**Going the extra mile**

You ever hear the term going the extra mile? What does it mean?

*Matthew 5:41 If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.*

This is where the phrase going the extra mile comes from. This term is used to refer to someone who goes above and beyond what is expected of them.

The roots of this phrase can be traced all the way back to the first century. The Romans had conquered most of the known world and they built a vast system of roads. These Roadways were the lifeblood of Ancient Rome. Over the course of 700 years, the Romans built more than **50,000 miles** of paved highways throughout Europe. This was enough road to encircle the globe and at each mile there was a stone marker. These mile markers determined the distance to the next town as well as to Rome itself.

During this time of Roman rule there was a law that a Roman citizen or soldier could order a subject, from one of the conquered lands, to carry his load for him. Romans adopted this system for their military to keep their soldiers from getting worn out from carrying heavy backpacks which could weigh over 60 pounds. The person was only required to go one mile and they could tell when they had gone a mile by watching the mile markers. If someone refused to do it, they would be flogged.

Now When a Roman soldier told someone to carry his pack, the person would have to drop everything they were doing and go out of their way to obey the order. You can be sure the person ordered to carry the load wasn’t very happy as they were doing it for the same people that attacked, ruled over and was heavily taxing them.

Now in Jesus Sermon on the Mount, He said, whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. You can imagine what the people listening to his sermon would have thought about this. They were under Roman rule and would have been extremely angry about going the first mile much less going two.

* **Jesus is telling his disciples, you must be ready and willing to go the second mile to serve even your greatest enemy.**

This is one of those passages that we, as Christians, like to look past because it requires us to move in our faith, witness, and life to serve not just friends or even strangers but those we don’t even like.

So, if you think about it the first mile was mandatory. It is doing what you have to do, should do and/or need to do. The second mile is going above and beyond that which is required. This is what Jesus is calling us to do.

Now, if you think about what makes someone stand out and rise above everyone else, it is usually their determination and willingness to “go the extra mile” It is their drive to do more than is expected or required of them.

This first mile is expected of us. Can you think of any TV shows, news articles or Magazine cover stories about someone who just did what was expected? **“----Man Mows his yard, story at 10----”.** No! You usually only hear about the person who went above and beyond the expected.

**So, what does the first mile look like**?

For a Christian the first mile is doing what is expected of you: reading your Bible, Going to Church, Praying and giving a helping hand once in a while. This is what is expected of you as a Christian. It’s not always easy and sometimes it can be difficult but you aren’t doing anyone else any favors by just going through the motions.

This is just what the Jewish leaders were doing back in Jesus time and everyone was looking up to them but then Jesus says: For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:20)

**What does the second mile look like?**

Luke 6:27-36 “But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the otheralso. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you. “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Highest, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Jesus said this to show how we should act as His followers so that others will know we are Christians by our actions. This includes Turning the other cheek, Giving the shirt of your back and Doing unto others as we would have them do to you. Bottom line is to love those around you no matter how that act toward you. Now that’s going the second Mile

This one passage tells us a lot on how to go the extra mile in treating others but Jesus talked about how to treat others throughout his teaching throughout his teachings.

* Love your Enemies

Matthew 5:43-44 You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you

* Work with all your heart

Colossians 3:23-24 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving

* Be more willing to give than receive

# Acts 20:35 In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’

* Always forgive

Matthew 18:21-25 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

* Stand out

Matthew 5:16 let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

* Put God first above everything else

# Mark 10:17-27 As He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” … You know the commandments, ‘Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.’” And he said to Him, “Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up.” Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, “One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

This man may have followed all the commandments (what was expected) but he wasn’t going the extra mile.

* **Jesus always asks for the second mile**

No one really expects you to go the extra mile. No one expects you to go beyond what is required. No one expects you to do more than what you have to do. It would be unreasonable for someone to expect you to act with complete selflessness, with no regard for yourself. With no hidden agenda. to love your enemies, help those who are mean to you, or pray for those who curse you.

Heck sometimes just doing nice things for nice people can be hard if it breaks your routine and takes you away from something you enjoy.

**🡪It is the second mile that separates the mediocre from the outstanding**

The first mile seems to take a lot of effort but It’s in the second mile that things get really tough because it starts to break down the attitude of being content in doing the bare minimum that is required.

It’s in going the second mile that your life really begins to change. It takes Time, courage, commitment and perseverance to tolerate the discomfort of going that extra mile or 2 or 3

One of the easiest things in the world to do is to become a Christian All you have to do is confess you are a sinner, repent of your sin, believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for your sin and was raised from the dead, and you become a Christian. But at the same time, one of the most difficult things in the world is to actually **be** **and act like a Christian**.

T**he call to discipleship is not a call to just become a Christian, it is a call to act like Christ.**

The problem with many churches is that they are made up of first mile Christians. Many believers settle for the simple faith that comes in the first mile of the journey and are comfortable with a faith that never moves beyond that first mile because it’s in going the second mile that our faith comes alive but it will cost us something.   This is where Jesus said “take up your cross daily and follow me” ([Luke 9:23](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+9%3A23&version=KJV))

**We need to Remember that God went the second Mile for Us**

The first mile was God giving us a chance, and we failed. God would’ve been perfectly just to have cast us into Hell at that point but Jesus went the second mile when he was beaten, hung on a cross and died for us to make a way for us to be saved.

**NOTE: You still have to do the 1st mile -** I need to point out that you can’t neglect the first mile. The first mile obligations and responsibilities are still a requirement. The second mile is that of a free choice after we have met our responsibilities. You can’t skip the first mile and go straight to the second mile and say that you are going the second mile.

**Closing**

How many of you have heard of the Golden rule? *(***Do unto others as you would have done to you***)* do you follow it?

Have you heard of the Platinum Rule? *(***Do unto others as they would want to be done to them."***)* How is this different?

The Golden Rules says I will treat you how I want to be treated therefore focusing om Me. The Platinum Rule says I will treat you how you want to be treated putting the focus on the other person.

Think of this: some people are huggers and they may think everyone just needs a Hug while others don’t like to be touched. The Golden rules says go hug them but should I force my way on them

The platinum rule goes a step further than the Golden Rule by requiring you to invest some time and effort into understanding the other person. You need to figure out how the other person wants to be treated. **You have to go the extra mile**

So where are you in your walk with Christ? can you say “I am on the Second Mile.”?

Can you think of someone else who has gone the second mile? Or treated you with the platinum rule?