

## ‘The blame game’

### Before starting the lesson:

(Get someone to ask someone else to take some chocolates from a box of chocolates and share the chocolates with others.)

I was speaking with Aston Villa fans the other week and we were discussing why their team was doing so badly. Three fans were moaning about how their team kept losing and was facing relegation.

One of them said to me, ‘I blame the manager, if he would sign new players then we could be a great side’.

Another guy said, ‘I blame the players, if they made more effort I am sure we would score more goals’.

And finally a young boy said to me, ‘I blame my parents, if I’d been born in Liverpool I’d be supporting a decent team!’

Now I would like to start my lesson by sharing some chocolates with you all, can someone please pass me my box of chocolates.

Wait a minute! **Where’s my chocolates?** They were on the side of the stage.

My whole lesson was centred around those chocolates and now someone has stolen them.

I’m sorry guys but I’m not continuing until someone owns up to stealing my chocolates.

Does anyone want to own up now so I can continue with my lesson?

I heard you (The person you chose earlier to ask someone else to take the chocolates and dish them out,) talking to someone earlier about those chocolates, **do you know anything about this? (they will deny even touching them.)**

You know this is supposed to be a Christian youth weekend and you, (the person you chose earlier) I love and respect you as my brother in Christ but I just can’t believe you would steal my chocolates. (They deny again.)

I can’t believe this is happening, listen guys I’m sorry for spoiling your weekend but this is serious, we’re supposed to be Christians not thief’s.

(The person you chose earlier admits talking about the Chocolates but blames the other person he told earlier to share them out.)

(Address the other person) So you stole my chocolates, all you had to do was ask and I would gladly give you one, this is really sad.

(The other person will deny stealing but blame the other person for asking them to take the chocolates in the first place).

Ok let me be honest with you, this whole thing was a set up to help us understand what it's like being blamed for something we weren't aware of.

(The person you chose earlier), how did you feel when you knew you were involved and had to deceive everyone and blame someone else?

How did you feel (the person who took the chocolates) when you were being blamed for something you didn't know was wrong?

You see we've all played the blame game at some point in our lives.

When I was younger I used to blame my sister for stealing biscuits from the biscuit tin until my mother caught me.

And then my sister would steal biscuits from the biscuit tin and blame me and my mum would believe her.

She thought this was great fun but I was the one on the receiving end of my dad's hands.

I was being blamed for something I wasn't doing and it wasn't fun for me.

But when we go to the **Book of Genesis**, we find Adam and Eve playing the blame game with God.

They were in paradise, blessed beyond their wildest dreams, a beautiful place to live, plenty of food and water and all these incredible animals all around them.

Until Satan came along to help them ruin their lives.

God says in **Genesis 2:16+17**, 'Listen, you can eat anything you like, except from that one tree in the Garden because if you do eat from that tree, you're going die'.

A little later the devil appears to Eve and says to her in **Genesis 3:1** 'Eve, did God really say you weren't allowed to eat from this tree, what does God know?'

Eve replies and says to the devil in **Genesis 3:2+3** 'Well, God did say we weren't allowed to eat or touch anything from this tree or we will die.'

Now somehow we've moved from not **eating** anything from that tree to don't even **touch** that tree.

The devil says to her in **Genesis 3:4+5** 'What does God know, He's scared that you will become like Him, you won't die, trust me.'

**Genesis 3:6** says that Eve thought to herself, 'well, it does look pretty good to eat and if it will give me wisdom too, ok I'll eat it, in fact I'll give some to Adam too'.

Now we know that God went out searching for Adam and Eve and they tried to play hide and seek with the Lord.

But when they failed to win that game, they changed to another game which we call the blame game.

And so when God asks them **what they have done, have they eaten from that tree?**

Adam basically says in **Genesis 3:12**, 'hey wait a minute God, don't blame this on me, it's Your own fault, You created that woman and if You didn't make her then we wouldn't be having this conversation.'

'And if You don't want to take the blame for it, then blame the women, she took it, not me'.

Eve jumps in and basically says in **Genesis 3:13** 'Hey wait a minute, it's not my fault, it was the devil who tricked me'.

Adam blamed God and the woman and Eve blames the devil, what a mess this is.

And so God curses the devil and punishes Adam and Eve before throwing them out of the Garden forever.

In fact, the story goes a few years later that Adam and Eve were walking past the Garden in Eden with their son, Abel said, **'So, Dad, you and Mom used to live in there, huh?'**

Adam said, **'Yes, son, it was lovely.'** Abel asked his dad, **'Why did you leave?'** to which Adam replied, **'Oh your mother ate us out of house and home.'**

In the **Book of Exodus** when Moses was away up the mountain. He comes back down only to find a Golden calf had been made.

When he confronts Aaron about it, Aaron just like Adam and Eve blamed everyone else.

He basically says in **Exodus 32:22-24**, **'Hey Moses don't blame me, they me gave me bunch of gold, I threw it in a fire and low and behold out popped this golden calf, it their fault not mine'.**

A few years later we read about a man named Saul and he was given very clear instructions to go out and completely destroy everything that a group of people called the Amalekites owed.

But in **1 Samuel 15:9**, we read that he kept the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs.

And so when the prophet Samuel confronted him about it, **what did he do?**

He basically says to Samuel in **1 Samuel 9:21**, **'hey wait a minute Samuel, don't blame this on me, it was the soldiers who took them to offer them to God, this wasn't my fault.'**

Does all this sound familiar? How many times have you heard someone that was caught doing something they shouldn't do say, **'It wasn't my fault, they made me do it! Or it's wasn't my fault it was someone else's fault!'**?

Now I believe there can be times when we get blamed for something we haven't done or said.

But when it comes to doing and saying things which God doesn't like, I think we need to take responsibility and own up to them.

Raise your hand if you've ever told a lie.

Raise your hand if you've ever done something you shouldn't have done.

Raise your hand if you've ever blamed someone else for something you did.

You see when we do something wrong, we can't run and hide and we can't blame someone else.

Blaming others for something we have done only makes things worse, it's always better to be truthful from the start.

In fact, I remember telling our children when they got into trouble, if they tell the truth they will be grounded for a week but if I found out they were telling a lie, they will be grounded for three weeks.

For the most part this worked with our children.

You see, blaming others only makes us feel sad and upset, it leaves us feeling guilty and full of shame.

But the good news is that God is a loving and forgiving God.

And the Bible says in **1 John 1:9** "If we will confess that we have done wrong, God will forgive us".

Which basically means that all that hurt and pain we put on ourselves and others around us will be forgiven.

All the guilt can be removed and the shame taken away and we can get back to being honest and happy again knowing that we're pleasing God.

Let's stop blaming others, let's start taking some responsibility for our own actions.

Instead of blaming others let's just admit our sins to God because He promises to forgive us.