



Back when I was thirteen years old, entering into the eighth grade, I had amassed a group of friends. These kids were “the popular people”. It was October of 1994. Kurt Cobain, the lead singer, songwriter and guitarist for the genre shifting band “Nirvana” had committed suicide six months before. I played guitar, sang, and wrote songs also. I was one of the few in my grade who did these things. These people liked me because I did these things, had a cool haircut, a rebellious attitude, and a sneer on my face. They liked me because I smoked cigarettes, rollerbladed, dropped the f-bomb, and hung with the “bad kids”. These people didn’t really know me on any deeper level than that.

And on this chilly October evening, a popular girl in our Middle School was throwing a party in her yard. She wanted my band, “Jokers Wild”, to play during her party. We showed up, set up our drums, guitar, and bass, and cheap little PA speakers with a microphone on a stand, played a short set of songs, then we were done and stepped off to hang out.

During the break, all the kids at the party came up, started beating on the drums, playing the bass, playing my guitar, and yelling in my microphone. I got ticked off, came up, got into the microphone, and screamed with enraged pubescence at everyone, “Yo, this is my equipment! You’re going to break something! Get away from it!”

I remember the look of shock on everyone’s faces as I had a confused testosterone meltdown in front of everyone.

I don't remember the rest of the party, but I do remember the feeling of isolation I had for the rest of my time there.

Afterwards, I went back into my eighth grade scene, and all these people who once acted like they were my friends fully discarded me. I don't blame them after I acted the way I did. But I remember that terrible sinking feeling of rejection that I carried with me throughout most of that school year.

It would take twenty-six years for me to realize that the seed of my anger issues was planted in me when I was a kid. I witnessed a high level of anger from my Dad often, starting at a very young age. I watched my parents fight a lot and never really resolve anything between themselves. They would fight like that and then not acknowledge what had happened to me, so I bottled all these angry moments up inside of me, and they progressively blew out of me bit by bit throughout the rest of my life. But that's another story for another time.

Back to that feeling I had at the party in eighth grade and after... Have you ever felt the terrible sinking feeling of rejection?

Maybe you made some mistakes like I did at age 13. You then dealt with the consequences of those mistakes, and one of those consequences was being rejected by people you didn't want to be rejected by.

Maybe you didn't make mistakes, and had people betray you, turn on you, gossip about you, slander you, be fake to you, or be outright aggressive to you when you didn't deserve it.

Either way, we all, at some point, will face rejection. There is no avoiding it.

The thing is, what will we do with that rejection?

We can internalize it, and allow it to turn into anxiety, bitterness, unresolved trauma, distrust, and passive aggressive behavior. We can bottle it up and it will lead us to bottles of booze. We can suck it in and next thing we know we'll be sucking on joints or meth pipes or God knows what else.

We can externalize it and allow it to break into fits of anger, rage, and even violence.

We can avoid it at all costs, developing a full addiction to people-pleasing, telling everyone what they want to hear, or think they want to hear, and just try to get everyone to like us, spinning dozens of relational plates at an exhausting pace.

Or, we can accept rejection. We can accept that the one who was rejected for us planned for us to experience His rejection in our very own bodies and minds, and learn the difference between godly rejection and ungodly rejection.

Think about it for a minute. Which do you want?

1. Internalized rejection and passive-aggression?
2. Externalized aggression as a response to rejection?
3. People pleasing to unsuccessfully avoid rejection? Or,
4. Identifying with the perfect Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was rejected for your sake so you could be accepted by Him?

First of all, rejection is hard. God made each of us with the innate desire to be loved and accepted just as we are. Yet we live in a fallen world where sin is rampant. People hurl flaming arrows of rejection at their family members, co-workers, and peers without realizing the depths of their damage that reaches throughout generations.<sup>1</sup>

People get hurt by rejection. Some are rejected because of their race. Some are rejected because of their socio-economic status. Some are rejected by their parents, siblings, spouses, ex-spouses, friends, co-workers, managers, bosses, pastors, churches, political parties, or more. Some are rejected because of their sexuality. Some are rejected because of mistakes they've made or sins they're currently battling. It's such a tightrope walk of life between grace and truth! Christ followers are called to live God's truth while also dispensing His agape love and you can bet that gets complicated and messy and so so good!

But when rejection happens, we need to deal with it and process it somehow. And like I said above, we can react in one of four ways... The first is internalized rejection that leads to passive-aggression. Just take a look at what this passage of the book of Proverbs says;

*Smooth lips with an evil heart  
are like glaze on an earthen vessel.*

*A hateful person disguises himself with his speech*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/how-to-handle-rejection-biblically/#ixzz8hU0TmqJ>

*and harbors deceit within. (Prov. 26:23-24)*

The image of glaze on clay is straightforward enough (26:23), but translators differ on whether the Hebrew “silver dross” should be amended after a related Ugaritic term to “glaze.” Dross removed by a smelter would look like silver when overlaid on clay, but no one would be fooled. In the same way, glaze is only a cover.<sup>2</sup>

In Proverbs 26:24, the lips of a hateful person hope to disguise the deceit of the “heart”.<sup>3</sup> The “hateful person” is malicious, and the Hebrew word for it is  $\text{קִיֵּץ}$ , or “śā·nē” which means hate, abhor, detest, loathe, be hostile, and/or have a feeling of open hostility and intense dislike.<sup>4</sup> The speech of this person can be charming, even beautiful, like glittering silver dross, but it conceals seven abominations (likely referring back to the “seven” in Prov. 26:16 and possibly the seven abominations in Prov. 6:16 – 19). In the same way, an enemy may also multiply kisses (Prov. 27:6).

Passive aggressive fakes and phonies have a “front” of “silver dross” glazed over themselves that may deceive some, but should be obvious to anyone with wisdom and experience.

But the problem is, the Church in our era and culture literally rewards passive aggressive behavior. We want everyone to be nice all of the time, not real, vulnerable, honest, and flawed. We want to train people to be marketing tools for the Church instead of disciples of Jesus.

Some of you have been rejected in the past- by a spouse, a lover, a family member, a friend, a leader, a peer, an authority figure, a job, or a corporation, and you’ve stuffed it down inside yourself. You go around pretending everything is ok. If you’re a Christian you do the fake Christian nice thing constantly, maybe even trying to fool the very people that live with you into thinking you’re a nice little Christian boy or girl.

But deep down, you are boiling with bitterness and cynicism. You’re like the Pharisees in Jesus’ day who also disguised themselves with their speech but harbored deceit within. Nobody can be real with you, and you can’t be real with anybody. Let me give you a warning- you won’t be fooling people your whole life. Eventually, something is going to break you, and your cover is going to be blown.

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<sup>2</sup> NIV Application Commentary Copyright © 2003 by Paul E. Koptak.

<sup>3</sup> NIV Application Commentary Copyright © 2003 by Paul E. Koptak.

<sup>4</sup> James Swanson, [\*Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew \(Old Testament\)\*](#) (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

Plus, you are never going to truly grow as a disciple of Jesus if you keep up this charade. You're never going to make a true impact in the lives of others for Him, either. Everyone can sense that something is off with you. Your hesitancy to be honest, open, and genuinely humble before God and humankind has led others to hesitate in being honest, open, and genuinely humble with you!

Men of Streetlight Community Church- for God's sakes, don't be boiling, closeted passive-aggressives! Man-up, deal with conflict, repent of all your secret sins, and let God ignite His purposes back up in your life! The women and children around you will be eternally grateful that you're no longer behaving like an adolescent boy! If you're struggling with this as far too many men in our culture are, I recommend Paul McCoughlin's book "No More Christian Nice Guy". You can even just listen to it on Spotify.<sup>5</sup>



Have you ever seen the movie Frozen and the character Prince Hans of the Southern Isles? Don't be like that jerk. Get real. Now. Before it's too late and you get publicly exposed and humiliated! God wants to lead you into the freedom of being the same man in private that you are in public, and to be unashamed of all that He's made you to be!

The second response to rejection is externalized aggression. But look what Paul wrote to the Colossians;

**8** But now, put away all the following: anger, wrath, and filthy language from your mouth. **9** since you have put off the old self with its practices **10** and have put on the new self. You are being renewed in knowledge according to the image of your Creator. (Parts of Col. 3:8-10)

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<sup>5</sup> Listen to "No More Christian Nice Guy" on Spotify here:

<https://open.spotify.com/show/1sB3wnKP7rg9LfdNDJX6nD?si=QTebqbA6QJWCipE7tDW5xQ>

Now since we're talking about cartoons, have you seen the movie "Inside Out 2"? I just love that movie. I especially love the little angry hot-headed dude.



Now this dude, literally called "anger", because he represents the part of the brain that responds that way, represents the anger inside of all of us. We all have a part of us that's angry, and it's important to get to know that part of us so we can give it over to Jesus, so that we can be angry at the things that anger God, and yet still not sin. (Eph. 4:26) Phew, that's easier said than done but with Christ these things are possible!

And Col. 3:8-10 certainly defines the negative, godless side of anger.

Anger, ὀργή (orgē), is synonymous with wrath (θυμός (thymos)), or a state of fury.<sup>6</sup> Jesus has been sanctifying this in me for my entire life. It's that terrible feeling of being so fired up about a situation or towards the action of a person- whether rightfully or wrongfully so, that one slips into a "state of fury" where self control is lost.

Now in my earlier, pre-Jesus years, this state of fury could actually lead to violence. I became a Christ follower and the states of fury continued to come and go, being tempered with the Word of God more and more through time. Now, as a 43 year old, 20 years married, Dad of 3 daughters and pastor of an urban Church in a very "angry" area of Akron, usually my worst "states of fury" will include some unsavory language or smacking a table while ventilating about something in the presence of my wife or another trusted friend.

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<sup>6</sup> James Swanson, [\*Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek \(New Testament\)\*](#) (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

But Col. 3:8 also warns against αἰσχρολογία (aischrologia), or dirty talk, which refers to filthy language; foul talk, abusive language, and obscene language.<sup>7</sup> So there you go—my sins are now fully exposed, as many of yours are as well!

I think anger, wrath, and filthy language from our mouths can result from a feeling of rejection. If I think about it and I'm honest, I have to admit that every time I get angry or say nasty things with my mouth, it's because my pride has been offended somehow. I even have to admit that when someone cuts me off in the road, my pride in being a good driver is the thing that leads to nasty things out of my mouth!

But anger, wrath and filthy language can also be awful weapons, especially in the hands of abusive men.

So if you're a hot head and don't know how to get your tongue bridled by the restraining, raging fire of the Holy Spirit, keep submitting your heart, head, and mouth to God! The tongue is a fire. The tongue, a world of unrighteousness, is placed among our members. It stains the whole body, sets the course of life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. (James 3:6)

I grew up in a house full of anger, wrath, and filthy language. I've struggled my whole life to submit this stuff to God. One time I was in a counseling session doing therapy led by a Christian counselor<sup>8</sup>, we invited the Holy Spirit into this session powerfully. The session included my counselor leading me into a very relaxed state of prayer and seeking the Holy Spirit.

If you're a baptist I imagined some powerful things of God. If you're charismatic I had a vision! I had a vision where my mouth was breathing fire that was out of control. In the vision I saw Jesus grab all the trials and struggles I had been through. They looked like a big pile of white, gooey snot. He then threw that pile of trials into my mouth, and the out of control, orange and red flames coming out were transformed into a blue, bunsen burner-esque flame. Jesus then told me to use my mouth only to prophesy the righteous things that He had fully refined inside of me, and that this fire from Him would be used to burn off harmful things instead of to burn and harm people! I won't forget what the Lord taught me in that moment. He was teaching me to make sure that I allowed Him to refine my thoughts before they hit my tongue and turned into words! I finally understood 1 Peter 4:11 which says "If anyone speaks, let it be as one who speaks God's words".

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<sup>7</sup> James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

<sup>8</sup> If you're looking for a great counselor and are in Akron, Ohio, sign up today at: <https://www.renewcm.com/>

And Lordy do I still have a ways to go! Guys- **nobody** thinks the thoughts of God, “For His thoughts are not our thoughts, and His ways are not our ways.” This is the Lord’s declaration. “For as heaven is higher than earth, so His ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts.” (Isa. 55:8-9) However, through a process of “prayer filtration” and seeking the Spirit, the Lord can take our unrefined thoughts, sanctify them, and transform them into what He wants. Only after that process can we, and should we, deliver the words He has asked us to deliver!

If you take a bunch of coffee beans, throw them in a pour over filter, and pour hot water over them, you’ll get a nasty cup of warm brown water. If you grind those beans into a fine powder with a coffee grinder, prep the filter with hot water, fill up the filter with the ground coffee, then pour hot water in a circular motion for a few seconds, let it drip through the filter into a cup as bubbles come up out of the ground coffee, thus “aerating” the coffee, then pour water in a circular motion until the cup is full, you’re going to get a great cup of coffee that they call a “pour-over”.

And Jesus needs to be involved in the process of grinding your thoughts! You give Him your beans- your sinful, unrefined, raw ideas. You let Him grind those beans with the truth of His Word, the power of prayer, and the presence of the Holy Spirit. Then you can pour that hot water through the filter and deliver that message that He’s refined in you, and people will say “that’s a good word!” “That’s a nice cup of coffee right there!”

That’s our God! He doesn’t want to squash or suppress your anger today! He wants to refine it and use it for His Kingdom to help, encourage, strengthen, challenge, embolden, and build up others! Thanks be to God, who always leads us in Christ’s triumphal procession and through us spreads the aroma of the knowledge of him in every place. (2 Cor. 2:14) May the good aroma of those grinds of Christ be spread everywhere we go like that fine smell of freshly ground and brewed coffee! We gotta let Jesus grind and filter our thoughts!

But one can certainly face rejection, and become deathly afraid of it, being utterly crushed by it. People like this won’t necessarily internally stuff the rejection down, and won’t necessarily blow the rejection response out into a nasty, hurtful flame. Rather, they will be perpetually hurt by rejection to the point of becoming impotent. In their fear response they will engage in a toxic game of people-pleasing, and ultimately, will stave off plenty of possible rejections, but unsuccessfully avoid inevitable rejections which are destined to come their way, and also develop unhealthy levels of anxiety produced from unresolved conflict.



When Paul was dealing with legalistic Jews in the time of the early Church who were trying to force circumcision and other Levitical laws on the Galatian Christians, he not only laid into these bunk, unbiblical leaders, but summarized his irritation when he said;

**10** *For am I now trying to persuade people, or God? Or am I striving to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ. (Gal. 1:10)*

That says it all right there.

My people pleasing friends- Christ did not call you to Himself to keep you in a game of trying to get everyone to like you. In fact, Christ Himself, in His most famous sermon ever preached, said;

**11** *“You are blessed when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of me. 12 Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matt. 5:11-12)*

And in fact, Christ was not only rejected by many Israelites and religious leaders, who were His very own people. Christ was also rejected by many Romans and Gentiles. Christ was also rejected in a sense, before His resurrection, by His very own disciples when they fled upon the time of His arrest. And it took Jesus rising from the dead for them to have their faith in Him restored.

In fact, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. (2 Tim. 3:12) Let me set you free from something, my fellow people pleasing friends. You only need to please God. And in Christ, God is pleased with you! That’s enough! Not everyone needs to understand you, support you, “get” you, believe in you, back you up, or be your friend! There are times when you have to stand for what is right, and that’s much more important than being “nice” and upholding the status quo!

Plus, if you start doing that, and actually speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15) instead of “loving others to the detriment of the truth”, which is actually not loving at all, then you will be set free in a way you haven’t been before. You’ll be amazed at how so much of the anxiety, worry, sleeplessness, and even physical health problems in your life evaporate, because you’re no longer torturing yourself into trying to keep everyone around you happy at all times!

I can relate. I remember when I took the role of being the lead pastor of what was then the Chapel in Kenmore and is now Streetlight Community Church, back in September of 2019. I had helped to plant the Church with my friend, Jacob Ley, who led the Church from April 2016 up until then, and I was his part-time, bi-vocational worship leader.

Many rightfully loved Jacob, and being the planting pastor of a Church for three and a half years isn't enough time to firmly establish something that can be handed to someone else. When Jacob left and I took over, I was absolutely overcome by the plague of people pleasing. I wanted the people that loved Jacob to love me like they loved him. I could tell that many were sticking around, vetting me out and comparing me to him. And Jacob and I were very different. I remember every Sunday that I would get up to preach, I could just feel my nerves on absolute overload, and would be worried the entire time about whether what I was saying would offend the people that were there.

But eventually, I simply realized that I needed to be as faithful as possible in speaking the truth of God's Word, and that I also needed to fully be myself, and allow cards to fall where they needed to fall. There was such great freedom in that. And yes, because of the circumstances, along with my shortcomings and the shortcomings of others, people did leave the Church. But new people came in who really resonated with our vision and culture. God worked it all out! And you know the best part? I get to authentically be exactly who I am in Christ without being worried about being someone I'm not just to try and keep people happy!

People pleasing friend- may Christ set you free from that inner torture of trying to please others!

Ultimately, I'm trying to convince you that you should identify with the perfect Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was rejected for your sake, so you could be accepted by Him! I want that for myself as much as I want it for all of you!

In the context of the entirety of Matthew 21, Jesus had triumphantly entered Jerusalem, being welcomed as a conquering King with clothes laid out on the ground and palm fronds waving in the hands of the admiring and hopeful. Then, shockingly, he flipped some tables over and called the religious leaders hypocrites and rip-off artists. Children were drawn to him while religiously elite adults were rebuking him. He killed a fig tree. The politically, socially, and religiously powerful Israelite leaders began to argue with Jesus, and He spat two riddles at them which made public fools of them.

Then came the narrative in Matthew 21:42-46, which illustrated the difference between Jesus and the chief priests and Pharisees. Jesus was so clearly on the earth to do what God the Father wanted, and was always putting that first before the desires of people and the culture around Him! Check it out;

**42** *Jesus said to (the religious leaders), "Have you never read in the Scriptures:*

*The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone.  
This is what the Lord has done  
and it is wonderful in our eyes?*

**43** *Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruit. 44* *Whoever falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will shatter him.” 45* *When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they knew he was speaking about them. 46* *Although they were looking for a way to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because the people regarded him as a prophet. (Matt. 21:42-46)*

Jesus cared far more about what His Father, the Lord in heaven, wanted than He cared about what people wanted. And He willingly laid down His life and was rejected by His own people, some of the most powerful Israelite religious leaders of the time. He was also rejected by the dominating government of Rome. He was betrayed by Judas, one of His twelve closest disciples, for a bag of silver. All His other disciples fled when He was arrested and not only refused to resist arrest and assume His rightful throne over the entire earth at that time (because it wasn't yet time!), but also healed one of His arresting officers' ears when one of His closest followers, Simon Peter, hacked it off with a sword.

And then Jesus made sure to complete the full rejection process, get flogged, mocked, practically beaten to death, slandered and sold out by religious people, slapped, spit on, and then publicly put on trial where a whole crowd of people was incited to yell “Crucify Him!” over and over. And all along He hadn't sinned once. He was nailed to a cross, He bled and died and suffocated while people mocked and jeered at Him. Jesus experienced ultimate rejection, experiencing in full the experience of being eternally forsaken by His Father while dying on the cross.

**45** *From noon until three in the afternoon, darkness came over the whole land. 46* *About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lemá sabachtháni?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” (Matt. 27:45-46)*

We want to soften the blow of the rejection that Jesus faced, because we want to soften God. But God is a relentless God of fearless, bold mission, and Jesus willingly experienced this painful, awful cup of suffering beyond what any of us could ever even fathom. It's something that He literally prayed to not have to go through, as He sweat potentially literal drops of blood in anguish as He anticipated the pain of it; “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” (Matt. 26:39)

But Jesus was on mission, a mission of rejection, to be rejected for our sakes, that we might be accepted in the sight of God!

***18 For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, 19 in which he also went and made proclamation to the spirits in prison (1 Pet. 3:18-19)***

We believe in this glorious gospel. We know that it saves lives. We know that it breaks people out of prison, the prison of death, the prison of hell, the prison of sin, the prison of repeated mistakes, the prison of worthlessness, lifelessness, and despair. We know that it speaks life altering, life giving words of acceptance over the lives of those who have been rejected everywhere else. We know that it reignites people's purposes in the world through the power of God, the fellowship and support of His Church, and His mission and calling on people's lives! I'm living proof! I'm one of y'all!

Our Church Community sees so clearly in the ministry of Jesus that we, as His disciples, are called to identify with people and people groups who have been rejected. We identify with the poor, we identify with minority communities, while holding a biblical view of sexuality, we identify with the LGBTQ community and recognize the nastiness that far too many have hurled at them in the name of Christ. We care for and invest our energies into the neighborhood of Kenmore, which has been largely forsaken by many in the greater Akron, Ohio area. We care for many who have been cast out and hurt by the Church for hypocritical, unbiblical reasons, and seek to provide a place of healing, spiritual formation, and growth for anyone willing to enter into that journey with us.

I, personally, have been convicted by Jesus Christ to hang with the rejected. I know what it feels like. I grew up in the suburbs and had a lot of money thrown my way, but I struggled with serious drug addiction, and was rejected by many of my peers and their parents when I was younger. I know what it feels like to be an outcast, and God has used it for His glory.

That's why we do hip hop ministry. Hip hop is literally an art form that has been rejected by and large by both many in society, and many in the Church, though Rap originated in 1973 from a legendary block party in South Bronx and grew to become one of the most influential styles of music in the world. The genre is so popular that in 2019, 52% of the top 100 most streamed songs were hip-hop.<sup>9</sup>

I don't care what anyone says about it, why in the world wouldn't we use the most powerful musical language in the world to communicate to those who need Jesus? I first hand have now seen three students who were a part of the hip hop program the Lord

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.allmusic.com/blog/post/around-the-world-global-hip-hop>

led me to start at First Glance urban youth center come to know Christ and are now walking with Him and writing and recording gospel rap! Some of these students were rapping about anything but Jesus when I first met them! People can say whatever they want, I'll be a hip hop head for Jesus for the rest of my life because of the way I've seen Him move through this music!

And many people have rejected me for wanting our Church to move away from being a predominantly white Church to becoming a multi-ethnic Church that truly welcomes black expressions of Christianity. People think I'm being a fake, or putting on some kind of show because we do hip hop and gospel music in our Church, and because I preach probably more like a black preacher than most white preachers.

But I can't help that I've been deeply impacted and influenced by both black culture and the black Christian community. I'm not trying to culturally appropriate anything here, I just have a deep love and respect for the art, culture, and passionate expression of the black community and the black Church in particular. I listen mostly to black preachers on Spotify because I like that style of preaching! Plus, I'm immersed in a world of relationships with young black dudes coming up hard in the city, and that language makes more sense to them.

So we have no apologies at Streetlight for being a haven for the rejects! If you've been rejected by others, you belong here! If you have no home, you've got a home with us! We're inviting *everyone* into a *lifelong relationship* with Jesus, and we **mean everyone!!!!** I know it's risky, I know it's crazy, but we'll make the space for you. Just make the space for Jesus to fully have His entire way in your life! No holding back! No keeping any part for yourself! Just give it all to Him! Deal? Alright, deal!

So jump into our Church, find a place to serve, get into a DNA discipleship group, go through our 12 weeks of DNA spiritual formation sessions and get disciple-making training this winter, if you're a dude stay tuned for the men's ministry groups and get together we're cooking up in the fall, give whatever the Lord leads you to give to this Church community if you're reading this and the Lord leads you to, give now through <https://streetlight.life/giving/>. Get involved in the Kingdom efforts we've got going on through serving and supporting our missional allies (<https://streetlight.life/allies/>). Come to the neighborhood cookouts and lunches we put on. Come to some of the events and concerts we are involved with. Make friends with some folks here! Let's see how we can spread this message of God's acceptance through Christ to as many folks as we can!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS :

1. Do you struggle with:
  - a. Internalizing rejection, and responding with passive-aggressive behavior?
  - b. Externalizing your response to rejection with aggressive behavior? Or,
  - c. People pleasing to try and avoid rejection?
2. What is God trying to say to you about your struggle with responding to rejection through passive-aggressive behavior, aggressive behavior, or people-pleasing behavior?
3. Think about your past experiences. What is at the root of this behavior?
4. What does God want you to do to move away from this behavior and into His life giving freedom?