

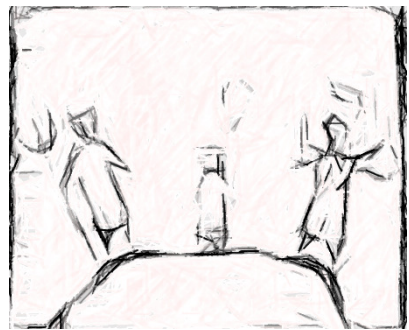
Shall we dance? (cont. from previous issue)

I have never really taken an interest in dance despite being forced into ballroom dancing (by my mom-long story) till I saw this guy (yes, Asia men do dance in local churches or even in our neighboring countries) dancing during worship. There he was in the center of the stage, doing his ballet turns while surrounded by a group of older dancers dancing. I thought the entire thing went very well – an extremely skilled dancer doing his stuff together with dancers who showed their joy in praising God with simpler movements. The dance was done in a way that was edifying to the congregation. To me, it showed the unity of the church, that despite differences in age or skill level, we move with the same purpose.

That memory stayed with me.

Recently, there was some furor over what was written about dance in last issue April [HOM Editorial](#), that the writing was worded a little too strongly against dance. Even among The Vine team we had a brief discussion over it. Due to the lack of space and time to expand on the topic for that issue, we decide to have me delve deeper into it here.

As with many things in life, there would always be differences in opinions. Any mode of expression can simply be used for good (God's people dancing as an act of worship in Exodus 15:20) or evil (Israelites were found dancing before a golden calf in worship in Exodus 32:19). Then came the absence of dance



being mentioned in the New Testament, causing some to argue that dancing should no longer be used as a form of worship. However, we should note that this argument arises from silence and is not based on clear biblical teaching. We must understand the context of early Christians, who were Jewish and would likely have incorporated Jewish forms of worship (recitation of prayers is the central characteristic of worship) in their praise to the risen Messiah.

There is also a concern that dance can be seen as association with sinful activities. Let us again take note that *everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way* as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 14:40. Christians can and should utilise dance as they do any other art form such as music, painting, drama, or filmmaking. As long as dance is worshipful, God-focused, and praiseworthy, it can too, have a proper place in worship. Of course, anything that distracts from having us the focus on Christ should be left out. I myself have seen a brilliant dance concept done in church but something was off about the entire thing as the focus was on the dancer and his skills, not on God. As with many things in life, there should be a care when performing in church, to avoid things that distract us from God.

When the focus remains on worshipping God rather than drawing attention to self, dance can be a beautiful art form that communicate truth, bringing glory to God and edifying others.

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