



INSIDE THIS  
MONTH'S ISSUE:

## RULES OF ENGAGEMENT !

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**“I have the right to do anything,’ you say—but not everything is beneficial.” – 1 Corinthians 6:12**

As we journey deeper into this year, God is drawing our attention to something vital yet often overlooked, rules of engagement. In a world that celebrates freedom without boundaries and choices without consequences, the Lord is calling His people to intentional living. Not everything that is permissible is profitable, and not everything that is allowed is aligned with our calling.

Life offers countless options. Voices everywhere say, “It’s not a sin,” “Everyone does it,” or “You’re free in Christ.” But Jesus calls us to a higher question: Is it beneficial? Is it helpful to your walk, your assignment, and your intimacy with God? True freedom is not the absence of restraint; it is the grace to choose what honours God.

This month, the Holy Spirit is inviting us to examine our lives honestly. To ask what we engage with, what we entertain, and what we allow to influence us. Rules of engagement are not about restriction; they are about alignment. They help us walk intentionally, live disciplined lives, and remain sensitive to God’s voice.

May the Lord grant us the grace to discern what is beneficial, the courage to obey His instructions, and the humility to live by His standards, even when they differ from those around us. As we honour our rules of engagement, may our lives bring glory to God and clarity to our calling in Jesus names, Amen!

# INTRODUCTION: LIVING BY A DIFFERENT RULE



From February 2022, the Lord began to deal with me in a very personal and deliberate way about what I now understand as rules of engagement. It wasn't dramatic at first; it was quiet, intentional, and deeply inward. The Lord made it clear to me that I was not to operate by the same rules as everyone else. There were boundaries He began to draw around my life, things I was not permitted to do, places I must not go, conversations I must not entertain, and words I must not say.

What struck me most was this: none of these things were sinful.

They were permissible. They were normal. They were things other believers did freely and innocently. Yet for me, the Lord said, No. And that was when He began to teach me a truth that reshaped my walk with Him: obedience is personal. What may be harmless for one person can become a distraction for another. What God allows for someone else may be disobedience for you, not because it is wrong, but because of what He is forming in you and what He has called you to carry.

God does not relate to us as a crowd; He relates to us as sons and daughters. And when He calls you into a specific assignment, He also gives you specific instructions. These instructions are not punishments; they are protections. They are not restrictions meant to limit you; they are boundaries meant to preserve you.

Then came a defining moment in February 2023, one I will never forget.

One quiet afternoon, as I sat before the Lord, not asking for anything spectacular, just being with Him, He spoke plainly and clearly.

"Ima-Obong, where is your phone?"

I brought it before Him.

"Where is your Facebook?"

I acknowledged it.

"Delete it."

I froze. Not because Facebook was my identity, but because it felt sudden. Still, I obeyed.

Then He continued, almost gently, yet firmly:

"Where is your Instagram? Delete it. Where is your Netflix? Cancel the subscription."

At that moment, I realised this was not about social media or entertainment. This was about undivided attention.

It didn't end there. I was instructed not to post on WhatsApp status unless He prompted me. My YouTube use was restricted strictly to sermons and gospel content. Gradually, almost surgically, He began to cut away associations. Friends. Conversations. Familiar spaces. Nearly 95% of what once filled my days was gone. What remained was silence. Stillness. And Him.

I remember asking, almost childlike, "Lord... so what will I be doing?"

And He replied with words that still echo in my spirit:

“When you are bored, I am here.”

That sentence changed everything.

It marked the beginning of my journey into deep friendship with Jesus. Not ministry. Not visibility. Not activity. Friendship. I began to learn that God is not interested in filling our lives with noise; He is interested in filling our hearts with Himself. He was teaching me how to sit with Him, how to listen, how to be content in His presence without substitutes.

None of these instructions were sins. None of them are rules for everyone. This is important to say. God does not mass-produce relationships. He custom-designs them. What He asked of me may not be what He asks of you. But for me, to ignore those instructions would not have been freedom, it would have been disobedience.

That was when I truly understood the Scripture:

“All things are permissible, but not all things are beneficial.” (1 Corinthians 10:23)

I learned to live by His rule for my life.

Some may say I spiritualise everything. Others may not understand the boundaries I keep. But the truth is this: when you know what God has called you to, you learn to guard your life differently. We are many, with different assignments, different measures of grace, different seasons, and different rules of engagement, but one Lord.

And the freedom we seek is found, not in doing everything we can, but in obeying everything He says.

May the Holy Spirit teach us the rules of engagement for our own lives, and give us the grace to obey, joyfully, fully, and without comparison in Jesus name. Amen.

## **BIBLICAL LESSONS: A PEOPLE SET APART**

From the very beginning of Scripture, God makes one thing unmistakably clear: those He calls for specific purposes are never left to live casually. Calling always comes with consecration. Assignment always comes with boundaries. Distinction always comes with responsibility.

Israel is one of the clearest biblical pictures of this truth. They were not just another nation; they were chosen. While other nations had visible kings, men who ruled by political authority, military strength, and human strategy, Israel's King was invisible yet all-powerful. The Lord Himself ruled them. He led them by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:21-22). He fought their battles. He fed them with manna from heaven. He gave them water from the rock. Their difference was their glory.

Yet, what God designed as distinction soon became discomfort.

In 1 Samuel 8, Israel came to Samuel with a request that sounded reasonable but was deeply revealing:

“Now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.” (1 Samuel 8:5)

What they were really saying was, “We don't want to stand out anymore. We want to blend in. We want to be normal.”

God's response was sobering. He told Samuel, “It is not you they have rejected, but Me as their king.” (1 Samuel 8:7). Through Samuel, God warned them plainly: a human king would tax them, oppress them, conscript their children, and take from them. Yet they insisted.

That insistence marked the beginning of their sorrow.

Here is a powerful lesson for us: when you abandon your God-given distinction in order to gain acceptance, you exchange divine covering for human systems. Wanting to look like everyone else may feel safer, but it often costs far more than we realise. God's rules are not meant to isolate us; they are meant to preserve us.

This pattern is consistent throughout Scripture: special assignment, special rules.

Take Samson. Before he was ever conceived, his destiny was announced. He was called to deliver Israel from the Philistines. But attached to that calling were clear instructions: no razor to touch his head, no strong drink, no defilement (Judges 13:4-5). These were not arbitrary rules. They were not about moral superiority. They were about protecting the grace on his life. Samson's strength was tied to his obedience. The moment he treated his consecration casually, his strength departed (Judges 16:20). His downfall was not sudden, it was gradual disobedience to what God had already made clear.

Then there is John the Baptist. From birth, he was marked as different. Scripture says he would drink no wine or strong drink and would be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15). He lived in the wilderness, clothed simply, eating locusts and wild honey (Matthew 3:4). His lifestyle seemed extreme, but his assignment was equally weighty: to prepare the way for the Lord. His separation produced authority. His restraint produced clarity. His obedience produced a voice that shook an entire generation.

And then we look at Jesus Himself

This is where the truth becomes unavoidable. If anyone could have lived without restraint, it was Jesus. All authority in heaven and on earth belonged to Him (Matthew 28:18). Yet He lived in complete submission to the Father. He said,

"The Son can do nothing by Himself; He can do only what He sees His Father doing."  
(John 5:19)

Jesus did not move independently. He did not speak carelessly. He did not act impulsively. Even though He had power, He chose obedience. Even though He had liberty, He chose restraint. His life teaches us that true power is not the freedom to do anything, it is the discipline to do only what the Father permits.

Paul captures this principle perfectly when he writes:

"I have the right to do anything, you say, but not everything is beneficial." (1 Corinthians 6:12)

This is the heart of rules of engagement. God does not give everyone the same instructions because He does not give everyone the same assignment. What distracts one person may not distract another. What weakens one person may strengthen another. But when God speaks to you, obedience becomes your responsibility. Beloved, the lesson is clear and consistent: calling demands consecration. If God has set you apart, your life cannot be governed by "anything goes." Grace is not permission for carelessness. Freedom is not licence for distraction. Love for God expresses itself through obedience (John 14:15).

The question is not, "Is it a sin?"

The deeper question is, "Is it permitted for me?"

When you understand this, obedience stops feeling like loss and begins to feel like alignment. You realise that God's boundaries are not walls meant to confine you, they are guardrails meant to keep you on course.

May the Holy Spirit help us discern our personal rules of engagement, and may He give us the grace to honour them, not out of fear, but out of love for the One who called us. In Jesus name. Amen.

## WHAT ARE YOUR RULES OF ENGAGEMENT?

So now, the question gently but firmly turns to us.

What are your rules of engagement?

Do you have clear, Spirit-led boundaries, or does anything go?

Are you a Christian who loves God but lives without restraint?

A believer who serves faithfully but has no personal convictions?

A pastor, leader, or minister whose public calling is strong, yet whose private life has no guardrails?

These are not questions meant to condemn; they are questions meant to awaken us.

Paul confronts this tension head-on when he writes,

“‘I have the right to do anything,’ you say, but not everything is beneficial... ‘I have the right to do anything,’ you say, but I will not be mastered by anything” (1 Corinthians 6:12).

Here, Paul acknowledges Christian liberty, but he also draws a crucial line: freedom without discipline leads to bondage. Grace gives us permission to choose well, not to live carelessly. Rules of engagement are not about legalism. They are not about proving how spiritual you are. They are the personal convictions the Holy Spirit places on your heart to protect your assignment. They are the quiet instructions God gives you in the secret place, often unnoticed by others, but vital to your growth.

They shape what you watch, because your eyes are gates to your soul (Matthew 6:22).

They influence where you go, because not every environment nourishes your spirit (Psalm 1:1).

They guide who you associate with, because “bad company corrupts good character” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

They govern how you speak, because life and death are in the power of the tongue (Proverbs 18:21).

They filter what you allow into your spirit, because what fills you eventually flows out of you (Luke 6:45).

Without rules, distraction becomes inevitable.

Without boundaries, compromise becomes subtle.

And without obedience, intimacy with God slowly fades.

This is why Jesus said, “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15). Love for God is not only expressed in worship songs and service; it is revealed in obedience, especially when no one is watching.

It is important to say this clearly: this is not about copying someone else’s convictions. What God restricts for one person may not be the same for another. Romans 14 reminds us that faith and conviction are deeply personal matters of conscience before God. The danger is not in difference; the danger is in disobedience.

So ask yourself honestly:

What has God told you not to do?

What has He been nudging you to let go of?

What has He restricted, not because it is sinful, but because it is unhelpful to your calling?

Many battles we lose are not because we are weak, but because we refused to disengage from what God asked us to leave.

Samson did not lose his strength in one moment; he lost it by repeatedly ignoring the boundaries tied to his calling (Judges 16). Esau lost his birthright not through rebellion, but through carelessness, trading something sacred for temporary satisfaction (Genesis 25:29-34). Beloved, God is calling us into a season of intentional living. A season where we stop asking, "Is it a sin?" and start asking, "Is it beneficial to my walk with God? Does this protect or dilute my calling? Does this draw me closer to Jesus or quietly pull me away?"

Different assignments require different rules.

Different measures of grace require different disciplines.

But the same Lord requires obedience.

Jesus Himself said, "To whom much is given, much will be required" (Luke 12:48). The more God entrusts to you, the more intentional your life must become.

May the Holy Spirit gently but clearly reveal your personal rules of engagement.

And may He give you the grace, not just to hear them, but to honour them with joy, humility, and love.

Because obedience is not restriction; it is alignment. And alignment is where power, peace, and intimacy with God flow freely in Jesus name. Amen.

## PRAYER

Father, in the name of Jesus,

I thank You for the freedom You have given me in Christ. Thank You that You have not called me to live carelessly, but purposefully. Today, I come before You with a willing and surrendered heart.

Lord, help me to discern what is beneficial and pleasing to You. Open my eyes to see the things that distract me from Your presence and weaken my intimacy with You. Give me the grace to let go of anything You have not permitted for my life, even if it is acceptable to others.

Holy Spirit, establish Your convictions in my heart. Teach me how to live by Your rules of engagement, rules that guard my calling, protect my spirit, and align me with Your will.

Strengthen me to obey You fully, without compromise, delay, or negotiation.

Father, I ask for grace to walk in discipline, wisdom to choose rightly, and courage to stand firm even when obedience is uncomfortable. Let my life reflect Your holiness, my decisions honour You, and my walk bring You glory.


I surrender my will, my choices, and my desires to You. Lead me, guide me, and keep me within the boundaries of Your perfect will. In Jesus mighty name, Amen.










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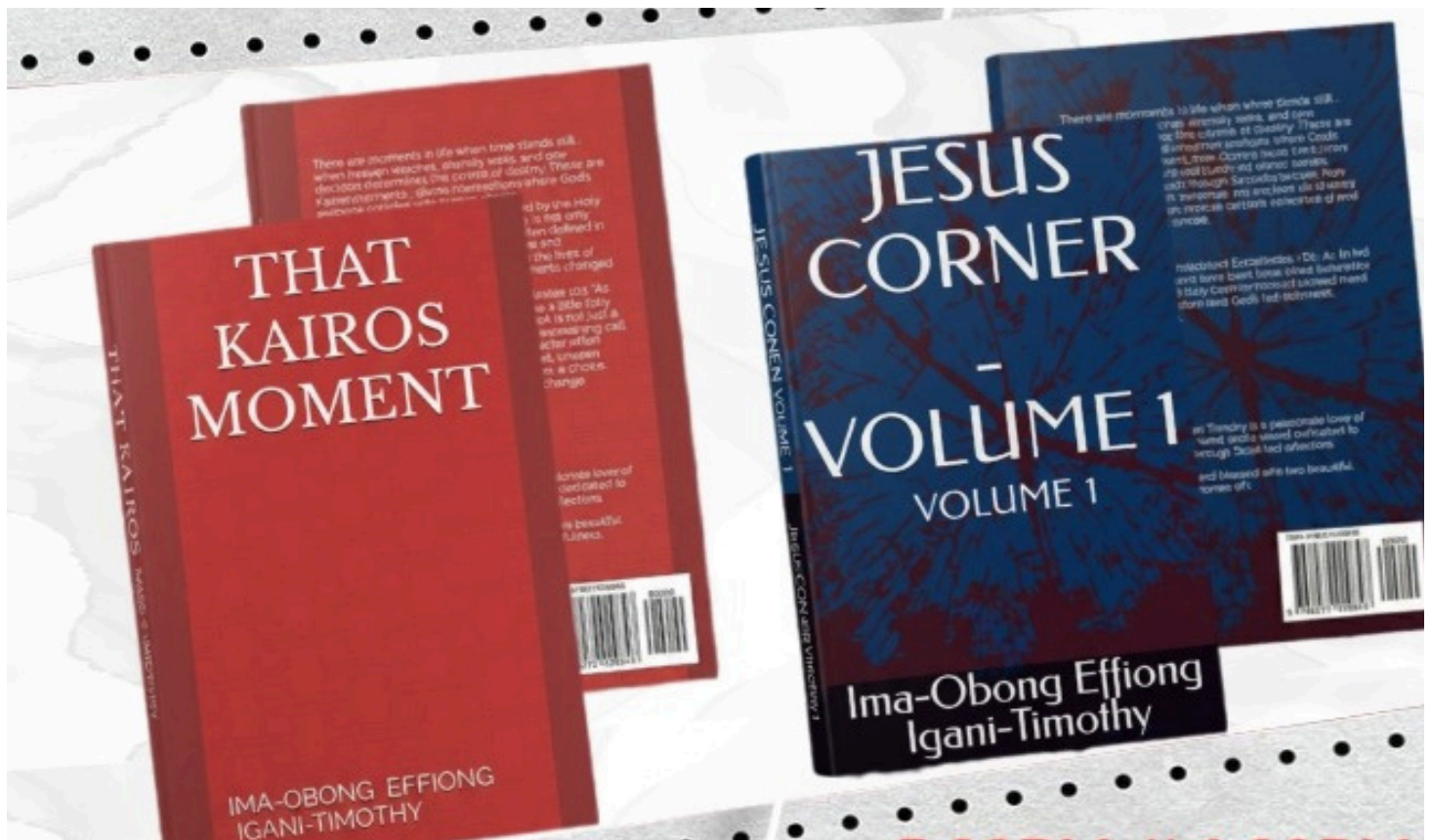
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