

Overcoming the Rejection Complex

Ken Birks, Pastor/Teacher

Opening Testimony of Personal Rejection:

- I grew up in a very strong Christian atmosphere with very strict parents.
- I went to public schools and experienced continued rejection by my peers because I wasn't allowed to participate in the worldly things they were involved in.
- I developed a rejection complex and came to accept rejection as the way life was.

Slide – Interactive Question #1

How many of you have been plagued by a Rejection Complex

- A. In the past I have suffered severely from rejection.
- B. I have in the past and I still deal with it on a regular basis
- C. I've been rejected from time to time, but it's no big deal
- D. I've never been rejected for anything

Testimony Continued:

- Following High School I joined the Army and went to Viet Nam
- While in Viet Nam I became a card carrying hippy, totally indulging in drugs from pot and LSD to Heroin.
- I fell in with the hippies or the heads as we were referred to, because, for the first time in my life, I felt like I was being accepted rather than rejected. I thought, "These guys will accept anybody."
- I remember finding it hard to believe that there were people who were actually nice and not mean.
- Eventually I realized that this whole lifestyle was an illusion and didn't produce anything positive in my life.

- In 1974 I gave my life to Christ and began the journey of being fulfilled in Christ by being the person who He had created me to be.

In this message today, I want to look at a couple of examples from the life of Jesus of how He experienced and dealt with rejection.

Slide – Isaiah 53:3 NKJV He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

Slide – The Message title is – Recovering From Rejection by Overcoming the Rejection Complex.

Example #1 – Jesus at Nazareth – Mark 6:1-6

Slides – Mark 6:1-6 NKJV Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. {2} And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, "Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! {3} "Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they were offended at Him. {4} But Jesus said to them, "**A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.**" {5} Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. {6} And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.

Slide – Why did these people reject Jesus?

1. **Slide – Familiarity** – They realized Jesus came from the same common heritage with an ordinary family and humble occupation. They rejected Jesus because of their familiarity with Him. It was the fullness of the saying "Familiarity breeds contempt."
2. **Slide – Guilt** – If the people really believed that someone just like them could make God known and perform acts of Divine mercy and compassion, works of healing and restoration, they would be guilty – indicted by their own belief.

- They would be guilty of not living up to their own potential
- Guilty of not being aware
- Guilty of being complacent and out of touch with God and His people in tangible ways
- It made them look impotent, complacent and guilty

Therefore, reject the offender and no offense can be taken, no guilt can be taken. By rejecting Him they could remain free, liberated to stay the same, unchanged, unmoved and unchallenged.

In this brief encounter, Jesus was faced with a fear that plagues most of humanity, a fear that many of us allow to dictate our choices in life, our choices of schools, choices of occupation, marital partners, leisure activity, etc.

Slide – The Fear of Rejection: The fear of not receiving approval, the fear of not being accepted is a motivating factor for so many decisions in life, even in our ordinary day-to-day lives.

Slide – Rejection produces a number of emotions in us:

1. The feeling of impotence & inadequacy
2. The feeling of being unaccepted
3. The feeling of doing something wrong or giving the wrong impression

The irony of Jesus' response to rejection is that He faced it not with fear but with amazement. He did not even deny rejection. He did not try to prove Himself by performing a special miracle or anything. He simply acknowledged the rejection with a note of amazement. Then, He picked up where he left off... He went about among the villages teaching.

Slide – Interactive Question #2

How do you handle rejection?

- A. I go out of my way to impress or convince
- B. I retreat or withdraw with my tail between my legs
- C. I lash out in anger
- D. Rejection is not a problem for me

If we choose one of the first three in the above – Rejection wins and the status quo is maintained – Things remain the same, unchanged, unchallenged. We stay stuck in the rejection complex.

Jesus did not fall into the trap of feeling responsible for other people's opinions or other people's feelings. He did not fall into the trap of trying to justify Himself. Nor did he cave into and give up or protest or stomp out.

Slide – Why Do I Need To Overcome the Rejection Complex?

Slide – Matthew 13:20-21 NKJV "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; {21} "yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

Slide – Why Do I Need To Overcome the Rejection Complex?

1. The Seed of God's Word Will Not Take Root.
2. We Will Eventually Stumble and Fall Away

The truth is, as Christians we are called to rejection just as Jesus was.

Slide – 2 Timothy 3:12 (NKJV) Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

If we haven't properly dealt with the rejection complex of our past, we won't be equipped to deal with the rejection that comes as a result of identifying with Christ. **We will stumble in a time of need.**

No one ever plans to backslide or fall away. It happens over a period of time by not responding to life properly. As a result, the seed of God's Word doesn't take root and when something comes along and really tests our faith there is nothing there to hold us steady in the midst of the storm.

Now that we understand the problem of the rejection complex and the threat that it represents in our walk with the Lord, let's move on to How to overcome it.

Example #2 – Jesus and the Samaritans – Luke 9:52-56

Slide – How to Overcome the Rejection Complex:

Slide – Luke 9:52-56 (NKJV) And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. 53 But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. 54 And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?" 55 But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. **56 "For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them."** And they went to another village.

Slide – How to Overcome the Rejection Complex:**1. Know Who You Are and What You Have In Christ.**

Jesus knew who He was and where He was going. The disciples did not know what Spirit they were of. They were totally unaware of who they were and what they had in Christ. They are ready to respond in anger by calling down fire from heaven. These disciples had a severe rejection complex.

Slide – Interactive Question #3

Do you know who you are in Christ and what you have?

- A. Yes
- B. No – It's still very unclear to me

Slide – Who You are and What You Have In Christ:

- You are a child of God – one of His favorites – John 1:12
- You are seated in heavenly places with Christ – Ephesians 2:6
- You have inherited all things with Him – Ephesians 1:17-18
- You are more than a conqueror in Him – Romans 8:37
- You have the Holy Spirit of God with you – Acts 1:8
- You have the kingdom of God within you – Luke 17:21
- You have the mind of Christ – 1 Corinthians 2:16
- You are partakers of the divine nature – 2 Peter 1:4
- You always triumph in Christ – 2 Corinthians 2:14

This is the seed of God's Word that He wants to get engrafted into our hearts that will replace the rejection complex. If you begin to believe and walk in all that you are in Christ, there is no room for the rejection complex.

Slide – How to Overcome the Rejection Complex:
2. Be Consumed With Your Destiny and Purpose in Life.

Vs. 53 because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem.

Jesus was totally consumed with His mission and purpose in life. His face was set as flint. Even though He knew He was headed into unpleasant waters He was firmly fixed on His mission in life. Because He was so consumed with His mission and purpose He was able to see this event through a different paradigm.

How many of us are truly consumed with God's purpose being fulfilled in our lives? **The word set means firmly fixed.**

There is a greater understanding and revelation of Scripture to those who are consumed with fulfilling their destiny in God.

Slide – John 7:17 (NKJV) "If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.

You are able to see things through the kingdom perspective because the eyes of your understanding have been opened to see through this paradigm rather than the paradigm of the rejection complex.

Personal Illustration:

Even though I suffered severely from a rejection complex in my youth, I do not remember going through a phase as a Christian when I had to deal with it in a major way. The reason was, because I was so caught up in the purpose of Christ and His destiny for my life that I was healed without even realizing it.

To illustrate this, I had something happen to me in the early 80's that tested my healing.

I had just been ordained as an associate pastor in the church I was attending at the time.

Shortly after being ordained another person came into the body who had been around and had been in ministry positions before in our fellowship of

churches. My pastor came to me one day and told me quite clearly that he was in and I was out.

I was devastated for about 2 hours or so, and then God reminded me who I was in Christ and what He had called me to be and I began to focus in that direction.

I set my focus on the person I was in Christ and what God's destiny was for me rather than on the rejection of the moment. I continued to support this pastor and his vision for the church wholeheartedly. I didn't miss a beat. It was because I was consumed with God's purpose and will that I was able to do this.

As it turned out, I became the Sr. Pastor of that church within a few short months due to some unfortunate circumstances that happened in the life of the pastor.

I wouldn't have been able to step into the position of being the Sr. Pastor of that church for 12 years nor would I be standing here speaking to you today if I had given into the rejection complex. But because I was consumed with God's purpose, I am still alive and kicking and pursuing God's purpose and destiny for my life.

What would have happened to my life if I had given into the rejection complex? What would I have missed?

Closing Comments:

What have you missed because of the rejection complex? It's not too late to get healed and move forward. God delights in making the crooked paths straight.

The unchanging truth is that you are unconditionally loved, totally accepted, and complete in Christ. Only God can meet all our needs. He is our sufficiency in every situation. You and I belong to God through our relationship with Jesus Christ. We hold a valued place in the family of God that no one else can occupy.

If you desire to destroy the rejection complex and pursue God with all of your heart and be consumed with His purpose and calling for your life, stand with me while I pray.

Let's Pray!