

WHY WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO REMEMBER CHRIST'S LOVE FOR YOU

Two psychologists named Parker and Asher once wrote:

Peer rejection in childhood often brings with it serious emotional difficulties. Rejected children are frequently discontent with themselves and with their relationships with other children. Many of these children experience strong feelings of loneliness and social dissatisfaction. Rejected children also report lower self-esteem and may be more depressed than other children. (Parker & Asher, 1987)

The point is this: who among us has not experienced some form of rejection in our lives on earth? Whether it was the bad feeling one gets from being chosen last, or not at all, to be on a ball team during P.E. or a neighborhood game; or rejection by a boyfriend or girlfriend; or something more serious later in life, we have all dealt with feelings that no one cares for us. According to Parker and Asher above, these feelings can be very damaging to us as children, and as adults. This is why we encourage each of the flock at Chesapeake to remember Christ's love for each one of us.

Even though we may not be picked to play ball, or get that promotion we worked so hard for, there is one who has chosen us. Jesus says in John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." He chose each one of us to be His disciples. Though we may reason to ourselves that it was our own decision to come to Christ, He says that He chose each one of us – chose us before we ever existed. He chose us, not because of our speed, strength, or intellect, but because He loves us. Paul writes to us in Romans 5:8, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Jesus died for us even though we weren't even born, yet. He chose us while we were lost in our sins.

Paul speaks to us, again, in Romans 15:7, "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God." The New American Standard Bible uses the word "accept" instead of "receive." This may be a better interpretation as the Greek word here carries the meaning "to bring to one's self" or "grant one access to one's heart." In spite of all our imperfections, Jesus chose us; He loves us and grants us access to His heart. We must always remember that when Satan fills our head with ideas of rejection, depression, and self-pity. **JESUS WANTS US! HE WANTS YOU!**

If we pity ourselves because we think we have no friends and are unwanted, remember Jesus calls us His friends in John 15:15, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." Here is the real question: He is a friend to us, but are we a friend to Him? Last week this article talked about committed friendship to each other. What about committed friendship to Jesus? Jesus says in John 15:14, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." Who doesn't love someone who chose them first; chose them just as they are, regardless of looks, talent, social standing, etc.; chose them even before they existed; and chose to die for them? Brethren, let's not let worldly rejection get us down, we have the love of Christ. Let's strive to show Him our love in return – "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15)

- The Elders