

Loneliness and Rejection

Genesis 2:18 “Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone...”

Isaiah 53:3 “He was despised and rejected by men, a man of suffering who knew what sickness was. He was like someone people turned away from; he was despised, and we didn’t value him.”

Types of Rejection:

1. Material rejection
2. Verbal rejection
3. Physical rejection
4. Emotional rejection

3 Truths about emotions.

1. Unprocessed emotions don’t die, they get buried alive
2. If you don’t heal from what hurt you, you’ll bleed on people who didn’t cut you.
3. Healthy relationships require people to know themselves.

The antidote to unprocessed emotions surrounding loneliness and rejection is not to ignore them, but to follow scripture’s guidance to do the following:

How to respond to rejection:

1. **Feel it- Your emotions are like children on vacation, you can’t put them in the driver’s seat or in the trunk.** Excessive affirmation to mask the pain of rejection or over spiritualizing the pain of rejection are two ways to avoid feeling the pain of rejection and loneliness. Scripture calls us to feel all of our God-given emotions. We’re told in Psalm 62:8 to “*trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts before him. God is our refuge.*” Psalm 62:8

Last week, we discussed this exercise to “empty the emotional jug” and it’s a way that we can pause to feel and not avoid difficult emotions.

Emptying the Emotional Jug Exercise: (Mad, Sad, Anxious, Glad)- Spend 15 minutes prayerfully pouring out your heart to God.

What are you angry about (from the past or present)? (Ask yourself this question 3 times. If there is **anything** else you could be mad about, what would it be?)

What are you sad about (e.g., a small or big loss, disappointment, or choice)? (Ask yourself this question 3 times. If there is **anything** else you could be sad about, what would it be?)

What are you anxious/fearful about (e.g., your money, future, family, health, job)? (Ask yourself this question 3 times. If there is **anything** else you could be anxious/fearful about, what would it be?)

What are you glad about (e.g., a relationship, an opportunity, your church)? (Ask yourself this question 3 times. If there is **anything** else you could be glad about, what would it be?)

2. Speak it to trusted people- Scripture says we are to Romans 12:15 *Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.* In other words, scripture assumes that in our lives we would have people that we can talk with regarding our sadness or anxiety.

3. Refuse to retaliate- Helpful nugget: pain that's not transformed will be transmitted. **Romans 12:17** *Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Give careful thought to do what is honorable in everyone's eyes.*

4. Interrogate- Although we should not suppress our emotions, they need to be filtered against truth. Sometimes rejection is excessively painful because of previous insecurities, and idolatry.

Insecurities tell us a whole different story. *"Self-rejection paves the landing strip for the rejection of others to arrive and pull on up to the gates of our hearts. Think about when other people say or do things that make you feel rejected. Isn't it in part due to the fact they just voiced some vulnerability you've already berated yourself for? It hurts exponentially more when you're kicked in an already bruised shin."* Lysa TerKeurst - *Uninvited*

Idolatry- believing that another person can provide us with fulfillment, validation, security or significance. At times, rejection is excessively painful because we've made a good thing (relationships, companionship) an ultimate thing.

5. Invite- Isaiah 53:3 *"He was despised and rejected by men, a man of suffering who knew what sickness was. He was like someone people turned away from; he was despised, and we didn't value him."*

Scripture says that the God who created the universe has been on the recipient of rejection, hunger, loneliness, homelessness, grief, betrayal, torture, injustice. He has experienced it all. What does that mean? Have you been betrayed? So has he. Are you broke? So was he. Are you lonely? So was he. Are you facing death? So did he. You can go to him. He's the Wonderful Counselor. You need to trust him. You need to go to him with what you have.

Prayer:

Lord,

I lay down my need to understand why things happen the way they do.

I lay down my fears about others walking away and taking their love with them.

I lay down my desire to prove my worth.

I lay down my resistance to fully trust Your thoughts, Your ways, and Your plans,

Lord.

I lay down being so self- consumed in an attempt to protect myself.

I lay down my anger, unforgiveness, and stubborn ways that beg me to build walls when I sense hints of rejection.

I remember your unshakeable, immovable and profound love for me as expressed through Christ on the Cross.

Amen.