

## Is Dancing Lasciviousness?

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*by Wayne Goff*

Some Christian parents are so obsessed with letting their children be popular, “normal,” and like everyone else, that they compromise their Faith by allowing their children to attend school dances like the prom. These same parents have never made a serious study of the sin of lasciviousness (lewdness, NKJV) or else they would never lead their children into that direction.

Other Christian parents are equally obsessed with keeping their children morally pure and they absolutely forbid their teenagers from going to any school function like dancing. They have the additional problem of trying to explain to their children why other Christian teens can go to the prom while they cannot.

One of the first sermons I ever preached was on the “Problems of Youth” (about 1974, when I was about 20). It included material on dancing, drinking, and fornication. Thirty-six years later nothing has changed, and I wonder if I’ve ever done any good preaching against these sins. I know that God’s Word does not return to Him void (Isaiah 55:11), but words cannot express the sadness of my soul over seeing parents give in to peer pressure and letting their children be popular. Perhaps I have not said and done enough.

“Lasciviousness” is defined as “unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shameless, insolence” [Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon, p. 766]. Mr. Thayer goes on to say that the word used in Galatians 5:19 means, “wanton acts or manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females” (pp. 766-767). Herein is where dancing is included -- indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females.

The warning from God is that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God, Galatians 5:21. Christians who allow their children to go to such ungodly functions probably do not believe that their dances are really lascivious. I have had parents tell me that their children’s dances are “just social functions.” I have had elders contradict my sermons on the subject and encourage children to attend school dances. I have had Christians look at me like I’m some real corny, pious, over-the-top naive “nut” when I preach on the subject. But perhaps the most common reaction is that Christians let their children attend these functions on the sly. They just sort of sneak around and do it without telling anybody. Of course, I find out about it when I overhear someone talking about it, or when I am accidentally exposed to those prom pictures. I guess if the preacher doesn’t find out, then it’s okay.

Emily and I taught our children the truth on the subject and we never let them attend school dances. I have never regretted it, and nobody has ever proven me wrong on the issue. Dancing is not the only lascivious act included in the term, but it is one of them.

Parents, if you want to do yourselves and your children a real favor, then sit down with them and read the various passages on “lasciviousness” and then read the definitions of this word by Greek scholars like W.E. Vine, Joseph Henry Thayer, and others. See if you are not convinced as I am.

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