MORAL CONFLICTS: DANCING

A. “Dancing is the vertical expression of a horizontal desire legalized by music” (British playwright George Bernard Shaw).

1. He is right on the mark! Shaw knew exactly what dancing is all about, & he died in 1950.

2. And yet many people (sometimes Christians) really work hard to try & prove that modern dancing is harmless fun.

   a. “I don’t see anything wrong it.” “I’m just having a good time.” “It’s not my fault if someone has a dirty thought, that’s their problem.” “They danced in the Bible.”

   b. Have you ever said or heard these kinds of statements? Dancing is definitely a moral conflict that we are confronted with today.

B. Noah Webster 1828 edition of Webster's American Dictionary of the English Language defines “moral”:

1. “Relating to the practice, manners or conduct of men as social beings in relation to each other, & with reference to right & wrong ... & has reference to the law of God as the standard by which their character is to be determined.”

2. He defines “conflict” this way: “A struggling of the mind; distress; anxiety.”

   a. Can I dance? Can I just go to the dance?

   b. Is it okay to watch “Dancing With the Stars”?

[Do you struggle with these questions?

Of course, the standard by which we must answer these & any questions regarding morality is God’s Word.]
A. The public media & entertainment industries:

1. For example, in 1987 the movie, “Dirty Dancing,” was released.
   
   a. I never saw it, but the story is about a teenage girl's rebellion against her father by starting a relationship with a dance instructor she met during the family's summer vacation.

   b. The types of dances she learned were “Dirty” dances, from a moral standpoint.

   c. But that movie is tame compared to today’s style of dance.

   a. Today they call it “freak dancing” or “grinding.” It is simulated sex on the dance floor.

2. Have you watched “Dancing With the Stars”?

   a. This style of dancing is not just on TV or at nightclubs; it is in our public & private schools.

   b. Have you seen video taken at a Prom dance lately, maybe on the TV news?

   c. Have you seen the outfits & the moves that are done by cheerleading squads & dance teams?

   d. Christian parents need to be teaching their children how to respond to these widely accepted behaviors.

   - Dress & deportment of Christian women (1 Tim 2:9-10).


   - Older Christian women teaching younger women how to behave & what priorities to make in their lives (Titus 2:4-8).
II. MORAL CONFLICT

A. Moral conflict doesn’t just exist in young people (Christians), but sometimes in their parents too.

1. However, the wisdom that comes from above should cause us to know that most modern dances generate temptation followed by lust, which is followed by sin & death (Jas 1:14-15).

B. So why is there a moral conflict on this subject?

Gal 5:16, 17, 19 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, & you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, & the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality” (NASU).

1. The only reason there is a moral conflict on dancing (and drinking alcohol) is that people want to satisfy the desires of their flesh!

2. Paul said that when you “carry out the desires of the flesh”, it will produce in you…

a. Immorality (porneia: translated “adultery, fornication” in the NKJV; sexual immorality).

b. Impurity (akatharsia: the moral impurity of lustful, profligate living: reckless wasteful, & unrestrained by convention or morality; Rom 1:24; 6:19).


Sensuality [aselgia] – “unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness - indecent physical movements, unchaste handling of males & females” (Thayer’s)
b. So when a person is moving his or her body in an indecent way (in a way to generate sexual thoughts in others), he or she is guilty of the sin of “sensuality”.

C. The world knows that dancing produces lust.

1. That’s why “Dancing With the Stars” is such a popular show; & that is also my most movies are produced – to appeal & or to produce lust (illicit desire) in us.

2. Now I know that some people will say that “Dancing doesn’t make me lust, whether it’s me dancing or someone else.”

a. But the reason people make statements like that is because they have become hardened to the deceitfulness of sin.

b. They have seen so much nudity (various stages of undress), that God’s definition of nakedness doesn’t make any sense to them.

c. They have seen so many lewd dances, that now they view dancing as just another sport or an enjoyable form of exercise.

D. But a Christian has to be perfectly honest with himself & with God.

1. First of all, a Christian is interested in God’s view of everything; His definition of words.

a. If He says that exposing the thigh is nakedness, & that nakedness is shameful or sinful – then we have to accept that.

b. If He says that moving our bodies in such a way as to produce sexual thoughts in others is a work of flesh (sensuality) – then we have to accept that.
2. Secondly, in our more lucid (clear headed) moments, we would have to admit that the appeal of dancing is to stimulate sexual thoughts & desires in us.

Matt 5:27-28 – You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Adulterers are numbered among the unrighteous who will not inherit the kingdom of God, but rather the lake of fire & brimstone, which will mark a person’s the second death (1 Cor 6:9; Rev 21:8)

E. So how would you answer? Can I go to the Homecoming dance? Can I attend the Prom? Is it all right to watch “Dancing With the Stars”?

1. You might say, “Can you put your hands on a flaming red burner on not be burned?” “What would Jesus do?” We know the answer!

Prov 6:27-28 – Can a man take fire to his bosom, & his clothes not be burned? 28 Can one walk on hot coals, & his feet not be seared?

2. One of the most basic lessons the Lord taught us is that we can sin with our eyes.

a. When you watch the sensual dances of other people, for any length of time, you can sin; you will imagine what you cannot fully see with your eyes.

b. Also, the one who is dancing is sinning by being cause of sin in others through “sensuality” (“lewdness”: a work of the flesh).

So dancing is not just harmless fun, when you look at it the way God would have us to.

Can it be justified from the Bible?

III. FORMS OF DANCING IN THE BIBLE

A. Amusement: childlike play (Matt 11:16-17).
B. Rejoicing: special occasions (Judg 11:34; 1 Sam 18:6; Psa 30:11; Jer 31:4, 13).


1. In the case of Miriam, the women always danced alone or in a group with other women.

2. So God’s word didn’t condone the dancing of mixed couples under the Old Law, & neither does His word condone such today.

D. Solome: The only kind of dancing found in the Bible that comes close to the dancing of today is that which was performed by the step-daughter of Herod Antipas when she performed a lascivious dance at Herod’s birthday feast (Matt 14:6-7).

1. This dance was part of the plan of Herodias, Herod’s wife, who held the grudge against John because he preached that their marriage was not lawful (Matt 14:4).

2. She plotted to have her daughter perform a lewd dance at this birthday feast, knowing that her husband would give in to her daughter’s charms & make some rash promise to her.

3. Herodias was right, Herod was pleased with her dance & answered her request to have John beheaded!

CLOSING

- Going to dances, whether one dances or not, puts you in the wrong environment.

- It will not build Christian character or make you more spiritually minded (Col 3:1-4).

- Dancing will lead you closer to fornication, not further from it (2 Tim 2:22; 1 Pet 2:11; 1 Thess 5:22).
- There is an old saying, “Dancing feet & praying knees do not grow on the same pair of legs.”

- Dancing, especially today’s dance, involving unmarried couples is a work of the flesh, & those who participate in any way “will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal 5:21).

- Let us put an end to the moral conflict of dancing, “walk by the Spirit, & you will not carry out the desire of the flesh” (Gal 5:16).

- “Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing & drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity & sensuality, not in strife & jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, & make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts” (Rom 13:13-14).

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