

Finding Your Security in God

turned the thick envelope
over and over in my hands. Guessing what was inside, I
hesitated to open
it and confirm my suspicions.

With heart pounding, I broke
the seal. Underneath it lay an invitation to a wedding—a
wedding that
should have been mine. I was being invited to celebrate the
marriage of
the man I thought I still loved and the woman who had broken
up our
engagement. Surely they didn't think I would attend!

As horrible as this
experience was, it was not unique to me. Every woman knows
someone she
thought would love her forever who later said, "I don't want
you
anymore. I don't love you or need you. I want out of this
friendship,
this marriage, this church, this job, this business." We have
all been
victims of rejection.

Rejection
is anything that happens to us that makes us feel unloved,
unwanted or
unworthy. We tend to avoid it at all costs, often missing out
on the
destiny God has for us because of the terrible pain of past
rejection or
fear of future rejection.

Let's put an axe to the root

of this horrible spirit! Rejection robs us of relationships and wonderful experiences in God. It causes us to put up walls around our hearts and make vows never to allow ourselves to be hurt again.

Those under the influence of the spirit of rejection make a decision to turn away the moment someone hurts them. They go from relationship to relationship until the spirit of rejection ultimately isolates them.

The truth is, offenses and rejection are going to come. When they do, we must make a choice to either react or respond.

Reaction comes from the soulish realm—our minds, wills and emotions. There isn't anything inherently evil in this realm, for God created our minds so that we could reason, think and remember. He created our wills to make choices for blessing and life, and our emotions to feel such things as love and righteous anger. However, when we are confronted with a spiritual problem, we must *respond* rather than *react*—under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Wrong Reactions

Wrong reactions to rejection will cause us to do one of two things: either lash out at others in confrontations of anger, bitterness, rebellion and defensiveness; or withdraw into self-pity, insecurity, escapism and

discouragement. One is an outward response, and the other keeps everything inside.

Anger. Anger

is often the result of rejection. We get mad because we believe we have been treated unjustly—and we take out our frustration on everyone else, even those who have not hurt us. The problem is that anger has a boomerang effect—"an angry man stirs up strife," the Bible says (Prov. 29:22, NKJV)—so we end up getting back what we have dished out, and the cycle of rejection is perpetuated.

Bitterness. Bitterness

is an evil fruit produced by one's unwillingness to forgive another his trespasses. It brings a curse of the tormentors. You go on memory recall. There's a rewind button in your mind the devil pushes all the time. When he does, you remember all the past hurts—as if they just happened yesterday.

Rebellion. Rebellion

rooted in rejection will produce a demonic tree with branches of self-will, independence, stubbornness, defiance, selfishness and pride. This reaction to rejection says, "I don't care what anyone else says, thinks or does. I'll do what I please."

Defensiveness. Defensiveness

expresses itself in criticism and judgment. Rejected people

build up
their own self-esteem by criticizing everyone else.

Self-pity. Self-pity
is an inward reaction to rejection. It is a form of self-affliction
that permits you to indulge in thoughts of unfairness until
you become
totally miserable.

Insecurity. Insecurity causes you to doubt God's love. You
ask, "If I am not loved by those closest to me, how could I be
loved by God?"

Rejected people become
tormented. They worry about everything concerning the
provision of their
Father's love. You can be 75 years old and still struggle with
the
question, "Does God really love me?" Even those in ministry
are not
excluded.

The enemy will use insecurity
against you by telling you, "You deserve the way you are
treated.
You'll never make it in life. Nothing good is ever going to
happen to
you. Why would God ever promote you? You are a failure as a
believer."
He will tell you that this is a judgment from God.

Escapism. Escapism—somehow
getting away from the problem—is the first reaction of many
hurt people
when they are rejected. Different expressions of this reaction
include:

- Leaving.* Even

David wanted to run away when one of his friends came against him. He said, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest. Indeed, I would wander far off, and remain in the wilderness" (Ps. 55:6-8).

- Shopping.* Some of us go shopping to escape. I had a friend who had a closet full of clothes with the tags still on them. I asked her what the problem was. Her reply? "I found it on sale." The truth? She had a miserable marriage, and going shopping helped her to forget it for a while.

- Sleeping.* Sleeping is an easy way to escape from the pain of rejection. If you aren't awake, you can't feel anything.

- Eating.* Most overweight people are heavy because they eat in response to an emotional upset. Eating provides gratification and helps them to temporarily escape the hurt they feel. At one time I weighed 265 pounds—the end result of my attempt to fill an inner void with my favorite food. Overeating gave me great comfort.

Discouragement. Discouragement causes a woman to become hopeless—she feels she has no prospect of being loved and no hope that anything will change.

Right Responses

In order to deal successfully with rejection, we must learn to respond properly to it. How do we do that? By taking the following steps:

1. Recognize where you are, but don't stay there. You can acknowledge your feelings of rejection without wallowing in them.

Be willing to identify the root of your problem but equally willing to let God pull it out.

2. Repent for wounding or rejecting others. Recognize that you are probably responsible for wounding or rejecting someone else, and ask the Lord—and the person you have hurt—to forgive you. Your attitude should be, I've got to do whatever it takes to repair the relationship.

Children are especially vulnerable to the wounds of rejection. If you are a parent, you have undoubtedly inflicted some of these, perhaps without meaning to.

"Get up from this table, and go to your room. I don't want to see you for the rest of the day." Do these words sound familiar?

God never tells us, "Get away from My table; I don't want to have to look at you." Of course, there are times when, if we don't repent, our fellowship with Him is broken, but He never rejects us.

Refusal to discipline is

another form of rejection. It says to your children that you don't love them enough to exert the effort to correct them. You don't want to be bothered.

3. *Forgive.* We

are commanded by God to have this response. "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses" (Mark 11:25).

Forgiveness must be immediate and complete. If we withhold or postpone it, we open the door for Satan to play on every sinful reaction to the hurts of rejection and make a way for evil spirits to enter in.

After you forgive, try to imagine the person you have forgiven coming into your house. See the way you would respond to him. Visualize yourself putting that person in a seat and serving him, or sitting beside him and washing his feet.

That's what I do every time the enemy tries to remind me of how someone has hurt me. I imagine myself sitting the person down, serving him, washing his feet and loving on him. Once a person showed up in a meeting that I had mentally done this to, and I was able to humble myself and minister to him in such a

way that there was total restoration.

4. *Re-establish the waste places.* The

Word promises, "If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach" (Is. 59:9,12).

When you have been rejected, it is often because the person who rejected you is himself insecure, wounded or rejected. Instead of criticizing that person and focusing on your own pain, reach out and minister to him. Let your behavior bring healing and "build the old waste places."

You may be surprised at the results. Just recently someone came up to me and confessed, "I acted like a jerk. I knew what I was doing, and I was wrong, and yet you demonstrated grace and mercy to me. That helped me to be able to humble myself and come back and get right with you and with God."

What greater testimony can we give to the world than that we can walk in love with one another! My attitude is, Bless God, not everybody is going to like me, but I'm going to walk with my brothers and sisters the best I can; I'm never going to throw them away. If you walk away, that's your decision, but I'll never

throw you away. As hard as it gets, we'll walk together.

God's Love

Even when we respond properly to specific instances of rejection, giving no opportunity to the enemy to torment us, we can still feel hurt and empty. That's because there is a longing in each one of us—a very human need—for approval and acceptance.

Often we attempt to satisfy this longing in the wrong way. We strive for acceptance from others by focusing all our attention on our appearance, performance or possessions. We figure that if we look good enough, do enough or have enough, we will be loved.

But none of these things will ever really fill our need. The only thing that will is a true revelation of God's infinite, unconditional love for us. We must come to understand that God chose us for Himself "before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4) and that we are totally "accepted in the Beloved" (v. 6).

God doesn't ask us to look good or be good before He will love us. He doesn't count our possessions to see if we measure up. In fact, His judgment of us is not based on external standards at all, but on the condition of our hearts. And even when that is found lacking, His love toward us is constant and unchangeable.

He will never reject us or
turn us away. On the contrary, He is always ready to enfold us
in His
“everlasting arms” (Deut. 33:27).

If you desire to know the
satisfaction of true acceptance, look to God—not people—for
approval.

Allow Him to show you His love and set you free from the wrong
responses

you’ve had to rejection in the past. Pray:

“Father, I come to You now,
in the name of Your Son, Jesus, who loved me and gave Himself
for me. I
thank You for Your unconditional love. I speak the blood of
the Lamb of
God over me and my family.

“From this moment on, I
choose to live in forgiveness. According to Matthew 18:23-25,
I forgive
from my heart any and all, living and dead, who have ever
wounded me. I
forgive them for knowingly or unknowingly rejecting me. I
forgive

_____ for not loving me the way God intended for (him,
her,
them) to love me.

“Lord, please forgive me for
holding on to past hurts, anger, unforgiveness or bitterness.
I am
released from any spirit and root of rejection, in the mighty
name of
Jesus. Go from me, and return to the pit you came from.

“I thank You, Lord, for

freedom and liberty. I thank You, Holy Spirit, for a fresh release of
Your anointing and grace in my life. Keep me, Lord, in this fresh walk,
and help me to always find acceptance and love in Your embrace. Amen.”

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