

THE EXTRA MILE

MATTHEW 5:38-42

Text:

Introduction:

We live in a self-centered world

There was a book written a few years ago by a pretty famous female author that talked about the importance of a revolution from within.

Throughout the entire book she speaks of nothing but a selfish life.

She talked of the inner self, true self, future self, self-love, self-rescue, the unique self, self empowerment, self belief, all through the book.

How can we as believers learn the joy of the selfless life in such a selfish world?

A man who is wrapped up in himself makes a pretty small package. Let me tell you the Christian life is not found in being selfish but in being selfless. Jesus calls us to go the extra mile in serving others. And it is that extra mile that will change your life.

Notice:

1. THE PRINCIPLE OF THE EXTRA MILE

When the Lord spoke these words Palestine had been occupied by Rome for about 100 years.

Now the Romans had learned many things from the Persians.

They had learned not only to conquer the land and but also use the people for their good.

If a Persian soldier were on a journey, he would tell a local to carry his sword or something for a mile.

Out of fear for his own life the individual would obey and carry the sword.

The Romans followed their lead and did the same to the Jewish civilians.

The Romans went so far as to write a law which said the local must carry the burden for one mile if asked to carry something.

This was humiliating to the Jew and the Romans enjoyed it.

Because of the humiliation the burden bearer would only go one mile and no further.

The Lord however told His followers that if they were commanded to carry the weapon for one mile that they should carry the weapon an extra mile.

When the Lord said this they must have thought that He was crazy.

Why in the world would we do such a thing to aid the soldiers, they hated, to aid him in his occupation?

What the Lord was trying to get them to grasp was to do more than is required by the law.

The Pharisees were into keeping the law but the Lord said that our righteousness was to exceed that of the Pharisees.

The Pharisees were into the minimum; just enough to get by.

But the Lord said to go the extra mile.

Illustration:

There was this farmer who decided he would buy himself a car. He saw one advertised that he liked. He

went to the dealer and the salesman began to add on extra charges.

A/C, is an extra \$500.

Whitewall tires, an extra \$200.

Genuine leather upholstery will be an extra \$200.

The next week the salesman wanted to buy a cow, so he went to the farmer.

The farmer said your basic cow would cost you \$400.

Then he started listing the extras.

Two-tone exterior is \$50.

Two horns will be an extra \$25.

Genuine cow hide will be an extra \$200.

Automatic fly swatter will be an extra \$15.

A person chooses what level he will live his life. There is the hellish level that returns evil for good. There is the human level that returns good for good and bad for bad. Then there is the heavenly level that returns good no matter what. That is the principal of going the extra mile.

2. THE POWER IN THE EXTRA MILE

When we begin to put into practice this command it transforms our lives.

A. It Will Change Our Attitude

The first mile was the slave mile. But the extra mile is the smile mile.

You do it out of love; our love for the Lord.

B. It Will Bring About an Accomplishment

The reason some believers are unsuccessful in their commitment and devotions is because they only do the minimum or only go the one mile.

C. It Will Open Opportunity and Create a Strong Alliance

To go the extra mile is contrary to what the world teaches and the extra mile will open doors that we thought would never be opened.

The Lord went the extra mile when He paid our penalty and died for our sins on the cross although He did not deserve it.

He went the extra mile for you. He is asking you to do the same for others.

Close:

The Lord covers most areas of life that we will face or experience in these verses.

- The Illustration of Personal Injury – the Insult; the Impulse; and the Instruction

Matthew 5:39

³⁹ But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

- The Illustration of Personal Injustice – the Perspective and the Purpose

Matthew 5:40

⁴⁰ And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also.

- The Illustration of Personal Inconvenience – the Demand; and the Distance

Matthew 5:41

⁴¹ And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

- The Illustration of Person Inhibition – the Expression and the Expectation

Matthew 5:42

⁴² Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

This life is not about our rights, but rather about our responsibility.

May we who are Christians be people who will go the extra mile.