

## *Competing According to the Rules*

“Rules? What rules? Whose rules? You can’t tell me what to do!” These comments often define today’s culture. Few want to submit to anyone’s rules, so the “every man for himself” concept is rampant in today’s world. But that approach to life threatens to undo civilization itself.

Without rules anarchy will rip our culture to shreds. Without rules force becomes the only final authority and thus the young, strong and violent will dominate every aspect of life.

Long ago mankind realized that good, proper rules are needed for the protection and propagation of a successful nation. But one might ask, “Who gets to make the rules?” (I’m glad you asked!)

The most successful nations throughout history have adopted rules right out of the Bible. Even non-Christian nations who adopt God’s overall rules can become safe and relatively successful.

The genuine answer is this, “God has decided the rules; we either recognize them or fail to. That recognition (and adoption) will determine the safety and success of any and every culture. But even more important is eternity! Consider what God’s word tells us about the “rules!”

Just like Olympians must compete according to the rules, so must all humans in the game of life, if we expect to spend eternity with God. God tells us quite clearly in II Timothy 2:5, “Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.” Pretty clear! Likewise, Paul tells the Christians in Corinth:

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. – I Corinthians 9:24, 24

Yes, there really *are* rules for life and God created them. Each individual, with his or her free will, must decide whether or not he will follow God’s own plan for life. They are His rules because in the grand scheme of things, *He rules!*

-Ray Wallace