

From Rejection to Acceptance



Identification (Part 9)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, sharing precious truths and insights that have made the difference between success and failure in my life, and can do the same in yours.

Our special theme throughout this Easter week is: Identification. we're speaking about the exchange that was accomplished through the death of Jesus, something that cannot be seen by the natural eye, but can only be understood by faith from the scriptures. But, when Jesus died on the cross, there was an unseen transaction in the spiritual world. All the evil that was due to us and our disobedience came upon Jesus as our representative, the last Adam, as he hung there on the cross, made a curse for us, that in return, we might receive all the good that is eternally due to Jesus, the spotless, sinless, obedient son of God. That's the exchange. The evil came upon Jesus that we might receive the good due to him.

In my previous talks this week, we've looked together at three specific aspects of this exchange. First of all, from curse to blessing. Jesus was made a curse when He hung on the cross that we might receive the blessing. Second, from sickness to healing. Jesus took our infirmities, our sicknesses, and our pains and with his wounds, we have been healed. Thirdly, from poverty to prosperity. When Jesus hung on the cross, he exhausted the poverty curse. We looked at that yesterday. The poverty curse was hunger, thirst, nakedness, and lack of all things, and very exactly, very literally, on the cross, Jesus fulfilled all that. He was hungry. He was thirsty. He was naked. He was in want of all things. That was no accident. It was part of the divine design. The poverty curse, in its fullness, came upon Jesus that in return, through faith, we might receive the blessing of prosperity.

Today we're going to look at yet another aspect of this exchange summed up in the phrase, from rejection to acceptance.

I need to begin by explaining what I mean by rejection. This is something which all of us experience at some time, but often we do not recognize it. Personally, I would say that rejection is the commonest emotional and spiritual problem and cause

of suffering in our contemporary culture. What do I mean by rejection? It can be defined in various ways with various phrases. Essentially, rejection is the feeling of being unwanted, unworthy, not really belonging, somehow being excluded. I think of the person who suffers from this wound of rejection as one who is always on the outside looking in, the one who would like to be inside, the one who would like to be part of the family, part of the joy, part of the acceptance, part of the love, but always somehow feels unable or unworthy to enter in. And, with rejection, there go many other things, loneliness, misery, self-pity, often even more terrible things like despair and suicide, but they all spring from that bitter root of rejection.

Now, this condition of rejection is described in various places in the Bible but there's a kind of general rejection which belongs to all who are not rightly related to God. This is described rather vividly by Paul in Ephesians, chapter 2, verse 12. He's speaking to Believers from a non-Jewish background and he says:

> "Before you became Believers, remember at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel, foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world." (NIV)

What terrible words those are at the end, without hope and without God. Truly everyone who is without Christ is without hope and without God; an alien, stranger, an orphan, somebody for whom full provision isn't made, somebody who's not worthy to be in but is on the outside looking in with longing and unfulfilled expectations. That's the condition of those, who through sin, have lost a right relationship with God, who need to be reconciled back to God.

We need to bear in mind that it was our sin that caused our original and basic rejection. In Habakkuk, chapter 1, verse 13, the prophet speaks to the Lord and says:

> "Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong." (NIV)

So, wherever evil comes, and wrong, then God averts His eyes. He cannot accept it. He cannot admit it into His presence. He rejects it. His infinite holiness and righteousness makes it necessary that He reject all forms of sin, of evil, and wrong, and for that reason, we were in this condition of rejection, outside, aliens, not belonging. But, thank God the death of Jesus changed all this and that next verse in Ephesians, chapter 2, verse 13, Paul speaks about this transformation:

> "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ." (NIV)

That's the transition from rejection to acceptance. We were far away, we were outside the family, we didn't belong, we were aliens and strangers, we had no rights. If we came to God at all it was as beggars, not as children, but now, through the death of Jesus, through His shed blood, we, who were once far away, have been brought near to God. That's the transition from rejection to acceptance. Jesus made possible this transition from rejection to acceptance about which I am speaking because on the cross He bore our rejection. Actually, that was His ultimate agony. That was the thing that broke His heart and caused Him to die. This is very vividly set forth in the Gospels, in the account of the crucifixion. We look in Matthew 27, verses 45 and 46, the account of the crucifixion:

> "From the sixth hour [that's midday] until the ninth hour [that's three P.M.] darkness came over all the land. About the ninth hour [three P.M.], out of that darkness, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?'"

That's Aramaic. It's a quotation from Psalm 22. It means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" It always touches my heart that Jesus cried out in Aramaic. I think it's a fact that we come to understand and experience that when people are in desperate agony, and particularly at the point of death, their mind frequently goes back to the language they first learned in childhood and that's how I understand that. Jesus used His mother tongue, the tongue that He learned in His home. He cried out, but not to a human being, but to God, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' And remember, no answer came from Heaven. That was the first time that Jesus had ever prayed or cried to God and did not receive an immediate answer. Heaven was silent. God averted His eyes. God stopped His ears. Why? Because God is too pure to look upon sin and cannot tolerate wrong and when Jesus became identified with our sin, because of His own justice and righteousness, God had to avert His eyes and stop his ears and there came no answer from Heaven. That result was for our good. It's very vividly stated in just a few verses further on in Matthew 27, verse 51:

> "At that moment [that was the moment that Jesus died] the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to

bottom." (NIV)

What did that curtain of the temple represent? It represented the separation between a holy God and sinful man but through the death of Jesus, because He bore our rejection, He obtained for us acceptance and the evidence of acceptance was the splitting of that curtain, and it was split, the Scripture says, carefully, from top to bottom. It was done not by man, but by God. Jesus had endured our rejection that we might enter into His acceptance. Now this acceptance through the death of Jesus is described by Paul in various places, especially Ephesians, chapter 1, verses 4 through 8, where he says this:

> "For God chose us in him [that's in Jesus] before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. [Isn't that beautiful to be holy and blameless in God's sight. How could we ever achieve that by our own effort? It's not possible by anything but through the substitutionary death of Jesus] In love God predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will. [Note, we're to be sons, we're to be children. We're not aliens or strangers. We're members of the Family. God is our Father, Heaven is our home, we belong to the best Family in the universe. Paul continues] to the praise of his glorious grace which he has freely given us in the One he loves." (NIV)

I always like the King James Version of that verse, it says, "God has made us accepted in the Beloved." There's the exact translation, from rejection to acceptance as God's children, members of His family. Verse 7, Paul goes on:

> "In him [Jesus] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding." (NIV)

Notice the emphasis on grace. It cannot be earned. Notice the emphasis on redemption. We have redemption through his blood, redeemed from the curse to enjoy the blessing; redeemed from rejection to enjoy acceptance.

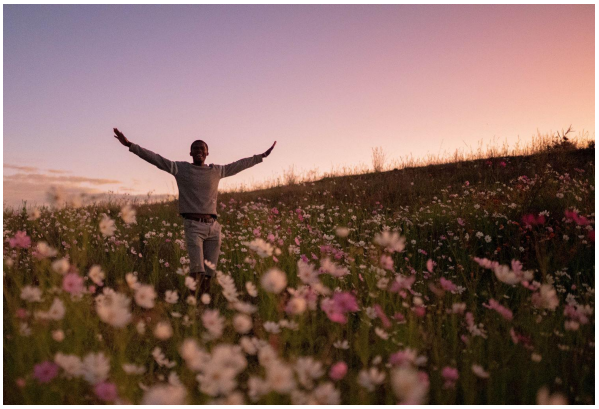
Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. We'll be looking at the final exchange that took place on the cross.

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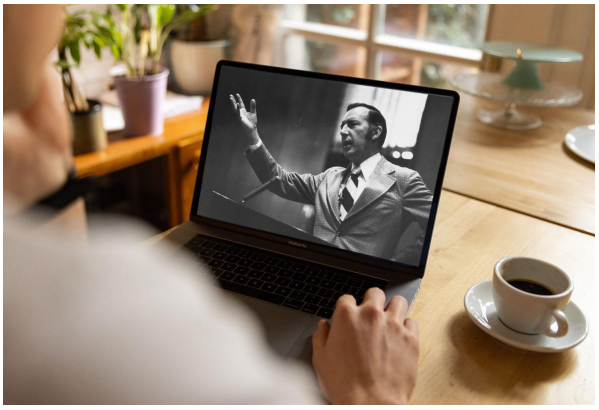
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