

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA

#256

Dearest grandchild,

Today's letter will focus on "rejection". Jesus, as you know, was "**despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering**" (Is. 53:3). When you love somebody you become vulnerable. You expose yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally to the one you love. This makes you vulnerable. Sociologists refer to the "principle of least interest" which states that "In any relationship, the person with the least love has the most power". Let us suppose, for example, that you fall madly in love with someone. While you are only interested in them, they are dating a dozen other people at the same time. This immediately puts them in a position of power. They can reject you easier than you can reject them. When you are gone, they have a dozen others to take your place!

Jesus came to earth with love, not power (see Phil. 2:5-11). He came in total weakness as a baby struggling for a breath of air. He couldn't even hold up His head and was totally dependent upon someone else to care for Him. Because He loved us more than we loved Him this gave us the power. We could treat Him any way we wanted to and we did. Note! "**He came unto His own and His own received Him not**" (Jn. 1:11). He loved us enough to die for us, and we often don't love Him enough to even read the Bible. He was, and still is, despised and rejected. Jesus lamented: "**I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him**" (Jn. 5:43). No wonder Jesus was a man of sorrows.

If you have not yet suffered rejection, someday you probably will. If and when it happens, remember that Jesus understands. He was rejected too! The story of George Matheson illustrates the pain of rejection in graphic detail. George was born in Glasgow, Scotland March 27th, 1842. He was the eldest of eight children. He excelled at school and entered Glasgow University where he studied Classics, Logic and Philosophy. He graduated with first class honors at 19 but was rapidly going blind. While at the University he met and fell in love with a girl who was a fellow student. They were planning to get married. When he told her of his impending blindness, however, she rejected him. She sent a verbal dagger into his heart and bluntly said: "I do not want to be the wife of a blind man". With that they parted. Obviously he loved her more than she loved him!

Years later the memory of that rejection came flooding back to George's mind. It was on the eve of his sister's wedding and resulted in the composition of a famous hymn. Richard Neil Donovan records George's thoughts at that time: "*My hymn was composed in the manse of Inellan on the evening of June 6, 1882. I was at that time alone. It was the day of my sister's marriage, and the rest of my family were staying overnight in Glasgow. Something had happened to me which was known only to myself, and which caused me the most severe mental suffering. The hymn was the fruit of that suffering. It was the quickest bit of work I ever did in my life. I had the impression of having it dictated to me by some inward voice than of working it out myself. I am quite sure that the whole work was completed in five minutes, and equally sure that it never received at my hands any retouching or correction. I have no natural gift of rhythm. All the other verses I have written are manufactured articles; this came like a dayspring from on high. I have never been able to gain once more the same fervor in verse.*" Here are the words he wrote that helped him cope with rejection:

O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.

O Light that follow'st all my way,
I yield my flick'ring torch to thee;
my heart restores its borrowed ray,
that in thy sunshine's blaze its day
may brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow thro' the rain,
and feel the promise is not vain
that morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
and from the ground there blossoms red,
life that shall endless be.

Albert Peace put those words to music. He was an organist and also the editor of a journal called *The Scottish Hymnal*. His experience was amazingly like that of Matheson. In only five minutes he was able to adapt the melody of "St. Margaret" to the poignant words of George Matheson. Remember! Rejection does not destroy those who trust in God. Jesus is proof of that! Paul had the same confidence and wrote that we can always: **"Rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character, and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit"** (Rom. 5:2-5).

I hope you never have to go through rejection like George Matheson did, but if you do, remember that Jesus understands. He too was a man of sorrow who suffered rejection. As George Matheson so beautifully wrote, however, His love will never let you go!

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce