

When I 'Looked' Like a Child

Parents often act as referees (judges) for their children.

"Mommy, Billy hit me!" (Four-year-old sister.)

Wisely, Mom finds Billy to hear his side of the story. Sure enough, Billy hit his sister, but she kicked him first, because he took a toy from her, because she screamed in his ear. (You get the picture. Neither one was really innocent.)

The vocal child is often the one who started the problem. When they tattle on the other child, their own fault is often revealed.

Solomon advised (adults):

**Do not go out hastily to argue your case;
Otherwise, what will you do in the end,
When your neighbor puts you to shame?**

--Proverbs 25:8

Have you ever approached a friend and (with a cloudy disposition) immediately began telling him/her how you were mistreated by a co-worker or boss or friend? You expected your friend to listen and accept every word, siding with you, and then verbally acknowledge the injustice you had experienced. You expected him/her to 'cloud up' with you.

But, what happens when the other person, the accused, tells 'their side of the story'? Do you still appear to have been so mistreated, so innocent?

Solomon continues his advice in the next two verses:

**Argue your case with your neighbor,
And do not reveal the secret of another,
Lest he who hears it reproach you,
And the evil report about you not
pass away.**

The simple lesson is to apply self control. It is true that life is full of injustices, but sometimes we are not completely innocent ourselves

Sometimes "I" cause the problem...

Sometimes "I" misspeak...

Sometimes "I" do something questionable...

Sometimes "I" forget something...

...and "I" start the chain reaction of injustices.

Before jumping to conclusions and 'arguing your case' with others, go to the person involved and try to work it out. Otherwise the truth of the situation might be revealed to your friends and you might be partly to blame!
Shame!

A little self-restraint along with a measure of wisdom might keep you from *looking like a four-year-old child*.