

It's Not My Fault

Many years ago Court TV featured the trial of Jaysen Williams, an NBA star accused of manslaughter. It seems that at a party in his home after a night out on the town with some of his friends, Mr. Williams was clowning around with a shotgun and shot and killed one of his employees. The prosecution charged that he committed manslaughter, while the defense claimed that the whole thing was an accident. The shooting may very well have been an accident, but Mr. Williams attempted to cover up or shift the blame away from himself which resulted in the charges held against him. Perhaps, if he had just acted in an appropriate manner after the shooting, and taken responsibility for his actions, the whole thing may have been dismissed as an unfortunate accident.

Mr. Williams demonstrated a human character flaw that we may all possess. When we make a mistake, we immediately go into a defensive posture and attempt to shift the responsibility away from ourselves. It's happened since the very beginning, look at Adam and Eve. After disobeying God and eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, the Lord confronts them, asking if they've eaten from the tree. Adam says, "Yes Lord I did, but it wasn't my fault, the woman gave it to me!" Eve likewise tried to steer the blame away from herself, "Yes, I ate from the tree but it's the serpent's fault." (*Genesis 3:9-13*). Sound familiar? Sure it does, we've all done it, at home, at school, and on the job. We've all tried to blame someone or something else for our shortcomings. Is this behavior acceptable for us as we strive to be Christ-like?

Taking responsibility for our actions, good or bad, is an attribute that will make the Christian stand out in a world full of blame shifters. The Bible describes Christians as "peculiar people" (*Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9 KJV*) and what could be more peculiar than a person who takes responsibility for his mistakes? Today we have sociologists and psychologists that tell us people are "victims" of their surroundings and therefore not totally responsible for their actions. But the Lord said that, "*for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.*" (*Matthew 12:36*). Yes, all will give an account of the things that are done while on this earth, both good and bad (*Romans 14:12*). As Christians, we must realize that we are indeed accountable for our actions and be ready to take responsibility for them. Of course, we are going to trip up and make mistakes, but we can never go wrong if we quickly admit to them and try to correct them. Let me encourage you to be honest with your husband, your wife, friends, teachers, and your superiors at work when you make a "boo-boo". You'll be treated fairly and respected for your attitude. Remember that we must always be an "*example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*" *1 Timothy 4:12*. Let us all step up and take responsibility!

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