

Enjoy Freedom From Rejection

I admit that rejection is not an issue I have struggled with personally. My attitude (which I'm not saying is a good one!) has always been, "If you don't like me, that's your problem."

However, through my years of working in ministry I have learned about rejection objectively—and, I must say, with surprise. At first I could not believe what people went through! But as I ministered to those suffering from rejection, God taught me about it, and I came to a special place of compassion and understanding.

Rejection can be described as the sense of being unwanted and unloved. I have explained it this way: You are always on the outside looking in. Other people get in; somehow you never do.

What is the opposite of rejection? Acceptance.

Here is the exchange: Jesus endured our rejection that we might have His acceptance. First John 4:19 says, "We love Him because He first loved us" (NKJV). How profoundly true! We cannot love God until His love awakens love in us.

This also is true of us in relation to human love. A person who has never been loved does not know how to love. Multitudes of people who suffer from rejection want to love but can't because love has never been awakened in them.

CAUSES FOR REJECTION

Rejection, I believe, is the most prevalent emotional wound in today's culture. There are a number of reasons for this. One is the breakdown of family relationships.

Every baby born into the world has one supreme need: to be loved. A baby needs to be cuddled and held. Mere abstract love cannot meet his needs; love has to be expressed actively.

I further believe—and many psychologists agree—that to a child, the love of a father is irreplaceable. I am not by any means belittling a mother's love. But there's a special security, for an infant, that's found in his father's arms.

When tiny babies are held by their fathers, they almost seem to be saying, "Anything can happen all around me, but I'm safe in these strong arms that hold me and love me."

Today, however, because family relationships have broken down, many babies do not experience this kind of loving acceptance from a father.

Sometimes the problem goes back to rejection before birth. Through the years I have talked with people who needed to be delivered from a spirit of rejection that came on them in their mothers' wombs.

Take, for example, a mother of four who's struggling to make ends meet. She discovers she is pregnant again and inwardly resents the upcoming addition to the family. She may think (or even say), "I wish I weren't pregnant!"

She doesn't have to say anything aloud because the little person inside—and bear in mind, it is a person—knows he is not welcome. That baby is then born with a spirit of rejection.

Divorce is another major cause of rejection. About 50 percent of today's marriages fail, and both parties usually feel the wounds.

Imagine what it is like for men and women who have devoted themselves to building a successful, godly marriage only to discover their spouses are unfaithful. There is no way for me to fully understand the rejection they must feel. How wonderful that God can—and does!

Other causes of rejection include even physical appearance. Most young women today feel they have to be slim to be

popular.

A girl may be a little plumper or quieter than her schoolmates or wear the “wrong” clothes and feel rejected. A boy may be a little shorter or slower or not very good at sports. It doesn’t take much to make a person feel rejected.

We can easily identify with the problem of rejection. Now let’s look at the solution provided by Jesus, who on the cross endured total rejection.

JESUS’ REJECTION ON THE CROSS

Those who experience rejection need to realize that Jesus Himself experienced it, too. Isaiah 53:3 prophesied that Jesus would be despised and rejected by men. John 1:11 says, “He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.” Psalm 69:8 says Jesus would become a stranger to His brothers and an alien to His mother’s children.

To be rejected by men was painful, but to be rejected by His heavenly Father was the ultimate rejection. Matthew 27:45-47 describes Jesus’ final moments on the cross and records His final question, ” ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’ ”

Mark 15:23 says that Jesus was twice offered something to drink. First, He was offered wine mixed with myrrh, but He refused it. Myrrh was a painkiller that to some degree would have relieved His suffering. Apparently Jesus had set His heart to endure the agony without alleviation.

Second, in His final moments, Jesus was given sour wine or vinegar, which was bitter. This may have been intended to keep Him from losing consciousness.

By accepting this sour wine, Jesus symbolically drained the bitter cup of rejection to its dregs. No human being has ever experienced the total rejection Jesus experienced on the cross.

Jesus finally cried out a second time, yielded up His spirit to heaven and died (see Matt. 27:50). For the first time in the history of the universe, the Son of God had prayed and received no answer from the Father.

Why? Because Christ was made sin with our sinfulness, and God had to deal with Him as He deals with sin. God had to reject Him—to refuse to accept Him—and so Jesus died not from crucifixion but from a broken heart.

HOW JESUS ACTUALLY DIED

We can surmise from Psalm 69 and from the New Testament record that Jesus did not die as a result of crucifixion, although that would have killed Him ultimately, but of a broken heart.

Crucifixion usually did not cause so quick a death. Mark 15:43-45 tells us that when Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, approached Pilate for the body of Jesus, Pilate “marveled” that He already was dead.

Normally speaking, then, Jesus should not have died so quickly. The two thieves had to be put to death by the soldiers.

What broke Jesus’ heart? Rejection by His Father—the ultimate rejection. He endured this in order that we might have acceptance.

Immediately upon Jesus’ death, the veil in the temple was torn in two (see Matt. 27:50-51). It was suddenly and completely torn by God from top to bottom.

The veil had previously separated a holy God from sinful man. Now, torn, it was the Father’s invitation to every person who believes in Jesus: “Come in. You are welcome. My Son has endured your rejection that I may offer you My acceptance.”

Acceptance by the Beloved—surely this is the ultimate acceptance!

There is a great deal of wrong emphasis in contemporary presentations of the gospel, in which everything depends on what we do. It is true that we have to choose, but we would never be able to choose if God had not chosen us in the first place.

You will find you are much more secure as a Christian when you are basing your relationship with God on what He has done. God is more dependable than you and I!

ACCEPTING JESUS' WORK

Many years ago I was due to preach at a large camp meeting and was in danger of being late. Hurrying across the campground, I ran into a woman—or rather, she ran into me.

As we straightened ourselves out after the collision, she said, “Oh, Mr. Prince, I was praying that if God wanted me to speak to you, we would meet.”

“Well, we’ve met,” I said. “But I can give you just two minutes, or I’ll be late for my preaching.”

She began to share with me all her woes and problems, and after about two minutes I stopped her. “I can’t give you any more time,” I said. “But pray this prayer with me.” I led this dear lady in a simple little prayer that went something like this:

“God, I thank You that You really love me, that I really am Your child, that You really are my Father, that I belong to the best family in the universe.

“I am not unwanted. I am not rejected. I am accepted. You love me, and I love You. Thank You, God.”

We parted company, and I made it to my preaching assignment.

About a month later I received a letter from this woman. After

reminding me how we had met, she wrote something like this: "Praying that prayer with you has completely changed my life. I am a different person."

What happened? She passed from rejection to acceptance, not by anything she did—trying harder, improving herself or praying more—but simply by accepting what Jesus had done for her on the cross.

CLAIMING THIS EXCHANGE

The worst thing you can do for people struggling with rejection is to tell them to do more and try harder. They will never believe they have done enough no matter how much they do.

Here is the wonderful thing: God loves us. God loves you In Christ we are His children. We belong to the best family in the universe. We don't need to be ashamed.

We are not second-class, not unwanted. We are accepted.

To appropriate this marvelous exchange, confess it with your mouth: "Jesus endured my rejection that I might have His acceptance."

If you really believe this, say: "Thank You, Father, that You really love me and that You gave Your only Son for me. You are my Father. Heaven is my home. I am part of the best family in the universe. I am secure in Your unconditional love and care. Thank You, Lord."

Derek Prince was educated at Cambridge University and the Hebrew University in serving with the British army in World War II, he experienced a life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ and devoted his life to studying and teaching the Bible. He has authored more than 40 books including *Blessing or Curse: You Can Choose (Chosen)*.