

The Miracle Mile

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Main Scripture Text: Matthew 5:38–42

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

MATTHEW 5:41

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Introduction

We’re preaching through the Sermon on the Mount, and we’re in Matthew chapter 5. Would you be finding it, please—Matthew chapter 5? And, in just a moment, we’re going to read, beginning in verse 38, and read right on through to verse 42—Matthew 5:38–42.

I picked up the newspaper the other day and read an article about a book written by the feminist Gloria Steinem. She’s made a name for herself as, I guess, a radical feminist. And, the title of the book was this: *Revolution From Within: A Book of Self-Esteem*. And, somebody has gone through that book and noted the following facts. I did not read the book. But, here’s what she mentions about self in that book. She mentions “inner self” five times, “self-esteem” 172 times, “future self” thirty-eight times, “true self” twenty times, “false self” seven times, “present self” six times. She also mentions “self-love,” “self-alienation,” “self-contentedness,” “unique self,” “self-wisdom,” “self-healing,” “self-rescue,” “self-denigration,” “the astronomy of the self,” “universal self,” “past self,” “forgotten self,” “older self,” “back-of-the-mind self,” “front-of-the-mind self,” “teenage self,” “internal-worthless self,” “external-sexually-valuable self,” “inflated self,” “self-empowerment,” “self-beneath,” “self-complexion,” “best self,” “optimum self.” Sounds a little “self-centered,” doesn’t it?

Well, we live in a world that is a very, very self-centered world. And, somebody has

well said that, “People who are all wrapped up in themselves make a very small package.” How are we going to get outside ourselves? How are we going to learn the joy of a selfless and Christ-filled life? The passage that I’m going to read to you will tell you all about it. The title of the message this morning: “The Miracle Mile.”

Now look, if you will, in Matthew chapter 5, beginning in verse 38: “*Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you*”—that is, Jesus said—“*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*”—that is, “Go with him two miles”—“*Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.*” (Matthew 5:38–42) Now, I want you to notice especially verse 41: “*And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain*” (Matthew 5:41)—or, “go with him two.”

The title of the message: “The Miracle Mile.” Now, I want to talk to you about “the miracle mile,” which is the second mile. Jesus said, “If anybody forces you to go with him one mile, go with him two.” (Matthew 5:41)

I. The Principle of the Miracle Mile

The first thing I want you to see is what I’m going to call “the principle of the miracle mile.” Now, what is all of this about? Well, you have to understand the background. You see, the Romans occupied the land of Palestine for about one hundred years, but they had learned something from the Persians, who had, at one time, ruled the world. The Persians had learned a secret—that not only would they conquer a people, but they could use those people in a very advantageous way that, as they subjugated them, they could make them do certain menial tasks. And, one of the things was this: that if a Persian soldier was on his journey and he saw somebody in a conquered land, he could say to that person, “Listen, by law, you must carry my knapsack, and you must carry my weapons for a mile.” And, they had to do that. The Romans learned from the Persians some six hundred years before that that was a very wonderful plan.

And so, the Romans would often take a Jewish citizen, a civilian; a Roman soldier would say to a Jewish civilian, “Here, carry this backpack for me. Carry my burden. Carry my weapons. You must do it by law. You must carry this burden for a mile.” That was the law. And, you talk about something that was humiliating to a Jew! Something that he hated with all of the intensity of his soul would be to be forced to carry another man’s burden for a mile.

Now, it is said that every Jewish boy had marked off a milepost from his house. He knew exactly how far a mile was because he was going to carry that burden a mile but not one step further. He knew exactly how far. And so, this is the situation in Jesus’

time, and it caused so much resentment; it caused so much rebellion. And, the Roman soldiers, according to historians, enjoyed humiliating the Jew by making him carry that burden a mile. They were the occupational army, you know, during that time.

Now, Jesus is preaching. They never went to sleep when Jesus was preaching. Jesus is preaching along, and He says, “And if anybody commands you to go with him a mile, go with him two.” (Matthew 5:41) Boy, at that time, they blinked, and heads jerked. “You mean, you want us to do double duty? You want us to go not only one mile; you want us to go two miles?” Jesus said, “That’s exactly right.” What is the principle of the miracle mile? Are you listening? The principle that Jesus Christ is talking about is simply this: you must do more than is required by law.

Now, the Pharisees and the scribes to whom Jesus was speaking in this Sermon on the Mount, among others, they were very careful to keep the law of God, so they thought. And look, if you will, for example, in verse 20. I think you’ll pick it up in chapter 5, verse 20: *“For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”* (Matthew 5:20) Now, the scribes and the Pharisees were very careful to keep the law—at least, they thought they were. They were keeping the letter of the law. They were keeping the law in a punctiliar way. And, Jesus said—listen—“Unless you are willing to go beyond what the scribes and the Pharisees do, you will in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:20) What the Pharisees had, and what many people in America have today, is what I want to call a “minimum morality,” a “loveless legalism.” And, what is the principle of the miracle mile? It is simply this: to do more than what is required.

¶ I was reading the other day about a farmer who had been in to buy a car, and later on the car salesman came to buy from the farmer a cow. And, here’s the way the farmer sold the cow to the automobile dealer; the farmer priced it this way: “Basic cow: four hundred dollars. Two-toned: an extra forty-five dollars. Extra stomach: seventy-five dollars. Produce storage compartment: sixty dollars. Dispensing device—four spigots, ten dollars each: forty dollars. Genuine cowhide upholstery: 125 dollars. Dual horns: fifteen dollars. Automatic fly swatter: thirty-five dollars.” And, some other things added up to 895 dollars for a four-hundred-dollar cow. Now, the Pharisees were very much like that farmer. I mean, they were willing to do just as much as required, and no more.¶

Somebody has said that “life really is lived on three levels: there’s the hellish level that returns evil for good; and then, there’s the human level that returns good for good and evil for evil; and then, there is the holy level, the heavenly level, that returns good for evil.” That’s what our Lord is saying here in 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.”* (Matthew 5:44) “Those who require you

to carry their burden a mile, carry it two.” (Matthew 5:41) Do more than is expected. Do more than is required. Go beyond that minimum morality. That is the principle of the miracle mile.

II. The Practice of the Miracle Mile

Secondly, I want you to notice not only the principle of the miracle mile, but the practice of it. Now, if you read this carelessly, you’ll get the idea that Jesus is teaching passivism. For example, look, if you will, in verses 38 and 39: *“Ye have heard that it hath 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 [two].”* (Matthew 5:38–41)

Now, is Jesus just teaching that Christians are to be doormats? Is that what He’s teaching? Is Jesus teaching that we can never defend ourselves, that we can never protect our homes, our lives, our loved ones? Not at all! As a matter of fact, Jesus said also, if you will remember in this Sermon on the Mount, that He did not come to diminish, or to destroy, the law of the prophets—He didn’t come to destroy that; He came to fulfill it. (Matthew 5:17) And, Jesus said, “Not a jot, not a tittle, shall fail from the law.” (Matthew 5:18) Jesus believed all of the Old Testament law, and a part of the Old Testament law is that we are to defend our loved ones and to defend, even sometimes to the point of death, our liberties and our rights.

As a matter of fact, Jesus here is quoting Exodus chapter 21, verses 24 and 25. He’s quoting it exactly: *“[An] eye for [an] eye, [a] tooth for [a] tooth, hand for [a] hand, foot for [a] foot, Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.”* (Exodus 21:24–25) If you read the Bible and find pacifism and you think Jesus is talking about us being a pacifist, you’re wrong. As a matter of fact, the Bible is against lawlessness. The Bible is against anarchy. We live in a generation of people who have pudding for brains who are defending the lion’s right to eat the lamb. Jesus never did that. Jesus taught that there should be civil justice.

“But now, wait a minute, pastor. On the one hand, you say that the Bible is against lawlessness and the Bible doesn’t teach pacifism; and yet, here, on the other hand, our Lord says, *‘Resist not evil.’* (Matthew 5:39) Somebody slaps you on one cheek—‘Just turn the other.’ Is that contradictory?” Not rightly understood; it is not.

The great Apostle Paul, I think, gives the greatest commentary on this passage. If you would, turn to Romans chapter 12 right now, and I want you to look at it because if you don’t, you’re going to get confused on this point. Turn to Romans chapter 12, and see what the great Apostle Paul teaches on this subject. Romans 12—and I’m going to

read beginning in verse 17, and I'm going to read right on through Romans 12 'til I get to chapter 13 and go to verse 4. I'll put it all together, and you'll have it exactly as the Bible teaches it. Now, here's what the Apostle Paul said, and he's commenting on what Jesus said—Romans chapter 12 and verse 17: *“Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible”*—now, underscore that sometimes it's not possible—*“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men”*—sometimes it is not possible. Now, notice verse 19—*“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves”*—that is, “don't take revenge”—*“but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord”*—you can be certain that God is no pacifist—*“Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”* (Romans 12:17–21)

Now, that ends the chapter. And, if that's as far as we read, we'd say, “Well, the Bible teaches pacifism, and the Bible teaches that we're just to lie down in front of evil and let evil take over.” But, continue to read. Go now into Romans chapter 13 and verse 1: *“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers”*—“the higher authorities”—*“For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he”*—the army officer, the soldier, the magistrate—*“For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain”*—God's magistrates have “swords”; that is, authority and power to wound and to hurt—*“for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.”* (Romans 13:1–4) Now, what is this saying? Very simply this: that you and I are not to take personal revenge. But, the Bible does not teach pacifism.

As a matter of fact, the Bible teaches that evil must be restrained. Now, turn to another passage; then I'm going to comment on it—1 Peter chapter 2, verses 13 and 14. Here's what God says to those of us who are citizens—1 Peter 2:13: *“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man”*—that is, to man's laws—*“for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors”*—now, listen to this—*“as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.”* (1 Peter 2:13–14) Now, men are wicked. We live in a wicked society, and the wickedness of human nature has to be restrained by law. And, just to lie down in front of sin and error and evil and wickedness is neither just nor kind because it doesn't protect the innocent, nor does it restrain wickedness.

So, what is our Lord talking about here? Well, let me just say this parenthetically: Have you ever heard it said that you cannot legislate morality? Well, you're right. There

is no law on earth that can make you moral—none. You can't legislate morality. There's not a law written that can make you love me or make me love you. You can't do that with law. Now, here are two fellows over here. Now, let's say we make a law to say that they have to love me. There's no law that can do that. So, therefore, I have to have a law that says they can't kill me. You say, "You cannot legislate morality," so, therefore, you legislate against immorality. That's what it's all about. Laws are not here to make us good. Laws are here because we are so bad and we have to be restrained. And so, what is our Lord saying here when He says that "if somebody will slap you on one cheek, turn the other?" (Matthew 5:39) What is our Lord saying when He's saying, "*Resist not evil*"? (Matthew 5:39) He is teaching that you are not to take personal vengeance. You're not to stand up for your so-called "rights." God has ways of taking vengeance, and God has ways of protecting. And, there are times when we ourselves have to protect our loved ones. But, what He's talking about here is the idea that so many people have—and I'll illustrate it here in a moment—of standing up for their own so-called "rights."

For example, look, if you will, in verse 39, and maybe it will get a little clearer here when we talk about this miracle mile. Go back to Matthew chapter 5 and verse 39. Look at it here. Now, Jesus says in verse 39: "*Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*" (Matthew 5:39) Now, there are two things, if you wanted to make a Jew angry, two things you could do: one is to spit in his face; the other is to slap him. Have you ever been slapped in the face? I mean, somebody with an open hand, right in the face. Or, to spit in your face? The ultimate act of contemptuousness. What is our Lord saying here when He's saying this? "Go the second mile when your dignity is degraded." You see, that's what they did to the Lord Jesus Christ. By the way, just put in your margin "Matthew chapter 26 and verse 67," and read it when you get home: "*Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands.*" (Matthew 26:67) They spit in the face of Jesus, and they slapped Jesus with an open hand. And, Jesus did not slap back; Jesus just simply turned the other cheek. What is our Lord saying? "When your dignity is degraded, when somebody insults you with an open hand, or a vile word, or whatever it is, just turn the other cheek. Go the second mile."

And then, He gives another illustration. Look, if you will, in verse 40 of this same chapter: "*And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him take thy cloak also.*" (Matthew 5:40) Our Lord is not saying here that you're not supposed to protect your property if somebody is trying to steal it. That's not what He's saying. Here is a law case. You've done something wrong, and somebody has sued you. And, they've gotten a judgment against you. And, you don't have anything to pay so they take your shirt. Our Lord says, "Yes, and give him your coat also. You did wrong. And, don't

just simply pay what's due. Don't just go one mile. Don't just obey the law. Give him your coat also. Go the second mile. Don't just do the minimum. Do more than is required."

And then, when somebody has a need and comes to you and asks you for help, look, if you will, in verse 42: "*Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.*" (Matthew 5:42) Don't just pay what you owe. Anybody can do that. Look in verse 46: "*For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if you salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?*" (Matthew 5:46–47) If you just love those that love you, if you just give to those who can give to you, if you just help those who help you, if you just do what is required of you and no more, any good red-blooded atheist can do that. But, when somebody has a need and they come to you, you don't owe them anything; but Jesus says, "Give to them, and don't turn them away." The Bible says in 1 Timothy chapter 6, verses 17 and 18: "*Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*"—now, if you have money, listen—"*That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.*" (1 Timothy 6:17–18) And, 1 John 3, verses 17 and 18: "*But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*" (1 John 3:17–18)

Now, here is our Lord saying that if you're walking down the street and somebody says to you, "Give me your billfold"; somebody says, "Give me your shoes"; somebody says, "Give me your house"; somebody says, "Give me your automobile," are you to do that? No, that's not what our Lord is saying at all. That is a false and an extreme interpretation of what our Lord is saying here. There is the kind of giving that does not help but it hurts. All scripture has to be compared to scripture. For example, the Apostle Paul said in 2 Thessalonians, "*If any [man] would not work, neither should he eat.*" (2 Thessalonians 3:10) You don't give to a worthless person. You don't give to a professional beggar. You don't give to a fraudulent person. You don't encourage the alcoholic in his booze by giving him more money to buy booze with. That's not what our Lord is talking about. But, what our Lord is talking about is simply this: that we do not simply pay what we owe, but we look beyond what we owe to see what they need and what we can do with that which God has put in our hand. And, by turning the other cheek, or by going beyond that which is required of us in a court of law, or by helping those that we do not owe anything to, we are doing something that Jesus calls "going the second mile." There's the law mile and the legal mile, and there's the love mile and the extra mile that I want to call "the miracle mile."

III. The Power of the Miracle Mile

Now, let me go to the third and final point here this morning. I've talked to you about the principle of the miracle mile. I've talked to you about the practice of it and some illustrations that Jesus gave—and He gave more—about loving our enemies. This whole chapter is full of that—going beyond the minimum morality, going beyond what is required by law and supplied by love. Now, let me, thirdly, just kind of wrap it up and see if I can apply it to where we live today. We've talked about the principle of it. We've talked about the practice of it. Let me talk to you about the power—the power of the miracle mile.

Why? What will the miracle mile do? Why did I call it, when I prepared this message, “the miracle mile”? Well, there are many things it will do, but I want to mention three of them today that, when you begin to live this way, will transform your life and give you joy and power that you will never have any other way.

A. It Will Change Your Attitude

Number one: It will change your attitude. The second mile is the smile mile. Remember that: the second mile is the smile mile. The first mile is the slave mile. You go the first mile and that's all—you're going to hate it every step of the way. In the first mile, you're required to go that far, and you are the victim. In the second mile, you are the victor. In the first mile, you are being controlled. In the second mile, you are controlling. The first mile is the law mile. The second mile is the love mile. The first mile only makes you bitter. The second mile gives you joy. In the first mile, you are conquered. In the second mile, you have conquered yourself, and the man who makes you carry his burden. The first mile is drudgery. The second mile is victory. It changes your attitude because you say, “I'm not doing this because I have to; I am doing this because I want to—because my Lord has taught me to.” It will change your attitude.

B. It Will Make You a Success

Here's a second thing the second mile will do: it will make you a success. All successful people, even in the in the natural realm, they are almost always second-milers. The reason that some people are not successful in their spiritual life is that they're just first-milers. They say, “Well, I'm going to do five minutes a day of devotions. Five minutes is up. I'm finished. I'm going to read my Bible so I can mark it up. I'm going to read through the Bible in a year. A dose a day keeps the devil away.” They're just simply doing what they think is required, but that's all they do.

Last night I was speaking with Kemmons Wilson, who was the one of the founders of the Holiday Inn organization back when it was a good family organization. And, he was one of the founders. I have heard Kemmons Wilson talk about what it takes to make success. And, I always laugh when he talks to these high schoolers and others and he

says, “If you want to be a success, you just have to work a half a day; that’s all.” He says, “It doesn’t make any difference if it’s the first twelve hours or the second twelve hours—just half a day; that’s all.” What’s he talking about? If you want to be a success—whether you’re building hotels or building lives for Jesus; it makes no difference—my dear friend, you’ve got to be a second-miler. All of these folks who just simply watch the clock on their job, all they do is what is required of them, what they’re paid to do. My dear friend, if you only do what you are paid to do, you’ll never be paid for what you’ve not done. There’s a difference.

¶ I was reading about Henry Ford. You know, he was kind of eccentric. And, Henry Ford, who built the great Ford organization, he was a genius, but different, eccentric. And, Henry Ford bought the Lincoln factory in Detroit, and it was losing money. And, he was trying to get the thing humming and started. So, he asked somebody to cut down for him a log. They cut a log off a tree, trimmed the limbs off of it. And, he had it brought into the office building, and he laid that log in front of the elevators that go up to the top, right down there on the floor. And, the next morning when everybody came in, there was a log there. So, all of the secretaries and stenographers and executives, they all stepped over that log and went up. And, there it was. Maybe they commented on it, but that was all.

Day after day, the maintenance people cleaned around that log. People stepped over that log. It stayed there, Bob, for three weeks. Nobody asked about it; nobody moved it. Everybody said, “I don’t know what it’s doing there, but it’s not my department. I don’t get paid for handling logs in front of elevators.” And, it stayed there for three weeks. And, Henry Ford called them all in and said, “I put that log there, and not a one of you asked about it. Nobody asked why it was there. Nobody wanted to know about it. Nobody did anything to remove it. And, every one of you are fired.” He fired everybody on that entire floor—fired every one of them; put his son Edsel in there to do something to make that business make money. You see, everybody says, “That’s not my business”; “I’m not there”; “I don’t have anything to do with moving logs”; “I type letters”; “I do this”; “I do that.”¶

You know, we have some folks here at this church, and I thank God for them. They don’t just simply report to work on Monday morning and say, “This is what I’m paid to do, and I’m going to do that,” and when the whistle blows at 4:30 or 5:00, or whenever it is, they go home and forget the rest of it. My dear friend, listen, the second mile will change your attitude. The first mile, you’re being controlled. You’re a victim; you’re forced to do it. The second mile, you say, “I am doing this. Now I am in control.” And, you can whistle while you walk and whistle while you work, going the second mile. The second mile is the mile that brings success in any endeavor—in the physical realm, in the spiritual realm, wherever it is.

C. It Is the Key to Better Relationships

Thirdly, not only will the second mile change your attitude; not only will this miracle mile make you a successful person; but, my dear friend, it is the key to better relationships. And, therefore, it is the key to witness.

¶ Let's just imagine here we are back two thousand years ago in the land of Palestine. Here's a man out there; he's working in the field. He's plowing along, working in the field. Here comes a Roman soldier. He's got this Roman soldier's backpack on. He's got his spear. He's got his canteen. He has all this. He sees that Jewish man out there in the field. He says, "Hey, I'm talking to you! You! Yeah, you! Come here! Pick this up! I'm tired. Carry that for me!" That Jew throws the reins of that plow down. He scowls. He grits his teeth. He mutters something. The soldier says, "What did you say?" "I didn't say anything." He says, "Pick that up." He picks it up. He says, "Okay, I'm going to carry this, mister. You're a soldier. Your people are in control, and there's nothing we can do about it. And, I've got to do it, and I'm going to do it. But, I want to tell you something, soldier: one of these days, we may be on top, and you may be under. And, I just hope I meet you some day after this is all over." And, he picks that burden up, and he carries it. There's the mark—a mile. And, he throws it down and says, "There! Now I've done it." He walks back to his work. But, he's too angry to work. He hits his fist on the barn door, goes in the house, and his wife says, "What's wrong with you?" "Oh," he says, "don't talk to me about it. I don't want to talk. I don't want any supper. Just forget it." Oh, he's seething. He's an inferno, he's so angry. He's been forced to go a mile.

But now, here's another man. He's heard Jesus give the Sermon on the Mount. A Roman soldier comes along and says, "Hey, you! Come over here!" "You talking to me? Be right there." "Carry that burden." "Yes sir, be glad to. Come on. Let's go." The soldier says, "This man, is he sick? What's wrong with this fellow?" They begin to walk along, and the Jewish man says to the Roman soldier, "Where are you from? Tell me about your family. How long have you been in the army?" And, they're walking along, and they're getting in a conversation. And then, they come finally to the one-mile mark. The Roman soldier says, "Well, thank you for carrying my burden. You've been different than most people. I appreciate it." And, the Jewish boy says, "Wait a minute. You're tired. This is a heavy load. Right down the road about two miles there's a well of water where we can both get a drink. I'm thirsty. I'm sure you must be thirsty. Let me just carry this for you another mile. Tell me some more about your family. Tell me about what it was like back in Rome."

Why, the second mile is so different from the first mile, they become friends. They begin to talk; they begin to converse. They're sitting there drinking water, and the Roman soldier says to the Jewish man, "You know, I've got to confess something to you: I've had the wrong opinion of you Jews. I really have. I've hated Jews. I have

thought you were a squalid race. I thought you had no character. I thought... I've never seen... Listen, just forgive me for the way I've felt about the Jewish people." The Jew says, "Well, listen, you've got a heart just like I do. When you talked about your wife and children, I saw that the heart that beats in your chest is just like the heart that beats in mine." "Why did you go two miles? Why? I mean you didn't have to. Why?" "Well," the Jewish man says, "have you ever heard of a man named Jesus? Many of us think He's the Messiah. I heard Him preach an incredible message. We were there at the Mount of the Beatitudes, and Jesus preached. And, Jesus said, 'When you fellows tell us to go one mile, we're supposed to go two, just out of love.'" He says, "Jesus said that? Who is Jesus? I've never heard anything like that. Tell me about this Jesus. I want to learn more about that. I have never in my life heard anything like that."^f

Don't you think that would open a door to witness? Don't you think that would make a difference? Don't you think it would make a difference where you worked tomorrow if you began to live that way? Don't you think it would make a difference in your school? Hey, I know it would make a difference in our homes. I know it would make a difference in our jobs. I know it would make a difference if we would just simply say, "I'm not going to go just one mile and do all that is required. I'll do what Jesus says, and I'll go the second mile. When they slap me on one cheek, I'll turn the other. They sue me in law and take my shirt; I'll give 'em my coat. I'll not just give what I owe, but I'll give what they need. Somebody makes me go a mile, I'll go a second mile, and I'll do it with a smile on my face." And, my dear friend, *if people began to live like that on Monday, they'd start believing what I preach on Sunday.* You know it is true. We'd go out and begin to live that miracle mile, the mile that makes a difference.

Conclusion

And, I just want to say this before I'm finished: Jesus—Jesus, the Son of God—was the One, my dear friend, that went the second mile. All of His life—all of His life—was the life of a second mile. Even in the Garden of Eden God was going the second mile. Adam and Eve had sinned against God, and you would think that God would stay up there in heaven and let Adam and Eve try and find Him. But, there is God, walking in the garden, saying, "Adam, where are you?" (Genesis 3:9) That wasn't the voice of a detective; that was the voice of a brokenhearted God, seeking God. And, Jesus left heaven, came to this earth, and the Bible says, "*God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*" (Romans 5:8) He went the second mile. We deserved the penalty of the law and justice, but He came to give us grace and mercy. That's what Christmas is all about. Oh, what a great Savior we have! What a wonderful, dear Savior! What a wonderful Lord we have! I can't understand why people don't want to give their hearts to Jesus. Can you understand that? I can't understand it. I

really can't. *If I had a thousand lives to live, I'd give every one to Jesus Christ.*

¶ A preacher was preaching, and he preached about Jesus and gave the invitation. And, people were coming forward, and a little girl who didn't understand it all asked her mother, "What are those people doing?" And, her mother said, "They're going forward to give their hearts to Jesus." That little girl said, "Why don't we all go?" ¶

That's a good question. Why don't we all go? Such a wonderful Savior is Jesus, who went the second mile for us! And, He wants to save you today. ¶