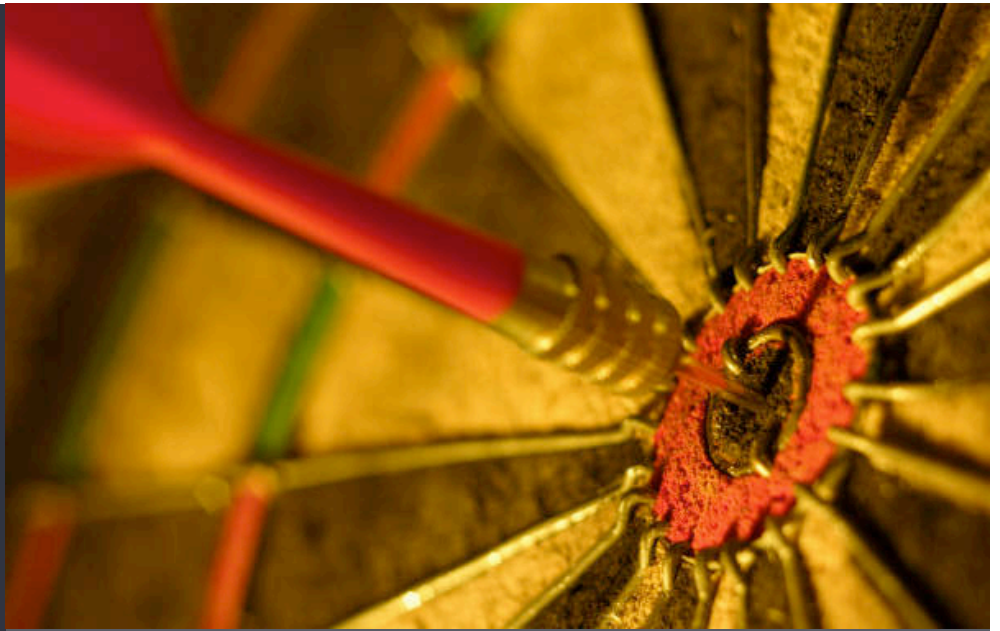


SSP

The Church of Jesus Christ



RIGHT OR WRONG?

Why is it so difficult to pinpoint whether something is or isn't OK according to God?

It should be easy to tell whether something is right or wrong—right?

Oh, if only, if only ...

The truth is, determining whether something is right or wrong can often be really hard. There are certain things we know are obviously wrong, like wearing a mullet or joining a terrorist organization. But sometimes things aren't so black and white.

For example, should I have a beer with dinner? ... everyone else is having one and I don't want them to feel like I'm too holy to hang around with ... besides, there's nothing wrong with alcoholic beverages because Jesus turned water into wine ... plus, it's lite beer and contains only half the calories of a can of soda.

So, is it right or wrong?

Answer: it's a trick question. Yes, you heard me. "Is it right or wrong?" is almost always a trick question because most of the time we aren't deciding between *good* or *bad* things. Sometimes we have to decide between *bad* and *worse*. Or between *good* or *better*.

Some of you may know Sister Sylvia Curry from the Mesa, Arizona branch. She's probably close to 80 years old, but she was young once. When she was in high school, she had to make a difficult decision. She prayed about it, and the Lord answered her in a dream. (I know, *awesome*.) The whole story appears below. It's being considered for the book of experiences that the General Church

Historical Committee is cooking up, so I'll warn you ahead of time that it's told with a lot of color. Happy reading ...

I had a nervous wiggle in the pit of my stomach that just wouldn't quit. Routine actions such as turning corners, entering classrooms, or casting sidelong glances down the school hallways were filling me with anxiety and dread. I knew that at any moment *the boy* would appear (poof!) beside me and ask me the *big question*.

When you are 17 years old, "Will you go to prom with me?" ranks as one of the most important questions ever asked. And I was not ready to give him an answer.

Don't get me wrong. It had nothing to do with the boy who I knew wanted to ask me out; it was the whole idea of prom that I wasn't sure about. Being recently baptized, I thought that God might be

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displeased with me for attending a school dance. Was it a sin?

I knew where my parents stood on the issue. My father made it crystal clear that, while the decision was up to me, he did not think prom was a good idea. I prayed about it, but I still wasn't sure. I figured I would just wait and see how things shook out before I made a decision.

My friend Lois told her mother that this particular boy was probably going to ask me to the prom. Her mother was so excited for me.

"Sylvia! If you go to the prom, I have a dress and jewelry that you can wear. It will look lovely on you! And if that boy doesn't end up asking you, my son will take you. I've already asked him, and he said he would love to."

After hearing that, I thought perhaps the doors were opening for me to go to the prom. Knowing that I'd have a date and a free dress definitely nudged me in that direction.

Nevertheless, I thought I would get the advice of an adult that I respected. I asked an older sister in my branch what she thought about it, and she replied,

"Sylvia, the prom is the last big event in high school. Everyone gathers to celebrate the end of the school year. It's like closing a chapter in a book. I really don't see anything wrong with it."

I became more and more comfortable with the idea of going to prom, but I thought it couldn't hurt to ask one more person's opinion. This time, I approached a younger sister in my branch, and I told her my predicament along with the advice that the older sister had given me. She thought for a moment and then said,

"Yes, it's true that prom is like closing a book. But you could also be opening a new book. Is it a chapter that you're willing to start writing?"

This threw me for a loop, reintroducing all of the uncertainty that

I had previously felt. That nail-biting feeling of balancing on a tightrope returned to me. It was time to seriously ask the Lord what *He* thought.

I did, and He answered me.

I had a dream that I was in my school's gymnasium, and it was decorated for a dance. I was sitting up near the top of the bleachers, and I looked down and saw my gym teacher dancing on the floor below me. She had beautiful flowers arranged on her shoulders. I thought to myself, "What gorgeous flowers! Surely going to the prom can't be a sin if she is adorned with flowers like these."

All of a sudden, I heard a voice behind me say, "Yes, her flowers are beautiful. But look at the flowers on *your* shoulders." I looked down and saw the flowers sitting on my own shoulders. They were absolutely stunning. They were ten times more lovely and fragrant than the flowers my gym teacher wore.

Then I woke up.

I asked the Lord what the dream meant, and I knew in my heart that I had my answer. I felt the Lord telling me that if I chose to go to the dance, I would not be making a bad decision, but if I chose not to go, I would be choosing something much more beautiful. Each day we are faced with choices that aren't necessarily *good versus evil*. Sometimes our choices are *good versus God's best*. While it wouldn't have been a sin for me to go to the prom, God had something better for me. I want to live the rest of my life making choices that allow me to experience *God's best* in my life.

"That nail-biting feeling of balancing on a tightrope returned to me. It was time to seriously ask the Lord what *He* thought."

So, what is your reaction to this story? You may be up against a tough decision that makes prom seem like child's play.

Open up your heart to the Lord, and ask Him for an answer. He cared enough about Sister Sylvia's prom question to give her an answer. Rest assured, he cares about you, too.

God bless you as you seek His best in your life,

The SSP Committee

This message is brought to you by your friendly neighborhood SSP team

The mission of the Student Support Program (SSP) is to create and uphold a support network among high school and college students in the Church (that's you!). We do this by sending words of encouragement to young people and promoting their involvement in the works of the Church.

If you have any questions, please contact SSP Chair Sis. Rachel Benyola at ssp/gmba@gmail.com



Sister Sylvia Curry