

## Our Victimhood Culture

### INTRODUCTION:

1. I want to talk about our *victimhood culture*.
  - A. I am doing so because it is fast-growing and a dominant force on our college campuses and among young people, and it is impacting society and will have an impact on us.
  - B. It is a culture spearheaded by *political correctness* that apparently began in our most elite colleges and universities and has spread to Canada, the United Kingdom, and likely into Europe.
  - C. As a result, it is moving into our government and will likely become part of mainstream thinking in the Western world if it is not strongly opposed.
2. But I am not addressing this from a political point of view.
  - A. Instead, my intentions for this lesson have to do with the spiritual ramifications of the culture.
  - B. I want to present what the victim culture is and why it concerns us, what the Bible has to say about it, and then to make some applications from what we have learned.

### BODY:

#### **I. What is the victimhood culture?**

- A. A **culture** is a specific set of ideas, rules, and social behavior of a particular group.
  1. In this case, those ideas, etc., have been *formulated, promoted, and acted upon* by a *particular group* within our society or culture (i.e., a culture within a culture).
  2. From the name you can deduce that this culture focuses on being a victim, or placing the blame on someone else, for *how things are, or are perceived to be, in one's life*.
  3. This culture glorifies victimization as a *moral achievement* and even a *status symbol*, and those within it, believe it or not, often vie for the status of being the most victimized.
- B. Defined and applied:
  1. **Cambridge Dictionary**: “the condition of having been hurt, damaged, or made to suffer, especially when you want people to feel sorry for you...or **use it as an excuse for something**” (dictionary.cambridge.org).
    - a. It is this last part that bothers me as a Christian and is one of the issues I hope to address.
    - b. Why? Because this culture sees victimhood (whether real or perceived) as *justification* for denying the *accountability* of a person or group concerning their actions.
    - c. In other words, if one has been, or feels he/she has been, hurt or damaged, in the slightest way by someone else, then that person is not responsible, or accountable, for whatever bad attitudes, choices, or actions that follow in their life.
  2. So, the *victimhood culture*, though claiming to want to bring about justice for the offended, is *really* about **blaming others** while **refusing to assign responsibility or accept accountability for one's actions**.
    - a. This is why people are allowed to destroy property, loot, etc., without punishment.
    - b. They, and others, feel they have been *victimized* by someone, a group of people, or the system, and so they are not held accountable for the criminal activity they do.
  3. Other disturbing facts:
    - a. Those who *disagree* with their view are seen as *victimizer* guilty of physical harm against them and must be stopped, or silenced, by force and even violence if necessary!
    - b. This culture encourages **constant fault-finding** and **rage** against anything perceived as a **microaggression** (anything that can possibly be interpreted as racist) or any divergence from **their approved opinions**, believing these to be a threat to the mental and physical wellbeing of themselves and society.
    - c. Rather than campaigning for the equality without regard to gender, race, or appearance, this culture seeks to recategorize people according to perceived “privilege,” which is based on race and gender.
      - i. Based on these categories **they** decide who is afforded respect and how much.
      - ii. Thus, you routinely have a **voiced contempt** for “white men,” which in their minds are apparently the worst!
- C. Some who claim to believe in God and the Bible attempt to **biblically justify** the victim culture.

1. Their supposed proof is found in the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:4-6 – “You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.<sup>5</sup> You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, **visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me,**<sup>6</sup> but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”). Also in **Ex. 34:6-7**.
  - a. From this they argue that whatever bad thing they may do, as well as its consequences, must be blamed on the **sins of their forefathers** and on **God** who **visits the iniquity of the fathers’ on the children**.
  - b. They believe this passage teaches that God gives the sinful attitudes and actions of their fathers to them.
  - c. Therefore, whatever they think or do **is not their fault**, seeing they are only doing as **God has forced them to do** as punishment for the sins of their forefathers.

## II. The Bible and the victimhood culture:

### A. Is God responsible for the victimhood culture?

1. Blaming God for one’s sinful actions is not new.
  - a. Solomon said, “That which has been is that which will be, and that which has been done is that which will be done. So there is nothing new under the sun” (Eccl. 1:9).
  - b. The victimhood culture is no exception, being as old as sin itself (Gen. 3:9-13 – “Then the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?”<sup>10</sup> He said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.”<sup>11</sup> And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”<sup>12</sup> The man said, “The woman **whom You gave** to be with me, she **gave me from the tree**, and I ate.”<sup>13</sup> Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” And the woman said, “The **serpent deceived me**, and I ate.”).
    - i. Adam and Eve refused to accept responsibility for their actions.
    - ii. In doing so, **both blamed God**, seeing God was the one who gave the woman to man and created the serpent.
2. God is not responsible for the victimhood culture.
  - a. But to understand this, we must first consider how God “visits the iniquity of the fathers on the children” (Ex. 20:5-6).
  - b. “Visiting” refers to God bringing the *consequences of the fathers’ sin* on the children, not *forcing* the fathers’ *bad character or behavior* upon them.
  - c. Now some might cry “foul,” claiming it is unjust for the children to suffer because of their parents’ actions. But if that is true, why not cry “foul” when they benefit from it?

### B. Proof of my conclusion:

1. God is not responsible for sinful conduct (Jas. 1:13-15 – “Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and **He Himself does not tempt anyone.**<sup>14</sup> But **each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.**<sup>15</sup> Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”).
  - a. God cannot be blamed for the sinful, evil, things we might do!
  - b. Temptation and sin are the result of **choosing to follow our lusts**.
  - c. If God does not even tempt us to sin, how could someone claim God **makes** them sin?
2. The “visiting” of the fathers’ sins on the children did not force the children to act sinfully.
  - a. God commanded/demanded that Israel **not to act like their fathers** (Psa. 95:7-10 – “...Today, if you would hear His voice,<sup>8</sup> Do **not harden your hearts**, as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the wilderness,<sup>9</sup> “**When your fathers tested Me, they tried Me**, though they had seen My work.<sup>10</sup> “For forty years I loathed that generation, and said they are a people who err in their heart, and they do not know My ways.”).
    - i. Whether they committed the sins of their fathers was up to them—it was their choice.

- ii. It would only be for their own choices that they would face guilt and punishment (Deut. 24:16 – “Fathers shall not be put to death for their sons, nor shall sons be put to death for their fathers; everyone shall be put to death **for his own sin.**”).
    - iii. So, if children act like their fathers in unbelief, God will hold them accountable (Heb. 3:12-19).
  - 3. God refused to allow the *victimhood culture* in Israel.
    - a. This culture appeared because God punished Israel with oppression and captivity because of their sin.
      - i. But rather than the Israelite captives taking responsibility for their own sinful part in it all, captive Israel put the blame totally on their **fathers**.
      - ii. They even had a proverb (Jer. 31:29 – “...The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.”).
    - b. God had Jeremiah address the victimhood culture.
      - i. He told Israel that the **children**, along with their **fathers**, were accountable for their sin and its punishment (Jer. 16:10-13 – “And when you tell this people all these words, and they say to you, ‘Why has the Lord pronounced all this great evil against us? What is our iniquity? What is the sin that we have committed against the Lord our God?’ <sup>11</sup> then you shall say to them: ‘Because **your fathers have forsaken me**, declares the Lord, and have gone after other gods and have served and worshiped them, and have forsaken me and have not kept my law, <sup>12</sup> and **because you have done worse than your fathers**, for behold, **every one of you follows his stubborn, evil will, refusing to listen to me.** <sup>13</sup> Therefore I will hurl you out of this land into a land that neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods day and night, for I will show you no favor.”).
        - 1) Though their fathers sinned, the children were held accountable for the choices they made.
        - 2) Note that it was not God who forced them down this path, but their own stubborn desires and their refusal to listen to God.
      - ii. Jeremiah specifically addressed their proverb (Jer. 31:29-30 – “In those days they will not say again, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children’s teeth are set on edge.’ <sup>30</sup> But everyone will die **for his own iniquity**; each man **who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge.**”).
        - 1) God holds everyone accountable for their own decisions and actions.
        - 2) We must see this because as long as this wicked self-deception of victimhood remains, sorrow for sin, repentance, and forgiveness are hindered.
        - 3) Therefore, any interpretation of Ex. 20:5 that claims that children’s sinful actions, etc., are **God’s fault** and **not their own** is patently false!
    - c. God had Ezekiel address and expose the error of the victimhood culture (Ezek. 18).
      - i. Here God begins by again rejecting the proverb first mentioned in Jeremiah (18:1-4).
      - ii. God lays down the principle that it is what you choose to do and be that determines how God will reward you (18:5-9, 19-20).
      - iii. So, again, any thought that other people’s actions, even those done directly against us, relieves us of accountability for our actions is simply false.
- C. More biblical problems with the victimhood culture:
  - 1. This culture’s emphasis on **fault-finding** and **enraged attacks** on one’s enemies, or anyone who deviates from their doctrine is contrary to Christ’s love.
    - a. Love’s description (1 Cor. 13:4-7 – “Love is **patient**, love is **kind** and is **not jealous**; love does not brag and is not arrogant, <sup>5</sup> **does not act unbecomingly**; it does not seek its own, **is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,** <sup>6</sup> **does not rejoice in unrighteousness**, but rejoices with the **truth**; <sup>7</sup> **bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.**”).

- b. We must do good to those that hurt us (Rom. 12:14, 17-21 – “**Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse...**”<sup>17</sup> **Never pay back evil for evil to anyone.** Respect what is right in the sight of all men.<sup>18</sup> If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.<sup>19</sup> **Never take your own revenge,** beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.<sup>20</sup> “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.”<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”).
- 2. This culture’s willingness to determine the value of others and gaging respect to be given them based on their race and gender is both hypocritical and contrary to God’s will.
  - a. It is hypocritical because they show **great prejudice** in the name of championing the cause of people who they claim have experienced prejudice for their race and gender!
  - b. God commands in 1 Peter 2:17 to “honor all people,” which they will not do.
  - c. One of the products of the gospel of Christ is to eliminate prejudicial thinking and actions (Gal. 3:26-28 – “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.<sup>27</sup> For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.<sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”).
- 3. So, one simply cannot be a Christian and be an active participant in the victimhood culture!

### III. Applications:

- A. We must live with accountability.
  - 1. Our thoughts and actions will be judged by God.
    - a. 2 Cor. 5:10 – “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that **each one** may be recompensed for **his deeds** in the body, according to **what he has done**, whether good or bad.”
    - b. Rom. 2:5-8 – “But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,<sup>6</sup> **who will render to each person according to his deeds:**<sup>7</sup> to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;<sup>8</sup> but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.”
  - 2. God will not be mocked in this matter (Gal. 6:7-8 – “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for **whatever a man sows**, this he will also reap.<sup>8</sup> For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.”).
- B. Children will face the consequences of their parents’ actions...which should be a sobering thought.
  - 1. Though not held guilty for their parents’ behavior, children can suffer physically for their parents’ actions.
    - a. Throughout the O.T. children physically suffered because their parent’s sin resulted in oppression or captivity.
    - b. That continues to be true today. For, when a parent sins and ends up in jail, or out of work, or becomes an alcoholic, the children suffer because of it.
  - 2. Children can also suffer spiritually because of their parents’ sins.
    - a. If parents fail to obey God, their children are going to be far more likely to not obey God, setting in motion generations of unbelief and condemnation!
    - b. If parents are not diligent and allow sin into their lives and home, their children will see this and be far more likely to do the same, even more so.
    - c. If parents are overcome by sin, such as marital infidelity, the children will be far more likely to be disillusioned with Christ and refuse to serve him.
    - d. So, parents, your commitment to Christ better be genuine and deep if you hope to save your children.

3. Children can be abundantly blessed for their parent's righteous (Gen. 20:6).
  - a. So, if you serve the Lord with your heart, your children will enjoy the benefits of your righteous devotion.
  - b. And, by doing so, you will help to set in motion the salvation of generations to come!

CONCLUSION:

1. I will remind you that the victim culture has little, if any, virtue about.
  - A. Instead, it is part of the work of Satan to convince the world that one can think and act in whatever way without accountability or eternal, or even temporal, consequences.
  - B. That, my friends, is nothing but a heinous lie designed to destroy you, your friends, society, all happiness, and ultimately your soul!
2. I encourage you to consider your actions and take responsibility for them.
  - A. If you have sinned and find yourself outside of Christ, will come to God in F-R-C-BP?
  - B. If you are a Christian and have strayed from the Lord, will you own up to your sin, repent, return to the Lord, and seek His forgiveness, while determined to live faithfully from this point forward?