



How to deal  
With  
Rejection

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## **Forward**

Jesus said that a prophet (in other words, a worker for God) is never honored in his hometown. But that doesn't make his work any less important.

A person doesn't need to be respected or honored to be useful to God. If friends, neighbors, or family don't respect your Christian work, don't let their rejection keep you from serving God.

I knew a man who prayed to God to make him more useful, as he felt his skills were not adequate. The Spirit of the Lord, made known to him that if he was able to do all those things on his own, that he would be of no use to the kingdom of God.

To be used of God, our dependence on him must be certain. When one is highly skilled, and uses those skills to bring achievement to him, he is not bringing glory to God.

Your feelings of rejection, may work to the advantage of the kingdom of God. We are not our own, but we are bought with a price. Glorify God.

## Chapter 1



### **Why God may have rejected Cain's offering.**

Genesis 4:3-5

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

The Bible does not say why God rejected Cain's sacrifice. Perhaps Cain's attitude was improper, or perhaps his offering was not up to God's standards. Proverbs 21:27 says,

“The sacrifice of the wicked is detestable—how much more so when brought with evil intent!”

God evaluates both our motives and the quality of what we offer him. When we give to God and others, we should have a joyful heart because of what we are able to give.

We should not worry about how much we are giving up, for all things are God's in the first place. Instead, we should joyfully give to God our best in time, money, possessions, and talents.

### **God feels rejected when we rebel.**

Judges 10:11-16

The Lord replied, "Did I not rescue you from the Egyptians, the Amorites, the Ammonites, the Philistines, the Sidonians, the Amalekites, and the Maonites?"

When they oppressed you, you cried out to me, and I rescued you. Yet you have abandoned me and served other gods. So I will not rescue you anymore.

Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen! Let them rescue you in your hour of distress!"

But the Israelites pleaded with the Lord and said, "We have sinned. Punish us as you see fit, only rescue us today from our enemies." Then the Israelites put aside their foreign gods and served the Lord. And he was grieved by their misery.

These verses show how difficult it can be to follow God over the long haul.

The Israelites always seemed to forget God when all was well. But despite being rejected by his own people, God never failed to rescue them when they called out to him in repentance.

God never fails to rescue us either. We act just like the Israelites when we put God outside our daily events instead of at the center of them. Just as a loving parent feels rejected when a child rebels, so God feels great rejection when we ignore or neglect him (1 Samuel 8:4-9; 1 Samuel 10:17-19; John 12:44-50).

We should strive to stay close to God rather than see how far we can go before judgment comes.

### **When you're suffering from unfair rejection.**

Judges 11:1-2

Now Jephthah of Gilead was a great warrior. He was the son of Gilead, but his mother was a prostitute. Gilead's wife also had several sons, and when these half-brothers grew up, they chased Jephthah off the land.

"You will not get any of our father's inheritance," they said, "for you are the son of a prostitute."

Jephthah, an illegitimate son of Gilead, was chased out of the country by his half-brothers. He suffered as a result of another's decision and not for any wrong he had done.

Yet in spite of his brothers' rejection, God used him. If you are suffering from unfair rejection, don't blame others and become discouraged. Remember how God used Jephthah despite his unjust circumstances, and realize that he is able to use you even if you feel rejected by some.

## **Recognize when you're rejecting God.**

1 Samuel 10:19

But though I have done so much for you, you have rejected me and said, 'We want a king instead!' Now, therefore, present yourselves before the Lord by tribes and clans."

Israel's true king was God, but the nation demanded another. Imagine wanting a human being instead of God as guide and leader! Throughout history, men and women have rejected God, and they continue to do it today.

Are you rejecting God by pushing him aside and acknowledging someone or something else as your "king" or top priority? Learn from these stories of Israel's kings, and don't push God aside.

## **God's "no" to a prayer is not a rejection.**

2 Samuel 7:8-16

"Now go and say to my servant David, 'this is what the Lord Almighty says: I chose you to lead my people Israel when you were just a shepherd boy, tending your sheep out in the pasture.

I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have destroyed all your enemies. Now I will make your name famous throughout the earth! And I have provided a permanent homeland for my people Israel, a secure place where they will never be disturbed. It will be their own land where wicked nations won't oppress them as they did in the past, from the time I appointed judges to rule my people. And I will keep you safe from all your enemies.

“And now the Lord declares that he will build a house for you—a dynasty of kings! For when you die, I will raise up one of your descendants, and I will make his kingdom strong. [13] He is the one who will build a house—a temple—for my name. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

I will be his father, and he will be my son. If he sins, I will use other nations to punish him.

But my unfailing love will not be taken from him as I took it from Saul, whom I removed before you.

Your dynasty and your kingdom will continue for all time before me, and your throne will be secure forever.’ “

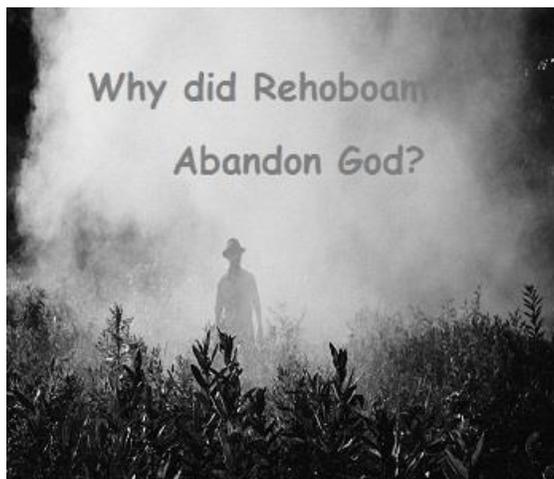
David’s request was good, but God said no. This does not mean that God rejected David. In fact, God was planning to do something even greater in David’s life than allowing him the prestige of building the temple.

Although God turned down David’s request, he promised to continue the house (or dynasty) of David forever. David’s earthly dynasty ended four centuries later, but Jesus Christ, a direct descendant of David, was the ultimate fulfillment of this promise (Acts 2:22-36).

Christ will reign for eternity—now in his spiritual kingdom and in heaven, and later, on earth, in the New Jerusalem (Luke 1:30-33; Rev. 21).

Have you prayed with good intentions, only to have God say no? This is God’s way of directing you to a greater purpose in your life. Accepting God’s no requires as great a faith as carrying out his yes.

## Chapter 2



### Why did Rehoboam abandon God?

2 Chron. 12:1-2

But when Rehoboam was firmly established and strong, he abandoned the law of the Lord, and all Israel followed him in this sin.

Because they were unfaithful to the Lord, King Shishak of Egypt attacked Jerusalem in the fifth year of King Rehoboam's reign.

Here "Israel" refers to Judah, the southern kingdom. During his first three years on the throne, Rehoboam made an attempt to obey God, and as a result Judah prospered.

But then, at his peak of popularity and power, he abandoned God. The result was destruction because God allowed Judah to be conquered by Egypt.

How could this happen? Often it is more difficult to be a believer in good times than in bad. Tough times push us toward God; but easy times can make us feel self-sufficient and self-satisfied.

When everything is going right, guard your faith closely.

A record of this invasion has been found on an Egyptian stone that says Shishak's army penetrated as far north as the Sea of Galilee, in the northern kingdom. Egypt was not the world power it had once been, and Shishak wanted to restore his nation to its former greatness.

He was not strong enough to conquer both Israel and Judah, but he managed to destroy key cities in Judah in an effort to regain control of the trade routes and create dissension among the people.

### **A fool rejects God.**

Psalm 14:1-3

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.

The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.

They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

The true atheist is either foolish or wicked—foolish because he ignores the evidence that God exists or wicked because he refuses to live by God's truths.

We become atheists in practice when we rely more on ourselves than on God. The fool mentioned here is someone who is aggressively perverse in his actions. To speak in direct defiance of God is utterly foolish according to the Bible.

No one but God is perfect; all of us stand guilty before him (see Romans 3:23) and need his forgiveness.

No matter how well we perform or how much we achieve compared to others, none of us can boast of his or her goodness when compared to God's standard. God not only expects us to obey his guidelines, but he wants us to love him with all our heart.

No one except Jesus Christ has done that perfectly. Because we all fall short we must turn to Christ to save us (Romans 10:9-11). Have you asked him to save you?

David applies these observations to his enemies when he says the evildoers “devour my people as men eat bread”: “They have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.” By contrast, David said, “Though you probe my heart, . . . you will find nothing” (Psalm 17:3).

There is a clear distinction between those who worship God and those who refuse to worship him. David worshiped God, and under his leadership Israel obeyed God and prospered.

Several hundred years later, however, Israel forgot God, and it became difficult to distinguish between God's followers and those who worshiped idols.

When Isaiah called Israel to repentance, he, like David, spoke of people who had gone astray (Isaiah 53:6). But Isaiah was talking about the Israelites themselves.

Paul quoted Psalm 14 in Romans 3:10-12. He made the image of straying sheep even more general, referring to all people. The whole human race—Jew and Gentile alike—has turned away from God.

## **Why Nazareth rejected Jesus.**

Matthew 13:55

He's just a carpenter's son, and we know Mary, his mother, and his brothers—James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas.

The residents of Jesus' hometown had known Jesus since he was a young child and were acquainted with his family; they could not bring themselves to believe in his message.

They were too close to the situation. Jesus had come to them as a prophet, one who challenged them to respond to unpopular spiritual truth. They did not listen to the timeless message because they could not see beyond the man.

## **Jeremiah's hometown rejected him too.**

Matthew 13:57

And they were deeply offended and refused to believe in him. Then Jesus told them, "A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his own family."

Jesus was not the first prophet to be rejected in his own country. Jeremiah experienced rejection in his hometown, even by members of his own family (Jeremiah 12:5-6)

Jeremiah 12:5-6

Then the Lord replied to me, "If racing against mere men makes you tired, how will you race against horses? If you stumble and fall on open ground, what will you do in the thickets near the Jordan?"

Even your own brothers, members of your own family, have turned on you. They have plotted, raising a cry against you. Do not trust them, no matter how pleasantly they speak.

Life was extremely difficult for Jeremiah despite his love for and obedience to God. When he called to God for relief, God's reply in effect was, "If you think this is bad, how you are going to cope when it gets really tough?"

Not all of God's answers to prayer are nice or easy to handle. Any Christian who has experienced war, bereavement, or a serious illness knows this. But we are to be committed to God even when the going gets tough and when his answers to our prayers don't bring immediate relief.

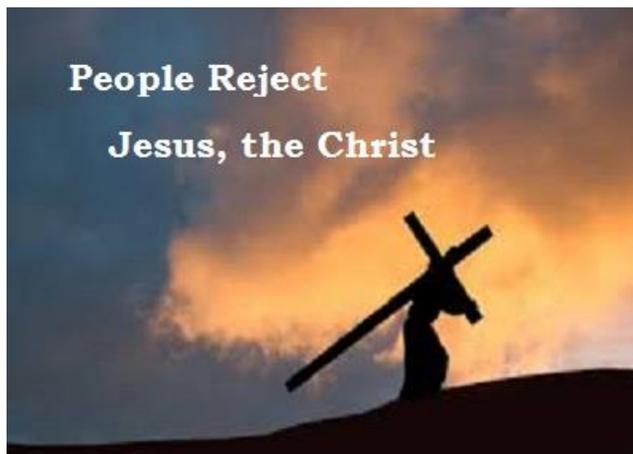
### **How we reject God.**

Matthew 21:37

"Finally, the owner sent his son, thinking, 'surely they will respect my Son.'

In trying to reach us with his love, God finally sent his own Son. Jesus' perfect life, his words of truth, and his sacrifice of love are meant to cause us to listen to him and to follow him as Lord. If we ignore God's gracious gift of his Son, we reject God himself.

## Chapter 3



### **People reject Jesus.**

Matthew 21:42

Then Jesus asked them, "Didn't you ever read this in the Scriptures? 'The stone rejected by the builders has now become the cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous to see.'

Jesus refers to himself as “the stone the builders rejected.” Although Jesus was rejected by many of his people, he will become the capstone, or cornerstone, of his new building, the church (see Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:7).

### **Consequences of rejecting Jesus**

Matthew 21:44;

Anyone who stumbles over that stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls."

Jesus used this metaphor to show that one stone can affect people different ways, depending on how they relate to it (see Isaiah 8:14-15; Isaiah 28:16; Daniel 2:34, 44-45).

Ideally they will build on it; many, however, will trip over it. And at the last judgment God's enemies will be crushed by it. In the end, Christ, the "building block," will become the "crushing stone."

He offers mercy and forgiveness *now* and promises judgment later. We should choose him now!

John 8:24

That is why I said that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am who I say I am, you will die in your sins."

The Sea of Galilee is an unusual body of water. It is relatively small (13 miles long, 7 miles wide), but it is 150 feet deep, and the shoreline is 680 feet below sea level.

Sudden storms can appear over the surrounding mountains with little warning, stirring the water into violent 20-foot waves. The disciples had not foolishly set out in a storm. They had been caught without warning, and their danger was great.

Hebrews 10:26

Dear friends, if we deliberately continue sinning after we have received a full knowledge of the truth, there is no other sacrifice that will cover these sins.

When people deliberately reject Christ's offer of salvation, they reject God's most precious gift.

They ignore the leading of the Holy Spirit, the one who communicates to us God's saving love.

This warning was given to Jewish Christians who were tempted to reject Christ for Judaism, but it applies to anyone who rejects Christ for another religion or, having understood Christ's atoning work, deliberately turns away from it (see also Numbers 15:30-31 and Mark 3:28-30).

The point is that there is no other acceptable sacrifice for sin than the death of Christ on the cross.

If someone deliberately rejects the sacrifice of Christ after clearly understanding the gospel teaching about it, then there is no way for that person to be saved, because God has not provided any other name under heaven by which we can be saved (see Acts 4:12).

### **People's rejection versus Jesus' acceptance**

Mark 6:4

Then Jesus told them, "A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his relatives and his own family."

Jesus said that a prophet (in other words, a worker for God) is never honored in his hometown. But that doesn't make his work any less important.

A person doesn't need to be respected or honored to be useful to God. If friends, neighbors, or family don't respect your Christian work, don't let their rejection keep you from serving God.

## Chapter 4



### **Teamwork helps us deal with rejection**

Mark 6:7

And he called his twelve disciples together and sent them out two by two, with authority to cast out evil spirits.

The disciples were sent out in pairs. Individually they could have reached more areas of the country, but this was not Christ's plan.

One advantage in going out by twos was that they could strengthen and encourage each other, especially when they faced rejection.

Our strength comes from God, but he meets many of our needs through our teamwork with others. As you serve Christ, don't always try to go it alone.

## **Why many reject Jesus.**

John 6:70

Then Jesus said, "I chose the twelve of you, but one is a devil."

In response to Jesus' message, some people left; others stayed and truly believed; and some, like Judas, stayed but tried to use Jesus for personal gain.

Many people today turn away from Christ. Others pretend to follow, going to church for status, approval of family and friends, or business contacts. But there are only two real responses to Jesus—you either accept him or reject him.

How have you responded to Christ?

You may pray a prayer unto salvation. "Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins. I accept you as Savior and honor you as Lord. I pray in Jesus name". Amen.

### **Rejecting God makes it impossible to hear him.**

1 Cor. 2:14-15

But people who aren't Christians can't understand these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them because only those who have the Spirit can understand what the Spirit means.

We who have the Spirit understand these things, but others can't understand us at all. How could they? For, "Who can know what the Lord is thinking? Who can give him counsel?" But we can understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ/

**You are unique. Use the skills God has given you, and leave the results to him.**

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: New Living Bible translation. Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007.