

How to Confront Rejection's Deep-Seated Roots

There have been a handful of people in my lifetime who made me feel utterly and completely rejected. People whose hurtful actions, self-centered or thoughtless decisions and critical words caused me to doubt my worth in this world—as a person, a woman and even as a treasured child of God.

I imagine you could say the same thing. Everyone has felt rejected at one time or another—and it hurts. Whether you were rejected by a co-worker, supervisor, friend, parent, child, spouse or someone in your community who wouldn't let you in their exclusive circle, rejection leaves behind an invisible path of destruction in our hearts and minds and has a long-term negative impact on our self-esteem. In fact, sometimes rejection can make us forget who we really are as we weaken under the poison of its sting.

But we don't have to live as victims of rejection. We don't have to let the negative thoughts in our heads about ourselves cause us to forget who we are and our value.

No matter what anyone says about us or does to us, we are in control of how we see and think about ourselves. We are in control of the dialogue that runs through our brains about our value and worth. And we are in control of making sure we hang on to who we know we are, and whose we know we are, rather than tying our self-worth to someone else's opinion, approval or acceptance.

Anytime we feel hurt, rejected, betrayed, accepted or unwanted, regardless of the circumstance, we always have two choices:

Choice No 1: Choose to allow one person's words—which become our words to ourselves—or their rejection define who we are

and determine our worth.

Choice No. 2: Choose to allow God—and His words—to define us and give us worth.

Choice No. 1 gives other people the authority to determine our identity and self-confidence. It allows them to decide if we have value or not based on their own opinions, and we begin reciting those words in our heads and eventually start to believe them. If we choose to believe their hurtful or critical words or actions as truth, we not only give that person control over our joy but also permission to destroy our self-esteem.

Choice No. 2 gives God the authority over saying who we are based on the truths in His Word. This choice allows us to hold tight to His promise that we are each valued and worthy in His eyes simply because we are His and nothing anybody says or thinks about us will ever change that.

Unfortunately, throughout my lifetime in a myriad of different situations, I chose No. 1 all too often, giving other people dominion over my happiness and self-confidence. But lately, I've tried to learn to be better at choosing No. 2 and remembering who I really am when my mind drifts back to the dark places where rejection and the lies of the enemy want me to live.

Over the past couple of years, as a result of becoming separated and divorced in a fairly short period of time, I have experienced rejection and betrayal to the fullest, most heartbreaking extent. As a result, believing in my value and worth in God's eyes and believing in myself, in addition to trying not to lose myself along the way, was and is a daily challenge.

Yet it is this awareness of my continual need to make the choice to remember who I am in Christ when my heart is aching due to rejection, or even the shame of my own mistakes, that

really drew me into the words of my friend Chrystal's new book, *She's Still There: Rescuing the Girl in You*.

You see one day last year, I suddenly realized that somewhere along this difficult journey, I had lost some of "me." In fact, at times, I felt like I had lost all of me. On many days, I felt like I didn't know who I was or who I was supposed to be. But Chrystal's book helped remind me that she-me-was still there. I just had to find her again and invite God to help me rediscover and embrace who I was in Him—whoever that might be. I had to be more aware of how I talked to myself and the lies I was listening to inside my own head, because as Chrystal wrote, "You will believe what you tell yourself, so be careful what you say." She also wrote, "Wrong thinking can steal the life that the girl in you would love to live." Amen. ...

If a hard situation, a difficult relationship or a mistake of your past has stolen your joy and robbed you of self-confidence, do you at times feel like you don't recognize the woman in the mirror anymore? I get it. And that's why this book touched my heart so much and I know it will yours too. In fact, last month I wrote a post about a similar message ("When You Realize You're Bleeding, Get Some Help") and it was based on Chrystal's message in this book and I want to encourage you to read that post too if you haven't already.

Don't give someone else's words or actions dominion over your joy, self-confidence and peace. You have the choice to choose you, instead of lose you, and it begins with the thoughts you think and the way you talk to yourself.

Has something happened in your life that has caused you to feel like you're not yourself anymore? Like part of you—or something—is missing?

Have you been allowing your thoughts to taint how you feel about yourself and your life?

Do you long to get back to the old you—the one that felt comfortable in her own skin and didn't hang her self-worth on the acceptance or approval of others?

Do you struggle with not only being happy with yourself, but with life in general, and long to find direction, purpose and beauty again?

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