



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

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August 9, 2009

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## Schedule of Services

### **Sunday**

Classes . . . . . 9:30 am  
Worship . . . . 10:30 am  
Evening . . . . 6:00 pm

### **Wednesday**

Classes . . . . . 7:30 pm

## The blame game

by David King

"And [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.' And the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate'" (Gen. 3:11-13).

When Adam and Eve got caught with their hands in the proverbial cookie jar, they did exactly what most of us do in the same situation: they tried to put the blame on someone else. Adam found fault with two parties: "**The woman** [#1] whom **You** [#2] gave to be with me . . ." For her part, Eve pointed to yet another party: "**The serpent** deceived me"—that is, the devil made me do it. In both cases, their accounts of events leading up to the sins were quite correct, but the implied conclusion—"I'm not responsible"—was bogus.

The finger-pointing in this story is so clumsy and transparent that it is almost humorous. But when we realize that this account is a mirror held up to expose our own behavior, it ceases to be funny. All of Adam and Eve's descendants are quite good at playing this blame game as a means of trying to avoid the consequences of our sins.

Children learn at an early age that siblings and playmates make handy scapegoats when things go wrong. And in many cases, that strategy is carried forward into adulthood, where it becomes a standard survival mechanism. Marriages break up because spouses are

too busy blaming each other for the problems in their relationship. Employees get stuck in dead-end careers while blaming incompetent management for the lack of opportunity. Even in the church, brethren are quick to pounce on each other's imperfections as the source of a congregation's problems. In every case, blaming others for the consequences of our own mistakes leaves the root problem unresolved, and usually makes matters worse.

There is no fault in recognizing that others may have contributed to a problem. The mistake is in trying to use that fact to avoid responsibility for our own errors. Whatever others may have done, it does not exonerate us from our own poor decisions. Adam and Eve were accurate in their descriptions of events leading up to their situation, but notice that both ended their alibis with the same incriminating statement: "And I ate." In the end, it really didn't matter what others did. The sin was their own, and they owned the consequences. They could not blame others.

When David was confronted with his crimes involving Bathsheba and her husband, he easily could have blamed the woman for her indiscretion. But unlike Adam, David accepted full responsibility for his error: "I have sinned against the Lord" (2 Sam. 12:13; Psa. 51:4).

The mark of maturity is the ability to rise above this childish blame game and own up to our own failures. Only then can we find the healing we need to move past our sins, and learn the wisdom we need to avoid making mistakes in the future.

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.