



RCCG OCEANIA

Bible Foundations

AVOIDING SIN, DIVISION, AND FALSE DOCTRINE

AT A GLANCE

BIG IDEA

Scripture is clear that God hates specific patterns of sin that damage people and communities. The gospel moves believers from bondage to sin into heartfelt obedience to the teaching delivered to them. Because doctrine shapes life, Christians must watch for those who cause divisions contrary to that doctrine and turn away from them.

PRIMARY PASSAGES

Proverbs 6:16-19

Romans 6:17

Romans 16:17

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- God explicitly identifies behaviors He hates, including pride, deceit, violence, and stirring up discord (Proverbs 6:16-19).
- Obedience is not merely external; it is “from the heart” and connected to the form of teaching received (Romans 6:17).
- Sound doctrine and a sound life belong together; what you follow shapes how you live (Romans 6:17).
- Believers are instructed to watch for people who cause divisions and obstacles contrary to the doctrine learned (Romans 16:17).
- The biblical response to divisive, doctrine-opposing influence is to avoid it, not normalize it (Romans 16:17).

INTRODUCTION

Scripture treats sin, doctrine, and unity as deeply connected. God is not unclear about what He hates, and His warnings are meant to protect people and preserve community. The gospel does more than adjust behavior; it reshapes the heart to obey true teaching. Because teaching forms lives, believers are also called to discern and distance themselves from influences that promote division and obstacles contrary to the doctrine learned.

SCRIPTURE READING

- **Proverbs 6:16-19** — This passage lists specific sins God hates—attitudes, words, and actions that harm others and fracture community.
- **Romans 6:17** — This verse highlights transformation: believers move into wholehearted obedience aligned with the pattern of teaching delivered to them.
- **Romans 16:17** — This instruction calls believers to watch for and avoid divisive influences that contradict the doctrine learned.

KEY POINTS

1. TAKE GOD'S MORAL DIAGNOSIS SERIOUSLY — God does not speak vaguely about evil.

Proverbs 6:16-19 provides a concrete moral diagnosis—sins God hates and finds detestable—covering inner attitudes (like pride), outward speech (like lies), harmful actions (like violence), and relational damage (stirring up discord). This list is meant to form conscience and practice. It calls believers to examine not only obvious wrongdoing but also the subtle sins that fracture trust and unity. Use the passage as a personal and communal mirror. Ask where these patterns appear in motives, conversations, decisions, and conflicts—especially anything that destroys peace and promotes discord.

- Read Proverbs 6:16-19 slowly and identify one attitude, one speech pattern, and one action to repent of and replace.
- Practice truthfulness and humility in conversations where exaggeration, defensiveness, or pride would normally appear.
- Refuse to participate in gossip, slander, or rumor-sharing—especially when it fuels suspicion or division.
- When conflict arises, aim to repair peace rather than win; avoid actions that “stir up discord.”

Scripture: Proverbs 6:16-19

2. OBEY FROM THE HEART, SHAPED BY TRUE TEACHING — Romans 6:17 connects real change to two realities: heartfelt obedience and a definite “form of teaching” that believers have received. Obedience is not mere external compliance; it flows from a renewed heart that embraces God’s truth. The verse also implies that doctrine is not optional or abstract. Teaching has a “shape,” and that shape forms discipleship—how believers think, choose, speak, and live. A key question is not only, “Am I obeying?” but also, “What teaching is shaping my obedience?” Scripture calls believers to be molded by the gospel’s pattern rather than by competing voices that distort life.

- Ask God to strengthen obedience that is genuinely “from the heart,” not driven by fear of people or desire to appear righteous.
- Identify one area where outward behavior is present but the heart is resistant; pursue repentance and sincere obedience there.
- Regularly review the core teaching you have received from Scripture and align habits and choices with it.
- When facing temptation, remember that true freedom includes being shaped by sound teaching rather than returning to bondage.

Scripture: Romans 6:17

KEY POINTS (CONT.)

3. **RECOGNIZE DIVISION AS A SPIRITUAL DANGER** — Romans 16:17 treats division and obstacles contrary to learned doctrine as serious threats, not minor personality clashes. Division that contradicts the gospel undermines spiritual health and destabilizes communities. The instruction begins with discernment: “watch” for patterns and people that produce division and stumbling blocks. This requires alertness, not paranoia—careful observation rooted in love for God, Scripture, and the well-being of others. Disagreement is not automatically sinful, but division “contrary to the doctrine” is uniquely dangerous because it pulls people away from obedience shaped by truth.
 - Pay attention to repeated patterns: conversations that consistently breed suspicion, factions, or contempt for sound teaching.
 - Evaluate teachings by whether they align with the doctrine learned and whether they produce godly obedience.
 - Refuse to amplify arguments that create obstacles to faithfulness; pursue clarity, peace, and truth.
 - Pray for discernment to distinguish ordinary misunderstandings from doctrine-opposing division.

Scripture: Romans 16:17

KEY POINTS (CONT.)

4. **RESPOND BIBLICALLY: AVOID WHAT CONTRADICTS DOCTRINE** — Romans 16:17 gives a direct response to divisive, doctrine-opposing influence: “avoid them.” Avoidance is not denial or indifference; it is protective obedience meant to preserve unity, integrity, and continued faithfulness to the gospel. Avoidance includes refusing to be drawn into a person’s divisive agenda, refusing to platform teaching that contradicts learned doctrine, and choosing distance when engagement becomes a channel for confusion or stumbling. Romans 6:17 reminds believers what is being protected: a life of obedience from the heart shaped by true teaching. Guarding doctrine is not merely intellectual; it is about guarding the path of discipleship.
- Set clear boundaries with influences (in conversation, small groups, or relationships) that repeatedly promote division contrary to doctrine.
 - Decline invitations to participate in debates or circles where the goal is to fracture unity rather than pursue truth.
 - Strengthen healthy connections with people and settings that reinforce sound teaching and heartfelt obedience.
 - If unsure how to apply “avoid them,” begin by reducing access and influence while seeking wisdom and clarity from Scripture.

Scripture: [Romans 16:17](#)

[Romans 6:17](#)

GROUP DISCUSSION

Tip: Use these questions to guide the group from seeing → understanding → applying.

OBSERVATION

- In Proverbs 6:16-19, what kinds of sins are listed (attitudes, speech, actions, relational outcomes)?
- What repeated themes do you notice in the list (harm to others, deceit, pride, discord)?
- According to Romans 6:17, what kind of obedience is emphasized, and what is it connected to?

OBSERVATION (CONT.)

- In Romans 16:17, what two things are believers told to watch for, and what response is commanded?

INTERPRETATION

- Why might God highlight sins that fracture trust and unity alongside sins that cause direct harm?
- What does “obedient from the heart” suggest about the difference between external conformity and true transformation?
- How does the “form of teaching” in Romans 6:17 help explain why doctrine and daily life cannot be separated?
- What makes divisions “contrary to the doctrine” especially dangerous compared to ordinary disagreements?
- How can “avoid them” be understood as a form of wisdom and protection rather than hostility?

APPLICATION

- Which item from Proverbs 6:16-19 is most likely to appear subtly in everyday life, and what would repentance look like in practice?
- Where is it easiest to obey outwardly while resisting inwardly—and how can obedience become more “from the heart”?
- What helps you test whether a teaching is shaping you toward faithful obedience or pulling you off course?
- What boundaries could you set to reduce the influence of divisive, doctrine-opposing voices while still acting with integrity?
- What would it look like for your group to actively cultivate unity that is consistent with the doctrine learned?

PRAYER FOCUS

- Convict us of the sins You hate, and grant true repentance in attitudes, words, and actions that harm others.
- Form in us obedience from the heart, shaped by the teaching of the gospel rather than competing voices.
- Give us discernment to recognize division and stumbling blocks that contradict sound doctrine, and courage to respond wisely.
- Protect our communities with truthful speech, humility, and peace that aligns with Your Word.

NEXT STEP

Prayerfully study the key passages, identify one concrete area for repentance and obedience, and establish clear boundaries against influences that promote division contrary to sound teaching.

CONCLUSION

God's Word names what destroys people and community, calls for obedience that flows from the heart, and warns against division that contradicts sound doctrine. A faithful response includes honest self-examination, deeper submission to the teaching delivered in Scripture, careful discernment about divisive influences, and deliberate avoidance of what undermines gospel-shaped unity and obedience.