

THE OVERCOMING LIFE

Overcoming Rejection Jimmy Evans

Focus When we are dealing with rejection, Jesus empowers us to overcome it. Victory is the birthright of every believer. We are not to listen to the devil who slinks into our thoughts when we are most vulnerable, and sends us subliminal messages of hopelessness and despair. We should not accept his lies, but instead focus on Jesus, press on, and receive the freedom from rejection He brings.

Fun What was your favorite tv show growing up? Who was your favorite character in it?

Review Key Scriptures: Philippians 4:13; 1 John 5:4

Jesus was the most rejected man in history, yet it never affected His decision-making. It never affected His attitude or the way He treated people; it did not keep Him from accomplishing His destiny. He is our ultimate example of an overcomer. We should not let the devil keep us from our destiny or use rejection to control our lives.

1. Forms of rejection.

Rejection comes in many forms, such as being unwanted, being excluded, being ridiculed, being divorced, not being loved, being gossiped about, being compared, being abandoned, and more.

2. Four common, but unhealthy ways we react to rejection.

A. Avoid the risk of rejection. Rejection makes people want to not try in relationships or endeavors. They reject others before being rejected and have a lack of commitment.

B. Anger and aggression. Rejected people are the most hostile. Chronic rejection causes people to want to lash out. Statistics say that most violent

crimes are committed by men who are single, who are newly divorced, or who have experienced a loss of relationship with a woman.

C. Hopelessness and despair. Rejection can turn into hopelessness and despair and cause higher mortality rates and sickness, greater mental and emotional problems, a higher suicide rate, and vulnerability to the devil's lies.

D. Being overly sensitive to rejection and overly dependent upon the approval and acceptance of others. We sometimes react to rejection by being easily offended and reactive, becoming self-centered and self-absorbed, and being overly dependent on the approval and acceptance of others.

3. How to overcome rejection.

A. Base your life on God's perfect love and what His Word has to say about you. He will never leave us or forsake us. God's love saw Jesus through all that He had to endure, and we also have full rights as children of God (Hebrews 13:5–6; Ephesians 1:5–6; John 6:37).

B. Pursue relationships with fellow believers who are pursuing God and healthy relationships. Choose your friends carefully! Choose friends who love God, share your values, and who will stand with you (Proverbs 17:17; Galatians 5).

C. Expect rejection and do not take it so personally. Everyone feels rejected at one time or another, and unrealistic expectations or toxic thoughts can set us up for great pain. Jesus was rejected, but His focus was God. An award awaits you in heaven (Luke 6:26; Luke 6:22–23).

4. Forgive those who reject you and give them God's love and acceptance.

Get off the defense and live on offense. Do not be unwise or set yourself up foolishly, but live your life for God; love your enemies, forgive them and pray for them (Luke 6:27–37).

Group Dynamics Idea Ask your group to select a Scripture that helped them overcome a hurtful situation, then share it.

Discuss

1. Have you ever felt rejected? What helped you overcome this rejection?
2. Discuss the ways the devil uses rejection as a control point in our lives.

3. How does rejection interfere with the destiny God has for us?
4. Using Jesus as our perfect model, how can we become victorious over rejection?
5. Explain this statement: "We are either overcomers, or we are overcome."
6. Pastor Jimmy has challenged us that where there is rejection, we are to "get off the defense and live on offense." What does this phrase mean to you?
7. Take a moment to quietly come before the Lord. Ask Him to show you if you have a spirit of rejection. If so, give it to Jesus. Ask Him to help you walk in victory, so that you can receive the destiny He has always planned for you.

Take Home As we conclude, remember the following:

- Rejection is something we have all experienced.
- Rejection can stop us from our destiny.
- Jesus is the perfect example of being an overcomer.
- We can be overcomers and step into our destiny.
- When our focus is Jesus, we are victorious.

Prayer Jesus, help me to be an overcomer. Empower me to walk in victory. In Jesus' name. Amen.

New Leader Tip Consider having a potluck meal together at the end of your semester. This is a good way to conclude your study and affirm friendships that have grown throughout the year.