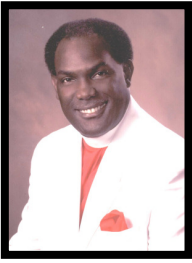


Ask Bishop Dennison



Q. *The summer months are upon us and I am looking forward to attending my annual family reunion. I am concerned this year because I have received some questionable advice from my Brothers and Sisters in Christ about partaking in the activities planned. As a group, my family will have a banquet, a talent show (singing and dancing), a basketball tournament, a card playing tournament (spades and bid whist), a bar-b-que (where we always dance the electric slide) and a church service. In the past, I have enjoyed engaging in all of these things. However, some of my friends in the church have told me that participating in the family talent show is not right because it is not a gospel talent show. Also, they say that playing cards is wrong, even though we are not gambling. Finally, I have even been advised not to dance the electric slide with my family. I am certainly a Christian and I would like to please God. At this point, I am not convinced nor convicted that these things are wrong. Please provide me with a biblical understanding on these things before I attend. I sincerely want to do what is right and avoid things that are wrong. Is it really wrong to sing “We Are Family” in the talent show with my sisters? Is it really a sin to play cards at the reunion? Is it really a problem with dancing with my family? Thanks in advance for your answer.*

A. I Corinthians 6:12 says, “All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” The bible says that some things are right in all cases, for example: love, patience, forgiveness, holiness, etc. The bible also says that some things are wrong in all cases, for example: drunkenness, slander, fornication, idolatry, adultery, etc. However, there are some things which the bible does not mention explicitly. These things can be considered disputable matters, like the issues addressed in your questions. I believe that as Christians we are to avoid any and all activities that are subject to be called into question by unbelievers and believers. This includes those activities mentioned in your questions. When facing disputable matters, ask yourself these questions. Will this activity lead me into sin? Will it glorify God? Will it build me or someone else spiritually? Does it follow Christ’s example? Does it give me the opportunity to worship Christ? Let love limit your liberty. Even if you think that the activity is not sinning, consider the weaker brother who does. You wouldn’t want to be a stumbling block to anyone would you? Romans 14:21 says, “It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.” To be more specific, I would not recommend that you sing the song, dance the electric slide, or play cards. Instead of singing the secular song “We Are Family,” why not encourage your family to sing “I Need You To Survive” by Hezekiah Walker. With respect to dancing, there are examples in the bible where dancing was inappropriate and was not done to please God (Exodus 32:19 & St. Mark 6:22). Secular dancing has traditionally been linked to worldly and satanic activities and is still associated with drinking, partying, clubbing, and sensuality. As a Christian I recommend that you avoid secular dances. Finally, card playing has long been associated with witchcraft, superstition, and fortune telling. It has been said that the design of cards was a way of expressing dishonor and mockery of God, our Heavenly Father. Some have placed the origin of the design with the king representing Satan and the queen representing Mary, the mother of Jesus. It is pretty clear that the origin is indicating that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the son of Lucifer. This is blasphemy. As a Christian, I recommend that you have nothing to do with playing cards that make a mockery of God.

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