

What Does the Bible Say About Dancing?

In the Old Testament, some dancing was acceptable to God: *“And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances”* (Exodus 15:20).

“And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter” (Judges 11:34).

“And David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod” (2 Samuel 6:14).

What kind of dancing was this? Was it the modern dance? Was this a lascivious style dance? No!

The dancing mentioned in the Scriptures just quoted was similar to the kind of celebration which takes place today after a sporting event when a team has won a big victory. It was like the celebration of a football player after he has made a winning goal.

There was also some dancing in the Old Testament, which was unacceptable to God.

“And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses’ anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount” (Exodus 32:19).

This dancing was in connection with the worship of idols. Some have suggested that this dancing was the kind of dancing which would cause sinful thoughts, and would therefore not be pleasing in God’s sight.

In the New Testament, we can read about a kind of dance which was sinful: *“And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee”* (Mark 6:22).

It appears that this kind of dancing caused Herod to be excited sexually.

She enquired of her mother, and was instructed to ask for the head of John the Baptist. It might very well be said

that a righteous man died as a result of this dance.

Paul includes the kind of sin committed in the lustful dance when he spoke of the *“works of the flesh”* (Galatians 5:19-21).

The two words in this list of sins which include the modern dance are *“lewdness”* and *“revelries.”*

Let us examine the meaning of these words.

Lewdness is defined as *“indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females.”* This is a good description of many dances; where bodily movements are intended to cause a person to have impure thoughts.

Some dancing involves handling the body of one of the opposite sex in an improper way. The Bible condemns this.

Those who are guilty of lewdness will not inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:21).

A **revelry** is *“a jovial festivity with music and dancing.”* It is also defined as *“wantonness.”* The word

wanton means “sexually loose or unrestrained.”

This “revelry” is involved in the some modern dances. As children of God we are called to be Holy, set apart unto good works. (1 Pet. 1:13-16)

As holy (set apart) people, Christians must not practice evil. Many types of dances are indeed evil.

Therefore, let us stay away from any activity which will cause us to have impure thoughts; including these types of dances.



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