

## **“I Can Help You Deal with Rejection”**

John 6:60-71

Jesus, even today, is embraced and loved by many, but rejected and opposed by others. Have you ever felt the sting of rejection? Jesus can help us deal with that.

### **How to Deal with Rejection**

#### **A. Be honest.**

John 6:60-62, Many of his disciples said, “This is very hard to understand. How can anyone accept it?” <sup>61</sup> Jesus was aware that his disciples were complaining, so he said to them, “Does this offend you? <sup>62</sup> Then what will you think if you see the Son of Man ascend to heaven again?”

- Jesus recognized his disciples were struggling ... and he dealt with it up front.
- Asking simple, direct questions can be helpful: “Does this offend you?”
- Focus on where the relationship can go ... Jesus wants them to consider how they might respond to future events.

#### **B. Depend on the spirit.**

John 6:63, The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing. And the very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

- Jesus downplays human emotion and effort, and emphasizes the Spirit’s leadership.
- Focus on following the Spirit, not human influences.
  - If you are being rejected ... decide who’s approval is most important.
  - If you are rejecting someone else ... consider if you are being emotion-driven, or Spirit-led.

#### **C. Let go of unbelief.**

John 6:64-66, But some of you do not believe me.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning which ones didn’t believe, and he knew who would betray him.)

<sup>65</sup> Then he said, “That is why I said that people can’t come to me unless the

Father gives them to me.”<sup>66</sup> At this point many of his disciples turned away and deserted him.

- There comes a point when people do not share the same vision and passion for Christ ... and you let go.
- Acknowledge that God leads people to, and away from you.

#### **D. When you experience rejection, affirm your connection to Christ.**

John 6:67-69, Then Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked, “Are you also going to leave?”<sup>68</sup> Simon Peter replied, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life.<sup>69</sup> We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God.”

- Rejection can feel lonely and isolated ... where can you go? Only Jesus has the words of eternal life.

#### **E. Understand that rejection is a part of life.**

John 6:70-71, Then Jesus said, “I chose the twelve of you, but one is a devil.”<sup>71</sup> He was speaking of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, one of the Twelve, who would later betray him.

- Even the “inner circle” experiences betrayal.
- The “devil’s” chief characteristic is opposition.

1 John 4:4-5, But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory over those people, because the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world.<sup>5</sup> Those people belong to this world, so they speak from the world’s viewpoint, and the world listens to them.

- There is an epic struggle between the Spiritual and the Worldly ... you are on the winning side, but it won’t always feel that way.

A closing prayer ... “Dear God, we long for a time of perfect peace and harmony, but recognize that while we are here in ‘the world’ there will be misunderstanding and rejection. Help us depend upon You completely. Help us hear and believe *Your* words that bring joy in the midst of strife. In Jesus’ name, amen.”