unloved, unworthy, useless, insignificant, hurt and bruised which leads into self-pity and low self-esteem. God delights in humility, but is saddened by self-pity, which blocks healing.

Jesus the Healer speaks of love, value, worth, not simply because of who we are in ourselves, but of who we are in Christ.

"Rejection", feeling excluded, has a devastating effect upon us intellectually, increasing aggression but decreasing ability to reason and think properly.¹ Rejection can lead to impulsive behaviour. An example.

Desperate to have a son she always miscarried the boys. Doctors had no explanation. She felt rejected, unworthy, unwanted. In prayer ministry they talked about family relationships – calm until her brother was mentioned - everything changed. She saw him as "vicious, always embarrassing and physically hurt(ful)... Her father failed to protect her." She suddenly remembered, aged nine or ten, walking beside a river, picking up stones, hurling them into the water, and crying out, "I'll never carry a boy child. I'll never carry a boy child." The decision was made.² Out of her rejection she had sent a command through her heart and mind to her body. But now, years later, that earlier vow prevented her having a son. Repentance brought healing.

3. Dealing with Rejection.

We can not avoid rejection, but recognise that it is only destructive when we accept it, take it on board, make it our own and follow it through with wrong decisions. "Satan loves to fuel the fires of low self-esteem with intermittent forms of rejection—a boss you can never please, a parent who only praises straight A's on the report card, or a friend who ignores you at a party."³

Rejection comes when our deepest needs are not met. We want to be accepted, loved, praised - a "somebody", not a "nobody". "Look, Daddy, at what I have done." "Don't disturb me now, Tommy. I'm busy!" How does Tommy feel?

We can prevent these horrendous flow-ons, through what God provides in the Cross-work of Jesus. We do it by making decisions, choosing to use what He gives, within the Father's love.

Who you are, and your value as a person, is not, cannot be, and should not be determined by others. Peter encouraged believers struggling with persecution and rejection in 1 Peter 2:9,10. Do you find it hard to accept God's love for you? Why?

- You are a child of God. You are loved by God, always, like the Prodigal Son.
- God sees you as a significant person – a somebody, you are not a nobody. And therefore:
- God respects every decision that you make. He loves you so much that He sends His Holy Spirit, Paraclete and Comforter, to convict you of the need to repent of wrong decisions and to make right decisions. He does this out of love, for your health and welfare.

Coming from such a position enables you get to the root of the problem, which is 1) a poor view of your own value as a person in the sight of God; and 2) a devaluing of the Father's love. As a child of God, "you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, (you) believed in him (and you) were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit..." Ephesians 1:13, and John 1:12, Romans 8:14-15

Only God can meet all your needs. He is your sufficiency in every situation. You belong to God through your relationship with Jesus Christ. You hold a valued place in the family of God and no one, no thing, can take that away from you. Romans 8:38,39, see Matthew 28:20c, John 14:16,17a

The steps for dealing with "rejection" are:

- Identify where the "rejection" is coming from, and forgive that person, or persons, "for they know not what they do." Set them free, so that you are free.
- Identify what your feelings are, see if they are coming out of low self-worth, and repent as is necessary – renounce that decision that allows you think of yourself as a nobody.
- Reaffirm your position in Christ as a child of God You are a somebody, loved by the Father! Do not lose focus.
- God in Christ is with you in all this heartache of rejection and will use your healing to draw you closer to Himself.
- Seal it, in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, with the unchanging truth that you are unconditionally loved, totally accepted, and complete in Christ.

3. Conclusion.

"Rejection" comes from not being encouraged, so let us "encourage one another."⁴ It has been said: "Perhaps once in a hundred years a person may be ruined by excessive praise, but surely once every minute someone dies for lack of it." And, "The faintest whisper of support and encouragement uttered by a Christian in the ear of a fellow believer is heard in heaven."⁵

Finally, “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up...”⁶ Healed from “rejection” we grow as encouragers to the rejected.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, You understand our feelings of rejection. Encourage us to accept ourselves as we accept others. Forgive us when we have reacted because we have felt unloved and unworthy. We claim the position we have in Christ today, chosen and called. We renounce any form of self-righteousness and accept by faith the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Thank You for the Holy Spirit, the encourager - we rest in the security of Your care and promise of Your eternal provision, in the name of Jesus we pray.

¹ Roy Baumeister, Case Western Reserve University, Ohio. Web Page

² With liberties, Sanford, J & P, *The Transformation of the Inner Man*, Victory House, 1982, pp 191-2

³ In Touch Ministries - Web

⁴ 1 Thessalonians 4:18 (ESV)

⁵ J. J. Murray from the Jesus Page

⁶ Ephesians 4:29 (ESV)