

WHOSE FAULT IS IT?

Two Stories

P. Ribes, s.j.

Intent of this Story

- ✓ *How to solve conflicts*
- ✓ *Stop playing the "Blaming-game".*
- ✓ *Accept responsibility for your actions and mistakes*
- ✓ *Where blaming stops, growth begins.*

Johnny and Rose

A cozy little cottage on a hill, one night, all of a sudden caught fire. A young couple, Johnny and Rose, the only dwellers therein, rushed out to save their lives from the fire.

Hardly had they came out, when a quarrel broke among them. Johnny shouted: "I have told you hundred times over not to go to bed without putting out the embers of the kitchen stove. But, stubborn like a mule, you would never listen. Look, look now what has happened. Our house is burning! Are you satisfied? Are your happy?"

"It's not my fault!," yelled Rose. "It's your fault! I have told you thousands of times not to smoke when you go to sleep. But you dog-headed, always go to bed with your cigarette but on your lips. Why do you lame me now? Can't you see that the fire began in the bedroom and not in the kitchen? It's clear. It's your fault. Only your fault!"

"Shut your mouth" Johnny screamed, "Don't blame me. I am telling you: it's your fault! Yes your fault!.... Yours, only yours."

Whilst they were quarreling and blaming each other, the fire, that at the start was small, grew bigger and bigger... then, fiercer and fiercer. Then, the cottage became an "inferno". The house went on burning. Meant while, they went on blaming each others..

Finally, before Johnny and Rose could settle their quarrel, and find out whose fault was it, their pretty, cozy, little cottage was reduced to a heap of smoldering ashes!.

Barthol and Teddy

Long ago, there were two friends, Barthol and Teddy. They were fishermen. Pooling their moneys together they bought a cute little fishing boat. Daily, they used to go out fishing. One day, their boat sprang a leak. The water slowly was flooding it..

Teddy shouted at Barthol. "Look, here! Can't you see? There is a leak. The boat is getting flooded; we are sinking...Barthol, I warned you so many times to check the boat before leaving the shore. But, you pig-headed never listened! See now what's happening. We are sinking! It's your fault!

Barthol got mad at Teddy: "No!. It's not my fault! You knew that the boat needed attention; even you had told me that, yet you did nothing about it. Why the hell are you blaming me now? It's your fault!"

"Shut up your dirty mouth" roared Teddy, "Who do you think you are shouting at me like that! And blaming me? One word more and I'll smash your head!" And with that, Teddy swung the little oar in the air like a deadly weapon.

A hand-to-hand fight ensued. There were blows, abuses, yells and curses. The little boat was dangerously swinging this side, that side. In the meantime, the boat was getting more and more flooded. At the end, all of a sudden, with a violent jerk, the little boat toppled over and sank.

Unfortunately, Barthol and Teddy could never know whose fault was it, before they would drown!.

Thoughts for Reflection.

- Conflicts and problems are unavoidable; they are part of human life.
- Do not try to find out whose fault it is.
- By knowing who is at fault, the problem will not be solved.
- Before you can find "whose fault was it", you might be already dead like Teddy and Barthol
- When there are problems and conflicts do not blame anyone, not even yourself.
- Accepting responsibility is healthy, blaming oneself is not.
- When there is a problem, the first thing is to find the remedy and apply it immediately. (*First, put off the fire of the little cottage, or plug the leak in the boat*).
- Blaming implies judging and condemning others nobody likes to be judged and condemned.
- Problems or conflicts involve two parties. We need two hands to clap!
- Both parties have to have a will to find a solution and a will to compromise.
- The "all-or-nothing attitude" will never solve any conflict.
- Parties searching for a solution in a conflict have to be willing to be both winners and losers.
- Addiction to the "blaming game" prevents us from growing up and living in peace
- The "blaming game" is a refusal to accept responsibly for our own actions.
- Blaming is always an escape from personal responsibility
- It keeps us immature, infantile and emotionally crippled.
- Whilst children blame others; grown-ups should accept responsibility for their actions

- We can't change things, but by changing our attitudes towards them, we can accept them.
- Blaming others turns us into violent 'reactors, instead of being free "actors"
- The penalty for refusing to accept personal responsibility in conflict is war and hatred.