

THE WORLD'S BIBLE #19

By Keith Greer

DANCING. Part 1

We want to continue discussing the subject of "The World's Bible." Today we want to examine the issue of "DANCING."

What saith the scriptures?

Not many years ago, I was involved in a discussion with three preachers and an elder, with the elder trying to justify the Christian's right to dance. Can this be so? Can a Christian participate in dancing and still be pleasing to God?

"Dancing", by today's definition, is to "move in rhythm, usually in time to music ... move up and down; move in a lively way" (Thorndike-Barnhart Desk Dictionary)

In Exodus 15:20-21, Judges 11:34, 1 Samuel 18:6, and 1 Chronicles 15:25-29 we can read about individuals "dancing". The Hebrew word, raqad, which is translated "dance" means "to leap for joy". These passages all clearly indicate that these were occasions for rejoicing, and cannot be compared with the "dance" of today.

Those who want to use the argument that God approved of dancing under the old law need to consider that we can also read in the old testament of dancing that displeased God. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, he found the children of Israel dancing along with idol worship. "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)

Although we discussed it briefly in our articles on modest apparel, when discussing the subject of dancing, we must examine the word "lasciviousness". "Lasciviousness" is from the Greek word "aselgia" and "denotes excess, licentiousness, absence of restraint, indecency, or wantonness" (Vine's Expository Dictionary of New testament Words) "Lasciviousness" means "wanton (acts of) manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, or unchaste handling of males and females" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament). "Lasciviousness" also means "tending to excite lustful desires" (Webster's New World Dictionary), and can be reflected in several different areas - walking, sitting, the way we dress, or the way we talk. Can anything that produces such thoughts or desires be proper for a Christian to do?

Some Christians want to argue about the different types of dancing - "slow dancing", "waltzes", "square dancing" or a "ballet". While we would certainly agree that there are different types of dancing, the Christian must always have the desires of the spirit, and he must always be able to put away all evil thoughts (Galatians 5: 22-24). We must be careful, not only for our own souls, but for the influence we have on others and their souls so that " ... no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way". (Romans 14: 13)

A number of years ago there was a movie called "Footloose." This movie caused quite a stir with the dancing sequences and also the storyline of the movie. A preacher's daughter wanted to go to the Senior Prom and he was against it dad called it the "devil's music." He was so much against it he tried to make sure it could not be held in the city limits-which he accomplished. The high school kids of the school took it outside the city limits so the prom was held. In a town meeting, one of the young men read a passage from Ecclesiastes 3: and quoted "there is time to dance." He concluded this was their time to DANCE. Sadly, his reasoning was flawed because he took the passage out of its context. The dance refer to in the Bible in no way is making reference to modern dancing. Keep reading...***