

## **FREEDOM IN THE CROSSHAIRS #5**

### **Introduction**

Tonight, I want to continue our series, “Freedom in the Crosshairs” because there is a such a satanic assault on our freedom today. We are in a war with demonic power that aims to transform America into a socialist nation and bring us into bondage.

Our foundational text is a promise Jesus made to His true disciples...

### **John 8:32**

**You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.**

Knowing the truth will make us free.

The corollary is that believing a lie will bring us into bondage.

With that in mind, we need to know our enemy.

### **Chabryas**

(420-357 B.C.) Athenian General who never lost a battle

**“The best commander in war is he who best understands his enemies.”**

### **2 Corinthians 2:11**

**The Apostle Paul warned us that Satan will take advantage of us if we are ‘ignorant of his devices’.**

We need to Know Our Enemy, especially his 2 devices, as revealed here...

### **Revelation 12:9-10**

**Satan is the ‘great dragon’ who was cast out of heaven; the serpent of old, called the Devil, who deceives the whole world...**  
**The one who is the ‘accuser of the brethren, who accused them before God day and night’ has been cast down to the earth...**

The work of the Devil as a deceiver is more well-known and more quickly recognized than his work as an Accuser; but the Bible tells us that accusation is something he does ‘day and night’.

When we say something goes on ‘day and night’ it means it never stops!

**We must overcome the accuser!**

So what is an ‘accuser’?

## **“Accuser”**

**A person who claims that someone has committed an offense or done something wrong**

In our last message we saw how Satan’s accusations take many forms.

### **SATAN IS AN ACCUSER**

- **He accuses us to God, and he accuses God to us (Job)**
- **He accuses other Christians to us and us to other Christians**  
Tonight I want to look at how...
- **He accuses us to the world, and he accuses the world to us**  
I call this device...

## **I. The Blame Game**

### **A. Definitions: What is the Blame Game?**

1. The word ‘blame’ means...

#### **Blame**

**To assign responsibility for a fault or wrong.**

- a. To blame someone or something for a fault or a wrong can carry the same meaning as to accuse someone as being guilty of a fault or responsible for a wrong.
- b. This is how God’s people can identify the nature of the evil spirit running rampant right now in America; it’s this spirit of accusation we are calling the ‘Blame Game’.
- c. The Blame Game has become so common in our culture it has made it into our English dictionaries!

#### **Merriam-Webster Dictionary**

##### **The Blame Game**

**A situation in which different individuals or groups attempt to assign blame to each other for some problem or failure. The Blame Game has become endemic in American life.**

(Endemic means a condition regularly found among particular people)

**In the Blame Game, *it is always someone else’s fault.***

Before we go farther, there ARE places where it’s someone else’s fault.

2. There are times where blame can be properly assigned:

- **The Captain of the Titanic** ignored at least 4 warnings from other ships about icebergs in the area. The ship sank and 1500 people drowned
- **Adolf Hitler** rose to power on the wings of antisemitic policies that justified the holocaust and the extermination of 6 million Jews.

3. There *are* situations where blame can be properly assigned. *But the Blame Game is different.* The Blame Game is where blame is assigned to others so that one can evade personal responsibility.

**In the blame game, accusation is used to excuse oneself from personal responsibility.**

**It is always somebody else's fault!**

a. Christians need to know that the blame game has been around from the beginning of time.

3. Satan invented the Blame Game to our first parents in the Garden of Eden and is still using to bring people and nations into bondage today. But knowing the truth can make us free.

4. The first accusation in the Bible is very subtle; the serpent sows the seed in the woman's mind with an insinuation about the goodness of God.

**Genesis 3:4-5**

**Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."**

a. The accusation is very subtle but it's there: "God is not being honest with you; God is holding out on you."

5. Adam and fell for it. But then God immediately comes on the scene to hold them accountable. But God does not begin with an accusation; He begins with a question to the man:

**Genesis 3:11-12**

**And He (God) said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" Then the**

**man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."**

a. Here is a sure sign that Satan's seed has found a home in man's heart; Adam has become an 'accuser' playing the Blame Game.

6. Actually, Adam makes a *double* accusation:

- a. He accuses his wife: The WOMAN gave me of the tree and I ate.
- b. He accuses God: The woman YOU gave to be with me...
- c. Adam has no idea how far he has fallen; he has become a child of the devil. He has become an *accuser*. He plays the Blame Game. Basically, he's saying, "It's not my fault"

7. Then God turns to the woman:

#### **Genesis 3:13**

**And the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"  
The woman said, "The SERPENT deceived me, and I ate."**

a. Here is proof that our first parents would contaminate the human race with the Blame Game.

#### **The 1<sup>st</sup> Blame Game**

- **The man blamed the woman for giving him the fruit and he blamed God for giving him the woman.**
  - **The woman blamed the serpent.**  
(And, as someone said...)
- **But the serpent didn't have a leg to stand on!**

**8. Adam accused the woman. Adam accused God. The woman accused the serpent. Why did the serpent have no one to accuse?**

9. The short answer is that 'the buck stops' with the devil when it comes to accusation. Another name for the Blame Game is "passing the buck."

#### **Passing the Buck**

**To shift or reassign the blame or responsibility for something to another person, group, or thing.**

**To evade responsibility by passing it on to someone else.**

a. Adam ‘passed the buck’ to the woman. The woman passed the buck to the serpent. So why didn’t the serpent pass the buck? The answer is... Because the buck stops with Satan! He is the ‘father of lies’; he is the source of all accusation!

10. I love this definition of ‘passing the buck’ because it not only tells us what it is but it also gives us the cure; we overcome the accuser and quit the blame game by taking responsibility for our lives!

#### 11. **Meditation Question Regarding the Fall of the Human Race**

**What would have happened in the Garden of Eden if Adam had taken responsibility for his sin instead of playing the ‘Blame Game’?**

a. Remember when God confronted them with their sin, He did not accuse them. **HE ASKED THEM A SERIES OF QUESTIONS.** Why?

- “Adam, where are you?” v.9
- “Who told you that you were naked?” Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded that you should not eat?” v. 11
- And God said to the woman, “What have you done?” v.13

b. God KNEW what they had done. He KNEW they were guilty. So why did God not just accuse them and get on with the judgment?

c. The answer: God was giving them an opportunity to TAKE RESPONSIBILITY for their sin!

#### **The Biblical Illustrator**

**It can hardly be doubted that, in all these instances, the gracious design of God was to afford the criminals opportunity of confessing their crimes. You must be aware how, throughout Scripture, there is attached the greatest importance to confession of sin, so that forgiveness of sin depends upon nothing but its being acknowledged. "If we confess our sins," says the evangelist, "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."**

d. In asking questions to which he already knew the answers was like a Mom and Dad who know their kid was somewhere they were not supposed to be. But instead of jumping into judgment and punishment, they ask a question: “Where were you tonight?”

e. This is what God is doing here. He is giving them a chance to take responsibility for their wrongdoing.

12. The truth is that we will never know what would have happened if they had confessed their sin; but knowing the nature of God, He might have forgiven them! The entire course of human history might have been different.

13. But they did not confess. They did not take responsibility. They played the Blame Game of accusation. And the human race has been playing along ever since.

14. Adam and Eve received the 'seed' of the serpent: deception and accusation. Then they passed it along to the human race. Let's look at some...

## **B. Biblical Examples of the Blame Game**

1. **Cain and Abel:** The proof that Adam and Eve passed the blame game and the spirit of accusation down to their children is found in the story of Cain and Abel.

- a. They each brought an offering to the Lord.
- b. God accepted Abel's offering and rejected Cain's.
- c. Cain accused God in his heart of favoritism; God asked him, 'Why are you angry? Do what is right and you too will be accepted.'
- d. But Cain rises up and kills his brother.

### **Genesis 4:9**

**Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?"**

**He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"**

**New Century Version**

**Cain answered, 'I don't know. Is it my job to take care of my brother?'**

e. Cain is actually accusing God of not taking care of his brother, which was HIS responsibility!

### **Matthew Henry**

**Some think Cain is accusing God and his providence, as if he was really saying, "Are not You his keeper? If my brother is missing, on You be the blame, and not on me. I never undertook to keep him."**

### **Matthew Henry**

**Cain impudently accuses his God of folly and injustice, in putting this question to him: Am I my brother's keeper? He should have humbled himself, and have said, Am not I my brother's murderer? But he flies in the face of God himself with an impertinent question, "Am I my brother's keeper? Surely, he is old enough to take care of himself, nor did I ever take any responsibility for him."**

### **Matthew Henry**

**See how sinners' minds are blinded, and their hearts hardened by the deceitfulness of sin: those are strangely blind that think it possible to conceal their sins from a God that sees all, and those are strangely hard that think it desirable to conceal them from a God who pardons those only those that confess.**

**2. Moses and Aaron:** While Moses was up in the mount receiving the 10 Commandments, the people demanded that Aaron make them a golden calf to worship. Which he did. When Moses comes down, he asks Aaron why he did it.

### **Exodus 32:22-23**

**And Aaron said, 'You know the people, that they are set on evil. For they said to me, 'Make us gods that shall go before us...'**

- a. Instead of taking responsibility for his sin, Aaron blames the people!
- b. Then he makes matters worse:

### **Exodus 32:24**

**And I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let them break it off.' So, they gave the gold to me, and I cast it into the fire, and this calf came out!**

- c. First Aaron blames the people; then he blames the fire did it. He never does take personal responsibility for his sin.

**3. Naomi and Ruth:** Naomi's husband escapes the famine in Israel by taking his family into the heathen nation of Moab, where her husband and 2 sons die. Left only with her 2 daughters-in-law, Naomi blames God for their trouble.

### **Ruth 1:13**

**“No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me!”**

a. When Naomi and Ruth arrive home in Israel after a 10 year absence, no one recognized Naomi...

**Ruth 1:19**

**Now the two of them went until they came to Bethlehem. And it happened, when they had come to Bethlehem, that all the city was excited because of them; and the women said, "Is this Naomi?"**

b. Naomi's response reveals the Blame Game as she accuses God of being the cause of her circumstances.

**Ruth 1:20-21**

**But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the Lord has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?"**

c. Naomi in Hebrew means 'pleasant', 'lovely', 'winsome'. Marah means 'bitter'!

d. It was her husband who took the family into their troubles; but Naomi blames God. She doesn't realize she is listening to the voice of the Accuser and using her own mouth to lay the charge to God.

**4. Samuel and Saul:** The prophet Samuel told the new King Saul to wait for him to arrive before going into battle so Samuel could make the priestly offering to God before the fight. But Saul can't wait and makes the offering himself. Then Samuel shows up with a question for Saul...

**1 Samuel 13:11,13**

**And Samuel said, "What have you done?"**

(This is like God in Genesis 3. The prophet knew what he had done but does not jump to judgement. He asks a question. He gives Saul a chance to take responsibility for his sin. But Saul plays the Blame Game)

**Saul said, "When I saw that the people were scattering from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed...Therefore I felt compelled and offered a burnt offering."**



- a. Saul disobeyed the word of God from the prophet; but instead of taking responsibility for his sin, he played the Blame Game.
- b. He accused the people who were going A.W.O.L.
- c. He accused the prophet for not showing up on time!
- d. The Blame Game ends up costing him his Kingdom!

### **1 Samuel 13:13-14**

**And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which He commanded you. For now the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you."**

Moving over to the New Testament to the story of...

### **5. The paralytic at the pool of Bethesda**

- a. In John 5 we are told of a pool at Bethesda where sick folk gathered to be healed when an angel would periodically stir the waters and the first one to go into the pool would be healed.
- b. Among the seekers at the pool was a man suffering paralysis for 38 years when Jesus pays a visit with the question...

### **John 5:5-6**

**Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"**

- c. Instead of simple "Yes!", the paralytic plays the Blame Game.

### **John 5:7-8**

**The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked.**

- d. You would think that at some point in 38 years the man could have figured a way to roll himself into the pool! But no.
- He had a form of Blame Game I call a 'victim mentality'

- He blamed his problem on others; “I have no man to put me in the pool”
- He blamed the one who would always ‘step down before’ him.

e. Mercifully, Jesus heals him immediately. But the question remains, how many people blame their spiritual paralysis on others???

**6. Pontius Pilate:** At the trial of Jesus, Pontius Pilate famously blamed the people for passing judgment on Jesus by washing his hands!

**Matthew 27:24**

**When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person."**

a. Here is a picture of a politician blaming the people for making him do what he knows is wrong!

b. He stood for Jesus up to a point. He offered the people the death of true criminal in place of Jesus. But ‘when he saw a tumult arising’ among the people, he put the blame on the people and declared himself innocent!

c. To this day we speak of those ‘who wash their hands’ of some matter or another; it means ‘I take no responsibility for this.’

6. All of these biblical examples here reveal this...

**There is a close connection between:**

**The spirit of accusation**

**The Blame Game**

**Passing the buck**

**Living in Victimhood**

**We overcome these in proportion to how well we handle personal responsibility.**

**II. The Secret of Man**

**Vaclav Havel**

(Leader of the ‘Velvet Revolution’ that toppled Communism in Czechoslovakia in 1989)

**“The secret of man is the secret of man’s responsibility.”**

**A. The Mystery of Mankind is the Unique Ability for Moral Responsibility**

1. In all God's creation, only man is able to take moral responsibility for his life; only man is accountable to God for what he does.

2. The miserable condition of the human race can be traced back to the man who refused to take responsibility for his sin but instead, played the Blame Game of accusation.

3. The Blame Game of accusation and passing the buck will bring you into bondage and put you in a prison with no way out.

### **David Gerrold**

**If you're passing the buck don't ask for change.**

4. Many people, perhaps some here tonight, may be in bondage because you're playing the Blame Game.

- Blaming your spouse?
- Blaming your boss?
- Blaming God?

5. The Blame Games is the reason so many of God's people are spiritually 'stuck'!

6. The only way out is by knowing the truth about the devil's devices; the truth that makes us free...

### **III. Close:**

#### **A. How to Overcome the Accuser**

1. We must know our enemy! He is a Deceiver and an Accuser.
2. We must learn to discern the voice of the Accuser when he is speaking to us or through us.
3. We must absolutely resign from the Blame Game!
  - a. This wisdom is not limited to Christians.
  - b. 100 years after Christ, a Greek philosopher said...

**Epictetus**

(Greek Philosopher, 50-135 A.D.)

**To accuse others for one's misfortunes is a sign of a want of education. To accept personal responsibility shows that one's education has begun.**

**Epictetus**

**The best day of your life is the day you decide your life is your own. No apologies and no excuses. No one to lean on or rely on, no one to blame.**

a. The day a young person learns this lesson is the day they begin to become an adult person.

**Hal Elrod (American author)**

**The moment you accept responsibility for everything in your life is the moment you gain the power to change everything in your life.**

4. Next week we'll look at how deeply the devil has invaded America with the Blame Game, Victimhood, and the spirit of accusation.

5. And once the church knows how to overcome the devil's devices, we can make a difference in the nation!

Closing Prayer

**Title**