

## Strictly Follow the Rules

*Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.—Joshua 1:7*

When it comes to competitive sports, we expect teams to play by the rules. We are indignant when we feel that they have cheated. Yet are we as incensed when we hear of someone breaking God's rules?

Society takes God's rules lightly and even jests about them. But to God each command is to be taken seriously. He told the Israelites not to even turn a little bit to the right or to the left but to stay absolutely true to His word. This is a day when Christians make excuses for their behavior and try to do what man expects not giving adequate thought to what God expects. The two are incompatible.

God knew we would be in a righteous war. In Ephesians 6, Paul talks about being strong in the Lord and putting on the whole armor of God that we can stand against the methods of the devil. In Joshua, we are told to be strong and courageous so that we can be obedient. It is only when the Christian is strong enough to obey the LORD that he will have victory in this struggle. Charles H. Spurgeon said, "Our victories will very much depend upon our obeying Him with all our heart, throwing strength and courage into action of our faith."

This is not a half way obedience as the verse says, "observe to do." That indicates a thoughtful, careful determination to strictly follow the rules. With such obedience to God's rules, God promises His blessing.