

# Rebuking the Spirit of Rejection

Until a few years ago, a spirit of rejection haunted me.

Growing up, I hated my tendency to be quiet. I used to grit my teeth when people would say to my mother, “She’s so quiet.” Here’s an example I will always remember.

When I was in high school, my mother visited the school during an open house event. I was a good student and expected my mom to receive glowing reports about my performance. However, most of the teachers pointed out my quietness and how they wished I would speak up more in class.

I’ll never forget what my math teacher said to Mom: “She’s so quiet, I hardly know she’s in here.”

“Great,” I thought, “Not only am I quiet, but I might as well be invisible.”

The truth was, I was quiet because I was hypersensitive to other people’s disapproval. Even when someone gave me helpful feedback, it was like nails on the chalkboard. Because of my insecurity, I did not really hear what they said. Instead, I heard confirmation of my own low opinion of myself: *Not good enough.*

Today, things are different. God delivered me from the spirit of rejection. For years, I sought self-esteem, but the Lord taught me to seek God-esteem instead.

God-esteem means learning to see yourself through God’s eyes. He created you special and unique. You don’t have to try to fit into someone else’s mold. After all, God is not going to say to you, “How come you aren’t like Mary?” or “Bob” or whomever else you compare yourself with.

If He wanted you like Mary or Bob, He would have made you that way from the start. Instead, God expects you to make the most of all that He has entrusted to you—your time, talent and treasure.

If a spirit of rejection haunts you, then you are not alone. Even Jesus was rejected.

I wrote the following Bible study about at least three times when Jesus faced rejection besides the time that the apostle Peter denied even knowing Him outright.

The way Jesus responded to people who rejected Him can teach us a lot about how to handle rejection in our own lives.

**1. The people in His hometown:** Matthew 13:54-58 gives us the following account:

*When He came to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is He not the carpenter's son? Is His mother not called Mary? And are not His brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?" And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house." Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.*

Rather than celebrating Jesus' wisdom and mighty works, the people in His hometown got offended. They had an attitude of "Who does He think He is?" They tried to diminish His present works by focusing on His background.

As a result of their unbelief in Him, Jesus could not do many mighty works in His hometown. Because of their dishonor, they could not receive from Jesus.

It was their loss.

Notice that Jesus did not beg and plead with them to accept Him. Instead, He kept it moving, focusing on fulfilling His call in the Lord. He desired to find those who would believe and receive from Him.

This reminds me of a saying that author Mark Victor-Hansen popularized in the sales profession. He called it "SW x 4":

"Some will, Some won't, So what? Someone's waiting!"

Jesus knew someone was waiting for Him, so He focused on that person rather than the ones who rejected Him.

**2. Some of His own disciples:** John 6:41-70 tells the story of how Jesus taught His disciples that He was the bread from heaven. Towards the end of that teaching however, Scripture records His startling statement:

*Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life. And I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me, and I in him."*

Admittedly, this statement is off-putting. Although we know Jesus wasn't asking His disciples to become cannibals and was speaking metaphorically of having Him live in us, most of them didn't understand that. Instead, this was their reaction:

*From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

Rather than just humble themselves and ask Jesus what He meant, the disciples who left just said, "Forget this, I'm out of here!"

Their relationship with Jesus was shallow. If it had not been, they wouldn't have left.

However, the 12 disciples had already decided they wanted the eternal life that Jesus offered. So they stayed with Him and continued to learn from Him.

Notice that Jesus did not go after the ones who left; He focused on the ones who stayed.

**3. The Pharisees, Sadducees and Scribes:** You would expect this group of people to welcome Jesus with open arms. As the Jewish religious leaders, they knew about the Messianic prophecies. They also knew that Jesus fulfilled them all. Yet they chose willful ignorance, so caught up in maintaining the letter of the Law that they completely missed its spirit.

They showed no love, mercy, nor compassion for the people.

When Jesus healed a woman with a spirit of infirmity (see Luke 13:10-17), the ruler of the synagogue got indignant. Why? Because the healing was done on the Sabbath day. You would think that He would celebrate the woman's getting free of the spirit that bound her.

Jesus was blunt in responding to this man:

*The Lord answered him, "You hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead it away to water it? Then should not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham whom Satan has bound these eighteen years, be loosed from this bondage on the Sabbath?" When He said this, all His adversaries were ashamed. And all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.*

Jesus was more concerned with doing what was right rather than gaining people's approval. He always wanted God's approval above man's approval.

In summary, you may experience rejection as you seek to fulfill God's will for your life. But you have to know that God created you on purpose, for a purpose.

There are some people whom God has called you to encourage, to advise, to teach, to serve. Some will embrace you while others won't. That is life.

If Jesus wasn't above rejection, neither are you as His disciple.

He teaches us:

*You have heard that it was said, "you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*

If you are in God's will and following God's word, then His opinion matters above all others—yes, even above your own. So focus on your purpose and becoming all that God who created you to be.

If you try to be someone else, you will always be second best.  
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*Once 240 pounds and a size 22, **Kimberly Taylor** can testify of God's healing power to end binge eating. She is an author and the creator of the Christian weight-loss website . Visit today for inspirational health and weight-loss tips.*

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