

# partying light

by Mindy Ferguson

“Mom! I need to talk to you!” she yelled with a notable tone of urgency in her voice. The door slammed and muffled pounding erupted from the stairs as she quickly made her way to my study. Recognizing a “mom moment” in the making, I abandoned the fragmented sentence on my computer screen and turned attentively toward my usually up-beat daughter.

She threw herself into a lounge chair in the corner of the room. Her lips quivered and tears began streaming down her sunburned cheeks as she struggled to speak. “I’m not going to that party,” she finally whispered, her voice restricted by the heartache gripping her throat.

My soon-to-be junior high schooler had been invited to a birthday party by a slightly older girl who lives down the street. A number of eighth grade girls were planning to attend the girly gathering and this was her first invitation to a “Jr. High” sleepover.

Quickly deserting my seat, I knelt on the floor beside her, brushing a tear from her chin. I listened as she explained some of the activities the adventurous

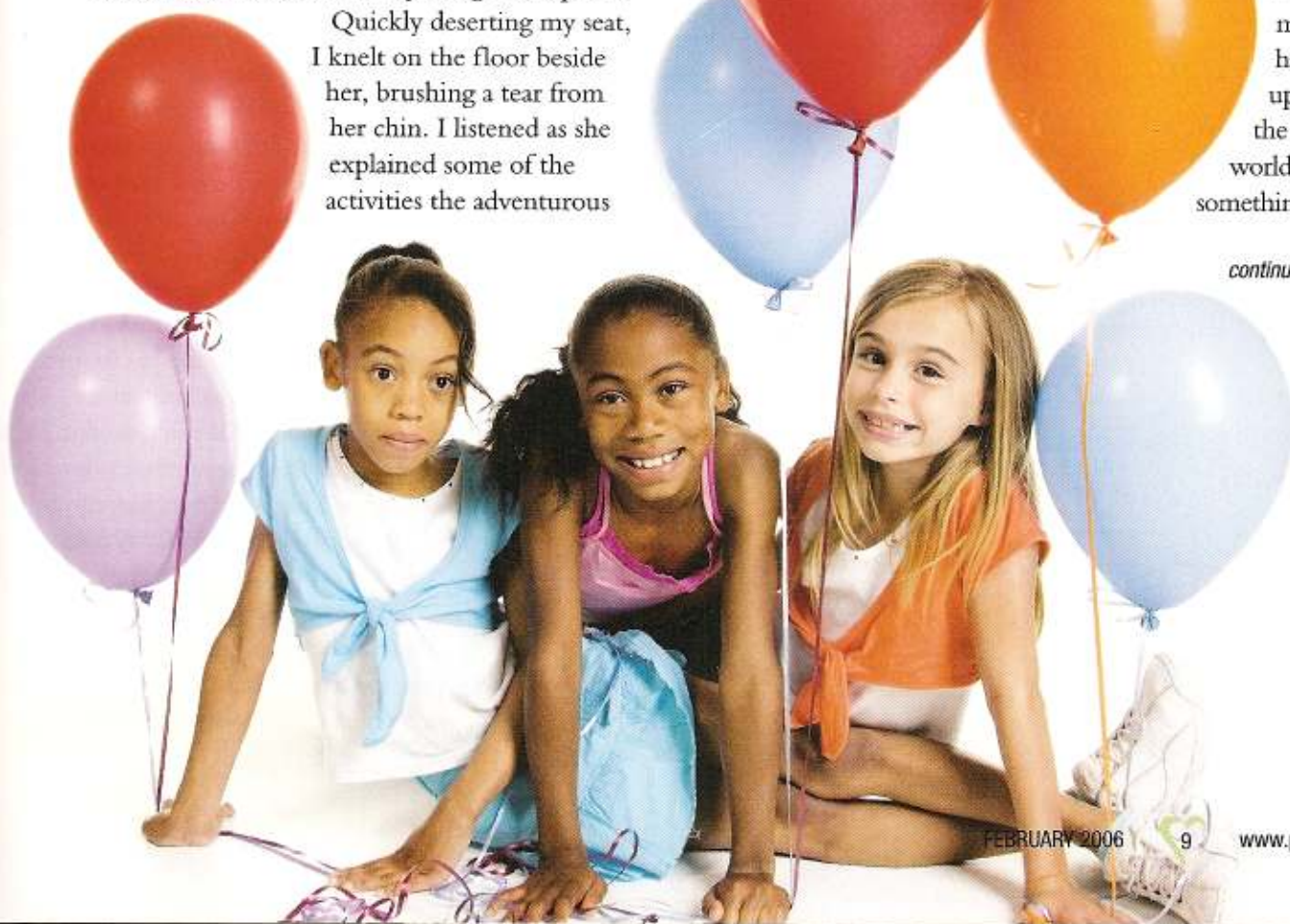
As a Christian, it’s difficult to be in the world but not of it, especially for kids. Partying “light,” as described by Mindy, is one way to find that balance.

teen had planned for the party, which included midnight festivities around a Ouija board. My daughter then said, “I told her I didn’t want to play that game.” After a short pause she sadly declared, “I’m not going to go to the party, Mom.”

Tears began streaming down my cheeks as well, my heart swelling with a mixture of motherly pride and compassion. We talked and prayed together for a few minutes, praising God for alerting her to the party agenda ahead of time. After a few words of affirmation, she wiped her tears and slowly made her way to her room to “IM” (instant message) another friend.

As I returned to my computer screen, I marveled at how much my little girl had grown up. She knew the spirit world was not something to play

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around with. I praised God for giving my fun-loving pre-teen the strength and courage to make such a difficult decision.

Later that day, my daughter asked if she could attend a portion of the party. After further discussion about the importance of steering clear from any activity that involved the contacting of spirits (Leviticus 19:31), I agreed. She attended for a few hours, enjoyed a visit to the swimming pool and some beauty tips from a cosmetic consultant. But as the sun began to set, she thanked the girl for inviting her, and then quietly made her way back home for the evening.

I must admit, I sometimes struggle to find the proper balance between separating myself from worldly activities and going to the extreme of isolating myself so completely from the mainstream that I become indifferent to those who need of a glimpse of the Savior.

When interceding for His disciples, Jesus prayed:

*They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified (John 17:16-19 NIV).*

Jesus' prayer made it clear that sanctification, which means to set apart for God's use, does not mean isolation. We need to know the Word of God, live it

out as best we can and depend upon the Holy Spirit to guide our steps. We have to be careful not to withdraw ourselves so completely that we no longer reflect Christ to the lost around us. We are called to live out our faith before the world in order to glorify God and draw others to Him.

*"You are the light that gives light to the world. A city that is built on a hill cannot be hidden. And people don't hide a light under a bowl. They put it on a lampstand so the light shines for all the people in the*

*house. In the same way, you should be a light for other people. Live so that they will see the good things you do and will praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16 NCV).*

We are the light of the world. We must remain committed to purity, separating ourselves from activities that can contaminate our spirits or tempt us to sin. But we also must be careful not to completely isolate ourselves from people who need exposure to Jesus Christ. Like my daughter, sometimes that means we should be "partying light." ❧



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Mindy Ferguson writes women's Bible studies and speaks to women's groups with messages of encouragement and hope. She served on the praise and worship team for Beth Moore Bible Studies in Houston, Texas and was on staff for three years as Director of Curriculum Development at Cy-Fair Christian Church. Mindy is the president and founder of Fruitful Word Ministries and lives in a suburb of Houston, Texas with her husband and two children.

**F**ebruary is the official month of love. How often do you tell your husband or your children that you love them? Everyone needs to hear those three magic words that warm the heart and brighten the day. One way to "share the love" is to buy small dry erase boards for each family member and mount them on your bedroom doors. (This would make a great Valentine's Day gift!) There are several stylish ones, as well as plain ones, from which to choose. We've done this in our home and it is a wonderful way to bless and encourage one another, by simply writing messages of love. (Hint: you can also write love notes on a mirror using dry erase markers. Unlike lipstick, they wipe right off!) Happy Valentine's Day! ❧