

Acceptance

In an authentic community people feel accepted for who they are. They don't need to pretend or project an ideal image in order to belong. In order for this to take place, three things need to happen; firstly, dealing with the spirit of rejection, secondly, embracing self-acceptance, and thirdly, learning to accept others for who they are. In this sermon I will cover the first one; dealing with the spirit of rejection and trust that the Lord will help us to activate a community characterized by acceptance.

Dealing with rejection

The enemy's strategy against us is to wound us with rejection and abandonment. When this happens, we then compensate through flesh patterns that can open us up to demonic activity. A wounded person is a hurting person and hurt people hurt others. A lot of the wounding takes place when we are still young. We have all been wounded and wounding is subtle. Sometimes it can be intentional but other times it is unintentional. Physical wounds can be bandaged immediately, however with emotional wounds we try to do something else about them. Remember, pain seeks pleasure. Wounded Christians will run to a counterfeit when they develop a wound of rejection, which very often becomes a stronghold. If you have a tree that you plant but decide you want to uproot it, it is better to do so when its 8 inches than when its 3 metres. At 8 inches the root system is only 8 inches deep, but at 3 metres it is 3 metres deep. We need to pray for our children before the root system is deep and more difficult to uproot.

Wounds become strongholds and strongholds attract spirits. A stronghold is a belief pattern that exalts itself above the knowledge of Christ. **The strongholds in our minds determine how we respond to situations.** We are failing to come to a place of authentic community in the Church today because of the spirit of rejection and the lies it comes with. This is because a stronghold will include default reactions and defence mechanisms that preserve a particular pattern. A spirit of rejection multiplies those feelings of rejection and the lies and irrational behaviour associated with them. How many of you have experienced crowded loneliness? This is where there are people around you that you are in relationship with but you still feel lonely. I remember many years ago when I was in a prayer meeting at university and the Pastor who was prophetic said to me that I had believed a demonically inspired lie that I will always be looking from the outside in, and I could identify with that. If you have a wound of rejection in your life, you will project it on others. We are then more likely to engage in counterfeits in order to deal with our pain. God designed family and community partly so that children build up emotional object constancy through the love, acceptance and affection they receive from their parents and loved ones. When this is not fully present there will be holes in our souls that produce negative fruit. You can decide for yourself what type of fruit you want.

It is important to be honest about how you have been wounded. It is alright to be weak and vulnerable. It does not mean you do not love your parents. Whether they sinned against you knowingly or unknowingly it has still impacted you. This process will help you to ultimately forgive. As you feel the pain, give it over to God. It is through these wounds, that darkness enters. Do not be in denial. **What was a wound of rejection can become a spirit of rejection.**

“You cannot repent of a demon; repentance will not be enough to deal with demonic force. Neither can you repent of a wound. A demon has to be cast out, and a wound must be healed.” - David Legge.



God's acceptance is bigger than your rejection.

Psalm 27:10

When my father and my mother forsake me, Then the Lord will take care of me.

When Samuel came to anoint the king, David was not even on the selection list. This would have brought rejection in his life. We should remember that there is always a way out despite all the pain we have been through. God should always be our source. Do not go to the counterfeits but make Him your stronghold. Are you prepared to run to God?

Romans 15:7

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

1 Timothy 1:15

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

Psalm 139:14

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made, your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

God designed you according to your purpose. When you are rejected in life, you end up with a twisted view of reality.

Ephesians 1:3-6

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us for adoption to son-ship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will - to the praise of his glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One he loves.”

Colossians 1:21-22

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation.

The Bible describes Satan as the accuser of the brethren and He does it through people or through thoughts.

John 6:37

All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

Acts 10:34-35

Opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him."

So this is God's truth with regards to our acceptance, but we live in a world full of rejection. Therefore, carry this spiritual object constancy, that you are accepted by God.

How does rejection affect the activation of authentic community?

All of these are flesh patterns that are not in line with God's truth. It is important to see that when behaviour is based on false belief the fruit is not good. Our action as a result of this identification is to confess, repent and renounce. Often it is very subtle because the outward behaviour is not always sinful, but the motive of the heart is. Remember that you are not a victim. You are responsible for your behaviour and attitude. Generally speaking you have passive reactions to rejection and aggressive reactions to rejection. So rejection comes in many guises.

1. Constant feeling of abandonment

- Fear of losing a loved one through death.
- Fear of being cheated on.
- Fear of rejection can also result in anger. Putting up a shield of anger as a defence mechanism.
- Often feeling misunderstood "people don't get me".
- Always explaining yourself because you feel misunderstood.

2. Addictions and substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, food etc)

- Instead of running to the prince of peace we practise idolatry. Where do you run?
- The bottle will not reject me.
- Masturbation and gambling are also common outcomes of rejection.

It is easy to judge others, but we must realise that the pain can be severe and pain seeks pleasure.

3. Unbelief

When the people who were supposed to show us love did not do so, then our tendency is to doubt the love of God. Sometimes we can minister to others but when it comes to issues pertaining to ourselves we sink into unbelief. When good things happen to us, we are suspicious. We think there is a catch.

Hebrews 3:12-13

Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Often you feel very insignificant and inferior. When people try to show you otherwise, you still interpret your world through that lens. You often have strong thoughts of self-hatred. The isolated self is a bad self. Sometimes we see the different self as the bad self. There is nothing wrong with being different. Unbelief often comes in the form of a demonic spirit, and you end up questioning God's heart for you.

4. Addictive relationships

You think you love them, but it is more apt to say "you need them". Your self-image is based on their acceptance or rejection of you. This happens when people have experienced deep rejection.

1 Corinthians 9:19

For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.

Addictive relationships are characterised by emotional abuse and control. You end up controlling circumstances in your relationships. They are also characterised by co-dependency and collapsed boundaries. You do not know where you end and the other begins. As long as you have the root of rejection you will always be bent towards man and not straightened to God.

John 5:41-44

I do not receive glory from men, but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me, if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. "How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?"

Believing in God means that He is our identity, the source of life. A common form of addictive relationship is joining a sub-culture or cult.

5. Dealing with Criticism and hypersensitivity

- You exaggerate the probability of being rejected.
- Small mistakes are seen as causes of abandonment.
- You are offended or embarrassed when corrected or disciplined. In a family, there is discipline. How do you react when you are corrected?

6. Self-pity

- You see your situation as all bad and others as all good.

7. Performance mentality to maintain relationships

- Love with a hook.
- Disappointment when love is unrequited (no love returned).
- Debt based relationships (they owe me one).

- Perfectionism and approval addiction.
- This manifests in your parenting style and produces guilt.

Luke 6:34-36

And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them, expecting nothing in return. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

8. Self-sufficiency

- **Maturity is seen in interdependence not independence.**

9. Isolation (hiding from love)

- Often the result is sabotaging relationships.
- This is often how the orphan spirit works.
- The result is that you end up with no mentors and your relationships with authority figures suffer.
- We isolate ourselves verbally and physically.

10. Protesting behaviour

- It is easier for you to attack than express your needs in a vulnerable manner.
- You can protest by rejecting others before they can reject you.

11. Lies

- “I will always be looking from the outside in”.
- Your inner villagers and emotional triggers are very loud.

12. Attention seeking behaviour

13. Comparisons

- Always looking over your shoulder, never feeling good enough, playing catch up

14. The Hero Syndrome

- If I achieve greatness then I will be accepted. The sad thing is that it is never enough.
- Sometimes the family relies on the hero for their corporate self-image. All eyes are on you to achieve.
- It is okay to be weak. You do not have to be perfect to be accepted.

15. Permissive and Placating behaviour in relationships

- This is seen in management style and parenting style.
- You project your fear of rejection onto others.

- You do not discipline others because of fear of being misunderstood and ultimately rejected by them.
- You fear being rejected even by your kids.

16. Self-rejection

- Suicide is an extreme form of self-rejection.
- Often the depression and despair has become so strong that a spirit of death attaches itself to someone.
- Fantasy is a form of self-rejection.
- Often healing from rejection involves correcting a misplaced identity.

Psalm 68:5-7 NASB

A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows, Is God in His holy habitation. God makes a home for the lonely, He leads out the prisoners into prosperity, only the rebellious dwell in a parched land.

Your current condition does not have to stay like that. If your father has not been present for you, God is your Father. God is a voice for the voiceless.

Psalm 68:6 ESV

God settles the solitary in a home, he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.

God has a solution for rejection. Healing takes place in community. Your situation does not need to remain the same.

It is important to deal with rejection issues so that we do not pass on rejection to our own children or people in our care. Despite everything that you have been through, remember the scriptures:

Colossians 2:9-10

For in Him (Jesus) the fullness of God continues to live giving complete expression of His divine nature. And you are in Him, and have come to fullness of life - in Christ you too are filled with the fullness of God and reach full spiritual stature.