

## Wisdom of the Bible ~ Acceptance & Rejection ~ Discussion Questions

Jason was a young teenager with major emotional problems. He had been on drugs, in and out of juvenile court, and was often in trouble. He was a loner and had virtually no friends. One of the worst parts of the day was lunch. He always sat at the same table in the school cafeteria, not with kids that were friends that he could talk to, but with kids that were neutral and at least didn't reject him.

One day there was just one seat left at that table, but when he went to sit down, the class bully kicked the chair away and told the other kids to spread out their elbows and not let Jason get in. Jason eventually shoved his way in and later, for a reason not relevant to this part of the story, got suspended for three days.

1. Are you ever the bully? In what way? Are you ever like the kids who spread their elbows? How? When? Do you ever feel like Jason? When? Why?
2. Thinking of the kids at the table, why are Christians so often afraid to speak out and take a stand for what is right? Are you willing to tell someone he is drinking too much? That he has a problem with anger? That he is a hypocrite?
3. Are you willing to stand up for what is true? For what you know is right? Speak out when someone in your group, possibly even the leader, is going in the wrong direction? (Mark 6:18, 6:26-28) Be careful that you are not overly judgmental.
4. You're on a missions trip. The leader has a heart for Christ but, you soon learn, the brain of a hamster. You a) bail out as soon as possible, b) make the most of it, c) vow to never go on another trip with that organization, d) speak to the leader, e) talk to the other participants about the idiot leader, or f)\_\_\_\_\_.
5. When Jesus went back to Nazareth, he was rejected (Mark 6:1-6). Why? Do we sometimes reject someone we know too well? Are we sometimes rejected because we are too well known? What can or should we do about this tendency?
6. What hinders us from listening and learning from the people we know well?
7. Jesus was also rejected by the Pharisees for his radical teaching. Many people continue to reject it today. Why do some people accept his teaching and others not? (John 12:37-50, especially 12:42-43)
8. The crowds accepted and hailed Jesus on Palm Sunday and 4½ days later rejected him and called for his death. If you had been there, would you have been in the crowd as a) a follower, b) a leader, c) an observer, or d) just stayed at home? How can people change their views from acceptance to rejection so quickly?