

Getting past blame to hearing the voice of God

Has God called us to be fruitful? Of course. So why, then, aren't we? Be careful; let's not just find someone to blame besides ourselves.
By Ben Graydon

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I'll admit that I grew up in blame-placing, excuse-making environment. I don't think I am alone in that. It's easy today, for example, to blame liberal Democrats for everything ... or the boss who failed to give you that promised raise ... or the idiot who's driving too slowly in front of you. But it misses the point that God wants us to learn, learn from, and develop new ground rules to live by.

How can anything less than taking 100% responsibility help us to grow into having the mind of Christ, to take responsibility (take ownership, get into the driver's seat, step up, take charge, etc.) and, thus, to accomplish what God wants us to accomplish in this life?

I wrote last about seed and about farmers' responsibility to plant it. Yes, to understand the seasons, to plow and harrow the land, to plant, to irrigate, to fertilize, to cultivate, then to harvest and figure out how best to market – all of those things that a certain vertically-challenged POTUS wannabe may not understand – essentially, to take full responsibility for all aspects of the seed and its use ... that is the only pathway to progress. No farmer gets ahead by bemoaning that over which he has no control – weather, pricing, economics, etc. That is all wasted effort and lost energy. While I dislike the phrase, "It is what it is" (No! It is what you make it to be!), there are always things that are out of our control, but what we HAVE control over is our response to those things – how we utilize them or allow them to control us.

While there does come a time to analyze what happened and what caused it so as to avoid a recurrence, the first order of business at the moment of the happening is not to point fingers of blame but to take appropriate evasive/corrective action. Are there some really bad things happening to us and around us? Certainly. But pointing out the bad things, other than in the context of figuring how best and most productively to respond so as to turn the "bad" to "good," is counterproductive. God means it all for our good, remember?

If we allow the way that we perceive that we are perceived (what people say, or that we *think* they say, about us) to dictate our performance, our pseudo perception becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, and we become what we believe that we are perceived to be. This is allowing blame-placing to rule our lives. We just watered the destructive seed that someone else planted. If, on the other hand, we KNOW that we are created in God's image, and we allow Him to shape our perceptions to the point at which we see ourselves as children of the King, joint-heirs with Jesus, we can be powerful to a greater degree than that to which our otherwise self-destructive self-perceptions might make us weak.

You create the context in which you are judged by your peers. You even select who your peers will be by choosing with whom to associate. Often this selection of context is mostly or solely even in your own mind.

Lance Wallnau says, "You'll never exceed your definition of who you are."

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You will always live in the company of a peer group whose affirmation you most value. Instead of affirming you for who you are, they challenge you for who you can become. This is the new group with whom you will come to associate once you identify who you really are. The standard goes up when you get into another peer group. That standard makes you uncomfortable with mediocrity and challenges you to be better.”

Do you find that if you fail to be productive in one area of your life, that failure carries over as well to other areas? If one fails to draw close to God, he likely fails to draw close to his spouse and family as well ... and he'll find the same lack of fullness in his business life, his financial life – in all areas of his life. But if one is complete in one area, there is an affirming uplift to his spirit that raises his completeness in all other areas of his life as well.

If all you've ever known is a blame-laying, excuse-making environment and have grown up responding defensively, it will be hard to sort kernels of truth from the emotional chaff that surrounds any words of instruction, correction or simple observation around you. In such a situation, we must quiet ourselves and listen for the voice of God, knowing that while we may believe that man meant it for evil, God means it for our good.