Seek The Old Paths

"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths...and walk therein" (Jeremiah 6:16)

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Did Christ Attend The Prom?

This truly is a wonderful time of the year. Among many exciting events of the season, one of the most exciting, for many high school students is the prom. What is it about a prom that causes so much excitement? Webster defines "prom" as "a formal dance given by a high school or college class." If dancing is not wrong then there is nothing wrong with the prom. If dancing is wrong, then the prom is wrong. Following, is a list of reasons why dancing is wrong. Please give careful and prayerful consideration to these:

- 1. It is forbidden in the New Testament (Gal. 5:19-21; *lasciviousness*).
- 2. It destroys one's influence for good (I Cor. 15:33; I Tim. 4:12).
- **3.** It depends solely on the mingling of the sexes (I Cor. 6:13,18; 10:8; leads to fornication).
- 4. It arouses desires that are immorally fulfilled (Matt. 5:28).

5. It is not to the "glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31).

Very few Christians will deny the fact that dancing is a sin. So the next question is "Could I go to the prom without sinning?" Invariably someone says, "I won't dance, but I want to go anyway." Paul said, "to abstain from the very appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:22). Could one go into a bar without leaving the impression that he is guilty of the sin of drinking? He may not drink, but because the primary purpose for a bar is so people can drink, the world believes that to be his purpose. Since the primary reason for a prom is to dance. even though one may not dance, the world believes he is. Even if you do not, you place a temptation before yourself and others to sin through lust. This fact you cannot deny!

Now, back to our original question, "Did Christ attend the prom?" The Bible clearly teaches that Christ did not sin (I Peter 2:22). Jesus was careful to (Continued on page 9. **PROM**) At this time of the year schools all over the country are making their plans for their annual spring proms. Parents will spend up to hundreds of dollars that their daughters can be beautifully dressed and their

sons handsomely attired. All for what? For an evening of SIN.

Once there was a time when preachers all over would raise their voices and point out the vice and sinfulness associated with dancing. Today, many had rather keep quiet and be popular than to be right with the Lord. When a preacher does speak out against dancing he is scorned and ridiculed, young people are supported and encouraged to attend the dances in spite of what the Bible says.

Why do parents allow their sons and daughters to attend the dances?

First. because we want to be like the people around us. The primary reason Israel wanted a king was that she might be like the nations around her. Right or wrong, what difference does it That is the same defiant make? attitude manifested by many parents and young people alike. Did not Paul say, "be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that he may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:1-2)? It takes a lot of courage for our young people to say, when asked to attend the dances, "No. as a Christian I do not dance." If

they are encouraged by their preacher to take a stand against it and discouraged by their parents to take a stand, what will most of our young people do?

Second, too many parents are more concerned with

their sons and daughters being popular than being right. They will never be "Mr. or Miss High School" if they are not poplar. Many times mother or daddy was not popular so they are pushing their children to be what they were not. To attend the homecoming dance, the valentine dance and the spring prom is the "in thing" with the "in crowd." Parents, which is more important to you, popularity or righteousness? I know what most will say but what are most allowing their children to do?

Third, parents are allowing their young people to attend the dances and proms because they do not know what the Bible teaches on the subject. It is sad when people have attended Bible study and worship for a number of years, some even taught classes, yet they still do not know what the Bible teaches on some subjects. What is sadder still, some do not care what the Bible teaches on certain subjects.

It is true that no passage can be found which reads, "thou shalt not dance." Because such cannot be found, many young people will attend the dances with their parents sanction. Just because there is no passage that reads, "thou shalt not dance" does not mean



the Bible does not condemn its practice. Consider the word "revellings" and "lasciviousness." According to the American College Dictionary, revellings is, "an occasion of merrymaking or noisy festival with dancing." In Lindell and Scott Greek Lexicon it suggests, "a jovial feast with music and dancing." Concerning the word "lasciviousness," **Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of** the New Testament, says, "filthy words, indecent bodily movements, handling of unchaste males and females."

Why is it that parents and young people alike will accept the definitions of some words but not the definitions of other words, while the definitions are coming from the same source? Suppose we were studying Philippians 1:27 where Paul wrote, "only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." To understand the passage we would have to define the word "conversation." From proper investigation we would learn the word means "our manner of living," not just the way we talk. To this there is no disagreement. If we were studying Mark 16:16 where Jesus said, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," we would want to learn about the word "baptism." The same sources as above tell us it means to "dip, plunge or immerse." Again, we would have no trouble with this definition. Why then do some have trouble with properly understanding the words "revellings" and "lasciviousness" when their meanings come from the same source as "conversation" and "baptism" where we accept the definition? The real reason we will accept some and reject the other is that some words agree with what we want to do while other words condemn what we want to do. We, therefore, disagree with the words that condemn what we want to do.

Parents and young people alike, listen, the Bible still says, "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:22). No one is naive enough to say evil is not associated with dances and proms. Just recently in Memphis, Tennessee, a dance had to be stopped, not hours after it got underway, but only minutes because of drugs and drinking. Every year in the Memphis area there is what is known as "Project Prom." That is, if a student is to drunk at the prom, or party following the prom, they can call this number for a ride home. In the quiet city of Trenton last year a large advertisement appeared in the local paper, signed by a good number of students of the local high school, encouraging their fellow classmates to have a "Safe and Sober Prom." If evil is not associated with the dances and proms, why such an admonition, even from fellow classmates?

It is a sad day when many schools are stopping their annual students banquets while keeping the spring prom. The banquet is something all students can participate in. The prom is for those who know not the truth of God or do not care what the truth of God teaches. It appears some of our schools are no longer interested in providing for all the student body. The Bible still says, "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them..." (Eph. 5:11). "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good..." (I Thess. 5:21-22). Young people, where are you going to stand? Parents, where are you going to encourage your sons

and daughters to stand? Where will you be during the prom?

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15 DANCING WRONG?

Sincere, honest, dedicated Christian young people ask this question every year. An ungodly world puts tremendous pressure on God's teenagers to join with them in worldly recreation. While not wanting to sin, teenagers do want to enjoy these years. It is for this reason that sin needs to be defined and lines drawn so that they can know what is right and what is wrong.

God wants the best for his children, young or old (James 1:17), and promises the "abundant life" to those who forsake the world and follow him (John 10:10). He expects us to be happy (Phil. 4:4) and does not restrict us from any good wholesome entertainment. He only withholds the things from us which would hurt us, as any good parent does for his child.

God has taught that dancing is sinful. It is condemned three times in Galatians 5:19-21 by the words, "lasciviousness," "revellings" and "suck like." Lasciviousness means "filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste (not pure) handling of males and females" and "conduct which excites lust." He added, *"Flee also youthful lusts..."* (I Tim. 2:22), which cannot be done while dancing.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

(1) IT CONDEMNS "REVELL-INGS" (Gal. 5:21). This word means, "An occasion of merry making or noisy festivity with dancing, masking, etc." This description aptly portrays the high school dances and proms of our day. The very atmosphere of dancing is sinful and is not appropriate for someone seeking to walk the "straight and narrow way" (Matt. 7:13-14).

(2) "NEITHER GIVE PLACE TO THE DEVIL" (Eph. 4:27). As children of God, our ancient and constant foe is the devil. We must "be sober" (watchful) lest he devour us (I Peter 5:8). It is hard enough to avoid his pitfalls without purposely placing ourselves in a place of known temptation! The Bible says, "Resist (NOT ASSIST!) the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). We can, and no doubt will, be tempted when seeing others engaged in indecent and vulgar acts on the dance floor. Can we pray "lead us not into temptation" (Matt. 6:13) and lead ourselves into it?

(3) "NEITHER BE PARTAKER OF OTHER MEN'S SINS" (I Tim. 5:22). Lovers of God must "eschew (shun) evil" (I Peter 3:11). They do not want to be a part of it! Could it be right to help raise money or purchase tickets to encourage teens to dance?! God's Word still says, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11), and "...neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 10-11). This is specifically speaking of false teachers but would apply to any not abiding in or practicing the teaching of Christ.

Young people, search your hearts, search the Bible and "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12). There is a heaven to gain and a hell to shun - ACT ACCORD-INGLY!

(Author Unknown)

(Continued from page 12, DANCING)

places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

As the Lord's people, we are to set our affection on things above not on things on the earth (Col. 3:1-2). We are to practice pure and undefiled religion and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world (James 1:27). We are not to be "conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2). The command given us is to not love "the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world. the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father. but is of the world" (I John 2:15-16).

Is dancing of the world? Does it help us set our mind on things above? Does it inspire us to holier service in the Lord's kingdom? Is it the practice of keeping oneself unspotted from the world? When the evidence and fruits of dancing are examined, the answers to these questions are obvious. Dancing stands condemned in the Bible.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID

J. Edgar Hoover, longtime head of the FBI: "Most juvenile crime has its inception in the dance hall, either public or private."

William H. Holmes, a former dancing teacher: "I found the ballrooms an avenue of destruction to multitudes...."

(Continued on page 9, DANCING)

Sixth Annual Mississippi Lectureship July 28 – Aug. 1, 1991

"Great Lessons From The Judges"

Held at: East Corinth Church of Christ

Directors: Garland Robinson/Sidney White

SUNDAY, JULY 28

9:45	Judges In The Hall Of Faith (Heb. 11:32ff)	James Segars
10:35	Eli And Parental Failure (I Sam. 2)	Fred Davis
	No King But God (Judge 8:23; 10:10-16)	
8:00	The Cycle In Judges (Judges 2:16-19)	James Boyd
MON	DAY, JULY 29	
9:00	Israel Prior To The Judges	David Bass
10:00	Gideon – His Growth And Leadership Lin	nden Ferguson
10:00	(Ladies Class) Using What You Have	. Tanya Bruce
11:00	The Providence Of God	Jim Bryant
	The Noblest Service (I Sam. 12:23)	
	Abimelech – Leader And Usurper (Jud. 9)	
	Questions & Answers	
	When The New Generation Comes (Jud. 2:10)	
	Friends With God's Enemies (Jud. 14:3)	

TUESDAY, JULY 30

9:00	Jepthah's Vow (Jud. 11:31ff)	Wayne Smith
10:00	Sin – Punishment	Tim Wilkes
	(Ladies Class) Entreat Me Not To Leave Thee (Ruth 1:16ff)	
	Repentance – Mercy	

1:30	Shibboleth – Sibboleth (Jud. 12:6)	Wayne Coats
2:30	Israel's Failure To Drive Them Out	Ken Burleson
3:30	Questions & Answers	. Charles Pledge
7:00	Respect For Things Holy	Garland Robinson
7:45	What Is Real Strength	. Charles Pledge

WEDNESDAY, JULY 31

9:00	Nazarite Vow (Jud. 13:4-5)	Melvin Sapp
10:00	Using What You Have (Jud. 3:31; 15:15; 7:16ff)	Steve Hodgin
10:00	(Ladies Class) Noblest Motherhood (Hanna)	Maggie Colley
11:00	Curse Ye Meroz (Jud. 5:23)	. Gary Colley
1:30	Intermarriage - Barriers Of Peculiar People Broken (Jud. 3:6)	Terry Cole
2:30	Gratitude (Jud. 5)	Roger Hamlet
3:30	Questions & Answers Cl	narles Leonard
7:00	Every Man Stood In His Place (Jud. 7:21)	Edward White
7:45	By Many Or By Few (Jud. 7) Cl	narles Leonard

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1

9:00	The Faithfulness Of God (Jud. 6:36ff) David Jones
10:00	No Place For The Fearful (Jud. 7:3) Chris Whitaker
10:00	(Ladies Class) Deborah - The Time Of The Prophetess Irene Taylor
11:00	Speak Lord, Thy Servant Heareth (I Sam. 3:9) Robert Taylor
1:30	Forgetting God (Jud. 8:34) Lance Foster
2:30	Confusion In Religious, Moral and Political Life (Jud. 17-21) . Wayne West
3:30	Questions & Answers Virgil Hale
7:00	Like Other Nations (I Sam. 8:5) Sidney White
8:00	Know The Enemy (Jud. 7:9-11) Gilbert Gough

AML HOUSING

We recommend those staying in a motel stay at Econo Lodge (601) 286-4421 - toll free (800) 446-6900. RV units may park on our property with water and electrical hookups provided. We prefer that you let us know in advance of your plans to bring your RV. Call 286-6575 or 286-2040. You may write us at: 1801 Cruise St., Corinth, MS 38834. AML EXHIBITS

ANUL EARIDITS

Exhibit space will be available subject to

the approval of the East Corinth elders. Please reserve space in advance.

AML AUDIO & VIDEO TAPES AND BOOKS

All lessons will be available on both audio and video tapes. The lectureship book, "LESSONS FROM THE JUDGES," will consist of full-content outlines of the lessons. (Note: the church is not involved in selling the tapes or books. This is done by individuals.)

The Christian And Modesty

Dennis Gulledge

Modesty is a Christian virtue, but to the world it is a hiss and by-word. The word "modest" means, "1: placing a moderate estimate on one's abilities or worth...2: observing the proprieties of dress and behavior: DECENT."

Our world is extremely uncomfortable with modesty in any form. Through the influence of Hollywood, TV and various other forms of media we are submerged in the works of the flesh. You are a misfit in society unless you are tainted at least a little bit. To be accepted by people in general today you must be a little immodest, a little immoral, a little impious, a little irreverent, a little indecent, or a little illicit. The world will smile on "a little," and rarely frown on a lot.

The word "modest" is used but one time in the Bible, and that is in I Tim. 2:9, where Paul said, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." The passage deals with female adornment, or dress. The context suggests that the tendency of some women then was to overdress (cf. I Peter 3:5). There is still the likelihood in our day that some will overdress for the sake of calling undue attention to themselves. Such is immodest. However, the greater likelihood today is the opposite - underdress. Women will underdress (wear brief, short, revealing items) for any number of reasons, either to be noticed, admired, or even desired by men, or the vain need of showing off their body to the best advantage (whatever that might be).

Christian ladies must be sensitive to the need for modesty in the way they dress. There are many reasons why this is so, but here I will mention one: for the sake of the difference between men and women, and God's will respecting such. Paul addressed the importance of modest dress to women! Jesus addressed the sin of lust to men (Matt. 5:28)! Do we need to wonder why? Women should also be sensitive to this for the sake of their own physical protection. This is a sex saturated society we live in, and sexual crimes and harassment are one of the most serious and common problems of our day. The aggressor is viewed as always being in the wrong in such cases, and the truth is the aggressor is wrong and God will judge such (Heb. 12:4). But, can we say that a woman is guiltless who cares not about the effect of her manner of dress. if it is immodest? Certainly the woman must share in the responsibility. Some men are crude, vile and corrupt no matter how modestly the woman presents herself, but that does not remove the God-given responsibility of modesty from her.

In 1984-1985, a questionnaire regarding swim-wear was sent by the Hollywood Social Studies organization to a sampling of U.S. psychiatrists to ascertain whether there are risks in sexual display of fashionable swim-wear

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of today. Of those who replied, 87% said a parent would be "realistic" to be aware that a swimsuit with high-cut legs might make a daughter a target for sexual advances or crimes; 84% said a parent would be naive to think that a daughter could wear a string bikini and not appear to boys to invite sexual attention: 81% said the same is true of females who wear bikinis or short skirts; 91% said that husbands and fathers have some responsibility for sensible guidance to enable females to avoid clothing that might be dangerously provocative to some males, and most of the psychiatrists polled said that some mothers who dress their little girls in



unnecessarily revealing swim-suits may be expressing their own exhibitionism indirectly, and that if the fact is brought to their attention, 96% said that a likely response would be self-righteous indignation, accusing anyone of vile motives who would dare think such a thing. So, do you still think that warnings about immodesty is only so much preacher talk?

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influence people for good. We should do nothing that Jesus would not do. He said He would be with us only if we would remain faithful to Him. You answer the question, "Did Christ attend the prom?" Young people, are you with Jesus? Think about it. Nothing is more important in all the world than your soul's salvation, not even the "once in a lifetime prom" (Matt. 16:26).

(Author Unknown)

(Continued from page 5, DANCING)

A former owner of one of Chicago's largest dance halls: "We know the natural desires of youth. We know that sex is the strongest impulse planted in the human race.... You can picture the effect on a boy or girl when this hunger is keenest...at one of these dances which calls for close abdominal contact and frequently brings the cheeks together and entwines the limbs.... There is...but one reason for its popularity. That reason is sex appeal. I hasten to assure you that I do not believe that dancers always are conscious this is the reason they enjoy this position and the steps that go with it. But this lack of consciousness is merely an added factor of danger."

Arthur Murray, the noted dancing teacher was quoted in Reader's Digest:

"The difference between wrestling and dancing is that, in wrestling, some holds are barred."

Homes for orphan children report that in a few months after the school proms they have many more unwed mothers and extra babies to care for!

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

1. "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (II Thess. 5:22).

Does dancing have the appearance of evil? Does dancing promote pure godly thoughts within the individual? We are to "flee youthful lusts" (II Tim. 2:22) and "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (I Peter 2:11). Romans 1:24 tells us of some whom God gave up to "uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves."

2. We are to keep ourselves "unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).

The smallest boat can sail around the world as long as the water stays on the outside, but when the water gets inside, even the largest ship will sink! Dancing promotes friendship with the world. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). 3. Dancing is bad fruit from a bad tree (Matt. 7:17-20).

Good fruit cannot come from a corrupt tree. Neither can bad fruit come from a good tree. Dancing has never produced more love for God, more devotion for the church, more respect for the opposite sex, more Bible reading, more prayer, more interest in heaven. Dancing has NEVER led to ANY good thing! Instead, it causes people to loose interest in the church, Bible study, holiness, teaching the lost, heaven.

DANCING IS LASCIVIOUS

Lasciviousness is the Bible word which most adequately describes dancing. It comes from a Greek word that is used nine times in the Greek New Testament. It is translated "lasciviousness" six times (Mark 7:22; II Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19; I Peter 4:3; Jude 4), "wantonness" two times (Rom. 13:13; II Peter 2:18), and "filthy" one time (II Peter 2:7).

W. E. Vine gives as the definition of the word: "absence of restraint, indecency, the prominent idea is shameless conduct." Thayer says: "Unbridled lust, indecent bodily movements, **unchaste handling of males and females.**" A. T. Robertson says: "unrestrained sexual conduct." The word means: "sensuality, inclination to sensuality (a fondness for or indulgence in sensual pleasures), conduct which excites lustful desires." If dancing is not described in this, then there is no heaven!

Galatians 5:19, 21 says, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness...They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (v.21). Dancing is a "work of the flesh." It is worldly, hedonistic, evil and satanic.

BIBLE EXAMPLES SHOW THE FRUITS OF DANCING

In Exodus 32, the children of Israel were waiting for Moses at the foot of Mt. Sinai. God said they had corrupted themselves with the golden calf and by dancing. "...And the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play. And the Lord said unto Moses, go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves" (vs.6-7). "And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing" (v.19). Part of their playing was their dancing! Their's was a sensual, lustful playing with each other!

In Daniel 5 we read of the city of Babylon being taken by Cyrus the Persian and his armies. Verse one says "Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand." Secular history records they were entertained by a thousand slave girls dancing on the tables before them (the pagans always entertained themselves by having beautiful seductive women dance to music so as to excite lustful emotions and desires). While in their sensual lustful indulgence, Cyrus marched his army down the dry river bed under the great wall of Babylon and took the city!

In Matthew 14:1-12 and Mark 6:17-

29 we read of the execution of John the Baptist. It was dancing that led to this hideous crime. On Herod's birthday, his step-daughter Salome, the daughter of Herodias, danced before him so as to excite lustful emotions and desires within him. He promised her whatsoever she asked up to the half of his kingdom. Being instructed of her mother, she asked for John's head. What caused Herod to make such a careless vow? What emotions did she stir in him?

CONCLUSION

There is no way in the world that dancing can be justified from the scriptures. It is bad fruit, lascivious, damnable! We are taught of God to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts" and to "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:12).

All who engage in it have SINNED. Concerning sin, the Bible says, "repent or perish" (Luke 13:3).



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DANCING IS SIN

Garland M. Robinson

"Dancing consists in the rhythmical movement of any or all parts of the body in accordance with some scheme of individual or concerted action which is expressive of emotions or ideas." It is the "rhythmic movement having as its aim the creation of visual designs." Dancing produces lustful desires within people that are sinful (Matt. 5:28).

The people of God have been "called out" of the world unto a holy life. We are God's own possession (I Peter 2:9). We no longer talk, act, dress, or go to the places we once did. The old way of life is sinful and separates one from God. In Ephesians 2:1-7, we read: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly (Continued on page 5, DANCING)

The theme of this issue is DANCING and the Spring Proms. Preachers and elders everywhere must warn and exhort young people to not be taken in by this great evil. Parents must take the lead in showing the kind of living God requires. Parents, why not plan a wholesome activity for Christian young people to attend instead of the prom? You will be glad you did and help souls be spared from much anguish. Young people, don't trade your soul for a supposed evening of fun. It's worth more than the world (Matt. 16:26).

Seek The Old Paths is a publication of the East Corinth church of Christ and is under the oversight of its elders. Its primary purpose and goal in publication can be found in Jude 3; II Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:13; 2:1; II Peter 1:12. Manuscripts are welcome.

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