Lesson 17: Accepted in the Beloved (Rejection)

Healing Streams Ministry, Savannah, GA. All scriptures are from the ESV unless otherwise noted.

Introduction
Traumatic experiences can begin to sow feelings of rejection within us, especially if these were sins of verbal, physical or sexual abuse directed against us. In fact, every sin against us is a form of rejection, even the well-meaning, conditional love of parents and teachers who put their approval of us on a performance basis. Even, perfect love must at times reject behavior and attitudes that are not right, but never the person who we are deep down, created and loved by God. To be rejected (for who we are) by the looks, words or deeds of others is a tremendously painful traumatic experience in itself. Many people—the shy, the perfectionists, the exhibitionists, the high achievers—organized their whole lives around trying to avoid rejection by others, while seeking to reap their approvals. The math on this is terrible: ten approvals can be easily wiped out by one rejection. And the pain of possible rejection keeps millions hiding their real self from others (even from God), running from true intimacy, love and life into the safer, shallow waters of meaningless relationships and purposeless lives. Rejection is a gigantic stronghold in the land promised to us that must be brought down!

Accepted in the Beloved
Our Father will never reject or forsake us. From before the worlds were created He has loved us and desired us. We are secure in Him. This is the antidote for any rejection we feel. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world... Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself... wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. Ephesians 1:3-6 KJV

People can and will reject and forsake us. Rejection by others is extremely painful to experience—if our hearts are secretly looking to other people to declare our worth to us. If our hearts had been established in God’s love for us, as Jesus was, we could have handled the pain of rejection as He did. Fortunately, it is never too late to learn. Let the pain of rejection that you have experienced drive you to fastening your heart on what God says about you—not people! God’s view of you is the Truth that will set you free. Learn to fall out of agreement with the compelling power of the enemy’s beliefs about you.

What is rejection?
- It is a sin against us (God has commanded everyone to love and accept us as He does).
- It is a devastating lie (there may be sin in us worth rejecting, but we are not sin).
- It is a major component of all psychological illness (very damaging to our sense of self).
- It becomes our own sin (unbelief in God; idolatry of others)—when we agree with it.
- It is an evil spirit (one that delights to feel and express rejection in us and towards others).

The sin of receiving of rejection and agreeing with it is the real source of all the pain that follows. The pain of being rejected need only last for the moment, but holding on to it ensures that it will continue to torment us. It also opens a door to the kingdom of darkness to bring even worse pain and oppression upon us through the fear of man and through self-rejection (see Lesson 18). Of course in seeking people’s approvals, we never realized that we
were being trained by an unseen enemy in the ways of idolatry. And yet by seeking our worth through others, rather than through God, we have been making other people’s opinions be a god to us. Thank God, this is not held against us (2Co 5:19) and we can begin to find freedom by recognizing sin as sin and turning from our idolatry of others’ opinions to live instead by what God declares about us.

Have we become “addicted” to approval by others? Turning from that false god will leave us sorely lacking a sense of worth unless we can stir our faith to truly trust in and rely upon the acceptance our Father is giving us for free every moment of the day. It is here that we may encounter another problem—our unbelief. In any moment we could have joy, confidence, and assurance of acceptance imparted to us by our loving Father—but He gives it through our faith in His Word and not very often as a feeling. Faith is like an electric tool—it does little good, unless it is plugged into a “live” electric current. We need to plug what we believe about God into the current of a living faith. To do this we may first have to confess that the sin of unbelief has been capturing our heart and learn to walk by faith, not feeling.

The truth is that the pain of rejection, as terrible as it is, can actually help us—if we learn to let it turn us away from the wrong direction we keep trying to go with our hearts. All along they were only meant to be plugged in to God. The pain of rejection is like touching a hot stove—let’s learn the lesson and turn away from what burns us and live by what gives life.

The secret knowledge that snares us. Rejection plays into a painful inner “knowledge” that already makes us feel insecure—the knowledge of sin dwelling within us. Even as children we may have known that something was wrong on the inside, though we would likely not have been able to articulate it. The terrible truth about our fallenness is that for our sins and separation from God, we would all ultimately be rejected. Our sinfulness actually deserves hell—the ultimate rejection. But this truth of who we are apart from Christ is meant to be swallowed up by the greater truth of the gospel—that Jesus suffered rejection and abandonment by God on our behalf, so that we would never have to experience it. The gospel liberates us from the torment of rejection—if we believe it with our whole heart.

Defense mechanisms. These are ways of the flesh we may have used to defend ourselves against rejection when it happened to us, whether it was real or imagined. Such ungodly responses are sinful patterns that keep the lovely, new creation you from emerging.

1) Withdrawal. Retreating like a turtle into its shell in order to avoid rejection.
Remedy: Trust God and believe that He accepts you and will never reject you.
   I will receive whatever love they can give, and give whatever love they can receive.

2) Anger and hatred. Rejecting back when hurt by rejection.
Remedy: you can’t do much about others rejecting you, but you can end your rejection of them.

3) False identity. Searching for an identity other than who we are in Christ.
Remedy: as we learn to trust and obey Jesus, the Holy Spirit begins to unfold our true personality.

4) Perfectionism. Trying to avoid possible rejection by becoming “bullet proof” against criticism.
Beware: if you live by the approval of others, you will “die” by their disapproval.

Self-rejection works hand in hand with a spirit of rejection. It says there is a good reason why they are rejecting you—you are unworthy, unacceptable, unlovable. In listening to and agreeing with it you open yourself up to hating and rejecting yourself. Once you begin rejecting yourself, fear enters—the fear that no one could love you, even God. Fear begins to enter with everyone you meet, because you fear that they too might reject you. Yet, God knew you long before He chose to create you. The truth is that your Father made His loving plans for you long before your mother and father were even born—you are not an accident or
a mistake. He chose you before the foundation of the world to be a receiver of His great love and grace-filled plans through the gift of faith in His Son. **You are fully accepted, totally unique, unconditionally loved, forever embraced.** You have won the “spiritual lottery”—through no virtue of your own you are destined to live in endless joy. God’s mind is made up! He wants you. So, don’t listen to a spirit of rejection talking to you or casting a shadow on God’s feelings for you. You are an awesome work of His (Ps 139:14-15)!

**The way to freedom from rejection.** The first step to freedom is recognizing the sin or the evil spirit that needs to be dealt with as not being the real you, then deal with it accordingly. You are already accepted and saved by God, but without knowledge you cannot get free no matter how zealous you are (Ro 10:2).
- Accept and believe God’s truth—no matter what others or your feelings may say.
- Love and accept yourself—as God does. This is pleasing to God who loves you.
- Love and accept others. The Lord gives grace to those who show mercy.

**Become so good at receiving God’s love, that acceptance from others is just a bonus!**

End notes for Accepted in the Beloved
1. Description of rejection: Teaching and Insights from Be In Health® teaching and materials, Dr. Henry W. Wright, Thomaston, Georgia, seminar notes, October 2000.
2. For these 4 defense mechanisms: Ibid.

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**Notes/Journal**

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**Exercise**

Learning to recognize how rejection impacts us needs to go hand in hand with realizing that it is a **LIE** that we took too much to heart and believed in to our own hurt. As you go down the check list, rejoice that rejection is **NOT TRUE** about you (from heaven’s perspective), even if you still feel that it is. Fall out of agreement with past patterns and past beliefs. *

___ The feeling that you are not good enough, or that you are un-loveable, comes from rejection.
___ You feel like you don’t belong, like you’re not a member, or even a human being.
___ A spirit of rejection cannot and will not receive love or allow you to receive or feel it.
___ You want people to love you desperately, but you are always questioning—convinced they don’t.
___ An excess of introspection—looking to discover what is wrong with you. Being self-critical.
___ You are always super sensitive to possible signs of rejection—always on the alert.
___ Walking around with your head down comes from rejection.
___ You want to be accepted, but if people notice you, you feel embarrassed.
___ If someone is trying to get close to you, rejection will make you want to pull away.
___ Rejection treats others badly, even driving them away, then says: **see they didn’t really love me.**
___ Being hard towards others or feeling nothing for others comes from rejection that has dug in deep.
___ You find yourself “walking on eggs” around a person with a spirit of rejection.
___ A spirit of rejection comes equipped with a “scrambler” that twists around what people say or do.
to make it seem like you are being rejected when you aren’t. That scrambling is not really coming from you, but from the spirit of rejection that you are entertaining. ___ Rejection won’t allow you to clarify through honest and open communication what the other person really meant or intended. Because of fear or hurt it goes immediately into anger and rejection of self or of the other person. Good communication usually defeats the scrambler.

*This check list was modified from Be In Health, teaching and materials, Pastor Henry Wright, class notes.

**Discussion Questions**
Have the group consider these 10 possible sources of rejection in childhood. Is it any wonder that many people have developed coping strategies to deal with the pain of rejection?

___ Growing up without a father’s love
___ Generational patterns
___ Coming from an unwanted pregnancy
___ Undesired gender at birth
___ Child of adoption
___ Child of unmarried parents
___ Competition for love of parents
___ Divorce/blended families
___ Death of a parent when a child is young
___ Verbal, sexual, or physical abuse

Now, ask the group to discuss the coping strategies cited in the lesson: withdrawal, anger and hatred, false identity, and perfectionism. What are the drawbacks to each one? Why don’t they work? How do they hurt us? What are the reasons why we keep using such failed strategies? In addition to the prayer steps (repentance of carrying rejection and confession of the Truth about our total acceptance), what practical steps could help break these habits?

Discuss the applicability of **the 4 A’s:** “Because of a lack of **Affection,** I sought **Achievements** in order to gain **Approval** so that I could feel **Accepted.**” Repeat this faith statement: “I can finally rest secure in the Father’s unending affection for me and acceptance of me.”

**Main Points**
- Our Father will never reject us—His love and acceptance of us is perfect.
- It is a sin against us—God has commanded everyone to love and accept us as He does.
- It is a devastating lie (there may be sin in us worth rejecting, but we are not sin).
- It is a major component of all psychological illness (very damaging to our sense of self).
- It becomes our own sin (unbelief in God; idolatry of others)—when we agree with it.
- It is an evil spirit (it delights to feel and express rejection in us and towards others).
- It draws power from a terrible secret truth: deep down we know something is wrong.
- Apart from Jesus we would ultimately be rejected; because of Jesus are totally accepted!
- Let the pain of rejection push you into fully agreeing with The Father’s view of you.

**Digging Deeper**
**Jesus knows what rejection is.** He experienced rejection as a man for our sake—throughout His life and ministry and especially in His dying. He bore it at the cross in His inner being—the sins of our rejection; the sins of our giving it and our receiving of it. He felt the full force of it first come against Him and then enter within Him. He fully sympathizes (He 4:15).

He was despised and rejected by men; a man sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Isaiah 53:3

He also bore the rejection of the Father in the final moments on the cross as evidenced in His cry of dereliction, when He experienced the full penalty of sin that was due to us—the utter abandonment by God to death, separation and judgment upon sin. He spared us this.
And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?" Matthew 27:46

**Sword and Shield**

Stand on what God says about who you are in Him. No one says this will be easy, only that it really works if you work it. Standing firm on the truth of scripture is what even Jesus did in the face of strong temptation. We are not greater than He (Mt 10:24-25). Do it His way!

Yet the Lord had a delight in loving your fathers, and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as it is this day. Deuteronomy 10:15

But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me." "Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me." Isaiah 49:14-16

For thus said the Lord of hosts, after his glory sent me to the nations who plundered you, for he who touches you touches the apple of his eye. Zechariah 2:8

“Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:20

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 2 Corinthians 5:17

And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Romans 8:30-34

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. Ephesians 1:3-6

**Prayer Focus**

Rejection wants you to feel rejected, unworthy, insecure. The truth is that you have an enemy who hates and rejects you and who will always want you to feel rejected, but you can learn to rest your heart in God who will never leave you, forsake you, or reject you.

For he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." Hebrews 13:5

Learn to stop touching the hot stove of letting others declare to you your worth (the idolatry of others). Put your whole heart into what He says He sees when He looks your way! Father, forgive me for holding out my heart to other people to declare my worth to me. You have declared Your unending love for me and my eternal worth to You by sending Jesus to the cross. Forgive me for letting other people’s opinions matter to me more than Your own. I repent of and renounce all rejection I have ever taken on. It is not about what they did or said—it is all about my unwitting sin of holding on to it—and letting them be god to me. By an act of my will I am taking my heart back from others and giving it to You. May I only desire to see me in Your eyes. Thank you for Your steadfast love and acceptance. My heart is safe under the covering of Your perfect love.
Renunciations and Affirmations

Confess and renounce in the generations of your family on both sides. Repent for each spirit you have entertained. Then confess and believe in the way God’s Word is telling you to go.*

Example: Father, I renounce ___ (Abandonment, Accusation...) in the generations of my fathers and I repent of having walked in it myself. I repent of my own sin of ___ (Fear of abandonment...). Forgive me and break its power over me and off my generations.

Abandonment
Fear of abandonment
Fear of commitment
Pattern of abandoning others

Accusation
Accusation by others
Self-accusation
Self-condemnation
Accusation of others
Critical spirit

Rejection
Rejection by others real or imagined
Self-rejection
Self-hatred
Rejection of others
Condemning spirit

Fear
Fear of failure
Fear of man
Fear of rejection
Fear of vulnerability
Fear of other’s words and attitudes
Fear of speaking in public

Driven-ness to achieve
False burden bearing
False responsibility
Rescuing, co-dependency
Perfectionism, people pleasing
Discontentment

Unloving spirits
Unhealthy need for love
Unhealthy need for approval
Unhealthy need for acceptance
Unhealthy need for identity
False or fabricated personality
Insecurity, inferiority
Inability to receive love

Rebellion
Control
Manipulation
Unbelief in God’s acceptance of me

Self-pity
Depression, spirit of heaviness
Deep hurt and wounding of the spirit
Hopelessness, despair
Unbelief in God’s promises to me

* Renunciation list modified from Be In Health® teaching and materials, Dr. Henry W. Wright, Thomaston, Georgia, seminar notes, October 2000.

Putting feet to your prayers/stretch yourself!  📚

Tips on walking out of rejection. It is not easy, but it is do-able with God’s help.

- Continue to make yourself available to family, friends, and others who may reject you. Hiding won’t help. Besides if you keep taking on rejection, you clearly need the practice of learning to release it until this new way of living gets established.
- Of course it hurts! But let the pain of rejection keep pushing you into God’s heart—that is where your heart needed to be all along. Few of us get our hearts back where they belong without the pain of doing the wrong thing goading us to do the right thing at last.
- Even so, don’t go looking for rejection or set yourself up to receive it unnecessarily.
- If you get beat up it’s OK to withdraw a bit to heal, but then get right back in the battle.
- Beware of feelings that want to pull you back from others or that would make you want to blame them for what you are feeling. A spirit of rejection wants us to find reasons in others why we don’t have to love them unconditionally or serve them whole-heartedly. Reject it.
- Fear of vulnerability is no excuse for withdrawing from life—that very fear is of the devil!
- Watch out for the way feelings of rejection can lead into fault finding and judging.
- Make sure you begin each day basking in the bright Son-shine of Your Father’s love! Learn to hold fast to the great Truths of your complete safety in Him (see Lesson 10, page 72).