William B. Kessel

2018

**MAKE GOD-PLEASING DECISIONS: THE VOICE OF DOLLY GUY**

*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God* (1 Corinthians 10:31).

It was New Year’s Eve, 2000. About 30 of us were touring biblical sites in Greece and Turkey. That night we were in a moth-eaten hotel near the ruins of Troy in Turkey. We were in the dining room and our supper was nearly over when the hotel manager called for our attention and proudly introduced a belly dancer.

Soon into her “performance” she began to get sexually suggestive. I whispered to my wife, who was seated next to me, “I don’t think this is going to help our marriage very much.” She replied, “You better believe it isn’t.” So we quietly and unobtrusively left our dessert and walked out. Over the next half hour about a dozen of our tour group did the same. The rest stayed to watch the show.

I invited the “walk outs” to come to the hotel room where my wife and I were staying for an impromptu New Year’s Eve midnight devotion. They came, and we read Scripture and we prayed.

One of those who walked out quietly and attended the devotion was a lifelong friend, a White Mountain Apache woman whom many of you probably knew. Her name was Dolly Guy from the Whiteriver church. Earlier that evening, before the midnight service, my wife and I went for a short walk around the hotel grounds. Dolly joined us. On the walk I asked Dolly why she decided to leave the belly dance. Her answer was to me, earth-shattering. **It was just wrong**, was her sole explanation. It was short, eloquent, and 100% meaningful. She made a judgment that the dance was not God-pleasing and that her presence as a spectator would not be God-pleasing either. Her quiet departure was a testimony to her faith.

The next morning on the bus, our main tour guide, a theologian from the Midwest, seized the bus microphone. He explained why he and others stayed at the dance and didn’t quietly walk out like the rest of us. He reasoned that when you are in a foreign country you don’t want to seem disrespectful to our host. Later, in private, I asked Dolly about his speech and the dance. Her response was the same, **It was just wrong.** And so it was. And THE WORD OF THE LORD GROWS.

**QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED**

1. What considerations went into Dolly’s decision to leave the dining hall and dance?

2. Was the tour host’s explanation for staying at the belly dance acceptable from a Christian perspective?

3. What were the results of Dolly’s decision to leave and her explanation for doing so?

**DECISIONS, DECISIONS, DECISIONS**

1. Decisions matter. Read Psalm 1

a. Who pays careful note of the decisions we make? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

b. What are the consequences of wise decisions? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

c. What are the consequences of unwise decisions? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Believers make decisions.

a. Some decisions are earth-shattering.

1) Read John 3:16. What was the decision of God the Father? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2) Read Matthew 26:39, 42, 44-46. What was the decision of God the Son? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

b. Some decisions are monumental. Read Joshua 24:14-15.

1) What was at stake for Joshua? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2) What was at stake for the Hebrews? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

c. Some decisions are life-changing and life-defining.

1) Read Hebrews 11:24-26. What was at stake for Moses? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2) Read Daniel 1:8. What was at stake for Daniel? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3) Read Ruth 1:15-16. What was at stake for Ruth? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4) Read John 6:66-69. What was at stake for the disciples? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

d. Some decisions are seemingly insignificant—or are they?

**PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY**

1. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:7. Sanctification means that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_has called us to no longer

live \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ lives but, rather, to live \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ lives.

2. Read Romans 12:2. The redeemed child of God practices godly mind control seeking to

know and do \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

3. What are some God-given examples of godly mind control? (Mind control as used here means

God’s love, will, and purpose are foremost on your mind.)

a. Read Philippians 4:8. Christians will want to think about things which are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

b. Read Galatians 5:22-23. The Christian life is characterized by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

c. Read Romans 12:2. On what basis do Christians decide what to do or not to do? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. When Christians live the sanctified, God-pleasing life, good things happen.

a. Read 1 Corinthians 10:31. Who is honored and glorified? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

b. Read Psalm 1:1-3. Who is blessed? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

c. Read Galatians 6:2 and Hebrews 10:24. Who else is blessed? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

d. Read Romans 12:14-21. Finally, who also is affected by godly thoughts, words, and actions? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. The Bible outlines several ways in which the Christian becomes stronger in Christian living.

a. Read Psalm 119:105 and 1 Corinthians 11:24-26. The Christian grows through faithful use of God’s\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

b. Read Hebrews 10:23-25. The Christian grows strong by attending \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

and being with other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

c. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17, 25. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is a wonderful Christian exercise.

**QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED**

1. What considerations went into Dolly’s decision to leave the dining hall and dance? Which of the

following do you think were running through her mind?

a. Do you think she was suffering from culture shock—strange sights, smells, and sounds?

Is there anything in her story which helps you answer this question?

b. Do you think she left because her friends, the Kessels, quietly left?

c. Do you think she left because she was convinced that one or more of the Commandments was (were) being broken? If so, which one or ones?

d. Do you think she left because that would be the most God-pleasing thing to do?

2. Was the tour host’s explanation for staying at the belly dance acceptable from a Christian perspective?

a. Was his point valid?

b. Does biblical morality override the desire not to offend anyone?

3. What were the results of Dolly’s decision to leave and her explanation for doing so? See #4 above.

a. By her decision to leave, was God glorified?

b. By her decision to leave, was she blessed?

c. By her decision to leave, were other believers blessed?

d. By her decision to leave, were others encouraged in their walk of faith?

CLOSING PRAYER

Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to thee.

Take my moments and my days; Let them flow with ceaseless praise.

Take my will and make it thine; It shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart—it is thine own; It shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love, my Lord, I pour At thy feet its treasure store,

Take myself, and I will be Ever, only, all for thee. Amen

(Christian Worship, Hymn 469)