

**TEXT** 1 Corinthians 10:23,24,31-33; 1 Timothy 4:13-16; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; 4:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to explain that the doctrines are the fundamental teachings of the Christian faith revealed to us in God's Word. They will recognize that the ministry is charged in God's Word to establish guidelines or policies for the church that are in harmony with Bible doctrines. The students will see that a high standard of Christian living with unhindered fellowship is the primary purpose for such guidelines.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. John 7:17

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. 2 Thessalonians 2:15

**RESOURCE MATERIAL** Tract No. 76 A Christian's Standard

**ANSWER TITLE:** **Playing by the Rules**

**SEARCH TITLE:** **Doctrines and Guidelines**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

Doctrines and guidelines of the church are closely related to discipline. The Apostle Paul viewed discipline as much more than correction or punishment. He related it to instruction, training, guidance, leadership, and control.

Discipline is an integral part of the function of the church. True discipleship means living a life self-disciplined enough to submit to the discipline of Christ and His chosen administrators. There is no disciple where

there is no discipline. There can be no church where there is no discipline of the members. The church is a body of believers submitted to Christ and to the spiritual leaders who "watch for their souls." Church discipline must involve training, guidance, and correction.

An increasing percentage of our society is undisciplined, unrestrained, and self-willed, but the child of God submits himself with joy to the lordship of Christ and the leadership of the church.

**YOUR OPENER**

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## RESPONSES

1. Your students may respond that it is our responsibility to know the doctrines. Discuss with your class how this can be accomplished. They may bring out that we learn to know the doctrines by taking advantage of being in Sunday school, attending Bible studies and meetings where the Word is preached, and also in personal devotions. Be sure your students' attention is focused on the absolute authority of the Word in governing and directing the actions of those who follow Christ. Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31,32).

2. Allow time for your students to offer their responses. Endeavor to help your class see the immense weight of responsibility carried by the ministry in the sight of God. Point out that God told Ezekiel that he would be held responsible if he failed to warn the people when God's Word was spoken. See Ezekiel 3:18,19; 33:1-9.

3. The believer is responsible to obey and submit. Ask your students to offer some examples of occasions—other than in their spiritual lives—when rules or directives guide their actions. They may bring up such examples as traffic rules, rules for games, and rules for organization membership. Then ask them to elaborate briefly on what the consequences of breaking these rules might be. Conclude your discussion of this question by paralleling this to the spiritual. If they fail to follow in obedience and submission they, too, will suffer consequences. One consequence would be that they would not be in full fellowship with the group of believers, or be qualified to participate as a worker in the functions of the church.

# Doctrines and Guidelines

**TEXT:** 1 Corinthians 10:23,24,31-33; 1 Timothy 4:13-16; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; 4:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17

**KEY VERSE:** Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. — 2 Thessalonians 2:15

**RESOURCE MATERIAL:** Tract No. 76 — A Christian's Standard

The Word of God gives us fundamental truths or doctrines, which help us understand the basic principles of the Bible. It also gives instructions on how we as individuals or as part of the church may please God. The doctrines set forth in the Word are the foundation of the Gospel. The ministry has the authority and responsibility to teach the doctrines, using them as a basis for discipline and establishing guidelines in the church. By adhering to these teachings and guidelines, the individual and church are brought into perfect union with Christ and with each other.

1. One definition of the word *doctrine* is, "a particular principle taught or advocated." What is our responsibility regarding the doctrines as given in God's Word? See John 7:17.

2. In 2 Timothy 4:1,2, we read about the authority and responsibility of the ministry to preach the doctrines and establish the guidelines for the individual and the church. What do you feel is the meaning and importance of each of the instructions stated?

3. Having recognized the authority and responsibility of the ministry, what does Hebrews 13:17 tell us is the responsibility of the believer? What are the consequences if one fails to fulfill these responsibilities?

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. It has been said that the doctrines are the “bones” of the Gospel, for they form the framework of our belief. What doctrines are taught by the following Scriptures?

Mark 1:15 and Acts 20:21

John 1:12,13 and Romans 5:1

John 17:15-17 and Hebrews 12:14

Luke 24:49 and Acts 2:4

James 5:14-16

John 14:3 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

5. God has a reason for all things. He inspired the Word from which doctrines originate. What is the end result of obeying the doctrines of God’s Word?

6. 1 John 2:15-17 is just one of the Scriptures that can be used in helping to establish guidelines for Christian living. What do you think this Scripture means when it refers to loving the world?

7. In considering our Key Verse, what do you think is meant by the phrase, “stand fast, and hold the traditions”?

4. Mark 1:15 and Acts 20:21 — Repentance  
John 1:12,13 and Romans 5:1 — Justification  
John 17:15-17 and Hebrews 12:14 — Sanctification  
Luke 24:49 and Acts 2:4 — Baptism of the Holy Ghost  
James 5: 14-16 — Divine Healing  
John 14:3 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 — Rapture of the Church

5. 2 Timothy 3:16,17 shows us that the man of God may be perfect. Help your students understand that one who desires to please God and wants His best for his life will realize that obedience to God’s Word—whether it be recognized as doctrine or a guideline as outlined by the ministry—is essential. To disobey is rebellion against God and will be judged accordingly.

6. In discussing this Scripture, your students will likely bring up some worldly activities. Help them understand that policies or guidelines as established by the ministry in regard to worldly activities are prayerfully made to assist the believers in wholly following God rather than opening their lives and hearts to harmful worldly influences.

7. Allow time for your students to offer their answers. Emphasis should be placed on the importance of maintaining a pure Gospel and upholding the doctrines and guidelines they have been taught. Then ask your students what might bring about a change in a church guideline. The resulting discussion should bring out that guidelines are subject to adaptation due to international locale, era of time, or other circumstances. This should reinforce the necessity of our maintaining a spiritual sensitivity toward God’s will, a burden to hold up the ministry in prayer and demonstrating our confidence in them by following their spiritual guidance.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is a dictionary definition of *doctrine*?

Name some of the doctrines as taught in church. What is the biblical origin of these doctrines?

Which ones should we be sure to teach and obey? Give an explanation of your answer.

Discuss some things that might lead to, or indicate, a love of the world, which 1 John 2:15 forbids.

In our ANSWER story, what rule did Dixie not obey? What was the outcome and how does it parallel our obeying the doctrines and guidelines of our church? Why do we obey the guidelines of the church, as well as the doctrines?

Give some reasons why it is important to know and observe doctrines and guidelines for Christian living.

Is a person's attitude important when obeying a given guideline?

Even as you obey, should your emphasis be on the rule or the obedience?

Will God insist that you obey or does He give you a choice?

Where is the blessing if you won't obey?

## THINGS TO DO

Wear some exceedingly inappropriate shoes into your class, such as dirty sport shoes or heavy work shoes that don't go at all with the rest of your attire. If the students comment or stare, tell them shoes are important to make walking easier, protect our feet, and meet special needs (work shoes, sport or dress shoes). The shoes themselves do not walk, run, jump, etc. There have to be feet in them, and life in those feet. We don't see the bare feet or the life in the feet when we look at a person, we see the shoes. They tell us something about the person. Parallel this to the fact that people cannot look into our heart or our mind and know what we believe. But they will see where we go, the way we act, and the things we do. Our Christian walk will be evident and a testimony to others if we obey the rules, and follow the guidelines laid down. If we profess a high standard but do not live it, it will be just as apparent to others as the inappropriate shoes were when you walked into class.

Bring to class a simple recipe and discuss what might happen if one or more ingredients were left out. Maybe some simple thing, like a fruit punch could be made,

but leave out the punch mix or sugar, and let the students sample the result. Bring out that in most recipes every ingredient is essential to produce the desired result. Every part of the Word of God is vital for instruction, guidance, discipline, etc. We don't want to leave out any part of it.

List some doctrines and some guidelines. Have the students put them into appropriate columns or have each student name one thing that they think is important for a Christian to do. Let the class discuss whether each one would be a doctrine or a guideline.

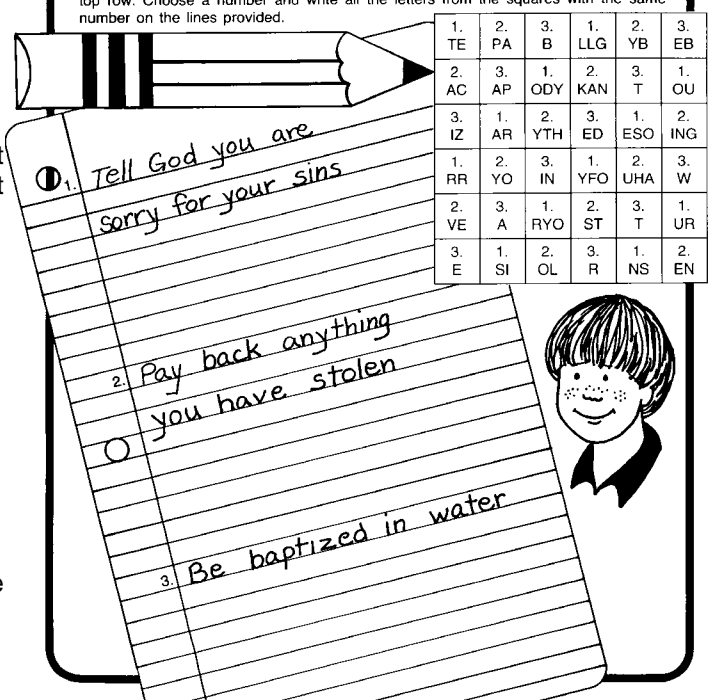
Wear a happy-faced mask to class to illustrate another approach to the doctrines and guidelines issue. The fact is that many people say they believe in all the doctrines but don't wish to obey them that watch for their souls, (a doctrine in itself!). Or the opposite attitude, that they keep all the guidelines but deep inside don't really believe or know why they do. In all these cases the people are wearing a "mask." These doctrines and guidelines must be used as a team in order for either of them to be of any real use. Encourage your students to look within themselves to see whether or not they are wearing a mask. Removing a mask makes a person rest easier with nothing to hide.

## Answers for ANSWER

### Be A Winner!

Our ANSWER story shows that it is important to obey rules if you want to be a winner. In the puzzle below are just three of the things God wants you to do to be a winner in life. There are more that you and your teacher can talk about. Start with the squares on the top row. Choose a number and write all the letters from the squares with the same number on the lines provided.

1.	2.	3.	1.	2.	3.
TE	PA	B	LLG	YB	EB
2.	3.	1.	2.	3.	1.
AC	AP	ODY	KAN	T	OU
3.	1.	2.	3.	1.	2.
IZ	AR	YTH	ED	ESO	ING
1.	2.	3.	1.	2.	3.
RR	YO	IN	YFO	UHA	W
2.	3.	1.	2.	3.	1.
VE	A	RYO	ST	T	UR
3.	1.	2.	3.	1.	2.
E	SI	OL	R	NS	EN



1. Tell God you are sorry for your sins

2. Pay back anything you have stolen

3. Be baptized in water

