

Should I Attend A Dance?

Should a Christian or anyone who wants to be godly attend the Homecoming dance or Prom? There are a lot of high school activities in which young people can involve themselves. Many of these are appropriate, but that does not mean that every school activity is one in which they should be involved.

How does one determine what activity to engage in at school? Should we make that determination based solely upon the fact that:

- It is an activity being held at school? No!
- It is an activity sanctioned by the school? No!
- It is an activity being chaperoned by adults? No!
- It is an activity that many of my friends will be attending? No!
- It is an activity in which I get to "dress up"? No!
- It is an activity that is a "once in a lifetime event"? No!
- It is an activity in which I get to have my picture taken? No!
- It is an activity in which one's parents participated and promotes? No!

For a Christian, what one participates in and supports is not determined by the school system, what is popular, or what friends may or may not do, but solely by God's will (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:3). The child of God (young or old) is to be different and distinct (2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:3-6; 12:1-2). We live in this world but we must not live by the standards of the world.

To answer the question concerning Homecoming dances and Proms, one must first consider whether modern dancing is something in which a Christian should engage. Are there any precepts and principles from the Bible that will help us in dealing with this question? Yes.

First, dancing is indeed condemned in the Bible. Listed among the works of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21, Paul uses two words that condemn dancing: "*lasciviousness*" and "*reveling*." Lasciviousness is described as "filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females" (*Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon*). Other translations use the words "lewdness," "sensuality," "debauchery," "promiscuity," "depravity," "lustful pleasures," and "shameful deeds." Reveling is a "jovial feast with music and dancing" (*Liddell-Scott Greek Lexicon*). Other translations use the words "revelries," "orgies," "carousing," and "wild parties." Sounds like a great place for a Christian to be, right? Paul concludes the list of the works of the flesh by declaring that they who "*do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*"

When one comprehends the full significance of these words, it is evident that dancing is condemned in the Bible and therefore unrighteous for a Christian.

Second, dancing causes lewd and lustful desires. We just saw how different translations explained the lustful desires caused by modern dancing. While dancing, one cannot obey: "*flee also youthful lusts*" (2 Timothy 2:22), "... *neither be partakers of other men's sins; keep thyself pure*" (1 Timothy 5:22), and "... *abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul*" (1 Peter 2:11). When we engage in activities that cause lustful desires, it is sinful. Jesus said, "*But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*" (Matthew 5:28). This holds true for a young man or young woman!

Third, dancing crushes one's influence for good. We influence the people around us for good or evil. Because of the desires generated, attending any dance is not a "*good work*" (cf. 2 Timothy 3:17). We must stay away from what is evil (Matthew 5:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22; 1 Timothy 4:12). Young people, keep your body and heart pure (1 Corinthians 6:16-20; Matthew 5:8). Parents, you must help your children to be pure in their attitudes, actions, attire, and activities by guiding and directing them in what is right. You are their only line of defense! The world will certainly not look out for their spiritual welfare! Both parents and young people need to stand up for righteousness and oppose sinfulness (Ephesians 5:11; 1 Corinthians 16:13).

The Bible has not changed. Even though it is 2013, we still must abide by its principles: "*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus*" (Colossians 3:17). It does no one any good to see how close one can get to sin without committing it.

It is tragic when there are those who will try to justify the participation of a Christian in school dances. No justification of lasciviousness and reveling will stand in the face of what the Bible teaches.

Someone might say that a Homecoming dance or Prom is chaperoned by adults. Since dancing is a sin, trying to give it respectability by calling it a "Homecoming dance" or a "Prom" does not work. You can call school dances whatever you want, but the activity is still sinful. How are you going to chaperone sin? Would it be scriptural for young people to get together to watch pornography as long as it was chaperoned by adults? No! However, the thoughts generated by pornography are the same as generated by two young people engaging in modern dancing. You cannot watch over sin and make it right!

Someone might say that dancing is simply good exercise or that a dance is merely a social event. Parents, do you really believe these are the reasons young people want to dance? What kind of exercise are they getting when they dance slowly and the young man is holding the young woman closely to his body? There is exercise for sure, but it is the unholy kind -- the exercising of his or her mind with impure thoughts (cf. Philippians 4:8). What kind of socializing takes place when a couple are rubbing their bodies together in seductive ways with highly sexual movements? This kind of "exercise" and "socializing" does not allow you, your son, or your daughter to become "*conformed to the image of his Son*" (Romans 8:29).

Someone might say that they enjoy the rhythm in music and must move when they hear it. If that is the case, if two young people are in the back seat of a young man's car listening to music and going through some of the same movements as displayed at a dance, I wonder how many parents would say, "I understand completely." Parents, if your daughter and some young man are in your home listening to music with earbuds so as not to disturb you and you see their sexually suggestive movements, would you be upset? But if those young people unplugged their earbuds so that you could hear the music, would you still be upset? Sadly, some would not. Is it not amazing how some think that the presence of "music" can justify a sinful activity? "Music" does not, in any way, vindicate indecent attire and raunchy activities.

Someone might say that if it is wrong to attend school dances because of what happens at them, then one cannot go anywhere without sinning. Do we really not understand the purpose of a Homecoming dance or Prom? It encourages and promotes sinful dancing. So why would a child of God want to attend and support a sinful activity? If you go to a mall, grocery store, sporting goods store, etc., it is possible that you may see and hear what is evil. But that is not their intended purpose. It is the purpose of a Homecoming dance and Prom to promote and encourage dancing -- something which violates God's command of purity. Furthermore, when you are in a place and see and hear what is evil, you can leave -- as you should. This is what Joseph did when He was tempted by Potiphar's wife in Genesis 39:12: "*And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.*" If you would have been a parent of Joseph, would you have encouraged him to go back to Potiphar's house knowing what awaited him? Faithful parents would say, "No!" Why then do we permit our children and encourage other young people to attend the school dances where sin is practiced?

Attending school dances is just no place for a faithful child of God. Be what God wants you to be. Do what the Bible directs (Matthew 6:33; Romans 12:2; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 3:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22; Titus 2:12; James 1:27; 1 Peter 2:11; 4:3; 1 John 2:15-17).

The modern dance is sin, and whatever form sin takes, a Christian must oppose it because it is accompanied by death (Romans 6:23). It matters not what the sin is, nor who is engaging in it, nor where it is being conducted. Our response to sin must be as one who despises it, not delights in it (Romans 12:9); who denounces it, not dignifies it (Ephesians 5:11; 2 Timothy 4:2-4); who departs from it, not demonstrates it in their lives (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Strive to remember who bought us, who we believe in, and who we belong to so that more than anything else, we live for the Lord (Philippians 1:21), and long for that beautiful place called heaven (Revelation 21:1-4).

Adapted From Jerry Joseph