

It's Got to be His Fault!

Most of us were still toddlers when we learned to point our fingers at a sibling and mutter, "It's his fault!" or "It's her fault." He or she is to blame. Certainly not me! The greater the damage in question, the louder and more caustic our accusations. When Mom's favorite lamp lay in the floor in shattered shards or Dad's prized tool vanished from his workbench, we went into crisis mode to make sure that somebody else in the house got the blame.

It appears to me that the COVID-19 pandemic has unleashed a flurry of blame-placing every bit as childish as any of our own juvenile efforts to dodge accountability.

"It's China's fault," we hear a gaggle of western world leaders insisting. "No," at least one Chinese military chief rebutted. "This latest virus is a secret weapon planted in China by Donald Trump." If we didn't know better, we'd think the accuser was a Democrat (after all, some of them blame Trump for everything from chicken pox to tidal waves). And here in our own country from both sides of the political aisle we hear ludicrous attempts to blame the other side for our present virus crisis.

Finding somebody else to blame is one of our most basic human traits. It's been happening ever since Adam whined, "That woman you gave me caused me to do it." Instead of manning up and confessing to God, "I made a bad choice. I did what You told me not to do." Adam pointed a finger of blame first at God and then at his wife. And we've been employing that strategy ever since.

Without doubt, the coronavirus epidemic has left a swath of damage worldwide. Jobs have been lost. Businesses have cratered. Travel has been disrupted. Athletic competition at every level has ground to a halt. Schools have been shuttered. And thousands have died. Surely somebody is to blame.

But even if we could accurately identify the culprit, would that put Mom's lamp back together again?