

FATHER'S DAY 2011

The Pew Research Center released the study on Wednesday and it headlined on CNN's website this morning, just in time for Father's Day – "America's Tale of Two Different Dads." The statistics show that the share of dads living apart from their children has more than doubled since 1960. Now, roughly one of every four fathers lives separately from a child, meaning 20.3 million children don't have a dad in their house. In 1960, 89% of children lived in a home with their dad, but today that figure has shrunk to 73% with no signs of slowing any time soon. 69% of those questioned said they believe a child needs a father in the home to grow up happily, but sadly that is simply no longer a reality in many families.

Many here are affected deeply by the absence of a father in their lives – sometimes through death, sometimes through disengagement ("absentee fathers"), and sometimes through outright abandonment. No matter the situation, it all hurts, and those kinds of hurts actually tend to grow throughout one's life. I hate to damage a well-worn cliché, but time simply doesn't heal all wounds. And so, children, teenagers, adults, seniors, wives, mothers, widows, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, women and men will observe Father's Day with a hole in their heart.

That hole is called REJECTION, which is in its most basic form simply the act of "refusing to accept someone." Children rejected by parents, or parents by children. Wives rejected by husbands, or husbands by wives. Friends rejected by friends. The carnage is horrendous.

The sense of being rejected, unwanted or unloved, affects more people than we realize. People suffering from a spirit of rejection can react in several different ways ... promiscuity, attention seeking, self-destructive behaviors, flattery, anger, drugs, bad friendships, moodiness, violence, self-pity, eating disorders, isolation, rebellion, despair, indifference, cruelty, cynicism, loneliness, or even suicidal tendencies.

Feelings of rejection often relate back to childhood, when for one reason or another an individual felt insecure or unwanted. And especially when parents are the perpetrators, children can grow up scarred for life. When something that is said or done to us penetrates our spirit, it WOUNDS us and we enter into life carrying baggage, burdens, and patterns of thinking and behavior that cripple our normal defense mechanisms. Problems that would be little for someone else tend to overwhelm us. Parents, be careful what you say to your children! They will remember it!

Proverbs 18:14 The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?

We live in an era of SELFISHNESS, when people will walk out on their spouses, their children, their marriage vows, their churches, their friendships, and their commitments at the slightest provocation. And these selfish people all sing the same song ... "This (_____) isn't meeting MY NEEDS, so I'm gone!" In some cases, they stay but they simply disengage by replacing their family or marriage with work, a computer, a hobby, a television, their friends, or an affair. And you may not like it, but there will always be selfish people around like this! They don't care who they hurt – and maybe some of them are in your past!

A common type of rejection, and one of the deepest woundings in a person's life, is when we are rejected by a parent. The rejection is doubled when a person is rejected by both parents. Those feelings of being unwanted, unworthy and unlovable last throughout that person's childhood and adult life, and can affect their adult relationships with a spouse or their own children. Rejected children often grow up to reject their parents when the parents become ill or elderly. Sometimes rejected children grow up to reject and neglect their own children which then becomes a generational pattern that is very hard to break.

Even following a happy childhood, adults can sometimes develop deep feelings of rejection when a spouse leaves them, a parent dies, a long-standing friendship crumbles, someone betrays them, or they lose a job. But it is hard to identify rejection, because most rejected people put up a barrier around their emotions so no one can reach them. They put on an air of being sociable, jovial, successful and self-sufficient. They build such impenetrable walls, but underneath the façade they are still crying out for the release from feelings of rejection. Some people even blame God, yet He is the only person who can help them.

That all sounds pretty hopeless, doesn't it? But wait just a minute ...

There is a difference between BEING rejected and FEELING rejected. How many of us feel rejected by our parents, when the reality is, they did their best in difficult circumstances that arose to affect their lives? Feeling rejected and being rejected are two different things, but the result is the same. We hurt, we react and we cry out. But it is no one's "fault" – it is just "life."

Matthew 5:44-45 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

That's still small comfort, right? But wait just a minute ...

Psalm 27:10 (KJV) When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.

Psalm 27:10 (CEV) Even if my father and mother should desert me, you will take care of me.

Psalm 27:10 (NLT) Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD will hold me close.

Psalm 27:10 (MES) My father and mother walked out and left me, but GOD took me in.

Hebrew (5 words) – father mother forsake Jehovah gathers

Psalm 142:4-5 (DAVID) I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

2 Timothy 4:16-18 (PAUL) At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

What is the opposite of rejection? ACCEPTANCE!

Ephesians 1:4-6 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Hebrews 13:5-6 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Romans 8:15-16 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Romans 15:7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.