

# St john rivers and edward rochester contrasted essay



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St. John Rivers and Edward Rochester contrasted Edward Rochester was born into a wealthy family, of high rank. The Rivers name was also well spoken of and highly respected. Both men had highly intellectual minds. They sought to cultivate and nurture them. Each, in their own way, thought themselves superior over other people. Rochester bluntly behaved in a proud manner, whereas St. John quietly held himself above others. Both men had great spiritual problems in their lives. Rochester always put himself above God. The happiness in his life was more important to him than obedience to the will of God. St. John put himself in God's place.

There was much impropriety when he declared that his will was also the will of God. He gave himself great power in stating this. Their view of marriage was also distorted. Rochester, although he loved greatly and with much passion, had an immoral love. He didn't hold the covenant of marriage in its rightful place. St. John didn't love at all and yet he wanted to enter into the covenant of marriage. He held marriage in a higher manner than Rochester did, but then there was still the issue of love that plagued St. John. Rochester and St. John both used manipulation in trying to get what they wanted.

They were both selfish in their desires. Rochester was ruthless in his desire to get what he wanted whereas St. John continually used different manipulative devices to get what he wanted. Rochester was more outgoing and emotional while on the contrary St. John was very timid and reserved. Their lives ended quite differently, despite their many similarities.

Rochester's life ended very happily for him. All things worked out for his own good, even all his physical ailments. St. John never married. He life quietly

ended. Both men seemed to have made peace with God. Bronte used men that were in her life as the models for Rochester and St. John.

Mr. Rochester's model was one of Charlotte Bronte's teachers, Constantin Heger, at the Brussels boarding school. Their relationship ending tragically. The married Heger cut off all contact with her. St. John's model was a clergyman who once encouraged Jane to marry him, although she had no love for him and he had none for her. Mr. Rochester's ways were manipulative and leading at times. St. John appeared to be on the exterior a saint compared to Mr. Rochester, but, while that may have been, in reality, St. John never had the inclination or will to learn from his mistakes the way Mr. Rochester did.

While Rochester believed to take what he could from life without heeding to what the consequences might be, he did learn from what was provoked by his actions. He also had a true passion for those he loved and showed it through actions. St. John did what he thought was right, or so he claimed. He never actually tried to learn from his mistakes, and he never would admit to his wrong doings. He justified himself by words from the Bible which he used out of context at times to aid his own benefit when it suited his case. In conclusion, those who can realize their flaws like Rochester and repent, are better off.

" For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world-our faith. " Rochester did overcome a world of many strongholds that kept him from the happiness that was waiting.

Because he did realize what was required of him in the eyes of God , and

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tuned away, all of his sin were forgotten by the Only One opinion that truly counts in the long run, our LORD God's. He is the one we should look to and turn to: " Look to ME... For I am God, and there is no other. " (Isaiah 45: 22) In the end, Rochester looked to our Creator, and He forgave and forgot his transgressions.

As for St. John, he sadly was never able to find the Glory of God. At least, that was the conclusion that I came to in the end. While I still carry a slight hope that he, St. John, was able to realize his mistakes and learn before it became too late, sadly, that light of hope is dim. But the words to cling to are: " No fear of death will darken St. John's last hour: his mind will be unclouded, his heart will be undaunted, his hope will be sure, his faith will be steadfast. His own words are a pledge of this-" (p 143) So, I cling to those words, hope in them, and know that all is according to His own plan.

Edward Rochester and St. John Rivers are both extremely interesting characters. They have deep personalities so that it requires some thought to fully understand their actions. They can both do the same thing, under the same circumstances, with different motivations and in different ways.

Rochester is an unkempt bachelor, owner of several estates. He is a globetrotter who rarely stays in one place long. He has a tendency to be loud and demanding. St. John is a handsome and well kept pastor in a small town who feels called to work as a missionary in India. He is quiet, if he says anything it is to the point and very clear. He is studious and very active in his parish.

Rochester seems to go about doing things fairly spontaneously and very boldly, without much thought as to religion. All of his actions are selfish and abrupt. St. John does everything very quietly and well planned, doing everything under the pretence of religion and his calling. Everything that he does is said to be done for the benefit of his mission. Where matters of Jane are concerned, Rochester would do anything, or give up anything for her contentment. He desires her for his wife because he loves her. St. John wishes for Jane to give up any plans that she may have and marry him and go to India with him, to help him in the mission field.

He does not care that Jane has no feelings for him, or that she does not want to marry him, he says that love does not matter, that it is Jane's calling. The similarity that appears to be the most obvious is how they acted towards Jane. They both were extremely selfish about how they treated her. Neither of them showed much, if any, compassion for her feelings. In the creation of the characters of Mr. Rochester and St. John, Charlotte Bronte uses a dark and light comparison to show that a person's appearance does not always match their character. When looking at St. John's appearance, you see the ideal, fair-complexioned man.

He is gorgeous, tall, decently-dressed, and a parson. Then when you compare that to Mr. Rochester, you find they are the direct opposites. Mr. Rochester has, as Bronte says, " a dark face, with stern features and a heavy brow;" he is homely, outspoken, and very worldly. When they are compared and contrasted, they are like indeed, as Mr. Rochester says, Apollo and a Vulcan. St. John's character is not outgoing. He keeps to himself and his job, but you find out through Jane's eyes that for such a beautiful person St. John

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is very unfeeling and does not love God with his whole heart and mind and soul.

You get to know him better later on and find out that St. John feels his calling in life is to go to India and be a missionary. When Jane first meets Mr. Rochester, he is very abrupt and mysterious. He talked to Jane about his mistresses. He told Jane he needed her to reform him. Mr. Rochester played with Jane's mind and emotions, to find out if she was really in love with him. He was manipulative, selfish, and deceitful. He had a wife, but he wanted Jane so bad he was willing to do what ever it took to get her. Mr. Rochester loved her, but it had to do with desire, not life-long love.

St. John started to take special notice of Jane after she inherited the money and split it between her cousins. St. John singled Jane out because he thought she had been self-sacrificing and that was what he respected. St. John told Jane that he wanted her to come with him to India as his wife. St. John told Jane, " You were not made for love, but labor. " He informed her it was God's will that she come, and against what he stood for, used the Bible and prayer to try and manipulate Jane into going. He would have succeeded if it was not for a miracle. When Jane comes back to Mr. Rochester, she finds a transformed man.

She had heard that his wife, who was insane and living on the third floor of his house, had set fire to the mansion and while trying to save her, Mr. Rochester had been badly burned. So badly that he lost sight in one eye completely, the other eye partially and lost a hand. Before the fire Mr. Rochester had blamed God for everything, and after the fire he realized that

God had used the fire to punish him for trying to commit bigamy. Mr. Rochester then realized that he had been wrong and changed. Jane took him back because she saw that Mr. Rochester really repented and the love that he wanted to give her was now a lifetime love.

In Bronte's comparison Mr. Rochester was the dark, selfish and manipulative character who completely wronged Jane. St. John was the light character. He was the man of God, he saved Jane from death and took care of her, but you find out that he was selfish and manipulative also. But unlike Mr. Rochester, he was not willing to change and admit he was wrong. In the end Mr. Rochester was the hero, and in personality, he turned out to be the light character by coming to know the real God and by changing. Bronte showed through her comparisons the age old lesson of not judging by a person's appearance.