

# HOW TO HANDLE REJECTION

## FIRST THINGS FIRST

Take a minute to pray for God to guide you as you study...

Take a moment to review the last lesson on having spiritual conversations in a secular world. What were some points that you remember? Did you have an opportunity this week to bring Jesus into your relationships with others? How did it go?

There is a story that goes like this...

One day a literature evangelist was out knocking on doors trying to sell books that would lead others to Jesus, help them learn about a healthy lifestyle, and children's books. He had been out knocking on doors for some time with no luck. Every knock was met with a, "not interested" or a, "no thanks" and even sometimes a, "get off my porch!" This brought tremendous discouragement that eventually turned into frustration. Hearing "no" after "no" after "no" isn't easy. Finally he snapped. While walking up to a new home, he came up with a plan. He knocked as usual, and this time, a middle-aged woman came to the door. Before he could even say anything, she said the same words he had heard too many times before - "not interested." Being frustrated and not willing to accept that response, the literature evangelist responded, "What aren't you interested in, living longer, or children's health?" These were the topics of the books he was carrying, and his response caught her off guard. Eventually he was able to show her the books and she purchased several!

I don't know if this story is actually true, but it touches on the topic of our study today: **Handling Rejection.**

Tell of a time where you experienced rejection.

Being rejected feels awful, and yet, we all experience it at some times in life. And you know what? Jesus experienced rejection too! In fact, He knows exactly how you feel in all of your experiences, including rejection.

**Hebrews 4:15:** "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to \_\_\_\_\_ with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet he did not sin."

He knows what you feel when you hurt. He knows what you feel when you're sad. He knows what you feel when you experience rejection. In reality, he experienced rejection often in His life.

Jesus was rejected by His family...

**John 17:5:** "For even his own \_\_\_\_\_ did not believe in him."

Jesus was rejected by His community...

**Matthew 13:57:** "And they took offense at him."

Jesus was rejected by those who claimed to love Him...

**John 13:21:** "After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, "Very truly I tell you, one of you is going to betray me."

Rejection will come when we are trying to lead others to Jesus. Jesus Himself experienced rejection and if **HE** did, God in the flesh, how much more will we? But when we do experience rejection we need to be ready to respond in a Christ-like manner.

Read Luke 4:14-30 and write down how Jesus is rejected and how He responds.

Read Mark 5:1-17 and write down how Jesus is rejected and His response.

In Mark 6:53-56 Jesus returns to that very same place where He was rejected but now people are ready to receive Him!

Jesus shows us two huge lessons about how to handle rejection when we are seeking to lead others to Jesus.

1. **Remain a Christian when being rejected.** Don't push but remain calm so they are witnessed to about Jesus even in their rejection of Him.

2. **Always be willing to go back and have a plan on how to reestablish a connection.** Pray through the rejection and ask God to open the door again.

## BASIC POINT

Rejection will happen, but Jesus will be with you through it all.

Now that you know that you will be rejected by people that do not want to hear about Jesus, and you know that Jesus was rejected in His life as well, it's time for you to get some practice. Isn't that what this set of lessons is called? It is intended for you to get some practice sharing your faith with others. So, let's practice!

The situation:

You have been meeting with Scott for several weeks. Hanging out, eating meals, watching sports, etc. You have been praying for God to show you the right time for you to talk to Scott about Jesus and feel like this next encounter is the right time. Scott is coming over for dinner and you are planning on talking to him afterwards. After dinner you share the gospel with Scott but he rejects it.

Practice responding to three types of rejection.

1. Scott gets angry and leaves.
2. Scott tells you that he believes in a higher power but thinks everyone has their own path.
3. Scott listens to you and then brings up that he doesn't think he can believe because when he was younger one of his childhood friends was killed by a drunk driver.

Rejection is something that we hate to experience. But there is comfort knowing that not only does Jesus empathize with us but that He also experienced rejection on a level way worse than we ever will! He was rejected by His own creation. But even through His rejection, He consistently tried to reach out to share His love with everyone, and He asks us to do the same.

Jesus puts it this way as He describes what we will face in the future while we witness for Him:

**John 16:33:** "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

When rejection comes, be encouraged! Let it confirm that you are a disciple, someone that is actively working to help others know Jesus. Rejection will come, that's for sure, but that comes with the territory. In the end, Jesus wins, and in the meantime, we press on doing His business.

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## FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

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1. What have you found are some of the best ways to handle rejection?
2. What emotions do you experience through rejection?
3. What will help you face rejection?

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### LESSON 6: HOW TO HANDLE REJECTION

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