

## THE BLAME GAME

I am so glad you are going to study the Word of God with me today. It is great to grow in the Lord. I am really proud of you. I know you are trying. I know some of you watching this show perhaps have for the first time your life said, "Get the Bible out. Let's study what this lady is talking about."

Today we are going to talk about the blame game. It is what people do when they do not want to accept responsibility. No one wants to say, "It was my fault." We do not even like to say we are sorry. Isn't that right? But, that is where growth is, that is where God is. It has been like that since Adam and Eve. Think about how long ago that was, about 7,000 years ago. People would not take blame even then. They kept wanting to pass it off. What did Adam say? He said, "The woman made me do it." What did the woman say? She said, "That snake, or whatever the devil was, that beautiful creature, made me do it." No one wants to accept blame anymore, yet when you do you grow. It is hard, and you grow. I had a jail ministry for about 10 years and I noticed something about people in jail. They never want to accept blame for what they have done. They will say, "The sheriff had it in for me. The police had it in for me. My lawyer wasn't any good; he didn't do me right. It really wasn't my fault; it was my friend's fault." They never want to say, "I did this and I need to take my lumps." Yet growth comes when you do say things like that.

Let's discuss and talk about what happened in the Bible when people were like that. In Exodus, when Moses was up on the mountain and getting the Ten Commandments, one more time the children of Israel complained. They were biggest bunch of groaners and complainers. They hated being slaves, they hated being in Egypt. They came out of Egypt and then hated being out of Egypt. They hated being in the desert; they hated having to depend on God for everything. They hated to move; they hated to not move. They were just a bunch of grippers. Do not be a complainer or griper. Do not be someone who shifts the blame and the problems to everyone else. They did. Moses was up on the mountain getting the Word from God. The Bible says in Exodus 32, "When Moses did not come back to the mountain right away, the people said to Aaron 'What happened to this guy named Moses. Make us a god to lead us.'" They were saying that to Moses' brother, Aaron. He was the spokesman for Moses. He should have been a very strong believer who did not back down when pressure was put on him by people. Aaron said, "Give me your gold earrings." Everyone dumped all the gold they had into a hot pot, and Aaron melted the gold and made a golden calf. The people said, "Oh, this is wonderful. This is the god that brought us out of Egypt." Can you believe that was going on, and that Aaron was letting it happen? I am sure Moses said, "You are in charge, take over Aaron, I will be back." When Aaron saw how happy the people were about it, he even went further. It says, "He built an alter before the calf and announced 'Tomorrow there will be a feast to Jehovah.'" The Bible says that early the next morning they had a big party. They all got drunk and a lot of sexual immorality went on. God began to speak to Moses. He said, "Quick, get back down there. It is serious. The people have abandoned all My laws, they have defiled Me, they have defiled themselves. They have made a calf that they are worshiping. Get down there, quick." The Lord said, "I have seen what a rebellious group of people they are. Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation." Moses said, "No Lord. Please don't do it." That is a really big person. He is saying, "Don't do it. Have mercy on them. You don't want the Egyptians saying God tricked them and brought them out here and then killed them." He reasoned with God and God listened. Moses said, "Remember your promise to your servants, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Remember you sworn and said, 'I will do this. I will give them this land.'" The Bible says God changed his mind and spared them. So Moses went down the mountain with the Ten Commandments. Joshua, who was Moses' assistant, heard the noise below them and he said, "It sounds like they are getting ready for war." Moses said, "No, it is not a cry of victory or defeat, it is singing." When they go to the camp, Moses saw the calf, he saw the dancing, and he got so angry that he threw the Ten Commandments to the ground and they smashed into a million pieces. He took the calf and threw it into the fire. When the metal was cooled, the Bible says, "He ground it into powder and put it in the water and made the people drink it." The Moses turned to his brother, Aaron, and said, "What in the world did the people do to you to make you do this, to bring such a terrible sin upon us." "Don't get so upset," Aaron said. "You know these people. You know how wicked they are. They said to me 'Make us a god to lead us for something has happened to Moses.' I told them to bring me their golden earrings. They brought them to me and I threw them in the fire, and out came this calf." That is blame. It caused a lot of problems for these people. The people had sinned so greatly against God that a terrible plague happened to them. The blame game is really serious. It affects you in such deep ways.

Another person in the Bible who was guilty of the blame game was Saul. Saul had so many problems. He

was a king and he never did get it right. He never could decide, "I am going to do the right thing. No matter what happens, no matter who gets made, I am going to do what God has told me to do." He would kind of do it and then he would not. He would always get into trouble. God said, "The time of the Amalekites is up." What does that mean? God will see people sinning, and sinning, and He keeps waiting for them to change. He keeps trying to give them another chance. He keeps trying to talk to them. Then there comes a day when it is over. They have had every chance God could possibly give them. They are never going to change. It breaks God's heart, but it is the truth. Their time was up and God said, "Saul, I want you to go in and I want you to wipe them out. They are evil. Destroy everything they have, all their possessions, all of their animals. Completely destroy them." Saul took all of his men and killed all of the Amalekites. He captured the king but he did not kill him. God had said to kill everyone. The Bible says, "Saul and his men kept the best of the sheep and the best of the oxen, and the fattest of the lambs, everything that appealed to them. They destroyed only what was worthless or of poor quality." Then the Lord said to Samuel, "I am sorry that I ever made Saul king for he has again refused to obey Me." Samuel was so deeply moved by this that he cried all night long. He was God's spokesman to Saul. It was so egregious to Samuel because Saul would never do what he needed to do. The next morning Samuel decided to find Saul. Saul was erecting a monument to himself up on Mount Carmel. When a person is in the blame game, they are so deceived. You can get on a big ego trip. You are so busy trying to blame everyone else and doing what you want to do and trying to get away with it. Saul was caught up in his delusion and was building this monument. When Samuel went to him, Saul said "How are you? What's going on?" But Samuel said, "What is all the noise I hear, the bleating of sheep and lowing of oxen? What is that?" Saul said, "It's true, the army killed everything we were supposed to kill and they spared the best to sacrifice to God. We destroyed everything else." Samuel said to Saul, "Stop! Listen to what God told me last night. When you did not think much of yourself, God made you king of Israel. He sent you on a simple errand and said, 'Go and completely destroy the sinners until they are all dead'. Why didn't you rush to obey the Lord? Why did you rush for the loot and do exactly what God said not to?" Samuel was confronting Saul, but Saul said, "But I have obeyed the Lord. I did what He told me to. I brought King Agag but I killed everyone else, and it was only when my troops demanded it that I let them keep the best of the sheep and oxen and loot to sacrifice to the Lord." Samuel said, "Does God have pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices or in obedience. Obedience is far better than sacrifice." Saul was caught up in the blame game, just like Aaron was.

Life has really bad things in it, and we make really bad mistakes. I have made them. You have made them. It happens. What we do with what happens determines what becomes of us. You will either go down or you will go up from how you handle it. It is really easy to say "It's my parents' fault. I wouldn't be in the mess I am in if I had had the right kind of parents." Some people say, "It's my teacher's fault. If she didn't have it in for me, I could have made good grades. I could have graduated. I had a teacher who got it in for me and I just couldn't take it anymore and I quit school." You might say, "It's my spouse. I could serve God and I could really do something if my spouse would cooperate and do what they are supposed to do." What you are really saying is, "If they would just change, my life would be better." That is not true. For things to change, you have to change. You might say, "You don't know what their problems are. You do not understand." Yes, I do. I am still saying for things to change, you have to change. Some people even say it is God's fault. I have heard people say, "My husband hasn't been in church in 20 years." You ask why, and they say, "Well, his little brother died and he prayed and prayed for him to live. He didn't live, and now he blames God. He has said, 'I am not going to serve a God that would let a little boy die.'" You do not know what happened there. It is none of your business. Some of you watching this show used to be in church and used to serve the Lord. You loved the Lord, but something happened and you got bitter toward God. Let me ask you, how is your life going? Get back with God. Every one of us has things happen that we could walk away from the Lord. The ones that tough it out and say, "I don't understand but I trust You and I am going to follow You. I was wrong and I am sorry." Those are the ones that keep growing.

You might remain emotionally unhealed. Everyone needs to be healed, but you cannot be if you will not accept responsibility for the issues and the things that you have done, for the stand you have taken or the things you have said. What results from all of that? Low self-esteem, lack of character, lack of integrity, fear. You do not want all of that stuff in your life. You want to get that out of your life. Those are emotional killers. It is really dangerous to make someone else responsible for your problems. That is what the blame game does. When you do that, you have to wait until they change for things to change in your life. For things to change, you have to change. If you keep on doing what you have always done, you are going to get what you have always gotten. Things have to change. You cannot make other people change. You can try but it does not work. It is hard enough to make yourself change. But, you can make yourself change.

Experiences in life can have a control over you. I am trying to tell you, life has bad things. You could have had the greatest life up to now. At some point in your life, you will encounter the challenges that you think are going to just swamp your boat. It will be easy to say, "Who is at fault here. That one is, or that one is." Maybe they are. But, you need to take responsibility for your part in it. That is the only thing that you can

Maybe they are. But, you need to take responsibility for your part in it. That is the only thing that you can change. Also, you need to repent. I love to repent because when you repent God listens and makes big changes in your life. He helps you. Think about something that is really an issue or serious situation that you do not want to admit your part in it. Right now, just say, "That part is my fault." There is a real freedom in it. I think people will not do that because they are afraid of what will happen. I was on my way to plant some flowers, and I was only driving about 20 miles an hour. I was not watching what I was doing and I went out past a stop sign. A car was coming from another direction and we had an accident. It was my fault. I was afraid and did not want to say it was my fault. I was afraid I would get into trouble or something bad would happen. I kept thinking, "Do the right thing, Betty. Do the right thing." I said, "I am so sorry. Are you okay? It was my fault." God covered me in that. He did great things for me in that bad situation. God watches, He listens. Are you saying what you need to be saying?

After you repent, another thing to do is say, "Okay, God, tell me what I do now." If you will listen, God will tell you the next step. You can do that and then say, "Okay, God, what do I do next?" He will tell you the next step. You can even go to God and say "I am really afraid to accept responsibility for this. I am afraid I will lose everything." God says, "You won't lose Me and I am all you need because I am your future." God is your future. Who holds the future? God does. You go ahead and admit where you are wrong.

Another thing I see in people is that they do not want to name the baby. Do you know what I mean by that? They do not want to say what their issue really was. They will try to say something that is completely different. Name the baby. I was wrong. I ran the stop sign. Just name the baby.

Another thing is that after you have repented and said, "Show me what to do, God," receive his healing. He has healing for you. He will heal you. He will heal your emotions, He will heal the situation. When you do the right thing, then God can come in and really work and help you. As long as your are trying to do self-protection or coverup, God cannot work. God does not work in evil; He works in good. He wants you to learn. You can trust God with the most difficult decisions, the hardest things, the things you are the most afraid of. God can do that for you.

Figure out what you need to do to completely walk free of the blame game. How did you get there anyway? Go back in your life and see where you really started passing the blame to other people and start there and work forward and repent of every single time that you can remember that you got involved in the blame game. Just say, "Lord, I did it here. I did it here. I did it in Junior High, I did it in high school. I remember in the third grade when I started." Repentance is like a good bar of soap. Have you ever been really dirty, and your bar of soap lathered really well, and you felt so clean when you got through washing with it? It says in 1 John 1:9, "If we will confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Wouldn't you like to be cleansed like that? Do you admire people who take responsibility for their lives, they handle their issues? Do you think, "I would like to be like that but I probably couldn't." Yes you can be like that. The power of God is available to you today saying, "I can help you solve this. I can help you do what you need to do to get this thing right." Have you ever really totally turned your life over to the Lord? Have you said, "Lord I have run it all my life all by myself and I have really made a mess of it. I am in a mess God. If there has ever been a mess, I am in this mess. I need your help. I need you to tell me what to do. I know you but I don't think I really know you." For some of you watching this show today, this is the first time you have ever seen the real God where He was where people really are. So many times, people put God way up high and they think, "I could never reach Him." Sometimes they put God way out there, and then say, "I could never get out there." I am coming to you saying God is practical, God is real. He is interested in you. He is interested in helping you. He wants to take your mess and give you a message. God loves to take the biggest mess you have ever made and help you accept responsibility for it, deal with, and then He will send you out to help other people. Everyone needs help; you need help. I need your message and you need my message. We are used by the Lord in the big mess. Another saying I have heard is, out of your trial you get your testimony. What does that mean? You tell people how God came through for you. "I went through this, and God came through for me."

If you are hearing about the real Jesus for the first time, He loves you beyond anything you could ever imagine. He wants to touch your heart. He wants to touch your life. He wants to give you a wonderful life. It can happen for you. It does not matter where you live in the world. I do not care what has gone on in your life. You can say, "Jesus, I need you. I see you now. I see what you are like. I need that in my life. Would you come in and touch me? Would you change me?" Some of you will say, "Lord I have been a wicked person. I have murdered people. I have cut people up. I have damaged people. I have blown up their cars. Jesus come in and touch me. I want a new life, I want a better life. I do not want to play the blame game anymore. Help me. Amen."

1. What is the blame game?
2. What happened to the people in the Bible when they played the blame game?
3. What steps do you take to stop the blame game?
4. How can you use 1 John 1:9 to help you stop the blame game?
5. At what point does God help you with the consequences of the blame game?

To watch the video on THE BLAME GAME, Pillar Five, Relational Skills, go to [www.bettyswann.com](http://www.bettyswann.com).

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