**1) Know the rules.**

It is important to know the special rules in chess as well as how the pieces move.

Don't believe your opponent.

Get a rule book. *The USCF Official Rules of Chess*.

Study your Bible and attend a church for worship.

 Exodus 20:2-17, Proverbs 22:6, Deuteronomy 6

**2) What is under attack?**

Since the object of chess is to 'checkmate' the King, it would seem the player with the most pieces would have a better chance of winning. If you have nothing to attack with, you cannot win. Don't give away pieces (material) for nothing. Ask yourself, "What is under attack?", or "What will be attacked very soon"? What is causing a problem in your life today? Are you working at a job that has you down? Does alcohol, drugs, or pornography play a part in your life? Are you filled with greed, envy, pride or lust?

You are under attack by sin and you need to address it today. (Proverbs 18:10)

**3) What can I attack** (or do)?

There may be times when your pieces are under attack but you have a move that makes a bigger threat against the other player.

A strong defense can be a good offense.

Pray and ask God to help you. He loves you and cares for you.

With God, nothing is impossible. (Matthew 19:26, Luke 1:37)

**4) Develop quickly**.

You cannot win if your men are still on the first row. Your pieces need to be moved into action. Avoid moving big pieces (like the Queen and Rooks) too early. In the beginning of the game they can be attacked by too many other pieces. Usually develop Knights before Bishops.

Learn how to use all the tools God has given you and he will bless you and give you even more than you ever thought you could have.

**5) Look for moves that ‘open’ up squares**.

The player who can attack (cover) the most squares has a better chance.

This is the ***'KING of the HILL***' principle.

Make moves that limit or force your opponent to respond. You need to always look for ways to reach out and touch others with the love of the Savior, Jesus Christ. The more people that you touch, the more blessed you will be.

**6) When you are ‘ahead’, trade pieces.**

If you are ahead (have more pieces), try to exchange pieces. In the end you will have more men left to finish the attack and should be able to win.

It will not do you any good to have a lot of money or things in the end of your life if you have not turned your life over to Christ.

You can give up a lot of things today for the rewards and promise of the future.

**7) Be a good sport.**

Chess is a game. It is competitive, but it is a game. Winning and losing is not what is important. Being fair and doing your best is your goal.

No matter how good you are, there will always be someone somewhere who is just a little better.

There will be days when you will make mistakes. The only 'REAL' mistake is when you fail to learn something from a 'bad' situation, problem, or action.

Be kind and forgiving to one another as Jesus has said.

**8) Don't Be '*and if only I*....'**

 After a game is over, don't boast of the victory or dwell on the defeat. Often times a player will go over the game and find many choices where *'A better move would have been...'*, or *'If only I had played such-and-such move, then...'.* It's nice to find new things, but the game is over and what '*might have been if only I had...*' doesn't count. God is the only one who knows the true plan. Do not try to guess why things did or did not happen. God wants us to have the best. Trust Him. It is hard to live the life of hope and joy if you are looking back on a life of hurt and regrets.

**9) Play the Board, not the Person!**

 Do not look at the person you are playing; keep your focus on the board.

It does not matter the age, race, sex or anything else about the person.

Many 'older' players tend to get intimidated by 'younger' players and many 'younger' players often get intimidated by 'older' players.

Sometimes boys get distracted by a girl player – It is not about the person.

**10) Seek out harder opponents!**

 If you always play easier opponents, you will not grow in wisdom or maturity. Seek out players who will challenge you and cause you to think and work harder. Likewise, be willing to share what you know with less experienced players and realize that sometimes a student may become stronger than the teacher! A clay pot only becomes useful after it has been fired at a high temperature. God, you are the potter and I am the clay – mold me to your image. Allow me to be useful and help others. Show me how to be better.