

THE BIG IDEA: If we want God's protection, understand His rejection.The Take-Off

We're at the halfway point of our Umbrella series, and like I told you last week, this week is the second of the 2 hardest topics we'll cover.

But first, a recap:

- Week 1 was about choosing to trust God's direction when it comes to the things He says and the places He leads
- This week was all-out God's direct authority over us through His ways and His word
- Week 2 was about choosing to trust God's correction when it comes through delegated authority placed by God over us
- The one common denominator in those 2 weeks is that they are about our response to situations that are usually beyond our control
- We don't control which way God might lead us and we don't really control which way leaders lead us
- In other words, the first 2 weeks have been about what we do when someone else - human or divine - moves the umbrella away from us
- This week is going to be about what happens when we move ourselves away from the umbrella

This one is going to require that you strap yourselves in - it could be a bumpy ride

Since there's no easy way to start, let's go with the Big Idea and then talk through it.

There will be a lot of Bible references that you'll need to jot down because I want you to study these. Remember, WE are on this journey under the umbrella of Jesus together. I'm not the expert; I'm a sojourner like you.

We've talked about God's direction and God's correction. This morning we're talking about God's rejection.

If we want God's protection, understand His rejection.

That statement can bring up a lot of thoughts and questions, so stay with me while we break it down.

1. We can't afford to reject rejection

- Let's acknowledge the obvious, ok. None of us like the idea of rejection.
- It feels terrible, even unChristian, and it's a foreign concept in our "everybody wins" culture
- If you've ever worked up the nerve to ask someone on a date only to hear them say no, you understand
- So let's examine if rejection is a Biblical concept. If it is, **we can't afford to reject rejection**
- Let's see what the Bible says about it:
 - Lucifer was an angel before he was a snake
 - His story is found in **Isaiah 14:12-14**
 - Notice that he wasn't asked to leave heaven; he was thrown out (rejected)
 - **1 Samuel 15:23** / We'll read more in this story next, but notice the phrase "God has rejected you"
 - **Titus 3:9-11** / Rejection isn't just an OT concept - here Paul instructs to "reject" people in the church
- So, if rejection is a concept that can happen, then we need to understand what causes it, right?
- If there's a cliff that I could fall over, I'd like to know where the edge is so that I can move AS FAR AWAY as possible from it!

2. The only time when 99 equals 100

- Let's go back to 1 Samuel 15 to see what caused Saul to be rejected because it's wise to learn from our mistakes, but it's wiser if we can learn from someone else's!
- The whole story is found in 1 Samuel 15:1-23, but let's look at verse 23 to find why Saul was rejected
- Rebellion leads to rejection, so what can we learn about rebellion?
- It's deceptive/ Do you see how Saul missed what he was doing?
 - He felt like he'd completely obeyed even though he hadn't
 - We tend to grade ourselves on a curve, but God doesn't
 - **99% obedience is 100% disobedience**; God equates partial obedience with rebellion - let that sink in
- It's contagious / Numbers 16 reveals this in Korah's rebellion
 - Around 250 leaders rose up against Moses and Moses fell down before God
 - V. 10 / Korah wanted more
 - V. 12 / Korah refused to even meet with Moses

- V. 19 / Korah had stirred up others against Moses
- V. 22 / Moses intercedes for Korah and the others
- Vv. 29-30 / God does exactly what Moses said
- V. 41 / The VERY NEXT DAY the people complained against Moses!
- V. 49 / Almost 15k died as a result
- Rebellion is contagious
- f. It's dishonoring / **Genesis 9:20-23**
 - Ham was okay further exposing his already exposed father
 - But not Noah's other sons - they covered their father's (leader's) nakedness
 - Noah cursed Ham but blessed Shem and Japheth

3. Rebels, curses, and witches - oh, my!

- a. That's interesting language - Ham was *cursed*
- b. Not to get too spooky, but given the month we're in, what do we typically associate curses with?
- c. Look back at 1 Samuel 15 - most of us are familiar with verse 22 - "to obey is better than sacrifice"
- d. But take a closer look at verse 23 - "rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft"
- e. **God equates rebellion with witchcraft**
- f. Why? Because it's all about control - who has it and who wants it
- g. Witchcraft isn't about cauldrons and green faces and broomsticks
- h. It's about spells and curses in an attempt to control, and God equates rebellion and disobedience with that
- i. Sometimes we disobey because we doubt God's commands; rebellion disobeys because it discounts God's commands
- j. "Did God really say?" Is a question of doubt
- k. Rebellion changes that question to "Did God really mean?"
- l. Saul knew exactly what God said to do but he controlled what he thought God really meant
- m. "Surely God wouldn't want me to not keep the best to give to Him?"
- n. Rebellion thinks it knows a better way, and what Saul learned is that rebellion walks away from the umbrella of God and ultimately leads to His rejection

The Landing

Of all the landings to the 330 messages I've given since our church began, I feel like may be the most important. I want to be clear - rebellion is about turning our hearts away from the clear direction of God, but so often the only way that God can reveal the control in our hearts is through commands that challenge our willingness to obey. One last scripture and then I'm going to call us all to respond to an admittedly unAmerican and undemocratic truth **2 Cor. 2:9** / Paul actually said to the church that he had written hard things just to see if they would fully comply. Why is this so important? Because often God gives leaders insight into OUR lives that He doesn't give to us. They may be used by Him to uncover blind spots. One quick example as we prepare to bow before the King [Pastor Bob, the district, and our assessment] This isn't about being afraid of losing our salvation - it's about having a heart that never wants to turn away from the umbrella - the protection and covering - of God. Let's pray.