



Contents

Lesson one	Understanding rejection
Lesson two	Why rejection is a problem
Lesson three	The source of rejection
Lesson four	The roots and fruit of rejection
Lesson five	The many cases of rejection
Lesson six	Jesus and rejection
Lesson seven	Dealing with rejection
Lesson eight	Moving on from rejection

Lesson One

Understanding rejection

What is rejection

It is an inability to give or receive love. It is often linked back to childhood, and probably to parents who have the same problem.

Rejection does not mean there is no love in the home, but the love may lack important ingredients such as: affection, touch or affirmation.

Rejection is never invited in, it just happens.

Someone has said that rejection is the greatest undiagnosed, therefore untreated, illness in the Body of Christ today.

How do people feel rejected?

Sometimes it's impossible to explain or understand but it is felt.

Many people feel unloved or unwanted, a sense of being worthless or valueless.

This leads to inadequacy, inferiority or insecurity.

'Everyone is better than me or does things better than me. I don't feel secure in who I am, I have no identity, no role.'

Often this leads to self-rejection and you begin a process of speaking negative words to yourself. This can lead to destructive thoughts being entertained.

How can a person who feels rejected handle love or affirmation spoken or shown through affection? All the barriers of self-protection go up, fear of further rejection is around the corner. No-one is allowed close.

Rejection affects all relationships

How can a person who feels rejected unconditionally accept the love of God? It's never easy.

Getting close to others is difficult.

It is easy to feel rejected by others without much happening.
It is easy to put the barriers up and refuse to let others in.

Sometimes people can't give love because they have not received love.
Sometimes people don't understand what love is.
You can't receive what you don't recognise.
You can't give what you don't possess.

Definition

- To refuse to acknowledge or to accept
- To forsake
- To refuse to have or use
- To cast or throw away as useless, unsatisfactory or worthless.
- To discard as not wanted or not fulfilling requirements.
- To refuse to love.

Rejection can result from a denial of love.

When you are loved you are approved and accepted; when you are rejected you are disapproved and refused.

We all need, require and demand love.

God has made us that way.

Love develops personal growth, gives a sense of security, develops a healthy and whole life.

Rejection causes a wound of 'self' and problems develop within.

The hurt personality will exhibit behavioural patterns that are not normal.

This crisis with identity can result in a mixture of withdrawing, protecting, or a rebellious attitude.

Self examination

- How do you respond when you look in a mirror or look at photographs of yourself?
Do you feel good?
- Are you necessary to what God is doing? Do you count? Are you needed? Is there a sense of self-worth and personal value.
- Are you really loved? Do people really love you? Is there a healthy sense of belonging? Is there an awareness of being wanted, accepted, cared for, enjoyed and loved.
- Do you feel you have the ability to get through life? Do you cope with situations? Are you able to meet life? Do you feel competent?
- Can you release what you have of God for his Kingdom? Or do you think you are locked up in your self,

Lesson Two

Why rejection is a problem

David and Mephibosheth

2 Samuel 4:4 and 9: 1-13

Mephibosheth was one of the many rejected people mentioned in the Bible. His father Jonathan and grandfather Saul were killed in battle. Only five at the time, his nurse shocked and fearful at the news picked him up and ran away to hide him. As she hurried to leave, she dropped him, and he became crippled in his feet for the rest of his life.

Mephibosheth was not only crippled physically at an early age but also psychologically. He was left physically deformed which would isolate him from others and with it came a sense of self-rejection, self-hate, inadequacy, inferiority, depression and much more.

His name from the Hebrew, it is believed means - 'from the mouth of the shameful thing.'

He had lost his rightful inheritance after the death of his family, he grew up a broken man, physically and emotionally and ended up living in the unfortunate place of 'Lo Debar', which means barrenness, infertile, no pasture.

Rejection can begin at a very early age, and will grow into a major problem.

Years later King David takes steps to help and puts some proposals to him. His answer is revealing: "***What is your servant that you should notice a dead dog like me?***" He was still full of past hurts. They had not gone away and all he could do was communicate negatively.

Yet the King's words were words of restoration and reconciliation. David gave him back his lost inheritance, and insisted that Mephibosheth eat at his table for the rest of his life as one of the King's sons.

Rejection will stop us sitting at the King's table.

Rejection affects the whole person

Spirit

Man's spirit is God's gift that brought him life. The human spirit is his spiritual source, like the source of a river. Out of this flows his response to life. It is the aspect of man and woman through which God encounters them, and by which they become aware and experience him, a God consciousness. The Bible is clear that this area of our being can be affected negatively. ***Proverbs 18:14 'a man's spirit sustains him in sickness, but a crushed spirit who can bear?'*** Rejection will affect a person deeply even in their spirit. This is why many rejected people have problems in their response to God as Father.

Soul

Humans are self-aware and self-conscious beings. The physical body houses the real person, yet is very much joined to it. The personality is formed, simply, by the will, the area of decision, choice or behaviour, the intellect, the area of thought, reason or knowing and the emotions, the area of feelings.

Rejection can affect any or all of these areas to the extent that a person is not able to behave as they want, choose as they would like to, or make right decisions.

When you are told that you are no good again and again, it will affect you on the inside. You will behave that way because you believe that you are no good. Your emotions will show others that you believe it; your emotions will show you that it is true, and you will begin to reject yourself.

Body

Some are rejected because they have been told constantly that they are ugly, or made fun of because of certain physical problems. Many people think they are the wrong shape, too big, too small, too thin, too fat, their noses are too long etc., Rejection and self-rejection will not wait to come in, it will affect you quickly!

Identity and image

God has called us as individuals with unique personalities. We are all different and we are all important to God. As men and women we image or reflect God's likeness. We are not only made to communicate with him but also to show him in the reality of what he represents.

Self-image is the way we see ourselves, what we believe about ourselves. When we become Christians, the Holy Spirit makes us alive to God. This God image now in us, works through our self-image, i.e. the soul or mind, will, emotion and intellect. If our self-image is unhealthy there will be a conflict in the way we see ourselves with the way God sees us.

1) The early years - parents

As children we totally depend on the reactions around us to arrive at an understanding of who we are. A child is so open and teachable. The most important people in our lives as children were our parents. A child's perception of life is filtered through the words, attitudes and behaviour of its parents. As we look into our childhood mirror, what reflection do we see?

2) The world within

Even from childhood we pick up so much of the world's ideas and its rubbish. The way we feel, our senses, our nerves, our capacity to respond, can affect the way we see ourselves, positively or negatively.

3) Satan the accuser

He is the father of lies, the one who will whisper to condemn, to bring guilt, to accuse. He will do what he can to stop us believing that God actually accepts us.

Within us all there is a need for recognition. In Jesus that is fulfilled. Yet it is easy to behave in a certain way to gain acceptance. It is not only children who misbehave to gain attention. Yet in Jesus we not only get peace with God, but with ourselves.

We know that God sent his Son to restore and redeem fallen man and woman and that he was the very stamp of God's nature and being. Yet so often rejection will get to the very root of our identity and image and affect us so deeply, that we cannot live as we want to as Christ's people. We still feel worthless, useless, inferior, inadequate.

Proverbs 23:7. "As a man thinks, so he is." Rejection will make us think and act in a way that is almost the opposite to what we know the Christian life to be. The greatest commandments were summed up very clearly by Jesus.

Matthew 22:37 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your should and with all your mind and love your neighbour as yourself."

How can you love God and your neighbour if you can't accept or even love yourself.

Lesson Three

The source of rejection

Often people are not aware that their problems are sourced in rejection because they only look at the fruit and do not go further.

The origin of rejection is in the very beginning of humanity, with Adam and Eve and their sons, Cain and Abel.

In order for roots to grow, something has to be planted and the surrounding conditions have to be right. First the ground is prepared, and then the seed is planted.

The Garden

This was a place of harmony. They were fulfilled as man and woman. They were totally affirmed and accepted in their identity, and secure in their role. There was a true sense of worth and belonging and they lived in the garden and met with God.

It was here where God gave the man and woman a commission which was to last forever.

Genesis 1:28. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over every living creature.”

God told them to “be fruitful”, “subdue” and “rule”. He gave them everything they required to live on this earth with satisfaction and fulfilment.

The Enemy

It was in this fantastic location that Satan came to tempt them. God had not only commissioned them, but gave them some commands to obey. Satan when he tempted them challenged them in their role and identity.

“Why, your eyes are not yet opened, there is so much more to see and know, you will be like God.”

He undermined God’s Word, gave them false expectations, distorted their image of themselves as children of God, and then destroyed their relationship with God and damaged their relationship with each other.

The Choice

God gave man and woman the right to choose. They decide to reach out for more. There was nothing more of course, except deception, and they lost far more than they realised. God has given us a right to decide about issues. We have the ability to make right and wrong choices. Adam and Eve made the wrong choice. They not only disobeyed God but rebelled against him and therefore rejected him. They chose rejection and the damage was done.

The Curse

When God entered the garden Adam and Eve were in hiding. They had rejected God's ways. God asked why and neither would take their responsibility. God made them both accountable.

They had lost their spiritual, mental, emotional and physical harmony with each other and God.

Because they rejected God, he rejected them from the garden and that disobedience became a curse on them as they went into a fallen world.

They lost their spirituality, their authority, and their inheritance, and death had set in. Satan took great advantage by putting many negatives on Adam and Eve, including rejection. Regretfully the consequences were soon to affect their first two sons, and rejection quickly became a root.

The sons - Cain and Abel

Adam and Eve were isolated, lonely and damaged. They felt, and were, a rejected couple. Even the animals and the land seemed against them. The boys Cain and Abel were born into this.

The boys were very different:

1 John 2:12. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his actions were evil and his brother's were righteous.

Cain was the firstborn, it seems some of the rejection of the parents has passed onto him.

There is something about the firstborn that is important to God, maybe Satan wanted to destroy it right at the beginning.

Something had come through the generational link that affected him more than his brother.

The whole of the human race had been affected.

The offerings

Cain brought the fruit of the soil as an offering to God, and Abel brought the first fruits of his flocks. God accepted Abel's but not Cain's - Why?

Cain wanted to please God by what he had done. He wanted God to accept the works of his hands and affirm him for what he had done. Cain was worshipping self and not God. Abel offered by faith, Cain offered by works.

Cain offered because he wanted acceptance and affirmation. Abel offered as a response to God and God alone.

The Reaction

Cain was very angry. A mixture of depression and self-pity, and he began to be rebellious. God accepted Abel's offering but not Cain. Who was Cain angry with, God, or Abel, or both?

God responded with grace and compassion:

Genesis 4: 6,7. Why?.....if you do what is right will you not be accepted?

The issue revolves around the word 'if'. Obedience will mean acceptance, disobedience will mean rejection.

The Warning

There is the critical stage. God gives Cain a warning:

Genesis 4:7. "If you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door: it desires to have you, but you must master it."

God is telling Cain about what is happening in the spiritual realm. He is saying there is still a chance to get it right. He is showing him that the enemy is waiting at his door. He is in a serious situation. Cain has a personal responsibility here. He can't blame everyone else. He must 'master' to overcome. If he chose God's way, God would give him the necessary grace.

The Judgement

Cain took no notice, deceived Abel, enticed him into a field and killed him. The hatred and anger was released onto his own brother. Cain became his own victim. He had rejected God and his ways therefore became rejected by God.

He became a marked man, a restless wanderer.

Rejection is tied up with identity and image.
The restless wanderer never finds fulfilment in who he or she is.

Something is always driving him 'to something more.'

Restlessness is a control which drives a person so that they are never satisfied in who they are, and what they do. This is the source of rejection. Cain then self-rejects with his cry of self-pity "***my punishment is more than I can bear.***" Cain continues to blame God "***You are driving me from the land.***" Ending in fear of rejection "***Whoever finds me will kill me.***"

Lesson Four

The roots and fruit of rejection

What are roots

When seed has been planted and the conditions are right, it is not long before roots begin to grow.

- The roots are the hidden part, yet vital to the whole.
- The roots of a tree give it anchorage and support.
- The roots often grow as deep as the tree is tall.
- The roots can be more difficult to remove than the tree.

The roots of rejection need careful and sensitive handling when exposed.

It is easy to pick the fruit from a tree. However, if the roots are not dealt with the fruit will return time and time again.

The roots of rejection

There are three areas which seem to sum up the roots of rejection.

1) Rebellion

In the context of rejection, rebellion is seen as an aggressive reaction to the person who is perceived to show rejection. The emotional reaction can be expressed through a display of anger, arrogance or criticism which can remain deeply hidden. At some stage there will be an eruption and damage will be done to them and to anyone around them. Many people with this root just hurt themselves. This can be through hating themselves or being physically violent to their own bodies.

2) Self-rejection

This is a reaction whereby the person who is rejected turns that rejection into themselves. It can lead eventually to suicide or attempted suicide. It is not difficult to turn thoughts, words and actions of self-rejection inward. Yet when we reject ourselves, we will finally reject the God who made us.

3) Self-protection

This is also known as 'fear of rejection.' Fear is always around the corner when rejection affects a person. The fear of additional hurt will create or release defence barriers that prove difficult to get through. Can you trust anyone? Will you be hurt again by that same person? You close off those inner feelings or emotions. You take control and no-one is going to get close enough to damage you again.

Points to note

Rejection violates a person throughout their being. The very character, personality and heart of a person can be affected. Evil spirits will enter into a person's life, or oppress them, because the hurt or wound of rejection gives an entrance. They cannot enter at will. They must have a reason, an open-door. Rejection becomes that door and over a period of time with some people, they become demonised.

Because rejection affects any person of any personality type, there will be different ways people react, therefore rejection could manifest in any or all of the three roots. These roots can be demonic in their own right. There are demons called rebellion, self-rejection and fear of rejection. The three roots in themselves point clearly to rejection. Just as the trunk of a tree grows out from its roots, so rejection is recognised by its roots, and often a demon is behind it.

Another demonic power to be considered is the 'orphan spirit'. It is clearly linked with rejection and takes root in the very early months or years of a person. Many people as children do not receive any kind of love from their parents and this causes a wound, and ultimately a spirit will enter that person.

Rejected people have a fear of further rejection and they will, if given the right, control in order to make sure they don't get hurt. Control can lead to the 'Jezebel' spirit affecting a person. This spirit will dominate, accuse or transfer guilt, release anger, or deny responsibility.

Often with rejection in the early years the hurt child goes within itself because it cannot cope. The child becomes locked up and it is often years later before the emotions come out. Adults who are in part still little boys or little girls react very emotionally in situations they cannot handle. They are aggressive, dominant, manipulative, withdrawn and much more.

What is fruit

Fruit is the product or result of something, As a seed is sown, it will root into the ground and ultimately produce - usually above the ground - a fruit.

Rejection produces fruit. It is important to understand and recognise the fruit of rejection in view of the importance of distinguishing roots. It is easy to identify the fruit, and deal with it, without touching the root.

Reactions

A reaction is a particular response to a situation. With rejection, reaction comes in two forms.

1) Outward, visible or external

Here people can be over-emotional, expressing all kinds of outward and loud emotions such as anger, be overbearing in behaviour, or aggressive in attitude. Rejected people sometimes defend themselves by attacking others.

2) **Hidden or internal**

Here there maybe a controlled suppression of the emotions, which can be like a dam. Things can be hidden which go back years but still have an effect. Rejected people often escape into themselves. They don't seem to cope with reality, it seems easier to hide, and not communicate honestly.

In both areas the response is unconscious. So the real person is not seen. This will affect identity and role, which in turn will affect the whole of their lives.

Lesson Five

The many causes of rejection

Causes

It is important to see that there are many causes that bring rejection and that it is possible to be affected, at the beginning of life, or at any time throughout it. We need to look into these specific areas because it is from there that the roots and fruit of rejection develop.

Conception

Rejection can begin in the form of a wound, hurt or demonic oppression before a child is born. Many adults have found that the roots of their problems have been sourced in childhood or even earlier.

Quote from 'The Secret Life of the Unborn Child' by Verney and Kelley 1981.

"We know that the unborn child is an aware, reacting human being who from the sixth month on (and perhaps earlier) leads an active emotional life.

The foetus can see, hear, experience, taste and at a primitive level, even learn before the birth. Most importantly, he can feel.

What a child feels and perceives, begins his attitudes and expectations about himself. Whether he ultimately sees himself (and hence acts), as a happy or sad, aggressive or meek, secure or anxiety-ridden person depends, in part, on the messages he gets about himself in the womb.

Therefore it is clear that a denial of love can affect a child before it is born. The womb becomes the child's first home. Is it friendly or unfriendly, peaceful or hostile?

The following are reasons for rejection at birth:

- An unwanted pregnancy
- Illegitimacy

Deuteronomy 23:2. No one born of a forbidden marriage nor any of his descendants may enter the assembly of the Lord, even down to the tenth generation. This can open the door to a spirit of poverty, uncleanness and insecurity.

- Already has too large a family
- Financial problems
- Conception too soon after marriage
- Fear of the birth, fear of deformity
- Attempted abortion
- Babies born through rape, incest, adultery, alcoholic or drug dependent mothers
- Separation or divorce. Baby is to blame
- A shock or trauma during pregnancy
- A mother becoming pregnant later in life.

It is good to know, however, God is very concerned about children in the womb.

Psalm 139: 13-17 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts O God! How vast is the sum of them!

Infancy

The first few months and years of a child's life are foundational and formative. Children mirror those who are close to them and their spirits are wide open to influence.

- Words affect the child i.e. 'you were a mistake', 'we didn't want any children' 'I wish you had never been born!' Etc.,
- Children can be separated too long, too early from parents.
- Children given up for adoption in the early months or years.
- Preferential treatment of one child over others.
- The trauma or shock of death, divorce or separation.
- Physical disabilities or speech impediments.
- Prolonged childhood illness.
- Parents who confront and argue in front of their children.

School life and teenage years

- Over criticised, over-disciplined, dominated, ignored or favoured.
- Being sent to boarding school.
- Being bullied, unfairly treated by teachers or children.
- Under pressure to succeed.
- Disinterest of parents.
- Religious pressure.
- Personal comments about self e.g. 'I'm no good', etc.
- Exclusion from a group of friends.
- Being called names.
- Being laughed at in class.
- Being put down in school or home.
- Constant sickness causing academic problems.
- Injustice in being punished wrongly.
- Being picked on by a teacher or ridiculed.
- Pressure from parents regarding brothers or sisters.
- Guilt over teenage pregnancy.

Family rejection

- Being called names by family members emphasising personal features.
- Constant criticism
- Poverty
- Immigration difficulties i.e. language, racism.
- Speech or learning difficulties.

- Domination by one member of the family.
- Cruel parents.
- Unhappy parents.
- Alcohol or any other addiction in the family.
- A family member convicted of crime.
- Parents showing no active interest in child's development.
- Being an only child, possibly spoilt or possessed.
- Lack of affection in the family.
- Redundancy or long periods of unemployment.
- Financial disasters.
- Separation, broken engagement, divorce.
- Sexual abuse inside or outside the family.
- Feelings of not being physically attractive.
- Being ashamed of one's sex.
- An inability to talk to either or both parents.
- Being forced into adult responsibilities too soon.
- Ill treatment by step-parents.
- Being forced by parents into wrong behaviour e.g. stealing.
- The premature death of parents.
- Being a middle child and ignored.
- Being an eldest child with unrealistic expectations put on you.
- Coping with the fact of adoption.
- Being handicapped or disabled.
- Being fostered.
- Children rejecting their parents especially when old.
- A refusal to have sexual relations in marriage.
- Unfaithfulness in marriage.
- An inability to have children.
- Being evacuated in time of war.

Abuse

Unfortunately, this is becoming more common. There are different types of abuse.

- 1) Verbal or mental abuse. Negative pressure by thought or word. Being put down, long silences or being ignored.
- 2) Physical abuse. Throughout childhood and into marriage. In addition to the physical side is the emotional hurt and humiliation. There is a right way to discipline a child!
- 3) Sexual abuse. If a child or young person is abused from within their family, the guilt, fear and confusion will be great, and they will endure the shame because of loyalty or the fear of reprisals or threats. It may hinder marriage in later life. The person will grow up with a sense of defilement and will be in conflict, with hate, fear and distrust. Abuse means betrayal.

Rejection in marriage

Separation and/or divorce will lead to some form of rejection. The marriage ceremony requires confession before God, one another and witnesses that create a spiritual bond. The tearing that separation and divorce brings causes deep wounding and often rejection. In addition to the sense of being cast aside and made to feel worthless there is the losing of income, home, friends, and often for children their relationship with one or both parents.

Lesson Six

Jesus and rejection

The key to all we have been looking at with regard to rejection lies in Jesus. There was no one more rejected than Jesus. Someone has said he was the most rejected person who ever lived.

We have seen that rejection has been with us from the beginning of life, and how its source is spiritual, although it does affect us physically, mentally and emotionally.

We need to consider how Jesus identified with rejection from the beginning of his life in the womb of Mary through to his death on the cross, and understand that he did so in order to set us free from its' grip.

The amazing thing is that Jesus never let rejection overcome or control him. He never manifested any fruit of rejection because the roots were never allowed to take hold. That is fantastic in itself because rejection **did** affect him. Finally, along with our sin it helped kill him.

His birth and early life

The parents of Jesus had to go through emotional problems with family, friends and the community because of her apparent immoral behaviour. Mary could have been stoned. Joseph nearly broke his contract to marry her. In the last three days of her pregnancy she had to undergo an arduous journey.

There was not much care afforded her on her arrival at Bethlehem. Surely Joseph had family there.

The birth took place in a stable/cave with animals in attendance. In the early years they learned King Herod sought to kill Jesus. When Jesus was presented in the Temple his parents were so poor they could only offer a pair of doves or two young pigeons.

They fled to Egypt as refugees.

They returned to an obscure, very poor town called Nazareth, where Joseph set up his business.

When Jesus was twelve he went through a crisis when he was missing for three days. Tempers were frayed, and there was a lot of reaction and misunderstanding. Many accused Jesus of not caring about his parents, how this must have hurt him! Did their misunderstanding lead to a conflict in their relationship?

His period of ministry

Throughout the 3 1/2 years of his ministry, the over-riding factor was that Jesus was rejected by virtually everyone. He even talked about it himself in order to prepare the disciples for the crucifixion.

His own people

Rejection started in his home town when, after speaking in the synagogue, the people were so furious they tried to throw him over a cliff.

Later they took offence again and cynically asked where a simple carpenter could get wisdom and miraculous powers. They called him a Samaritan, a great insult to a Jew in those days. More than once they said that he had a demon. They did not like him going to the house of Zacchaeus.

At the end the Jews demanded the death of Jesus and continually mocked and insulted him as he hung on the cross.

John 1: 10-11 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

The leaders of the people

From the very beginning there was trouble because Jesus had authority and power.

Jesus began to affect the common people and they followed him. He began to undermine the tradition of Jewish society and the religious and political leaders saw their hold begin to slip. So they began to plot against him. They claimed he was a blasphemer because he talked about forgiving sins.

The leaders condemned him because of some of the things his disciples did.

They continually pushed Jesus to do miraculous signs.

The leaders tried to catch him out with awkward questions.

The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin finally tried to get evidence against Jesus to condemn him. They couldn't without false accusation.

The leaders insulted and mocked him as he hung on the cross.

His family

Incredibly even his family showed Jesus rejection. They wanted to take charge of him because they thought he was mad. Basically they did not believe in him.

His disciples, his friends

After 3 years with Jesus not one of his friends were with him in the end. His hard message caused many of his disciples to no longer follow him. He was betrayed by one of his disciples

Jesus predicted they would all fall away even though they denied it. Peter who declared his loyalty denied him at the end. In the garden of Gethsemane his friends fell asleep. Everyone deserted him and fled.

His own words

Jesus repeatedly foretold his coming rejection and death.

Luke 9:22 ***“The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and the lawyers.”***

Luke 9:44 ***“The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men.”***

Luke 17:25 ***“But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.”***

Luke 18:32 ***“He will be handed over to the Gentiles, they will mock him, insult him, flog him, spit on him and kill him.”***

His greatest rejection

Jesus not only suffered the physical and mental pain of crucifixion but he also had to deal with the spiritual side. This meant Jesus taking upon himself at the cross our sin which led to the rejection of his Father.

Isaiah 53 sums it up. ***“He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hid their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he took up our infirmities, griefs and sicknesses and carried our sorrows and pain, yet we consider him stricken by God, smitten by him and afflicted. He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities and the punishment that brought us peace was upon him The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all yet it was the Lord’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer.”***

His greatest rejection was evident on the cross when he cried, ***“my God, my God why have you forsaken me?”***

The rejection of Jesus was made complete at the cross when the Father turned his back on his son. Why? It was their love for you and me that made it happen. The cross then became a ‘divine exchange’ for us. Instead of being and feeling rejected, we can receive healing, acceptance, affirmation, love security and so much more through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Questions regarding personal and family history

In counselling it is helpful to ask a series of questions relating to the history of the counselled. These questions will open up a person regarding issues in their life and family that could be important to their healing. The object is to get the person to think through their life from conception to birth, and right through to where they are today and their family history.

Lesson Seven

Dealing with rejection

Even though God has dealt with rejection through his Son, there is a responsibility on our side to do something about it. Our response should not be passive; faith is always active. We need to appropriate (to take for ones own use) that which has already been given to us in Christ.

Our responsibility

- We have a part to play in our healing and wholeness
- We need to answer for our conduct, behaviour, feelings and actions.
- Personal accountability for Christians is crucial.
- Our behaviour is our behaviour.
- As we see this and own it, the process of healing will come easier.

When Jesus begin his ministry, he made a pronouncement to his people:

Luke 4: 18-21 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.”

Then he said ***“Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”***

Revelation demands a response we need to take action.

The father heart of God

Many people with rejection have been affected by their parents. This has an effect in later life in their relationship to God as a Father, for they cannot accept easily his love for them and they find it hard to love him back.

It is easier to worship God from a distance. He is in heaven on his throne and we are a long way off on earth.

In Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6 we are encouraged to call God, ‘Abba’. In Jewish culture this is used by adult sons and daughters as a warm, familiar, respectful response to their father. We have been adopted (we have the same rights and privileges as birth sons) into the family of God and he said to us ***2 Corinthians 6:18 “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters.”***

God the Father is seeking to give us security, permanence, peace, emotional stability, affirmation and acceptance. Rejection is a barrier to that. Look at his response to Jesus in ***Mark 1: 10 & 11. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”***

Our identity is found in relationship, firstly accepting God as Father, then understanding that he accepts us, and finally that we can accept ourselves and others.

Planning prayer for healing

Before prayer it is important to consider some issues that should make the prayer for healing/deliverance less difficult.

- Clarity with regard to understanding the areas that need prayer, i.e. what roots or fruit to be prayed for.
- Are we confronting demonic power or is it a question of inner healing.
- Preparation with respect to fasting and regarding specific scriptures may help.
- Recognise the responsibility to change after receiving ministry.

Repentance

Repentance is a change of heart, will, thinking and emotions. It is a deliberate turning away from the sin and a clear turning into God with a change of lifestyle.

- 1) Rejection is sin! Rejection leads us to sin against ourselves, others and the one who created us. Our wrong reactions to others which came out of our rejection is sin.
- 2) In *Psalm 51* we read of David's repentance. He saw that he was the problem, took responsibility and responded to God.
- 3) *2 Corinthians 7:10* "**Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.**" There is pain in repentance, maybe we need to expose this a little more. This takes time and we should not be afraid of that.
- 4) *Acts 2:37* "**When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers what shall we do?"** Peter said REPENT. God's Word had penetrated into their hearts and they responded accordingly. We need to be open to that then repentance becomes effective.

Unforgiveness

In dealing with rejection there will almost always be someone to forgive who has hurt you or someone you hold unforgiveness against. There is a key story in *Matthew 18: 21-35*. It shows up the issue of unforgiveness very clearly. Quote from C.S. Lewis "Everybody says forgiveness is a lovely idea, until they have someone to forgive."

How does this affect us:

- We have been forgiven much. It far exceeds any amount that we might have to forgive.
- God's grace and mercy is motivated by forgiveness. Our refusal to forgive compromises God's power to forgive.
- Unforgiveness is sin, no matter what has happened to you. Two wrongs never make a right. Retaliation is never justifiable.

- Unforgiveness will be judged by God.
- Unforgiveness imprisons the one who cannot forgive.
- Those imprisoned will be subject to torture and torment.

The conclusion to all this is that unforgiveness can be a great barrier in our relationship to God as well as each other. When Jesus dies, all the barriers went down *Ephesians 2: 14-16* “*For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.*”

Forgiveness may need to be a process. You may have to keep forgiving until the pain goes. It certainly is an act of will and we have to decide to forgive before our emotions entangle us.

If somebody has hurt us it can:

- Affect the way we see them. Forgiveness will change our vision.
- Affect the way we feel about them. Forgiveness will soften us, we may even have compassion and love for them again.
- Affect the way we talk about them. Forgiveness will help us be more patient about them.
- Affect our attitude. Forgiveness will not want to get even.
- Affect our ongoing relationship. Forgiveness can make for a new beginning.

Inner Healing

With inner healing we need to acknowledge the wounds, hurts and memories and surrender them to Jesus, asking the Holy Spirit to bring healing. This may take time and there maybe a release of emotions. Let it happen and don't suppress the feelings of pain.

Healing from the demonic

When there is a demonic intrusion, go to prayer by being specific in taking authority and in casting out the demon. Sometimes there is a struggle with a manifestation of some kind. Press through and don't be afraid to have more than one session.

Reconciliation

Broken relationships can be restored. There has been a change from enmity to friendship. God's peace rules and there is no fear. This may take time, so don't rush insensitively into things.

Lesson Eight

Moving on from rejection

The issue of rejection is so great for so many that it is important to see that pastoral care follows on from prayer for deliverance and healing. It is not good for people to be left to carry on in isolation. Sometimes those healed and set free think the enemy will not bother them again, so they neglect the basic disciplines that are needed to grow away from rejection and into maturity in our walk with Jesus.

Disciplines needed for Christian growth and development

- 1) After healing and deliverance there needs to be somebody to talk things through, be accountable and honest to where you are.
- 2) Reading, applying and living out the Scripture is essential to freedom in Jesus.
- 3) Learning to communicate with God, thanking him for what he has done.
- 4) The battleground is almost always the area of emotion, through the will. The enemy will continually attack in this area. In Christ we can control the way we think, and use our emotions and our will. We can renew our mind using these disciplines.
- 5) Being positive does not mean unreality. The way we talk about ourselves needs to be challenged continually.
- 6) Learn to relate to God as Father.
- 7) Often our self-worth and value has been undermined. It needs reviving and working on. Do not recognise failure as defeat.
- 8) Do not isolate yourself from the Church. Get involved in some kind of service.
- 9) Resist the enemy and submit to God. The enemy is no respecter of persons, yet we need to understand the authority we have in Jesus.
- 10) We get what we expect, so expect freedom. Don't dwell on the past, look forward with reality.
- 11) Humour minimises fear and anger. The joy of the Lord is our strength. Jesus was and is full of joy, let's develop his character.

