

The Second Mile

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[0:00] Matthew 5, from verse 38, the context there is the Lord speaking on the mount.

! He's saying, you've heard it have been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. 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.

And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

The context there is of love your neighbour. Verse 43, it says, you have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. Verse 44, but I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his Son to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth the rain on the just and on the unjust.

[1:21] For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. I'd like to hone in on verse 41. Matthew 5, 41.

And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. The second mile. The second mile. Under the Roman law, a Roman soldier could compel any person to carry his pack for him one mile.

Are you willing to go the second mile? Go the second mile. We can too easily shy away from inconvenience to settle for the bare minimum.

And we do that as Christians sometimes, don't we? As Christians we settle for the least that we can do, the bare minimum. Or will you go above and beyond the call of duty?

[2:28] Will you have that Christianity that goes beyond expectations? A radical kind of Christianity. Over the top. Now I read a book by a businessman, Zig Ziglar.

Over the top. And it was quite an encouraging book to me. As much as he was using worldly terminology, but he was a Christian, Zig Ziglar.

And it's only about going over the top. As Christians we should be over the top. We should be full on. We should be radical. Extreme. The first mile is hard.

That's what you're expected to do. When the Roman soldier comes and says, carry my pack. It's what you're expected to do. It's your obligation. It's the bare minimum.

The second mile is where we go above and beyond that which we're called to do. Beyond the call of duty. It's voluntary. It's with cheerfulness. It's with joy that we give that second mile.

[3:28] It's with generosity and kindness. God loves the cheerful giver. Going the second mile. You can think of it in those terms of service, of ministry. Of our giftings, of our abilities.

In the workplace even. Ecclesiastes 9.10. It says that we should put our hand to things with all our mind. With all our strength. We shouldn't hold back. But many people, many Christians sadly, they're one milers.

They're one milers. They do what they feel they're commanded to do. But nothing extra. It's as if it's just in their mind. They're just performing out of duty. Out of a sense of duty.

But God's people are called to be second milers. We're called to go the second mile. To go the extra distance. To go beyond what's expected. To give more than we have to.

To step outside our comfort zone. And go beyond the comfort barrier. So that nothing will block you. Nothing will stop you from serving God. Nothing will hinder you.

[4:31] You'll plough through. You won't mind personal inconvenience. You won't hold back when disappointment dogs your steps. None of these things will move you as a believer.

Because you're a second mile Christian. You're a second mile Christian. You'll go the extra distance. You can see that in Paul's life. For example in Acts 20. He's talking of serving the Lord with all humility.

Of mind. And with many tears. And temptations or trials. That befell him. He says he taught publicly. Went from house to house. Testifying.

Preaching the word. Now he says I'm bound in the spirit. To go into Jerusalem. Knowing the things that shall be for me there.

This is Acts 20 verse 23. He says that he knows what's going to face him in Jerusalem. He's well prepared. He knows God by spirit has told him what he can expect.

[5:30] He says that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city. Saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But verse 24. He says but none of these things move me.

But none of these things move me. Neither count on my life dear unto myself. So that I might finish my course with joy. And the ministry which I've received of the Lord Jesus.

To testify the gospel of the grace of God. None of these things move me. What are you moved by? People of God this morning. What are you moved by?

Sometimes we can be moved by the trials. Sometimes we can be moved by the tears. We can be moved by the opposition. But Paul said none of these things move me.

Even bonds and afflictions that abide me. None of these things move me. Because I want to finish my course with joy. He wanted to go the second mile. He wanted to undertake that journey of faith.

[6:34] He wanted to go beyond the pain barrier. Some things should move us. Jesus was moved with compassion. Noah was moved by faith.

He built an ark. He was moved with fear. Holy men of God. We read we're moved by the Holy Spirit. And penned his word. Some things we should be moved by.

We should be moved by the Holy Spirit. We should be moved by fear. The fear of God. It's a good kind of fear. We should be moved by faith. And moved with compassion. But the things of life.

The difficulties that surround us. The things that would deter us. The things that would make us maybe want to let things slip. The things that would make us feel like it's too hard.

They should not move us. They should just make us want to dig deep. And go stronger in God.

Because the job must be done. The ministry must be done. The service that God has called us to.

[7:32] We're not serving on our own terms. For our own vain glory. We will plough through. We'll break through. In ministry. In serving God.

We need to go the second mile. Now the context in Matthew 5. The Lord Jesus is speaking. In the context here. It's about human relationships. It's about how he gets on with other people.

It's about those relationships that we have. In life. He speaks of love. And love for our enemies. Love for our enemies. Now.

It's where the rubber hits the road isn't it? When we actually go beyond. That which is comfortable. I mean I've been in churches. In this church.

Some a while back. And we had fisticuffs in the foyer one day. We had fisticuffs. We had two. I thought were godly Christian men. Trying to thump each other.

[8:29] And you know. You wonder. That's. You wonder whether. Something is missing. When you see that. Now. We might disagree with one another here today.

There's. I know there's various. Viewpoints. On all kinds of subjects. But. It's about. It's about human relationships. Isn't it? Love. Love your enemies.

It's about dealing with people. And the Lord Jesus. He went the second mile for us. Didn't he? While we were yet. Sinners. Even though we were his enemies. Christ died.

For the ungodly. Thank God for that. Christ died for the ungodly. And the Lord Jesus. He went the second mile. He became a man. He humbled himself.

Even to death. In 2 Corinthians 8.9. It says. For you know the grace. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. That though he was rich. Yet. For your sakes.

[9:25] He became poor. That ye through his poverty. Might be rich. He that was the richest. Became the poorest. For us. He that was perfect.

Became. S. I. N. For us. Sin. God's forbearance. With man. That should speak to us. Shouldn't it? The second mile.

That Christ went. That should speak to us. Romans 2.4. It says. Of the riches of his goodness. And forbearance. And long suffering. The goodness of God.

The forbearance of God. The long suffering of God. He's demonstrated it towards us. Hasn't he? His great forbearance. That's an expression of his grace. His patience towards us.

Now it's interesting. Romans 2.4. And there was a time when I used to like the NIV. The New International Version. But it gets it really wrong on this one.

[10:21] In Romans 2.4. It changes the forbearance of God. To the tolerance of God. It says God is tolerant.

Friends. I put it to you today. God is not tolerant. He's not tolerant. He is just. He's just. But thank God he's forbearing. He's forbearing.

He's holding back. He's holding back his wrath. He's holding back his judgment. He is patient. And persevering. He's long suffering towards us. God is not tolerant.

He's intolerant. Towards sin. But he is forbearing. Thank God for that. Today. And here's the great example. It's one of the human relationships.

As God's people. We're meant to be forbearing. Forbearing. It says in Colossians 3.13. Forbearing one another. And forgiving one another. So if any man have a quarrel against standing.

[11:22] Even as Christ forgave you. So also do ye. In Ephesians 4. Likewise he says. That we should walk worthy. With all lowliness.

And meekness. With long suffering. Forbearing one another. In love. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit. In the bond of peace. Now I don't know about you.

But some Christians get under my skin. Even some of you people. No. But not really. No. But sometimes Christians can annoy one another.

And they can disturb one another. And you can get frustrated with one another. But God is helping you to learn forbearance. I had this prayer request this morning.

So I put on here. I've lost it now. But it said. That can you tell. Can we pray for those who are making a mess. To clean up their mess. Amen. Now I know who said that.

[12:23] But maybe God is teaching. Whoever put that prayer request forward. That you've got to forbear with those who are making a mess. You've got to forbear with those who are being messy.

You know. If you bring food to eat. Some people are going to gush the food. It's going to get eaten. You know. You've got to be forbearing with one another.

You know. If there's dishes to be washed. Thank God people have had something to eat. And they've been able to fellowship together. We need to forbear with one another. Forbearing one another. You know.

Some people get up here and say all kinds of things. But. And I'm not saying anything went wrong today or anything. But I'm just saying. That there's a sense we've got to forbear with one another. Some people might pray something.

That we might not be able to say amen to. But we've got to forbear with one another. And learn to be a blessing to others. It says in Romans 15.7.

[13:19] Receive ye one another. In the context it says. The strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. And not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour. For his good to edification.

Romans 12.10 it says. Be kindly affectionate towards one another. With brotherly love. In honour preferring one another. It's about not being selfish. It's about edifying.

It's about going the second mile. You know. I'm still learning that. You know. I'm still learning that with my dear wife. You know. I've got to forbear one another. At home.

But she's got more forbearing to do than me. But we've got to forbear one another. In love. Don't we? And you think of for example. The good Samaritan. The good Samaritan.

He went the second mile. The good Samaritan. You read it in Luke 10. The man was bashed on the road. Bleeding and dying. His clothing torn.

[14:14] Wounded. The thieves left him. Half dead. Luke 10. 31. Tells of a certain priest came by. He passed on the other side.

A Levite went by. He looked on him. He passed on the other side. Verse 33. But a certain Samaritan. As he journeyed. Came where he was. And when he saw him. He had compassion on him. And went to him. And bound up his wounds. Pouring in oil and wine. Set him on his own beast. And brought him to an inn. And took care of him. On the morrow he departed.

He took out two pence. Gave them to the host. And said unto him. Take care of him. And whatsoever thou spendest more. When I come again. I will repay thee.

Look at how he gave. And gave. And gave. Look at how he went. The second mile. The third mile. The fourth mile. He was journeying. He had a job to do.

[15:10] He had an appointment to keep. He had business to conduct. What a distraction. What an interruption. What an inconvenience. That man was.

He could have been like the others. Passed by on the other side. Even taken a look and passed by. But no. He had compassion. He bound up his wounds. He poured in the oil and wine.

He went to expense. He set him on his own beast. He took the place of walking. Or the lesser beast. He put him on the best beast. The best donkey. And he brought him to an inn.

And he took care of him. Overnight he took care of him. Then on the morrow. He gave money. For time ahead. And he said if there's more. I'll pay again. Second mile.

Christianity isn't it? Second mile. He could have said. Look. I'll pay X amount. He didn't even put a limit on it. You know.

[16:06] That's amazing isn't it? He gave the two pence. And he said. Whatever you spend more. I will repay when I come again. You know. That's the second mile.

Luke 10.37. The Lord Jesus says. He that showed mercy on him. He was the neighbour. He was the one who fulfilled. Love thy neighbour. Then said Jesus unto him.

Go and do thou likewise. Go and do thou likewise. God's teaching us. When we have people that are like sandpaper. Heard that expression.

You know. Sandpaper's good when it rubs off the rough edges of our lives. Isn't it? Sometimes when people bug you. It could be God. Using them. To teach you.

Forbearance. To teach you. To not be fault finding. To not. Be overwhelmed by the shortcomings of others. To avoid contention.

[17:04] In 1 Thessalonians 5.14. Paul says. Now we exhort you brethren. Warn them that are unruly. Comfort the feeble minded. Support the weak.

Be patient towards all men. So there's a time to exhort. I'm not saying. There's a time to say. That's. Not exactly. Sound teaching. We will exhort people.

We will warn them. That are unruly. There's times when. We've got to say. No. That's. Out of order. It's unruly. We need to be warned. We need to comfort the feeble minded.

There's. There's many amongst us. In our circle. That are feeble minded. People we want to comfort. And exhort. And love. As Christ would love them. And for all men.

We're to be patient. Toward all men. You know. That applies to everybody. So those that we find. The hardest to deal with. In life. In. In a home life. Workplace.

[18:02] Church life. Be patient. Towards all men. So friends. To wrap up. I want to put it to you today. To accept the challenge. Accept the challenge to. Go the second mile.

Accept the challenge to go the second mile. Whether it be in ministry. In serving God. Nothing should be too hard for you. Nothing should be too hard for you. It's a joy and privilege.

To serve him. And we've heard about giftings. We've heard encouragement. To unwrap the giftings. And use that which God has placed in your life. For his glory.

Use the talents and callings. The abilities that God has placed in your life. And go the second mile with the ministry you have. Don't say, look I'm going to do this.

And draw a line. Because God will make you go over the line. God will help you to go over the line. To go beyond the comfort zone. You know, there's folk here.

[19:02] That have got up to speak. And this is the first church in decades. That they better have opportunity. Let alone been asked to do such a thing.

And we ought to be a church that encourages ministry. Encourages all of you to minister. You know, there's some folk that have been afraid to even pray out loud. You're amongst friends here. And the friend of friends is here. He's the one you're talking to. And you know how to put on a show. I know it was said about dress code. We're not promoting a dress code.

You can, well, you can wear just about anything you like. To a degree. But, I mean, as far as... You're not answering to me, it's to him.

What would you wear for him? That's the question. It's not about impressing men. It's about pleasing God. And if you can please God in casual clothes, then by all means, do so.

[20:03] But people, the bottom line is to go the second mile. Go beyond what's comfortable for you. It may be that you've never prayed publicly.

For example. Or, you know, shared a testimony. Or shared a Bible reading. Or stepped out. You know, I needed a backup bus driver this morning.

And I'd like to have someone I could call on for that. I'd like to have people I can call on to do such things. There's lots of opportunities. So, step outside the comfort zone.

And be willing to serve God. And go the second mile. Go beyond duty. Go enjoy that second mile in that journey of faith.

And especially with one another. Forbearing one another. Love your neighbour as yourself. Love your enemies. And as God's people, we may differ.

[21:03] But we will forbear with one another. Because that's the godly thing to do. Thank you. We'll just pray, shall we? Lord, we just thank you today.

That we can follow in your tread. You who left heaven's glory. You went the second mile. Lord, you've gone above and beyond anything that we could ever imagine or deserve.

We can never be worthy of what you've done for us. Help us, Lord, to serve you. Willingly. To go beyond our own strength.

To rest on your strength. To walk with your spirit. To be led by your spirit. If there's any here today that have yet to trust you. That they'll trust you today.

That they'll say, yes, Lord. I trust you. For paying for my sin. I trust you. I turn to you and ask you, Lord, save me.

[22:08] I want to follow you. Help me, Lord. Help us, Lord, to love one another as you've loved us. In Jesus' name.