

THE CHRISTIANITY OF ONE MILE OR TWO?

1. Text: Matthew 5:38-42
2. Verse 41 is the focus of our lesson today. It brings us to the heart of what we are as a Christian as it looks at our motives and very soul.

I. The Principle

1. Compel is a loan word from the Persian postal service. Anytime anyone was needed to keep it going they could be forced to help. It came to mean any kind of forced service of an occupying power. In Jesus' time it usually applied to a soldier commandeering civilian labor for some service. It was bitterly resented by the Jews.
2. Simon of Cyrene in Matthew 27:32 had this experience, same word used.
3. It meant forced, compulsion, demand, required.
4. The mile was Roman term for 1000 paces. Some Jews measured off a 1000 paces from their homes to know when their job was exactly done, this far and no more.
5. Jesus said, "Go the required one mile, then another." Volunteer in glad surrender. Do more than the exacting legalistic limits.
6. A religion of one or two miles? What must I do or what do I choose to do? What do I have to do or what is there for one to do? Do we constantly think of the minimum to do? Do we ask, "Do I have to do that?" Are we walking the mile of compulsion or the second mile of choice?

II. Passages

1. Matthew 5:46-47 In love and greeting, what do you more than others?
2. Luke 10:29 Who is my neighbor or whom do you think was a neighbor?
3. Luke 17:10 When we do all required, still unprofitable servants.
4. Hebrews 10:25 The assembling: How much?

III. Practice

1. Imagine a man measuring out to the penny for his wife and children.
2. Imagine a boy saying, "How little can I do to win your hand in marriage?"
3. The support of the church?
4. The "liberal" giver?
5. Ephesians 4:28 Work with your hands to give to others.
6. Colossians 3:22-23 to slaves: Work heartily as unto the Lord.
7. The work of a servant and a wife.
8. In leaders and those that get ahead.
9. From grim duty to gracious decisions: you are in control, decide for yourself, have your freedom, labor of limits or love? (I Thessalonians 1:3)
10. "And some more."
11. I do not know the minimum. Will that be our plea on judgment day?
12. This spirit destroys whole societies.
13. Most of us are content to do what we absolutely have to do to be saved and no more.

Conclusion: Always two ways of doing things: bare minimum or beyond the expected.

**A Sermon preached by Monte Ginnings
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