

## Learning To Rely On The God Who Will Never Abandon You

### A Bible Study On Isaiah 49:13-16

3<sup>rd</sup> Step - Lesson 9

Fear of rejection can be a powerful influence in a person's way of thinking and living. It can be especially powerful if a person has actually experienced rejection or the threat of rejection from people who were important in his life. For instance:

- *"My mother put me in a foster home, but she told me she'd come back for me. I waited and waited, but she never came back."*
- *"I didn't want to have sex with my boyfriend, but I was afraid of losing him. Without him I don't have anything. Without him I'm nobody."*
- *"My mom and dad were fighting a lot. I tried to be really good so they wouldn't get a divorce, but they ended up getting divorced anyway. Dad left us. And I always felt like it was my fault for not being good enough."*

Experiences like these can lead to things like people-pleasing, inability to say "no," avoiding getting close to others, and sabotaging relationships ("I know they're going to reject me sooner or later, so I'll just beat them to the punch.")

People who have had experiences like this may also fear that God might do the same thing to them. The Bible has good news: God's love is absolutely reliable. God never goes back on his commitments. He doesn't give love or withhold love depending on how good we've been.

**THOUGHT QUESTIONS:** How do you act when you're in a relationship where you don't feel secure? How do you act when you're in a relationship where you feel safe and secure?

Isaiah 49:13-16

13 Shout for joy, O heavens; rejoice, O earth; burst into song, O mountains! For the LORD comforts his people and will have compassion on his afflicted ones.

14 But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me; the Lord has forgotten me."

15 Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! 16 See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

1. What good news do you see verse 13 offering?

Why might that seem too good to be true to someone who has experienced rejection before in his life?

2. In verse 14 God's people ("Zion") are saying that the troubles they see in their lives must mean that God has actually rejected them. Have you ever felt that the problems you're having are proof that God is punishing you by abandoning you?

3. What does verse 15 tell you about God's love?

4. Think about how teenage girls sometimes write their boyfriends' name on their hand, and then stare at it and sigh. Think about how some men get their wives' or girlfriends' name tattooed on their arm. Then look at verse 16. What does this tell you about God's love?

5. The New Testament makes it clear that, rather than reject us because of what we've done wrong, Jesus chose to take the blame for our wrongdoings himself. Just before describing how Jesus was arrested and crucified, the Bible says this about Jesus: *Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love [John 13:1].*

What does that tell you about God's love?

6. How do you think being sure of God's love might change the way you look at yourself?

How do you think it might change the way you live your life, to be sure that God hasn't abandoned you?

**CLOSING PRAYER:** What would you like to say to God, knowing that nothing you have to tell him will drive him away?