

Rejection / Acceptance by God

Tita: Anita did not want Friday to arrive. It was the day that payment was due for the school trip: 5 days away in the mountains with all her friends sounded wonderful, but she had a huge problem. Anita's dad had been unemployed now for 8 months and she did not have enough money to pay for the trip. She had been working after school and on weekends at the market for the last 6 months but she was still short of money...

Tammy: Welcome. It's good to be together again on *Women of Hope*...I'm Tammy.

Carol: And I'm Carol. I wonder whether Anita was able to get enough money to go on her trip. Let's hear the rest of the story...

Tita: ...Anita remembered a coin that her grandfather had given her years before. The coin was old, dirty and a bit dented on one side. She had cleaned it up...the best she could at the time, and then she'd forgotten about it. But today she would take this precious coin out of the box she had kept it in all these years and find out if it was worth enough to help her pay for the trip. She felt sad as it was a very special gift, but she could see no other way to find the money.

Well...everyone she asked about the coin simply laughed at her or looked at her as if she was mad: "Why are you wasting your time with that coin...it's so old and dirty, it's useless," said one of the girls from school. "That coin is of no value now," said the lady at the local shop, when Anita told her why she wanted to sell it. "I think you'd better accept that you won't be able to go on the school trip. That coin is not only old and dirty but it's dented on one side. It's damaged...so it's not worth anything."

All these comments made Anita feel embarrassed and rejected. She obviously was not meant to go...she would miss out on the trip. She felt sad and alone!

On Friday morning Anita told her teacher that she would not be going on the trip. She had not had time to earn enough money and her old, dented coin was worthless.

The teacher asked to see the coin and said: "Anita, come with me." The teacher patiently polished the damaged coin. She could see that in places it shone.

So that afternoon, she took Anita to see Mr Jones at the bank. "Anita did you know that this is a gold coin?... Its value is enough to pay for your trip and much more!" said Mr Jones.

"But how can this be? Anita asked, "Everyone said it's worth nothing because it's dirty and damaged."

"Yes it *is* dirty and it's a bit damaged," he answered. We don't know what's happened to it or where it's been. But even though it doesn't look shiny, the value of the coin has not changed. It has always been valuable and it still is. In fact it's *more* valuable because it's old!"

Carol: Well, you certainly can't tell how valuable something is by how it looks can you?! You may have recognised Tita's voice as she told us that story. Thanks for coming again today Tita.

Tita: It's a pleasure...

My dear friend, I wonder if the story of the coin reminds you of something in *your* life? Perhaps you have been badly treated by your parents or others; people may have abused you physically or sexually. You did nothing to deserve this but it happened...and perhaps it's still happening.

Maybe someone has told you repeatedly that you are not good enough, that you are not important...not needed...not wanted.

Could it be that after many years of marriage your husband has said he does not want you anymore and has left you?

Or perhaps your boss has fired you, saying that you don't work hard enough?

When people treat us in ways that are unfair and hurtful, we start believing that we are dirty and damaged. We believe that we are worthless and useless, or we feel we're a failure! ...And before we know it, we begin acting that way.

Tammy: That's so true Tita. If we let other people make us feel bad about ourselves, we'll soon start to believe that we are worthless...that nobody could love us...or see any value in us...just like that coin in the story!

Tita: If this is you today I want you to know that you *are* valuable no matter what others may think. You are *unique* – there is only one person who is exactly like you! You have abilities and talents that make you who you are! Yes, you may have suffered; you may have been rejected and told that you are not good enough but that does not change the real you! Deep inside, you are *still* that precious person with many good things about you. And can I tell you a secret? The physical or emotional scars that you may carry help you to grow. You have survived and overcome those hard times...and that adds so much to your experience of life. Just like that coin...under the pain, suffering and hurt is the most valuable part: the real YOU. And you can then help others who are going through similar circumstances to yours!

Tita: I have a very dear friend who was recently divorced by her husband after 25 years of marriage. I was very sad for her and we spent a lot of time talking about how she was feeling. But do you know, she soon began discovering that she does *not* have to listen to the ugly words of rejection, anger and disrespect from her husband any more. She does *not* have to keep feeling that she's not good enough because he has rejected her and ended the marriage. In spite of the pain she has gone through she has discovered that she is a valuable woman and that she always *has* been. But her real self, the woman of value that she is has been buried underneath the emotional wounds that she has suffered for so long.

It has taken time for her to discover who she really is. Now she can believe in herself again... She has the help of people who know her and love her, and she *knows* that she is unique and valuable. The good news is that now she is ready to use her personal experience and pain to support others and teach them that they are valuable too.

What about you? Have you been going through life feeling rejected and worthless? Maybe you haven't received respect; you haven't been valued. Are you finding it hard to see the real you, in your circumstances, or these harsh messages?

Would you like to think that all your suffering has some use? Would you like to be able to use your pain and hurt to help others?

Carol: And today on *Women of Hope* we want to share some more with you about how valuable you really are. So we've asked Tita to tell us a little more...from God's word, the Bible. Thanks Tita...

Tita: Perhaps you're asking yourself: "Who is this person talking to me and telling me that I'm *valuable*? She has never met me and perhaps never will, so what does she know about me? Perhaps I'm wasting my time listening to her."

Yes, you're right my dear friend, I *don't* know you and perhaps we'll never meet, but I know someone who knows you very closely. Someone who knows you better than you know yourself. Is that possible? Yes...this person also knows what you are thinking...how you are feeling...and

everything you say before you even say it! This person is God. And do you know why he knows you so well...because he made you.

In God's word, the Bible, in the Psalms, we read some amazing words. Would you read them for us please Carol?

Carol: Sure: "You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and have woven me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your skill is marvellous - and how well I know it. You watched me as I was being formed...as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born." (Ps 139: 13-15 NLT)

Tita: These were words written by king David as he talked to God. David was

a king of Israel, who lived about 3000 years ago. King David knew that God had created him...and that not only did God know all his physical qualities but *he* knew that *God* knew all about him. Listen to what he wrote next:

Carol: "You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my every thought when I'm far away. You map out the path ahead of me and tell me where to stop and rest. Every moment you know where I am. You know what I am going to say even before I say it Lord." (Ps 139 2-4 NLT)

Tita: Friend, God created king David, God created me, and God created you...and God never makes mistakes. He created each one of us exactly as HE wanted us to be. Because he is our creator, he knows better than *anyone else* the good things we think and do.

King David made some dreadful mistakes - he took another man's wife, and arranged for her husband to be killed. And just when he thought he had covered it up, God sent a prophet to tell him that God knew, and was angry. David was really sorry, and God forgave him and gave him a new start.

So God also knows those parts of us that are *not* so good. Yet he loves us and helps us to become better people. But he will not *make* us change. He will only help us if we invite him to be part of our lives.

How do you feel when you think that God...who is perfect, pure and holy, who never makes mistakes...loves you and me? How does it make you feel that he knows you inside out – all the good things...and all the mistakes you've made in life? Yet...God loves you and wants you to know that you are valuable to him. How amazing!

Tita: Remember my friend whose husband divorced her after 25 years of marriage? Well, in the beginning she felt very, very upset...as if her life was destroyed. He had loved her...how could he leave her after such a long time together? She felt overwhelmed with sadness. She felt afraid of the future... anxious...hurt...and worse still - rejected by someone who knew her so well. Yet after 25 years, he said, "You are not good enough for me, we need to end our marriage."

Let me tell you how she has been able to overcome these feelings of sadness, anger, pain, hurt and especially rejection. She has constantly reminded herself that God loves her *just as she is*.

Yes, she surely made mistakes in her marriage relationship and has faults...she is not perfect. She also knows that God knows every mistake, and every wrong thing that she has said and done. But even so...God does not reject her. All she has to do is tell God when she knows she has made a mistake...tell him she is sorry, and receive his forgiveness.

We call God's love *unconditional*. He loves us and accepts us no matter what. This understanding of God's love has allowed my friend to overcome the pain caused by another imperfect human being - her husband.

God knows that sometimes our own mistakes, or things that happen to us, damage us, just like that coin. But the teacher in the story we told you earlier, saw the value of the coin even when it was dirty and dented. She patiently cleaned it because she knew its value... God does the same in our lives.

And why would God do this for us? Because he tells us in the Bible: "For I know the plans that I have for you, they are plans to benefit you not to harm you, to give you hope and a future." (Jer 29:11 NIV) Not only has God created each one of us and loves us but he has amazing plans for each of our lives. He sent his son, Jesus, to show us the way to himself so that we could have a relationship with him. Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. He is waiting for us to come to him and ask him to forgive us for the wrong things we've done.

My friend was rejected by her husband...but God has not rejected her. She knows he gave his son, Jesus, for her. He has fantastic plans for her life. He sees her potential in spite of the hurt, pain and rejection she has suffered. If your story is like hers, I want you to know that today could be your opportunity to allow God to begin healing the pain and hurt of rejection. He wants to help you get back your sense of self-worth!

Carol: Thank you Tita for telling us the story of the dirty coin...and the story of your friend who was rejected just like that coin.

Tita: You're welcome. It's always good to share stories together that can help us all in our lives.

Tammy: And how wonderful to know that your friend was able to see her true value and that now she can help others see *their* true value *too*.

If you would like to ask God to help you in your own life, maybe you could pray this prayer with me.

*Father God, thank you for creating me so carefully...
Thank you for those words from the Bible that tell me that you know all about me...
I want to experience your love and acceptance in my life...
Thank you for sending Jesus to take my place...
to take the punishment for the wrong things I've done...
Please help me to know how much you love me and value me...
And help me to show your love to others...
We pray this in the strong and powerful name of Jesus. Amen...*

Carol: We have a little time left together today, so let's hear from a listener to *Women of Hope* - how she found her true value as well...Tammy will read her letter.

Tammy: Hi, I am a single mother. My husband left me, and my child, a long time ago and did not give any reason why. He just disappeared and still I have not heard from him. At first it was difficult for me to accept him leaving me. I lost all hope because I did not own much. I could not even start a small business because I had no money. Also, I don't have any parents who can help me. Because all hope was gone I cried and cried until I came to know the Lord, Jesus. I listened to the Word of God through the preaching of my pastor and through the Women of Hope program. Now my hope is in God. Some days I don't have rice or any food but I am not hopeless. I am so happy because I just kneel down and pray to God, because I know God is with me and he has a plan for my life. I listen to the Women of Hope program every week and never miss it. I hope this program will continue to be aired for women just like me.

Carol: Thank you for sharing your story with us. Keep trusting in God.

And here's another letter...

I have learned a lot from the WOH program. I used to be a person without hope. I tried many times to kill myself by taking medications. My husband is a drunkard and he never treated me well, so I became depressed... One day I started to go to a women's group that studies the Bible in my village. Through the Bible study, I have been helped to see hope, and because of hope, I came out of the depression. I started to listen to the WOH program...and I gave my life to the Lord Jesus. My children also gave their life to him as well. Now I have found hope in the Lord, Jesus Christ. I now have a job...

I always look forward to the time to listen to the WOH program every week.

Tammy: We're so glad you found hope in Jesus.

And one more...this woman has learned to help others just like Tita's friend.

Through listening to WoH I got the Bible lessons to teach to the women's group in my village. WoH gives hope to the hopeless women...it has helped me, encouraged me, and helped me build up my self-confidence. Now I am able to teach other women. I stand up with strong faith. Jesus is the only true God, and only through him can we have true love and salvation for all mankind. Teaching the women's group in my village has helped me to grow in the Lord even stronger.

Tita: God bless you as you too continue to listen to *Women of Hope*...teach and help others, and learn to trust God more. Goodbye for now.

Tammy: We would love to hear your story too.

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