

Dancing and Lasciviousness

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Lasciviousness (“sensuality” NASB) is a type of wickedness that is mentioned and condemned several times in the New Testament. But do we know what it involves in order that we may abstain from it?

Lasciviousness is defined as: “ indecency, wanton acts or manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females.” One can see that lasciviousness is a broad term that does not identify any single sinful act, but many.

Lasciviousness would involve any type of lewd talk, or off colored jokes, etc. The Lord’s apostles declared that, “there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which is not fitting” (Eph. 5:4). We are commanded to “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear” (Eph. 4:29).

Since lasciviousness involves “indecency” one could be guilty of it by the way they dress. Many of today’s clothes, especially as the days get warmer, are indecent. Clothes with low cut fronts and backs, mini-skirts, short-shorts, halters, midriiffs, swimsuits, etc. are considered by most to be acceptable dress. But just because something is acceptable to the world does not mean it is acceptable before God. To reveal one’s nakedness is something that

is described in the Scriptures as shameful and sinful. In fact God even uses the term “nakedness” figuratively in the Scriptures to describe sin and wickedness (Ezek. 16:36; Nahum 3:5; Rev. 3:5). The apostle Paul wrote, “Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly...”(this would also apply to men as well). To fail to follow this instruction is to dress sensual, lascivious.

There are many who always ask, especially as prom time comes around; “What’s wrong with dancing?” Could anyone not know what is wrong with dancing who knows the definition of “lasciviousness”? In fact, the definition of this word is a pretty good definition of modern dancing—“indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females.” Lasciviousness is among the sins that Jesus described as, “evil things” which “defile the man” (Mk. 7:22-23). It is listed among the works of the flesh of which we are warned, “that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:19-21). Yet, it is condoned by many and is something in which many encourage their children to participate.

Lasciviousness involves several sins that are popular in our society and there are few who abstain from it. However, Jesus says that following the majority is not what you want to do if you want to have eternal life (Mt. 7:13-14).

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