

Choosing the Blame Game or an Attitude of Gratitude

By Karen Sue Nyquist

Inspired by Pastor/Evangelist George Ehigiator's Message - 11/7/2021



Life can be hard. It can be painful. When we look at others, we can see some that have it better than we do or have hurt us. When we are suffering and having many problems, we often do wrong things and make wrong choices. These include: denying, making excuses, or blaming others. We may blame society, other people groups, even God. When we blame others, it's called, "Playing the Blame Game."

1. The Blame Game - 5 Reasons People Play the Blame Game - but Rarely Win

"5 Reasons We Play the Blame Game - but Rarely Win," (1) Susan Krauss Whitbourne Ph.D., *Psychology Today*, 9/19/2015, www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog.

- Blame is an excellent defense mechanism. It helps us preserve a sense of self-worth.
- Blame is a tool we use when we are in an attack mode.
- We may blame because we aren't very good at figuring out why people do what they do.
- We may blame because it's easier to blame than to accept responsibility.
- We may lie and blame others even though we know we are at fault. (1)

Good News! God is watching all that we go through. He sees our pain and confusion and wants to help us to make beneficial choices. The Bible, God's word, gives us excellent advice. It says, "**Confess your trespasses (faults, mistakes, wrongs, sins) to one another**" (James 5:16). Then **ask for their**



forgiveness (Genesis 50:17). The Bible also says we need to **repent and confess to God**. "If we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful and just to **forgive us our sins** and to **cleanse us** from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Some of us blame ourselves, then emotionally beat ourselves up. God doesn't tell us to do that either. Follow His loving instructions: **1) repent, 2) confess, and 3) ask for forgiveness**. What a relief when we let God remove the burden of our wrongs, guilts, denials, and blaming!

"Unlike other games, the more often you play the blame game, the more you lose. Learning to tell when you need to own up to your role in a bad situation will help you grow from your experiences, and ultimately help you achieve more fulfilling relationships." (1)

Good News! Once we have given our lives to Jesus, we have additional help for difficult times and for healing afterward. We have His Holy Spirit living inside us. God's word says, "We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how **dearly God loves us**, because **he has given us the Holy Spirit** to fill our hearts with his love" (Romans 5:3-5 NLT).

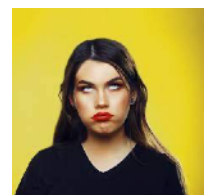
2. The Ungrateful Fateful - When we go through hard times, it is so easy to become ungrateful, even for what we do have.

People who are ungrateful often have an "egocentric vision of the world" so they "assume that others are bound to meet their needs and desires. That way of understanding the world will prevent them from experiencing gratitude." (2) "Ungrateful People: The 'Poison' of Ungratefulness," Aki Rosenberg, *Psychology Spot*, www.psychologyspot.com/ungrateful-people. **UNGRATEFULNESS IS POISONOUS!**

5 Risks that Ungrateful People Face (2)

- Chronic unhappiness
- Difficulty recovering from traumas
- More mental disorders
- Condemned to despair
- Worse physical health

God's Word explains that some, "did not glorify him as God, nor were



thankful, but **became futile in their thoughts**, and their foolish **hearts were darkened**" (Romans 1:21).

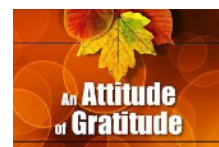
Good News! God does not want us to suffer these things. His word, the Bible, tells us "in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). He wants us to develop the habit of being thankful, of being grateful in every situation.



3. Attitude of Gratitude - "Gratitude is not just a feeling, it is also a skill and a way of seeing the world." (2). ". . . (gratitude) is an attitude towards life that implies being able to notice and appreciate the positive that exists in the world" (2). "Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life... makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow." – Melodie Beattie (3) "How Gratitude Can Affect Your Physical and Psychological Well-Being," Susanne Kane, PsychCentral, 11/1/2019, www.psychcentral.com/lib/how-gratitude-can-affect.

5 Benefits of Having Gratitude (3)

- a) Gratitude promotes positive mind-sets and reduces stress
- b) Gratitude is related to better sleep, mood, less fatigue and inflammation
- c) Gratitude predicts lower depression rates in patients with chronic illness
- d) Gratitude helps improve mental health
- e) Gratitude fosters well-being at end of life



Wow! "A conscious decision to increase gratitude pays off." (3)

4. Giving Thanks - When we are grateful, we need to express that by giving thanks. How? by saying, "Thank you for..." "I so appreciate what you did." "I am so grateful that ..." or sending "Thank you" texts. For some of us, this comes easily; for others of us, we need to practice. People around us will appreciate our expression of gratitude. What about God?

Good News! The Bible says, "Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. . . . **giving thanks always for all things to God**" (Ephesians 5:17, 20). Yes, God appreciates it when we tell Him, "Thank You."

Wait! Did the Bible say "for all things"? Yes, even in the darkest times, we should find something to be thankful for. Finding the "silver lining" on every dark cloud will give us strength and hope to help us through. Paul, one of Jesus' followers said, "I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. **I can do all things through Christ (Jesus) who strengthens me**" (Philippians 4:12-14).

5. Is Jesus Your Lord and Savior? - If you have not yet accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you do not have full access to His help, hope, and forgiveness. You do not yet have His Holy Spirit living inside to guide you and strengthen you. **Here is a suggested prayer:** "Dear Jesus, forgive me for all my sins and cleanse me from all my bad attitudes. I repent from trying to live my life my way and ask You to be my Lord. Make me the kind of person You want me to be. Right now, Jesus, I open my heart and receive You as my personal Lord and Savior. I want to have a new vibrant relationship with God. AMEN!"



Name _____ Date _____

Now that you have asked Jesus into your heart, being grateful will be so much easier. Spend time with Him. Start talking (praying) to Him. Read His book, the Bible, where He reveals Himself even more clearly. Daily, ask Him to become involved in your life and request His advice, direction, even correction. Obey Him when He reveals His will to you. Spend time with others who love God too. Go to a good church where you feel God's presence, they preach the Bible, and you can fellowship with other believers. We learn much about God from each other.

GOD BLESS YOU! NationTakers Ministries

856 Cabrillo St., San Francisco, CA 94118 - Mail P.O. Box 27475, San Francisco, CA 94127

1(415) 337-7027 info@nationtakers.com www.nationtakers.com

Join us in person or on Sunday Livestream at 11 am PT on Facebook or YouTube.

www.facebook.com/nationtakers www.youtube.com/nationtakers