

November 28

Luke 11:28 (NIV) ²⁸ [Jesus] replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.” **Matthew 7:21 (NIV)** [Jesus said,] ²¹ “Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter.”

I have written a little about my baseball career. I had never been taught much about baseball when my dad had me join a team. I did not like it because I had no idea what we were doing. So, when we moved to Germany, I had no plans to continue that frustrating experience. However, when my friends signed up for baseball, I did likewise. My coach, a semi-pro enlisted man, saw from the beginning I was lost. Instead of relegating me to the bench, he began working with me. He taught me how to use my glove, how to judge a fly ball, how to anticipate a batter, and how to hit. Whatever he told me, I did. When he told me to practice, I practiced. Wherever he sent me on that field I went. Over time, I became a competent baseball player.

Many people hesitate when hearing Jesus’ words that we are to obey everything He commands. If we love Him and want to spend eternity with Him, we will do what He commands. Jesus’ commands make it seem as if we have no choice in our lives. To follow Jesus, it seems we have to give up our will and become puppets, following in Jesus’ footsteps. Yet, that is not the reality of Jesus’ words or of our relationship with Him. I did not have to follow my coach’s instructions. I wanted to do so because I had faith in him. I knew he was doing his best to make me my best. We are to have that same attitude with Jesus. He is the Lord. He knows the end from the beginning. He knows us better than we know ourselves. His commands are not burdensome; instead, they are life. We follow them because we trust Him, because He always speaks the truth, and because His Way is always the best way. I never lost my individuality playing baseball, and the same holds true of us as we follow Jesus. We obey His commands because we know that doing so will make us better persons than we could ever be on our own.