

Far Beyond Expectation

Matthew 5:38–42

*If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile,
carry it two miles.*

—Matthew 5:42 NLT

“Going the extra mile” is a familiar and often used figure of speech. The roots of this phrase go back two thousand years to the time of Christ and the time of the mighty Roman Empire. This past weekend in my message for the Calvary family, I explained that Christ introduced “the extra mile” when he called His followers to an unexpected kindness toward others.

Roman soldiers possessed the right to force any Roman citizen to carry their belongings (or pack) for one mile. Roman roads had short stone pillars as mile-markers. The distance was evident to both the soldier and the person conscripted to carry the pack.

Most people would dramatically and pointedly drop the soldier's pack at the base of that first marker. They would not go an inch more than the law required them. Jesus, however, in His Sermon on the Mount, said that we who follow Him should willingly go double what was required. Even the kindest of people would not be expected to do that.

There have been many stories of brave nurses, doctors, other health care workers, and first responders going the extra mile during the coronavirus pandemic. One retired inventor came out of retirement and went far beyond any expectations. His story exemplifies what it means to go the extra mile for others!

The GoodNews Movement's Instagram account tells the story of this compassionate inventor. “Peter Tsai, the inventor who, in 1995 patented the filtration material used in disposable N95 masks, has stepped out of retirement to field calls from labs, companies, and health-care workers in need of help in scaling up production. Tsai also set up a lab at home to test methods to sterilize disposable respirators for reuse.”

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Talk about compassion! Tsai knew that his N95 masks were critical to our world right now. He did what no one would have expected of him. As the followers of Jesus, we should be willing to go the extra mile. We should serve, love, and help others around us in ways that surprise people. It should be the norm of our lives, not the exception. Look for ways today to go a little farther, invest a bit more time, and go out of your way to live and love like Jesus by going the extra mile!

Others will know we are the followers of Jesus if we willingly go the extra mile!

Today's Prayer

*Lord, give me the strength and wisdom to extend grace to others. Give me a heart to go the extra-mile. Let me serve like Jesus—far beyond the expectations of others.
—Amen*