

## Escaping the Role of Scapegoat

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Todd sat with his head in his hands and waited for his boss. He knew what was coming. This would be the third job he had lost in as many years. It would give Diane something new to gripe about. She already thought he was not a good husband and had told him so many times. He could hear her gossiping to her sister about it now. As he waited, he felt the familiar pit in his stomach. It was the same feeling he would get as a boy when he waited for his father to come home. Dad would step one foot in the door and mom would run to him. Mom would report all the awful things Todd had done that day. It seemed as though Todd was the only one that knew that some of it was real and some was only imaginary. His mother and sisters had gotten so accustomed to blaming him that they had a private joke. When something went wrong they would say "Todd did it." With these memories, the pain and loneliness of childhood came flooding back.

Todd got up and paced the office floor. He felt the anger rise up within him. He was so tired of feeling like a victim. How could this have happened again? Sure, he had been late a few times, there were those arguments on the shop floor, some of his work had been a little sloppy and some of his mistakes had cost the company money. Could Diane be right? Could he bring some of his problems on himself? Maybe he was not a victim after all. Maybe he had more control over his life than he thought. He had choices, didn't he? It had never occurred to him before. He found comfort in that thought.

He needed help to sort this out. But, where to find it? He cried out to God. Suddenly, he was flooded with new thoughts and memories. Only, this time the memories were comforting and the thoughts were clear. He remembered the Pastor speaking about God's love for him and God's desire to make him into a new creation. For the first time, he felt God in a personal way. The boss' office was transformed into Todd's prayer closet. Humbling himself before God, he asked God to change him and to make him a new. There would be much work ahead. Todd would be changing his behavior and the way he viewed himself and others. Only this time, he would not be doing it alone.

The boss came into the office and Todd extended his hand and said "I would like to get something off my chest and tell you what I did."

(Although Todd is a fictitious character, the pain and struggles of those that have been assigned the role of scapegoat are very real. The hope there is to change and to not cooperate with the assignment is also just as real.)

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