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Dealing with Behavior Problems

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Dealing with Behavior Problems

In order to overcome behavior problems, we first need to know that God understands our predicament. He must! The Bible He gave us is so realistic about the human condition. A part of us wants to do what is right, but we go ahead and do what we know is wrong anyway.

An important question for us to consider is, what causes us to do wrong?

The Blame Game

If we listen to the “experts” or even to the ordinary folk we live with every day, we hear many different explanations for why people do bad things. What most of these explanations have in common is a tendency to say that the behavior is not really the fault of the one who does it.

- Do you have a problem with rage? Maybe you can lay the responsibility for it at the feet of your father, who mistreated you when you were a kid.
- Do you feel a desire to engage in sex with persons of your own gender? It might be that you have a “gay gene.”
- Do you steal things? Maybe the fault lies less with you than with a society that stacks the deck against the poor.
- Do you drink too much? It could be that you have alcoholism disease.
- Do you have a hatred for men? Maybe it is all due to the date rape you suffered when you were younger.

We do not mean to make light of the hardships that people endure—not in the least. Victims of abuse and misfortune deserve our concern and support. And we should recognize that they really do have to deal with the consequences of what has been done to them through no fault of their own.

On the other hand, we do mean to point out the ways that people tend to shift some, if not all, of the blame for their behavior problem away from themselves. This all-too-human tendency goes back to the first couple, for when God tried to get Adam

and Eve to fess up to the fruit-eating incident, Adam blamed Eve—and Eve blamed the serpent!¹

The practice of blaming bad behavior on a variety of factors other than sin is certainly understandable—who would not like to avoid responsibility for their behavior problems if they could? But it is an unfortunate manifestation of the sinful nature nevertheless.

In some instances, the blame is completely misplaced. In other instances, the blaming does manage to identify a contributing factor to someone's poor behavior. But even in such cases, the contributing factor does not constitute the heart of the problem. The blaming misses what is really going on.

Sadly, everyone loses at the blame game. Worst of all, blaming poor behavior on secondary factors results in a reliance upon solutions that do not work.

Select the right arrow (below) to continue reading Chapter 1. Dealing with Behavior Problems.

¹See Genesis 3:12-13.