



VOLUME 16.07

**THE WOUND WITHOUT A NAME**

# source

16.07

## THE WOUND WITHOUT A NAME

### **contents**

SECTION 1: **SERMON NOTES**

SECTION 2: **FILL-INS**

SECTION 3: **CREATIVE ELEMENTS**

SECTION 4: **DRAMA**

SECTION 5: **TOKEN IDEAS**

SECTION 6: **DISCUSSION OUTLINE**

SECTION 7: **LEADERSHIP NOTES**

### THE WOUND WITHOUT A NAME

A. I was at our retreat last week listening deeply to the people in my small group and to others I talked with after our evening services. There was a REPEATING THEME.

1. Often, I'd hear sentences like...
  - a. "I just wish my dad (or mom) could tell me that he's proud of me. I've spent my life trying to earn his approval...but no luck."
  - b. "I can't ever be good enough in my own head. I feel like I'm always on the outside looking in. Nobody knows it, but inside, I just want to be accepted. From who? I'm not really sure."
  - c. "I've spent my life making other people PAY for the rejection I felt. If I felt pain, other people needed to feel the pain too."
  - d. "I have to PROVE MYSELF all the time. I need to get the women, get on a sports team, earn the big salary or an important job. Because whatever 'success' is, I'm still trying to find it, so I can prove myself by trying to get IT...whatever IT is. The only problem is, IT keeps changing."
  - e. "Sure, sometimes I come across detached and maybe even a little hard. But I build the walls inside of me because I don't want to keep feeling the junk on the inside."
  - f. "I can't cut it spiritually. I keep messing up...blowing it. I hear all the stuff about Jesus and His unconditional love. But that's NOT how I'm feeling. I think Jesus is watching me with His arms folded, not too impressed, kind of waiting for me to clean up my act."
2. Very few of these people said the literal word "REJECTION"...yet that's what their hearts kept pointing to. That's why I call rejection "THE WOUND WITHOUT A NAME."
3. Counselors tell us that 1 out of every 5 people in America's culture today have a serious problem with rejection. But when they did the statistics on today's youth culture, they said that 1 out of every 3 people in today's youth culture deal with serious rejection issues.
4. I think we all have the little kid inside of us who is searching for different things: love; attention; affirmation; understanding; trust; or maybe even justice.

B. There's no bigger battle in life than the one between the parts of us that WANT TO BE HEALED...and the parts of us that are comfortable and content with REMAINING BROKEN.

1. Reasons People May Remain Broken: Fear; Too emotionally lazy; Unwilling to lose control.

2. Ephesians 1:3-6 (The Message Bible), *“How blessed is God! And what a blessing He is! He’s the Father of our Master, Jesus Christ, and takes us to the high places of blessing in Him. Long before He laid down earth’s foundation, He had us in mind. He had settled on us as the focus of His love, to be made whole and holy by His love. Long, long ago, He decided to adopt us into His family through Jesus Christ. (What pleasure He took in planning this!) He wanted us to enter into the celebration of His lavish gift-giving by the hand of His beloved Son.”*
3. Ephesians 1:6 (New King James Version), *“We praise the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.”*
4. Nine Top Causes Of Rejection
  - a. Parents (*2<sup>nd</sup> highest cause*)
    - “Parents are just kids who grew up and had kids.”
  - b. Job/School Related Situations
  - c. Race or Ethnic Background
  - d. Male-Female Relationship Problems
  - e. A Close Relationship Which Turns Negative and Painful
  - f. The Belief That They Have Failed Morally or Spiritually
  - g. Sibling Rivalry
  - h. Lingering Emotions After “The Big Mistake” in a Person’s Life
  - i. Measuring Up to YOUR OWN EXPECTATIONS (*Top Cause*)

### VIDEO #1: “LONG LOST FAMILY”

*(For the video we used, email us at [video@youthleaderscoach.com](mailto:video@youthleaderscoach.com))*

### C. Biblical Patterns Of Rejection

1. JUDAS: Rejection that comes from LONELINESS and HURT
  - a. John 18:1-3, *“Jesus, having prayed, left with His disciples and went to the Garden. He and His disciples entered it. Judas, the Lord’s betrayer, knew the place because Jesus and His disciples went there often... So Judas...led the way to the garden...”*
  - b. Perceived rejection can turn a person from a DISCIPLE into a BETRAYER.

2. SAUL: Rejection that comes from STUBBORNNESS and SELF-WILL
  - a. 1 Samuel 15:19, *“Why did you stubbornly refuse to obey the Lord? Why did you not destroy all the Amalekites?”*
  - b. 1 Samuel 15:23, *“For rebellion is like the sting of witchcraft...and stubbornness is like idolatry.”*
  - c. On the outside, this kind of rejection can come across as cynical, hard, or detached. But that’s just a cover-up for what’s going on inside.
3. PETER: Rejection born out of FAILURE
  - a. John 21 is the agonizing account of Christ’s first encounter with Peter after his betrayal. Peter had denied that he even knew Jesus. So he felt like a huge failure. But when he and Jesus first were reunited after Christ’s resurrection, Peter let his sense of failure distance him from Jesus.
  - b. An Important Question Tonight: WHEN YOU FEEL REJECTION, WHAT’S YOUR FALL-BACK?
    - Do you do stupid stuff? Let your “hungry need become a dangerous need?” Bury it and pretend it’s not there? Or do you talk to Jesus about your rejection?
    - You’ve got to decide on your GOOD DAYS how you’ll react on your BAD DAYS.

### VIDEO #2: “LONG LOST FAMILY”

*(For the video we used, email us at [video@youthleaderscoach.com](mailto:video@youthleaderscoach.com))*

### D. THREE IMPORTANT FACTS WE NEED TO GET INTO OUR HEARTS:

1. Christ, on the cross, took every ounce of my rejection. He died not just for my SINS... but also for my feelings of REJECTION.
  - a. Isaiah 53:3, *“Jesus was despised and REJECTED of men, a Man of sorrows, and a Man who was acquainted with MUCH GRIEF...”*
  - b. Mark 15:34, *“And the ninth hour, Jesus cried out from the cross, ‘Father! Father! Why have You forsaken Me?’”*
  - c. Isaiah 53:4, *“Surely, Jesus has taken all of our GRIEF and He has carried on Him all of our SORROWS...”*

2. In the GREAT EXCHANGE of Calvary, I became ACCEPTED because Jesus Christ was first REJECTED.
  - a. Zechariah 2:8, *“For He that touches you, touches the APPLE OF MY EYE says the Lord God of Hosts.”*
  - b. Psalm 27:10, *“For when my mother and father forsake me. THE LORD WILL TAKE ME UP.”*
  - c. Leviticus 26:11, *“‘I will set My dwelling in and among you,’ says the Lord. My soul shall not reject or separate from you.”*
  - d. Romans 8:31, *“If God be for me, who can be against me?”*
  - e. John 15:16, *“God has CHOSEN me.”*
  - f. Joshua 1:9 and Matthew 28:20, *“I will be strong, vigorous, and very courageous. I will not be afraid, neither will I be dismayed, for the Lord my God is with me wherever I go.”* He NEVER REJECTS ME but has promised to be with me always.
3. You get SAVED when you BELIEVE in Jesus. But you will be TRANSFORMED when you realize that JESUS BELIEVES IN YOU!

### VIDEO #3: VOICES FROM A WOUND WITHOUT A NAME

*(For a video of our testimonies, email us at [video@youthleaderscoach.com](mailto:video@youthleaderscoach.com))*

### VIDEO #4: DRAMA - “A Tough Breakfast Conversation”

*(To see a video of our drama, email us at [video@youthleaderscoach.com](mailto:video@youthleaderscoach.com))*

Closing dramatic sketch taken from John 21 of Jesus’ post-resurrection encounter with Peter...after Peter denied even knowing Jesus.

### THE WOUND WITHOUT A NAME

- A. I was at our retreat last week listening deeply to the people in my small group and to others I talked with after our evening services. There was a REPEATING THEME.
- Often, I'd hear sentences like...
    - "I just wish my dad (or mom) could tell me that he's proud of me. I've spent my life trying to earn his approval...but no luck."
    - "I can't ever be good enough in my own head. I feel like I'm always on the outside looking in. Nobody knows it, but inside, I just want to be accepted. From who? I'm not really sure."
    - "I've spent my life making other people PAY for the rejection I felt. If I felt pain, other people needed to feel the pain too."
    - "I have to PROVE MYSELF all the time. I need to get the women, get on a sports team, earn the big salary or an important job. Because whatever 'success' is, I'm still trying to find it, so I can prove myself by trying to get IT...whatever IT is. The only problem is, IT keeps changing."
    - "Sure, sometimes I come across detached and maybe even a little hard. But I build the walls inside of me because I don't want to keep feeling the junk on the inside."
    - "I can't cut it spiritually. I keep messing up...blowing it. I hear all the stuff about Jesus and His unconditional love. But that's NOT how I'm feeling. I think Jesus is watching me with His arms folded, not too impressed, kind of waiting for me to clean up my act."
  - Very few of these people said the literal word " \_\_\_\_\_ " ...yet that's what their hearts kept pointing to. That's why I call rejection "THE WOUND WITHOUT A NAME."
  - Counselors tell us that \_\_\_\_\_ out of every \_\_\_\_\_ people in America's culture today have a serious problem with rejection. But when they did the statistics on today's youth culture, they said that \_\_\_\_\_ out of every \_\_\_\_\_ people in today's youth culture deal with serious rejection issues.
  - I think we all have the little kid inside of us who is searching for different things: love; attention; affirmation; understanding; trust; or maybe even justice.

B. There's no bigger battle in life than the one between the parts of us that WANT TO BE \_\_\_\_\_ ...and the parts of us that are comfortable and content with \_\_\_\_\_.

1. Reasons People May Remain Broken: Fear; Too emotionally lazy; Unwilling to lose control.
2. Ephesians 1:3-6 (The Message Bible), *"How blessed is God! And what a blessing He is! He's the Father of our Master, Jesus Christ, and takes us to the high places of blessing in Him. Long before He laid down earth's foundation, He had us in mind. He had settled on us as the focus of His love, to be made whole and holy by His love. Long, long ago, He decided to adopt us into His family through Jesus Christ. (What pleasure He took in planning this!) He wanted us to enter into the celebration of His lavish gift-giving by the hand of His beloved Son."*
3. Ephesians 1:6 (New King James Version), *"We praise the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved."*
4. Nine Top Causes Of Rejection
  - a. Parents (*2<sup>nd</sup> highest cause*)
    - "Parents are just kids who grew up and had kids."
  - b. Job/School Related Situations
  - c. Race or Ethnic Background
  - d. Male-Female Relationship Problems
  - e. A Close Relationship Which Turns Negative and Painful
  - f. The Belief That They Have Failed Morally or Spiritually
  - g. Sibling Rivalry
  - h. Lingering Emotions After "The Big Mistake" in a Person's Life
  - i. Measuring Up to YOUR OWN EXPECTATIONS (*Top Cause*)

C. Biblical Patterns Of Rejection

1. \_\_\_\_\_: Rejection that comes from \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

a. John 18:1-5, *“Jesus, having prayed, left with His disciples and went to the Garden. He and His disciples entered it. Judas, the Lord’s betrayer, knew the place because Jesus and His disciples went there often. So Judas led the way to the garden...”*

b. Perceived rejection can turn a person from a \_\_\_\_\_ into a \_\_\_\_\_.

2. \_\_\_\_\_: Rejection that comes from \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

a. 1 Samuel 15:19, *“Why did you stubbornly refuse to obey the Lord? Why did you not destroy all the Amalekites?”*

b. 1 Samuel 15:23, *“For rebellion is like the sting of witchcraft...and stubbornness is like idolatry.”*

c. On the outside, this kind of rejection can come across as cynical, hard, or detached. But that’s just a cover-up for what’s going on inside.

3. \_\_\_\_\_: Rejection born out of \_\_\_\_\_

a. John 21 is the agonizing account of Christ’s first encounter with Peter after his betrayal. Peter had denied that he even knew Jesus. So he felt like a huge failure. But when he and Jesus first were reunited after Christ’s resurrection, Peter let his sense of failure distance him from Jesus.

b. An Important Question Tonight: WHEN YOU FEEL REJECTION, WHAT’S YOUR \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_?

- Do you do stupid stuff? Let your “hungry need become a dangerous need?” Bury it and pretend it’s not there? Or do you talk to Jesus about your rejection?
- You’ve got to decide on your \_\_\_\_\_ how you’ll react on your \_\_\_\_\_.

#### D. THREE IMPORTANT FACTS WE NEED TO GET INTO OUR HEARTS:

1. Christ, on the cross, took every ounce of my rejection. He died not just for my SINS... but also for my feelings of \_\_\_\_\_.

a. Isaiah 53:3, *“Jesus was despised and REJECTED of men, a Man of sorrows, and a Man who was acquainted with MUCH GRIEF...”*

b. Mark 15:34, *“And the ninth hour, Jesus cried out from the cross, ‘Father! Father! Why have You forsaken Me?’”*

- c. Isaiah 53:4, *"Surely, Jesus has taken all of our GRIEF and He has carried on Him all of our SORROWS."*
2. In the GREAT EXCHANGE of Calvary, I became \_\_\_\_\_  
because Jesus Christ was first \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. Zechariah 2:8, *"For He that touches you, touches the APPLE OF MY EYE says the Lord God of Hosts."*
- b. Psalm 27:10, *"For when my mother and father forsake me. THE LORD WILL TAKE ME UP."*
- c. Leviticus 26:11, *"I will set My dwelling in and among you,' says the Lord. My soul shall not reject or separate from you."*
- d. Romans 8:31, *"If God be for me, who can be against me?"*
- e. John 15:16, *"God has CHOSEN me."*
- f. Joshua 1:9 and Matthew 28:20, *"I will be strong, vigorous, and very courageous. I will not be afraid, neither will I be dismayed, for the Lord my God is with me wherever I go."* He NEVER REJECTS ME but has promised to be with me always.
3. You get \_\_\_\_\_ when you \_\_\_\_\_  
in Jesus. But you will be \_\_\_\_\_ when you realize that  
\_\_\_\_\_ IN \_\_\_\_\_!

### VIDEOS

#### VIDEO #1: "LONG LOST FAMILY"

*(Clip from TLC reality show; For the video we used, email us at [video@youthleaderscoach.com](mailto:video@youthleaderscoach.com))*

#### VIDEO #2: "LONG LOST FAMILY"

*(Clip from TLC reality show; For the video we used, email us at [video@youthleaderscoach.com](mailto:video@youthleaderscoach.com))*

#### VIDEO #3: VOICES FROM A WOUND WITHOUT A NAME

*(For a video of our testimonies, email us at [video@youthleaderscoach.com](mailto:video@youthleaderscoach.com))*

#### VIDEO #4: DRAMA - "A Tough Breakfast Conversation"

*(To see a video of our drama, email us at [video@youthleaderscoach.com](mailto:video@youthleaderscoach.com))*

Closing dramatic sketch taken from John 21 of Jesus' post-resurrection encounter with Peter...after Peter denied even knowing Jesus.

## A TOUGH BREAKFAST CONVERSATION

(Taken From John 21)

- Jesus: *(Post resurrection appearance.)* Peter, you haven't said anything all breakfast. It seems like there is some distance between us. Is everything all right?
- Peter: *(Defensive.)* Distance? I wouldn't say distance. Maybe I'm not kissing up to You like the rest of the disciples are...but distance? I wouldn't say there's distance.
- Jesus: Look, Peter, nobody's asking you to kiss up to Me, but here's the deal...you're one of the closest guys to me. You're one of the first disciples I picked...what's going on? Come on...talk to Me.
- Peter: I guess I was one of the first. I bet You've been regretting that decision for a while now.
- Jesus: Regret? Peter, this isn't like you! You're one of the closest guys to Me. Talk to Me. What's going on?
- Peter: Close...we used to be close. Maybe I should have remembered that before I denied that I knew you three times to those people...before that rooster crowed. I should have remembered then.
- Jesus: Peter...the past is in the past. I brought you here this morning to ask you ONE SIMPLE QUESTION *(Pausing after for emphasis.)* Peter, do you love Me?
- Peter: *(Flippantly.)* Yes, of course I love You and I know that You love me too...even though I have a hot head and I can sometimes say stupid things. I get it. So, yes, I love You.
- Jesus: Then Peter, if you love Me...I need you to take care of My People. I need you to take care of them, Peter, they need you. They need YOU!
- Peter: What are You talking about? Your people? What is this Jesus, some sort of a joke? You know I can't even take care of MYSELF!
- Jesus: Peter, you're missing the point of all this. I'm NOT LOOKING for PERFECTION. I'm looking for a REAL RELATIONSHIP between you and I. That's all I've ever wanted! But you keep blowing off My question. I need you to answer this for them. I need to know. Peter, please tell Me...Peter, do you LOVE Me?
- Peter: *(Voice tone still pretty detached...assumedly from guilt.)* YES! What do You want me to say? Alright. I know that I'm not perfect. I know that You still love me...so YES, I love You too!
- Jesus: If you love Me then...I need you to take care of My people.
- Peter: *(Angered.)* Listen, Lord...clearly this conversation isn't going down the way You wanted it to! And I think it would be best if we took a break and came back to it before I get too heated up!

*(Jesus and Peter both start to go separate ways...then Jesus turns back around, changing the tenor of the conversation to pretty intense.)*

Jesus: *(Calling back as He starts to walk away.)* Peter...Peter! Come on...I don't know what's getting into you. I don't know why you're letting it get like this. You're one of the closest people to Me. You're going to let it end like this? Talk to Me...what's going on?

Peter: *(With anger and strong emotion...as though finally cracking to show what is inside.)* Do You want to know what's going on? You want to know what's going on? I FAILED YOU! That's what's going on! Maybe You don't remember...but when things got tough, I was WORTHLESS! Do You want to know why I'm pushing you away? It's because I'm a FAILURE. I'm a GUILTY FAILURE!

Jesus: *(Trying to reconcile.)* Peter, you actually think that? You think you're a failure? Peter, you feel like I've REJECTED you?

Peter: Listen...if You're not still mad at me...then You're not as smart as I thought You were!

Jesus: Peter, I have never expected PERFECTION from you. *(Pausing...then softening and with love.)* All I've ever wanted was to know that you LOVE Me.

Peter: *(Still angered and strong voice.)* You don't think I WANT to believe that? You don't think I WANT with all of me to think it's that easy? Listen, Jesus...when You needed me...I let You down! And if there's one thing I know, it's that REJECTION BRINGS MORE REJECTION. *(Voice breaking.)* I've rejected You and I feel like You're just going to reject me too. And You know what? I DESERVE that!

Jesus: Maybe you do deserve that...but the good thing is that My love for you doesn't depend on what you DESERVE. *(Pausing...tone really softening.)* Peter, look at Me.

Peter: *(Sounding as though he's fighting to get out words now...crying...but still not looking Jesus in the face.)* I can't look at You. Lord, just let me go. Alright? Just let me go. I'm not good enough, okay? You should know that. I'm not good enough. Let me just reject You. Let me just reject You again, before You reject me.

Jesus: Peter, your SALVATION came because you chose to BELIEVE in Me. But your TRANSFORMATION will come the day you realize that I BELIEVE IN YOU.

*(Pausing...)* There's nothing you could ever do to push Me away from you. I'm going to be here forever. I will always be by your side. So, Peter...I need to ask you one more time. Do you love Me?

Peter: Jesus, if You're willing...if You're willing to look past all my failures...and all my mistakes...then yes...I truly love You.

*(Embrace and freeze)*

*Music up*

### THE WOUND WITHOUT A NAME

1. A medical instrument with a tag that says, "THE WOUND WITHOUT A NAME."
2. Boxing gloves with a tag that says, "There's no bigger battle in life than the one between the parts of us that WANT TO BE HEALED...and the parts of us that are comfortable and content with REMAINING BROKEN."
3. A Band-Aid with a tag that says, "Sometimes rejection can come across as cynical, hard, or detached. But that's just a cover-up for what's going on inside."
4. A spoon with a tag saying, "A hungry need is a dangerous need."
5. A cross with a tag saying, "Christ, on the cross, took every ounce of my rejection. He died not just for my SINS...but also for my feelings of REJECTION."

### THE WOUND WITHOUT A NAME

1. Let's go round the circle, introduce ourselves, and say one thing we sincerely appreciate about our youth ministry.
2. Tonight we talked about something that most people shy away from: REJECTION. Why do you think most people don't talk about this topic of rejection?
3. There are so many reasons why we might not like to talk about the topic of rejection, but it is so important that we don't ignore this topic. Though we may not say it by name, rejection is a huge deal in our society. What do you think are some of the ways rejection impacts people?
4. Do you ever find that you can reject people...leaders, friends, teachers or mentors? What is it that often makes you push people away?
5. Let's be vulnerable with each other. Let's ask ourselves the all-important question: When you are rejected, what is your fall back? In other words, how do you respond when you are rejected?
6. In closing, let's talk to ourselves a little tonight. When you face rejection, what do you have to tell yourself so you don't let the rejection cripple you?
7. *[Close in prayer as you see fit.]*

### WHEN CRITICISM COMES CALLING

by Jeanne Mayo

I just hung the phone up 20 minutes ago. I was trying to be a friend to another youth leader who, in his words, is “getting his head kicked in.” The issue? Criticism. And in his mind, a discouraging and deafening amount of it right now.

I think that maybe criticism robs more youth leaders of their joy and fulfillment in ministry almost more than anything else. It’s not really a question of “Will I be criticized?” The more realistic question is, “How can I be successful in youth ministry while being criticized?” Your grandma really was right when she told you, “Criticism will either make you bitter or better.” Aristotle even weighed in on the subject. He wisely said, “Criticism is something you can avoid easily—by saying nothing, doing nothing, and being nothing.”

So let me share some of the ways I try to think and respond when, like my friend said, “I’m getting my head kicked in” by criticism. And take encouragement knowing that it happens to me all the time. Did I mention, “All the time?”

#### **1. I try to evaluate the difference between constructive and destructive criticism.**

Proverbs talks about the importance of constructive criticism when it says, “*Let my brother smite me for it will be a kindness to me.*” So one of the greatest ways we ever grow in ministry and life is to have people give us constructive criticism, even when it feels humbling and painful.

#### **2. Look beyond the criticism and try to see the critic.**

I’ve learned not to put much stock in the nameless criticisms that abound in ministry, i.e. “Lots of people think...” To take a criticism seriously, I need to know the names associated with it. Some people criticize so often that they act as though it is their “spiritual gift”! When a criticism comes from them, I just realize they are living up to their standard performance. But other times, when I hear a name, I immediately get on the phone to say, “Can we talk?” The difference is because I know those people are not characterized by a critical spirit. I often tell myself, “Instead of trying to put others in their place, try to put yourself in their place.”

#### **3. Remember that even the best parents can occasionally become defensive and reactionary when it comes to their own children.**

So when criticism comes from them, try to graciously hear them out and see things from their perspective. It is agonizingly easy for normally sane parents to “go on the war path” if they perceive that their teenager has been wounded or treated unfairly. Just give extra grace in those moments. One day, these same parents will probably tell others that you were “the best youth leader” their student ever had.

#### **4. Remember that even Jesus was often criticized and deeply misunderstood.**

Christ was constantly criticized, most painfully from inside the church world. He was accused of being a glutton, a man who hung out with sinners, and even of being a Samaritan (one of the lowest accusations possible back then). 1 Peter 2:21-23 says it well, *“For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example to follow in His steps. He committed no sin...but while He was reviled, He did not revile in return. While He suffered, He did not utter negative threats. He just kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously.”*

#### **5. Remember that jealousy and criticism are often the “trophy” that mediocrity pays to excellence.**

So if you feel that jealousy and insecurity are at the root of the criticism, don't allow the criticism to become too huge in your own mind. Allow time to prove the person wrong. The day after Lincoln gave his famed Gettysburg Address, a prominent newspaper wrote, “The cheek of every American must tingle with shame as he reads the silly, flat utterances of a man who now serves as the President of the United States.” So take courage from Abe Lincoln, and remember that time will often be your vindicator.

#### **6. Guard carefully your own attitude toward the critic.**

A negative attitude toward criticism can sometimes cause you more internal damage than the actual criticism itself. So fight to not let yourself respond negatively. Just remember that you cannot sink someone else's end of the boat and still keep your own end afloat. So ask the Lord to help you be bigger than any pain, anger, or misunderstanding that you feel. He will celebrate that request. I promise.

In short, I've often made the mistake of taking other people's opinions of me too seriously while not taking God's opinion of me seriously enough. So when criticism starts to “kick your head in,” try to focus on the Lord's opinion of you more than that of others. He always understands what you are facing and remains solidly in your corner, cheering you on along the youth ministry journey. For extra encouragement, remind yourself of what the history books say about Abe Lincoln these days!

A blurred, artistic photograph of a person's face and neck, with a white text box overlaid. The background is dark, and the person's skin is a warm, golden-brown color. The text box is white and contains the following text:

**THERE'S MORE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT**  
**[JeanneMayo.com](http://JeanneMayo.com)**