

## SESSION THREE

# Rejection Must Fall

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*Those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.*

ROMANS 8:14-16





## Orientation

Rejection letters for writers are legendary. New writers are coached on how to get ready for multifarious rejections from agents and editors. Blogger Nathaniel Tower even goes so far as to categorize rejection letters in his post “Ten Levels of Rejection (and What to Do about Them).”

There even used to be a magazine called *Rejected Quarterly* that accepted only short stories that had been rejected at least five times. Writers submitted the five rejection letters as proof, along with their stories. Sadly, like many magazines in recent years, *Rejected Quarterly* stopped publishing due to lack of interest. It was rejected by its audience.

As painful as writerly rejection is, though, it is dwarfed by the pain of rejection from someone close to us: a parent, a spouse. A few words from a key person in our world, or the lack thereof, can shape our view of ourselves for our entire lives. Rejection looms as a giant and haunts us with its cousins—insecurity, inferiority, perfectionism, or compulsive drivenness. Whenever we believe we’re only as good as our latest success (or failure), we’re in the clutches of the giant of rejection.

Fortunately, God counters that toxic thinking with the only thing that can defeat it: his acceptance. In this session, we will see how David resisted the pull of rejection and how God invites us to embrace the acceptance he offers us.

## Welcome and Checking In

Go around the group and invite everyone to answer one of the following questions:

- *When you were growing up, who accepted you just as you were? (If the answer is nobody, you can say so.)*



or

- *What are some of the ways you typically respond to rejection?*

Last week you were invited to participate in the “Between Sessions” section of the study.

- Did you do one of the activities? If so, which one? If not, why not?
- What are some of the things you wrote down in reflection?
- What did you learn by engaging in these activities?

## Hearing the Word

Read aloud in the group the following passage from 1 Samuel 17:32–37. As before, listen for any fresh insights as this portion of the David and Goliath story is read.

<sup>32</sup> David said to Saul, “Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him.”

<sup>33</sup> Saul replied, “You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth.”

<sup>34</sup> But David said to Saul, “Your servant has been keeping his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, <sup>35</sup> I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it.<sup>36</sup> Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. <sup>37</sup> The LORD who



rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine.”

Saul said to David, “Go, and the LORD be with you.”

In groups of two or three, share your answers to the following questions:

What was one thing that stood out to you from the Scripture, and why?

How did Saul react when David offered to fight the giant?

How did David respond to these words of rejection?

## Watch the Video

Play the video segment for session three. Use the following outline to record any thoughts or concepts that stand out to you.

### Notes

It's often hard to shake off comments said about us—or not said about us. Feeling as if we don't live up to others' expectation can lead to the giant of rejection in our lives.



In life, we have to ask if we are doing things “so that” or “because.” Are we doing things *so that* we can get something from God? Or *because* of what God has already done?

The difference in the two phrases is powerful. We do not serve God so that we can somehow gain his approval, but “because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19).

People operating out of a *so that* attitude respond in one of two ways to rejection. They are either crushed and feel unworthy of others’ love, or they flip it around and vow to become the best at everything to prove they are somebody worthy of love.

God has already decided that we are “good enough” to have a relationship with us. We were never worthy of this on our own, but we were worth it enough for God to send his Son to die for our sins.

If we live *for* people's approval, we will never feel as if we measure up. But if we live *from* God's approval, we will already know that we are accepted. This mindset changes everything.

The Bible says we are worthy, loved, valued, and chosen sons and daughters of God. The giant of acceptance falls when we choose to live this out.

Rejected people reject people. Loved and accepted people love and accept people. We must believe we are accepted by God to truly accept others—and thus promote God's glory.

## Group Discussion

Take a few minutes with your group members to discuss what you just watched and explore these concepts in Scripture.

1. Consider the reasons outlined in the video about why people typically feel rejected. Could you identify with any of them? If so, which ones?



2. What reasons for feeling deeply accepted did you hear in the video? Which of them are already prominent in your thoughts, and which aren't?
3. What does it mean to understand the miracle of our creation? How does that nurture a sense of acceptance?
4. In what sense can you say, "God chose me"? What does this mean to you, and why is it so important?
5. What do you think we need to do to become fully captivated by God's acceptance so that it affects the way we think and act?
6. What's the difference between living *for* acceptance and living *from* it? How can you put this into practice?