

## WHY I DIDN'T GO TO THE PROM

*David Halbrook*

I would like to discuss with you some basic Bible reasons why I did not go to the prom. Prom time is decision time. Those who serve God have always had to face difficult decisions and make tough choices with the help of God. To begin, please consider Hebrews 11:24-25.

*“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.”*

Here we see that Moses had a decision to make, whether to stay in the house of Pharaoh and some day become the Pharaoh and live a life of luxury, or to be with God’s people and be a slave for a certain time. The problem with the prom is that it is primarily a dance. In the dictionary a prom is simply defined as a “formal college or school ball or dance.” Therefore, the prom presents God’s people a decision on whether to attend a dance. We need the courageous faith of Moses.

As a Christian, I look to the Bible as God’s word and

especially to the New Testament as the teaching of Christ that guides me in my decisions. I want to share with you how the teaching of the Bible convinced me not to go to the prom. Three points I would like to discuss from the Bible are lasciviousness, the influence on others, and some areas of personal choice.

**LASCIVIOUSNESS.** The first reason I am not interested in attending a prom or any other dance is that the things that go on there can cause lasciviousness. Please turn to Galatians 5:19-21.

*“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”*

The Bible says lasciviousness will keep us out of heaven. Lasciviousness is defined as “wanton acts or manners, filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females.” This definition is given in Thayer’s Greek-English

Lexicon of the New Testament. Such conduct gives dancing its sex appeal. Sexual foreplay and sexual intimacy are reserved for marriage.

When questioning whether or not to go to a dance, there are three questions that I thought one should ask himself. First of all, can you control your thoughts so that you will not lust? Second, can you control the thoughts of the person you are dancing with and be sure that they are not lusting? Finally, can you control the thoughts of those who may be watching you and be sure that they are not lusting? If the answer to any of these is “no”, then a person should not go to the dance. I do not think there is a person alive who could answer all three of these as “yes”. One may think that he is able to control thoughts that he has, but once you get to the dance things can change. There is no way to control the thoughts of others. If we cause others to sin, we are partly responsible. Jesus said in Matthew 18:6-7,

*“But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offences! For it must needs be that offences come; but woe to*

*that man by whom the offense cometh!"*

We can see from this how God hates for people to be lost. You can see the severity of being responsible for someone being lost. Christians are to be the light of the world. Bill Reeves, who has done a lot of gospel preaching in Mexico and America, once gave me this piece of advice. Christians should not feel peer pressure because Christians are leaders, not followers. Christians are the light. And when you turn on the light, darkness scatters. There is no pressure on the light. By the good example of Christians, there ought to be pressure on people not to go to the dances instead of to go to the dances. Exodus 23:2 teaches that we should not be followers but leaders. *"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment."* So we can see from this we are not to do something just because everybody else does.

**INFLUENCE.** But another reason I am not going to the prom or any other dance is because I want to have the right influence on others. The matter of personal influence should be very important. In considering dancing, there are several things to think about in terms of what the effect would be on other people.

The first point to consider is what would be the effect on non-Christians. When non-Christians see some Christians dancing and others taking the stand of not dancing, what message is this sending? All they are going to see is a double standard, and they will not see any difference in our standard and the standard of the world

with its error and confusion.

The second point to consider is what would my influence be on other Christians? If I go to the dance, I may influence others to go, causing them to be weak and fall away from Christ. We have seen what God thinks of those who cause others to fall away.

Thirdly, what would the influence be on the church? Because some may go dancing and others not, the world may view the church of Christ as hypocritical, which may directly or indirectly keep them from learning what is right and being saved.

Finally, I will lose the power of my personal example if I attend dances such as the prom. How can you expect someone to listen to you when teaching them if you are not living your life in the way you should? 1 Thessalonians 5:22 teaches, *"Abstain from all appearance of evil."* This is a simple verse and easy to understand, but it has a message we should consider. Christians should abstain from all forms, fashions, and appearances of evil. Christians should not give Satan any opportunity to cast a shadow of doubt on our character. Christians should be willing to give up some things in order to be sure that nobody would get the wrong idea about what we believe and how we live our lives. Attending the prom and other dances shows that we flirt and compromise with evil rather than abstaining from it.

**AREAS OF PERSONAL CHOICE.** Some things in the Bible are concrete and leave no doubt about what we are to do in order to be pleasing to God. But there are also some areas of personal choice which must be

decided by each individual. One thing would be going to the prom just to get your picture taken and then leaving. While there is not a book, chapter, and verse to prove this either way, there are a couple of things that I myself have to consider when making a decision on this. First of all, how do people who only see the picture know that I did not dance? Every time someone sees that picture, I am not going to be there to defend myself and say, "Oh...I just got my picture taken there and left, and I did not dance." I am not always going to be there when the picture is seen. Secondly, my presence could be misleading. People may only see me going or coming out. How are they going to know I did not dance?

Another area of personal choice would be going to a banquet that is given at a site other than where the prom is being given on prom night. Some schools sponsor banquets at one site, and then those who are going to the prom leave there and go to the prom. These are just a couple of examples of personal matters that must be carefully decided by each individual.

While looking through some material on the history of dancing, I found something I thought was interesting to share with you. On October 12, 1778 the Continental Congress of the United States ruled dancing as an act that produced idleness, dissipation, and a general depravity of principles and manners. Dancing was ruled illegal. Surely dancing has not gotten any better from that time until now. My, how we have changed in some two hundred years!

Let us remember again the courageous faith of Moses in

Hebrews 11:24-25.

*“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.”*

I would have to say that verse 25 pretty well summarizes why I did not go to the prom. I have chosen not to enjoy the deceitful pleasures of sin for a season. To follow Christ, we must fight the temptations of this world. We cannot be afraid to be different.

We must let our lights shine no matter what the cost. Jesus said in Matthew 5:13-16,

*“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before*

*men, that they may see your good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven.”*

It is clear Christ would not be a part of dances with their sexual appeal. If we allow ourselves to fall into these traps of Satan, our salt will have lost its strength, and we will allow our light to be blown out by Satan. Christ is the great light of the world and Christians must reflect His light to the world by following Christ. Jesus said in Mark 16:16, *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”* Since I first believed in Christ and was baptized into Him, I have been trying to follow His teaching and His example. That is why I did not go to the prom.

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## TESTIMONY OF THE WORLD

1. Mrs. Henrietta Hunt, Superintendent of the Springfield, Illinois Redemption Home says: “Dancing drags

down more girls than anything else. Fully half of those who came to us last year, went wrong at the public school dances right here in Springfield.”

2. E. S. Sonners, M. D. said of the dance: “I attack the modern dance as a reversion toward savagery. As a medical man, I flatly charge that dancing is fundamentally sinful and evil. I charge that dancing charm is based entirely on sex appeal. I charge that dancing is the most advanced and the most insidious maneuvering preliminary to sex betrayal. It is nothing more than damnable, diabolical, animal, physical dissipation...I tell you the basic spell of the dance is the spell of illicit physical contact...Under what other shield can a man or woman, a youth or maiden, so promiscuously fondle so many of the opposite sex in a single night—or a lifetime...?”

3. Prof. Harry Stribes, renowned champion dancer and originator of many society dances said: “I will say that I do not believe a woman can waltz virtuously and waltz well, for she must yield her person completely to her partner.”

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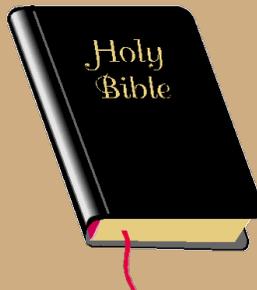
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