

## The Blame Game-devotional

"Wasn't me!"

My fourteen-year-old son has spoken those words more often than I care to remember. It's always someone else's fault - most often, his sister's. To my son, blaming comes almost as naturally as the gray roots he's causing to sprout from my head. Hey, at least he's doing his part to keep Clairol in business!

Okay, so my son isn't the only one ever to speak those words, "Wasn't me!" After all, Adam started the whole blaming thing that day in the garden: "It was the woman You gave me. She brought me the fruit and I ate it." But Eve wasn't about to take the fall: "It was the serpent. He tricked me." (Genesis 3)

Can't you just picture God rolling His eyes at that one?

With sin, came blame. And because none of us is yet perfected (contrary to my teenaged son's not-so-humble perception of himself) blaming and making excuses is still very much alive and well today. So how can I get my son to stop playing the blame game where everyone loses?

I suppose I can start by setting an example. I might not say the words, "Wasn't me!" but when it takes longer to check out at the grocery store than it does to do my shopping, I excuse my impatience: It's the cashier's fault! If my kids leave their toys in the middle of the floor, I excuse my outburst of anger: If the toys weren't there, I wouldn't have yelled! It's traffic's fault that I was late. Or my mom's fault that I don't handle money properly. If she would have taught me better...

Yada, yada, yada.

God wants us to be accountable for the way we act. The truth is, we are all responsible for how we respond to our circumstances. The moment we're old enough to realize how something should be handled, we're able to make a good choice. I can choose to exercise patience while I wait in that grocery store line. I can decide not to yell at my kids when they leave their stuff lying around. I'm not saying it's easy, only that it's possible! If I do choose to yell or become frustrated, guess whose fault it is? (Quit pointing!)

But isn't it great that when we are quick to say, "I did something stupid," or, "I was wrong," God is even quicker to forgive. Making excuses and blaming others for our actions only causes dissension and separation – between us and others and, even more, between us and God. Yet, each time we confess, we become a little more sensitive to just how much we need Jesus and His forgiveness, which is what it's really all about.

In the same way, I am much more likely to show mercy to my son when he takes responsibility for his actions and stops blaming his sister. Convincing him of that, however, may take some time.

Just like convincing me that my son isn't the cause of my gray hair isn't going to happen any time soon.

I just don't buy it.

"He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy." Proverbs 28:13 (NIV)

### About the Author

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