

Lame Games we Play 2 – The Blame Game

Welcome to Redemption Church in Plano Tx. It is so great to worship together. Thank you for being with us today. Our staff of volunteers does a lot to transform this school into a church so that you will feel right at home as we do the 3 things. The 3 things are that we worship together, we receive God's word together, and we talk to God in prayer together. I am thankful for our volunteers. Let's give them a hand.

Greetings to everyone watching this online. We appreciate you as well. Please help us spread this message to as many people as possible. Share, like, comment.

My name is Chris Fluitt and I am excited about the 2nd week of our series – The Lame Games We Play.

Lame Games we Play Title

Life is filled with games that we should no longer play. Last week I told you how I was a victim of packaging.

Victim of Packaging

I purchased a terrible product based on its great packaging. I showed you the video game last week. It was Athena for the Nintendo Entertainment System. I have had the terrible music stuck in my head ever since. Pray church pray. I need to get that 8bit sound track out of my head.

Sin is a terrible product with great packaging

I want to remind you that sin is a terrible product with great packaging. You will always regret being fooled by the packaging of sin.

Adam & Eve fell victim to the serpent's sales pitch in the garden. They regretted it. They experienced sin and it brought them shame.

Shame is the realization of what you have done and what you have become.

Adam & Eve tried to manage their shame. We try to do the same. We try to make our shame manageable. We try to hide it. We try to control who sees it. We try to not let shame effect us.

This is what we referred to as the Shame Game.

Shame Game

The shame game is a game you cannot win.

If you are tempted to enter into the shame game, chances are good that you have played their follow up classic.

Blame Game

The Blame Game is played like this. We receive the shame and redirect it through blame. We never really own the shame, we deflect the shame towards something or someone else.

The Blame Game reminds me of a very old video game. This is actually one of the oldest arcade games ever.

Kids I am not talking about the 1st Call of Duty or the Halo game that came out a few years ago. I am talking about a game that had zero color and only featured white pixel dots on a screen. The only controls of this game were wheels that could move a white bar in one of two directions. You could move it up and down.

Anyone know what I am talking about?

Pong Video

The idea of Pong is very simple, as is the idea of blame.

That small pixel dot that flies on the screen toward you, and you maneuver the white bar to paddle the dot away from you.

When shame flies toward us, we find inventive ways of paddling shame away from us through blame.

When Adam & Eve disobey God and experience shame, they pong that shame into blame. They redirect the shame into blame.

Genesis 3:6 (NIV2011) When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Genesis 3:7 (NIV2011) Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Genesis 3:8 (NIV2011) Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

Adam & Eve are hit with SHAME, but watch what happens.

Genesis 3:9 (NIV2011) But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

Genesis 3:10 (NIV2011) He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

Genesis 3:11 (NIV2011) And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

Genesis 3:12 (NIV2011) The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

Genesis 3:13 (NIV2011) Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

When God speaks to Adam about what happened, how did Adam respond? Who did He blame?

Genesis 3:12 (NIV2011) The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

The WOMAN... YOU put here with me.

God it is Eve’s fault. And God you gave me Eve... so it is your fault also. Adam blamed Eve, and God!

Like a game of pong, Adam deflected his shame, pushing it back to others.

Eve having her own shame and now the blame from Adam, what did she say?

Genesis 3:13 (NIV2011) Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Eve pongs the blame to the serpent.

Blame never takes responsibility

Adam & Eve were caught red handed, yet neither of them took responsibility. Neither Adam, nor Eve uttered the words “I did something wrong.”

This sentence is an essential part of a responsible life. Practice saying it with me. “I did something wrong.”

It should be just as easy to say “I did something wrong” as it is to say “THEY did something wrong.” There is something broken in humanity, where we are natural blamers, deflectors of shame, and terrible at being responsible for our failures.

I remind you that Adam & Eve didn’t learn blame from anyone. They didn’t have a mom or dad, or a college roommate who taught them this unhealthy response. They blamed NATURALLY.

It is Natural to blame

We have a fallen nature because of sin. Our nature doesn't NATURALLY take responsibility. Our nature NATURALLY blames.

"THEY did something wrong" comes out like a rapid fire automatic weapon, but "I did something wrong" comes out slower than the US government. And when someone quickly declares "you did wrong" we are so quick with the pong controls to shift that blame. That is how the blame game is played.

What if Adam would have said "God I did something wrong"? What if the man & woman would have said "WE did something wrong"?

Some games come to us naturally. Some games you pick up the controller the first time and you feel like you are already good at it. The Blame game is just like that. Everyone is a PRO at the blame game.

The majority of the energy spent between my oldest sons is in blaming each other. "Why is your room a mess?" "It was my brother." "Who started broke this?" "It was my brother." "Who forgot to clean up their plate?" It was my brother."

BUT if WE are honest... **Is it possible that we spend the majority of our energy playing the blame game?**

God asks dumb questions

Now get irate at me. I am not going to call God dumb, but it appears that God asks some dumb questions in the Bible.

Genesis 3:9 (NIV2011) But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

God, do you really not know where Adam is? Where you just not paying attention like a parent who was looking at their phone and looks back up to have no clue where their kid wandered off to? What is up with this dumb question?

Genesis 3:11 (NIV2011) And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

All knowing God... I think you should know the answer to these questions.

Genesis 3:13 (NIV2011) Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

Again with the questions that God should already have the answer to...

You and I ask questions for our benefit. We ask questions to learn information. God doesn't need information. God is well informed. God asks us questions for our benefit, not his. God doesn't ask you questions so that He will learn... God asks questions so that we will learn.

God asks ~~dumb~~ the important questions

"Adam, where are you?" God is giving Adam a space to admit "where" he is.

Maybe God is asking you today... "Where are you?"

"Who told you that you were naked?" Adam will you confess that you have been talking to the serpent?

Maybe God is asking us "Who told you these things about yourself?" Where did this realization you have of yourself come from? Did it come from God?

"Did you eat of the tree I commanded you not to eat from?" Adam will you confess you did wrong?

God asks us today "Have you been doing things I said in my Word not to do?"

Every question was a pixelated pong ball tossed toward Adam. And every question, Adam defensively countered, pivoted, and sent the shame somewhere else.

Every question God asks is an opportunity to put the control down and allow truth to hit our heart. Adam & Eve never stop playing the blame game in this conversation.

It is Natural to blame

There is always someone or something to shift the blame towards. Have you been deflecting? Have you taken responsibility?

- I am angry... but it's because of what I have to put up with at work.
- I am impatient... but it's only because I have so much to do and people slow me down.
- I am lustful... but it's because our culture posts so many sensual images.
- I have anxiety... but it's because I need more money.
- I am not Spiritually alive... But it's because my Connect Group isn't more encouraging, my Church more engaging, the Worship music more lively, or pastors sermons more coherent.
- I am rebellious... But it's because my parents, bosses, elders are dumb.
- I am critical... But it's because God has given me this spiritual gift to help all the ignorant people around me.
- I am bitter... But if you only knew what I went through...
- I am a gossip... But I don't start the conversation...
- I am selfish... But I would be more generous if I had more money or time.

It is Natural to blame. It is supernatural to be forgiven.

It is hard to stop playing the blame game. We have been playing it for so long. It is difficult to take the responsibility for our wrong. The blame game is natural – we play it without even realizing we are playing it.

Forgiveness on the other hand... No one is accidentally forgiven. Forgiveness requires something...

What is the unforgivable sin?

We get asked this question more than any other question on our anonymous text line. Mark 3:29 talks about the blasphemy

of the Holy Spirit, and that it is unforgivable. We get questions about this along these lines.

- I did this thing? Did I commit the unforgivable sin?
- I said this... Can I be forgiven?
- I had these impure thoughts and I am afraid that I just committed the unforgivable sin.

The subject of forgiveness is of the utmost importance. We could spend the next hour talking about the different theological viewpoints of Blasphemy of the Spirit. Instead I will tell you 2 things that God will never forgive.

If you do either of these things you will not be forgiven.

#1 If you do not admit & confess your sin, you will never be forgiven.

#2 If you do not forgive others, you will never be forgiven.

Let's start with forgiving others. Jesus is very clear about this.

Matthew 6:15 (NIV2011) But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Unforgiveness is unforgivable!

Is there someone you have not forgiven? When we talk to God in a few minutes you need to tell God, "I have done something wrong God. I have not forgiven this person. I was wrong to not forgive them when you have so graciously forgiven me. I forgive them. God forgive me."

If the person you have not forgiven is in the room, I challenge you to meet them in this altar. I challenge you to forgive them and ask them to forgive you for holding on to unforgiveness.

Unforgiveness is unforgivable! Say it! Do it!

Now let's talk about confession. If you do not admit and confess your sin, you will never be forgiven.

1 John 1:9 (NIV2011) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:10 (NIV2011) If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

Un-confessed sin is unforgivable.

This is what is so dangerous about the Blame Game. That Pong paddle always deflects the shame. It always pushes back the wrong. It never accepts the wrong. It only denies. It only blames.

musician

You cannot be forgiven and play the blame game

You must confess you are a sinner. You must confess you have sinned. If you don't do this you make God out to be a liar. If you do this you cannot be forgiven.

No one is accidentally forgiven. Forgiveness requires you to put down the controls and take on the shame.

Shame is not all bad. You were never meant to live in shame, but shame does have a purpose. Shame brings you to repentance.

2 Corinthians 7:10 (NIV2011) Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

Really good sermons don't bring you to repentance. Pumped up worship music doesn't bring you to repentance. Godly sorrow brings you to repentance, leads to salvation, and leaves no regret.

When you put the pong paddle down and accept the shame there is a sorrow. The word for sorrow there is heaviness, pain, grief, and annoyance. The shame we try so hard to avoid can bring us to repentance, salvation, and leaves no regret.

Are you done playing the blame game? We are going to talk to God. I want to challenge you to come and talk to Him today. When you take a step toward this stage it is a confession that you are a sinner. It is a confession that You need God's forgiveness and grace. People who come to the altar are done blaming others, they are ready to Take responsibility for what they have done. Will you come?

If you have never repented. If you have never asked God to forgive you of your sins I want you to come into the 1st 2 feet of the stage. We want to lead you into repentance today.

If you want special prayer come into the 1st 2 feet. We want to pray for you. We believe God can work a miracle.