

## "You Are Responsible"

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by Bill Crews

Among the many important things that we must teach our children, beginning when they are very young, is **personal responsibility**. They must grow up knowing and believing that they are responsible for their own thoughts and attitudes, choices and decisions, words and actions. They must not grow up refusing to accept blame, and all the while blaming others, especially for their own foolish and sinful actions.

We live in a world in which, both from the religious and the non-religious schools of human philosophies, they are bombarded with propaganda that would encourage them to take the "**I'm not responsible**" route. They can grow up thinking and saying, "*It isn't my fault,*" or "*Don't blame me.*" The foundation upon which the superstructure of Calvinism (a religious philosophy) is built (with its inherited total depravity, its unconditional predestination, its irresistible grace, and its impossibility of apostasy) is the contention that everything that comes to pass among men and angels has been unchangeably foreordained by God. It disavows the consequences, but that kind of postulation allows no room for personal responsibility and accountability. And the certain conclusion we must draw from godless evolution (embraced by atheists, humanists, rationalists, "free- thinkers," radical "feminists," and others) is that mankind is the result of eons of evolution, produced by blind chance and sheer accident from resident cosmic matter and forces, and without design, purpose, or destiny. Man would then be no more than an accident, and might even be a mistake. As just another animal he would have no code or standard by which to measure his conduct. Man's conduct would, in fact, be the result of genetics, "*instinct,*" and environment, and **HE WOULD NOT BE RESPONSIBLE!**

But there is a God; the universe and man are His creations; He has made Himself and His will known to man; we were made in His image; we are free moral agents, able to choose between right and wrong, responsible for our own decisions and actions. Because we are responsible, we control our own lives and destinies. A day of judgment is coming, and we shall then be held accountable for our own thoughts, words, and deeds. "*For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad*" (2 Cor. 5:10). "*For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God*" (Rom. 14:10). "*So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God*" (Rom. 14:12).

We do our children no favor when we try to shield them from responsibility for and the consequences of their own decisions, choices, and actions. For example, by suing the homeowner in whose yard or the school on whose playground they were injured *by their own foolish actions*. We are not to always defend them, shield them, blame others, nor ever to lie for them. Protect them, yes; but do not protect them from the just consequences of their own behavior. People are encouraged to sue, not simply when they are entitled to a fair recompense; but whenever they can obtain an unfair out-of-court settlement -- even though the injury or the damage was their own fault. I cannot sympathize with the smoker who wants to sue the tobacco company for the unpleasant consequences of his choice to become and remain a smoker. I have a file of articles, going back nearly fifty years, warning against those very consequences. Nor can I sympathize with the one who chose to drink and drink, and keep on drinking, until he had destroyed his health, and then wants to sue the manufacturer or the retailer. We have all heard again and again what such drinking can do to the body. One must learn to accept the risks, when he chooses risky activities. It seems that the so-called "**experts**" and "**authorities**" in human behavior are more concerned about trying to figure out why people do the things that harm themselves or others than they are about getting people to **accept responsibility** for their actions.

This all started in the garden of Eden when neither Adam nor Eve would accept personal responsibility for personal misbehavior (Gen. 3:11-13), and it has continued on to this very day. Let us not get caught up in it.

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