

ONE MILE OR TWO?

Matthew 5:38-42

Introduction: Being a Christian doesn't get rid of the inborn human nature feelings and reactions. There are times when feelings well up inside that causes us to react in ways that Christians shouldn't. It's the old human nature breaking out before we can even think about restraining it. Everybody at one time or other has this happen to them. Jesus spoke against these feelings and reactions knowing how the old human nature works. Jesus said that it is possible to keep His commandments and still be an "unprofitable" servant. Ever hear of "going the second mile?"

I. ARE YOU A ONE MILE CHRISTIAN AND DISCIPLE?

1. In the days of Jesus Israel (Jews) were under Roman law and power. There was a Roman law that stated that a Jew had to carry whatever he/she was told to by a Roman for the distance of one mile but no further. One mile was commanded, to fail to do so brought severe penalty.
2. If for some reason the Jew carried the burden further than the required one mile, it had to be totally voluntary and deliberate without any persuasion by the Roman. It had to be more or less the Jew's idea.
3. One mile equaled the bare minimum. The one mile was done without too much murmuring as it was the law and therefore in a sense, easy to do.
4. Apply the "one mile" principle to Christians and it is found that "one mile Christians" are usually unhappy, nominal people who have one foot in the world and one foot in Christianity. They do as least as they can in both situations, doing exactly and only what they have to do.

II. ARE YOU A TWO MILE CHRISTIAN AND DISCIPLE?

1. Remember that when the Jew went past the one mile, he/she went farther than expected.
 - Do you as a Christian go beyond the expected? Do you go twice as far or even farther?
 - What about loving those who have hurt you or your loved ones?
 - Other situations that ask so much more, do you give more?
2. Popular television commercials of auto repair shops have a "logo," "If you bring your care in five minutes before closing time, we will still service your car..."
3. Have you ever asked yourself, "What would Jesus do in my situation?"
 - Have you ever imagined yourself where Jesus said you were, "a vine attached to the branch?"
4. Do you deny yourself, your feelings, wants, in order to take up your cross daily and follow Jesus?
 - Have you ever put aside what you wanted to do in order to do something you as a Christian should do?

5. Where are you in relationship to what you KNOW of Jesus and what you are doing for Him?
 - Are you doing "one mile" service or are you going that extra mile voluntarily?

III. DOING WHAT IS COMMANDED IS ONLY GOING THE ONE MILE

1. Think about it. If we do ONLY what we are commanded to do, what kind of disciples are we?
 - First thought would be that we are obedient, faithful, etc..
 - Remember the Jew and the Roman law of going the one mile? He was commanded to.
2. How do we then go the second mile for Jesus?
 - It is more than just loving those who love us back.
 - It is more than just singing in the choir.
 - It is more than just attend Sunday School.
 - It is more than just teaching a class.
 - It is more than just being a deacon.
 - IT IS A QUALITY OF LIFE! A LIFESTYLE THAT IS NOT COMMANDED BUT PLEASING TO GOD.
3. Do you know what a "sandpaper Christian" is?
 - That's a Christian who just rubs people the wrong way.
 - That's a Christian who is not going the second mile.
 - That's a Christian who is doing ONLY and EXACTLY, no more, no less what is commanded.

CONCLUSION:

1. Now, how are you going to live your life, knowing that just keeping the commands, rules isn't all there is to being like Jesus?
2. Jesus said to "do unto others," not "be like others."
3. How about going out of your way to love the unlovable and go that second mile?
4. What joy is there in commanded service compared to voluntary service, going the second mile?
5. Jesus never sinned. He kept every commandment of God, yet He went the second mile and more for those who needed Him to do so.
6. So, from now on, be a "second mile-er."