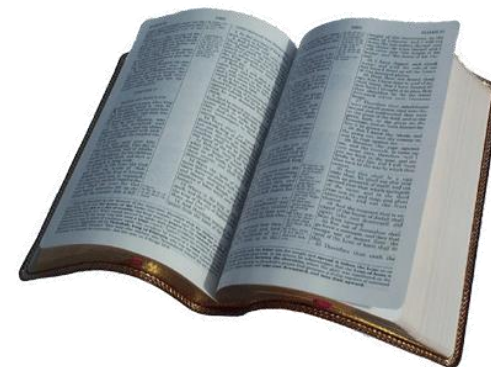


permission to dance. However, could attending or participating in a dance be construed by others as permissiveness towards this sexual encounter? What if the harmless dance causes others to sin? Jesus said “Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes!” (Matthew 18:7). We need to acknowledge that it can indeed be a rather significant stumbling block to those for whom dancing is a sexual desire to dance before them. Paul wrote that “if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to stumble” (1 Corinthians 8:13). If something as important as meat (a food) ought to be set aside to avoid causing another to stumble, how much more so should we avoid those activities that are merely entertainment?

A Christian avoids worldliness and clings to what is good. We desire to avoid even the appearance of evil, and instead desire to encourage others to be faithful to God. Those couples dances today (high school dances and proms, dancing at local establishments, and even wedding receptions) create sexual tension that is contrary to the Christian manner of life.

Not all dancing is sinful. But dancing that has as an underlying theme sexual tension is lasciviousness, which is a sin; therefore, most modern couples dancing is sinful.

## A Christian and Dancing



Romans 12:1-2 *Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Paul's admonition to Christians is a central concept in being a Christian. A Christian is one who has been called out of the world (John 15:19) and called to live their lives in a manner contrary to the ways of the world. This is the constant work a Christian faces: turning away from worldliness and walking in Christ.

One aspect of worldliness that is a great stumbling block is lasciviousness. This word is sometimes translated as sensuality, and is tied to sexual immorality in its usage in the New Testament (Mark 7:22, 2 Corinthians 12:21, Galatians 5:19, Ephesians 4:19, 1 Peter 4:3, 2 Peter 2:2, Jude 4). It is also tied to similar words such as carousing/reveling. These passages tell us clearly that it is a sin; it is a work of darkness and a work of the flesh that removes the Grace of God, and causes us to be disinherited from the kingdom.

The sin of lasciviousness is a word used to describe any behavior or conduct that

offers a sexual enticement without the sexual action itself. We could describe immodest clothing as lascivious; we could describe pornography or suggestive art as lascivious; we could call television commercials which sell us things with sexual enticement lascivious. Finally, for the purpose of this article, we could call most modern dancing lascivious.

If dancing is lascivious, then it is a sin.

Many will (correctly) point out that there was dancing in the Bible that was not condemned (Exodus 15:20, Psalm 149:3, Luke 15:25). At the same time, we see dancing in the Bible that was sinful (Exodus 32:19, Matthew 14:6). To understand this it needs to be stated that ALL lasciviousness is sin, but not all dancing is lascivious. Dancing that is lascivious (sinful) would be dancing in which a sexual tension or sexual desire is enticed or suggested.

Today, modern couples dancing is clearly meant to incite a sexual tension of varying degrees. While some deny it, truthfully everyone acknowledges that this is true. Imagine if a married man observed his wife dancing with another man; would this not invoke some sense of betrayal or anger because of the inferred sexual nature of such an engagement? If two men were dancing together in a modern dance,

would it not be (perhaps unconsciously) presumed that they were homosexual?

Even those who are not Christians understand that modern dances have a fundamental underlying sexual nature. Principle Kenneth Hoagland of Kellenberg High School recently canceled the spring prom at his school. Why? *"It is not primarily the sex / booze / drugs that surround this event, as problematic as they might be; it is rather the flaunting of affluence, assuming exaggerated expenses, a pursuit of vanity for vanity's sake – in a word, financial decadence"* (Family Research Council, Issue #22, 3/16/2007). Stephen Wallace, chairman and CEO of SADD said *"Prom and sex are too often linked in the minds of young people seeking independence and maturity in adult behavior. Along with this rite of passage can come significant pressure for both boys and girls to engage in activities they may not really want and may not be ready for."*

Perhaps many may see their own engagement in dances as harmless or non-sexual, and quite possibly it is. Others state that dancing partners who have God's blessing in their sexual interest towards each other (a husband and wife) have complete