

GO Sermon Series – Part 5

“Going the Second Mile”

Pastor Dale Campfield - December 5th, 2010

Intro:

Matt 28:19 *“Go and make disciples of all nations...”*

ECC Process of Discipleship: Making an IMPACT...To Love...To Grow...To Serve

We have 3 priorities – To love...which is expressed in our Sunday morning celebration and connection groups. To grow...which is expressed in our Path to Discipleship. To serve...which is expressed in our daily lives in the places we live, work and play; as well as through the local church. The vision of E.C.C. is to gather together weekly for corporate worship, loving God and each other; then to come together in small Connection Groups for discipleship and fellowship, and are regularly involved in reaching out to others with the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ through community outreach. To Love...To Grow...To Serve!

Intro:

We’ve stepped up, realizing the plan of God for our lives: The Great Commission and the Great Commandment; to love God and others, making disciples of all. We’ve learned how to STAND, against the enemy, making the decision to not bow. Now, it’s time to GO. It’s time to practice what we preach.

Key Verse: Mark 16:15

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

Last week we talked about “My Own Little World.” It’s so very easy to get caught up in our own little world, not seeing the lives and hearts of the people around us who are needing a touch from God. We see and feel our pain, not realizing that there are many around us who are experiencing their own pain. We live in our world of knowledge and often times look only at ourselves and not those around us; those who are directly in our own path of life. It’s time to get out of our own little world and see theirs! It’s time to get out of our comfort zones and Impact them!

Today: “Going the Second Mile”

Has anyone ever done something for you that was totally above and beyond the call of duty? Has anyone surprised you with random acts of kindness that you felt you did not deserve?

Take a look at this verse...

Matthew 5:20

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "*Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees*" — unless it goes further, unless it goes beyond the call of duty, unless you go beyond what you are paid to do and forced to do and asked to do, unless your whole life & your spirit & your outlook exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees — "*you will by no means enter the Kingdom of Heaven.*"

Jesus gave us some clear examples of what He meant.

Matthew 5:38 – 42

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.”

KEY VERSE: vs. 41: *Whoever asks you to go one mile, go with him the second mile.*

If someone strikes you on one cheek, what should you do? Turn the other cheek.

Does someone want your overcoat? Then give him your sweater as well.

Does that mean an arrogant Roman soldier force you to carry his heavy equipment one mile?

Then when you get to the end of that mile, turn to him, and say, "I'll gladly carry your equipment one more mile?"

If I were a Roman soldier, I could come by any Jew's house and order you, that's right order you to walk a mile with me and carry some of my baggage. You would have no choice. According to Roman law, the Jewish person had to walk the first mile. There was no arguing about it. That's the way life was. They owned you for a mile. Imagine your worst enemy coming up to you and ordering you to carry their heavy bags for one mile.

You're carrying this heavy load and once you come to the end of that mile you would lay down the bags and say 'my mile is up, I'll be leaving now.' Jesus was teaching, shock the daylights out of him and offer to go the second mile and mean it. You see for the first mile, he owned you and you had no choice. But in the second mile, you own yourself and you're in control of how you're going to let Jesus shine in you. Jesus is saying the difference between the Christian and the non-Christian is that the Christian should go above and beyond and walk the second mile, and do the extras that cause others to say, "Wait a minute. They don't have to do this. Why are they doing this?"

A great story to illustrate the message of going the second mile would be from Genesis chapter 24. I encourage you to read the entire chapter.

Genesis 24

It's a fantastic chapter of God's sovereignty upon our lives. In reading this, I want to tell you about a woman who went far and above beyond the call of duty. She went the second mile. Her name was Rebekah, the woman who was to become the wife of Isaac. Let me remind you of her story. Abraham was getting very old, Sarah had died and Isaac was about 40 years old. In those days, the father did the match making and it was probably overdue that arrangements had to be made for Isaac to get married. I wonder how many of us would have ended up with the same spouse if it were up to our parents to make the arrangements. Hey kids, how many of you really want mom or dad to make your selection for a husband or wife? I'm pretty sure that Cazi, Linzi and Max would prefer that I not be the one to do that for them!

Anyway, Abraham didn't even do the job himself. He sent out his chief servant, Eliezer to do the job. Abraham made Eliezer take an oath that he wouldn't get a wife for Isaac from the Canaanites, who didn't believe as the Jews did. Instead, Eliezer was to travel to Abraham's home, and find a wife from Abraham's own people.

So, Eliezer sets off on his journey, it was a pretty good sized caravan, as he took 10 camels, which were loaded with valuable gifts. Eliezer had a difficult job. He had to convince a young woman to leave her homeland, her family, friends, travel a great distance to marry a man she hasn't met. The odds seemed stacked against him.

Abraham came from Haran and if the town of Nahor is in the same vicinity, then Eliezer and his caravan of camels would have traveled 435 miles. A camel can average 25 miles per day, so it would have been a 17 day one way journey. I don't know how many times Eliezer prayed to find a bride for Isaac, but we get to listen in on his prayer in Nahor. He prayed that when he asked one of the women for a drink of water, she would do more than expected, she would 'water the camels also.' He prayed that this woman, would be the one whom God is choosing for Isaac.

According to middle eastern hospitality, if you asked someone for a drink of water, they would certainly give it to you, but probably not to your camels. As Eliezer finished praying, Rebekah walked toward the well to put water in her jar. After filling her jar with water, Eliezer hurried to meet her and asked for a drink. Rebekah said, "Drink, my lord," and she lowered the jar to give him a drink. After giving him a drink, she added, "I'll draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking." So she ran back to the well to draw more water and drew enough for all his camels.

Notice what verse 21 says about Eliezer, "he gazed at her in silence. . ." Why? Because he was astounded that she was willing to go way above and beyond what was expected. You may say, I would have given the man and his camels some water. But for you, it may be a matter of turning on a faucet. She had to get her water out of a well. Did you know a thirsty camel will drink between 20 and 30 gallons of water . . . each. Rebekah came to the well in the cool of the evening when all the other women were coming. She would have to take her turn getting water from the well. Serving water to 10 thirsty camels who drink 20 to 30 gallons of water in 10 minutes means

that it probably took her how long to satisfy the camels? Any math majors? 1½ to 2 hours to fill up these animals.

Rebekah committed herself for almost two hours to a perfect stranger. She did far more than he had asked of her. Now at best, some of us might have said hello to the man. We might have given the great American Nodding of the head wave as we walked by. Or on the reservation where I grew up, it was one finger in the air coming up from the steering wheel of the truck. The pointer finger.

A few of us might have offered him a drink of water. Even fewer of us would have told him he could borrow our bucket to get some water, but how many of us would have committed 2 hours at the end of a long day to someone we don't know and may never see again?

It's usually not our goal to do more and get nothing for it. Many people will do the least amount of work possible, hoping and even expecting to receive the maximum benefit possible. It is the belief that we can do the least amount of work in order to get by.

What I'm talking about this morning is a...

- **2nd mile Rebekah philosophy.**
- **It's summed up in the words, "I will draw water for your camels also."**

When Rebekah spoke those words she became a beautiful woman in spirit as well as in body.

If Christians were willing to go the second mile on our jobs, at school, or at home — our bosses, teachers, friends and family members would want to come to church to find out what makes you behave the way you do. They'd come not to hear the preacher, but because they would see people who care, people with compassion, people who are dedicated to serving God.

How do we begin to apply this 2nd mile Rebekah philosophy? I see 3 actions steps and a blessing.

ACTION STEPS TOWARDS THE 2ND MILE PHILOSOPHY

ACTION STEP #1: Take the first mile seriously.

You see, even the most glamorous jobs can become routine and rote. You no longer find the excitement and pleasure you once received. As a result, we begin to do a shoddy, messy, and hasty job on the first mile, then we have to cover our tracks in the 2nd mile. With that kind of thought process you would never convince anyone that your faith makes you different.

We must begin by taking the first mile seriously. Give it your all when you are at work, when you are playing, when you are volunteering. I read a testimony from a minister once who said, "When I worked at the rehab hospital, they devised a policy that everyone would receive the same percentage raise. I was outraged!! It was unfair. I was supposed to spend 6 out of the 8 hours per day providing pastoral counseling. I tried to accomplish that task and there were other chaplains who arrived late and had two hours of counseling. I thought 'how could they receive the same

raise I am?' The reasoning from the personnel department was that your incentive is your pride, you must live with yourself. And in many respects they were being biblical without knowing it. I didn't have to compare myself to anyone, I would get paid whatever they deemed appropriate, my reward would come on that day when I meet the Lord and He proclaims, 'Well done good and faithful servant.'"

I don't have to impress anyone other than Jesus. So, your first action step is to ask yourself, 'Is God proud to call me one of His children? Am I watering the camels for God?'

ASK YOURSELF: "Is God pleased with my pre-camel-watering job?"

ACTION STEP #2: Take the second mile with confidence, energy and joy.

One other thing about Rebekah, verse 20 tells us she "RAN" to the well to get water for the camels. The Hebrew meaning for the word "RAN" is {to hurry, dart about, to chase or to bring quickly}. It struck me, why would she run? Was Temptation Island or Survivor on television? Did she want to watch another episode of Dancing with the Stars? Were her friends going to the movies? Obviously it is none of those, she was simply being a servant of God and most likely saw a very tired man and thirsty camels and wanted to help as quickly and efficiently as she could.

What does that mean for us. It leads to our 2nd action step — watering the camels with a smile. Sometimes Butch asks me to get something for her. I might be in the basement and when she does I often give a 'sigh.' I suppose it is like talking under your breath, you kind of want the other person to hear it, but not to understand it. I have come to learn that Butch has excellent hearing. She hears my sighs, groans and mumblings. Do you think I am a willing servant at those moments? No way. Am I running to water her camels also? Nope, I don't want to be bothered. I am not being an effective witness for Jesus in my own home. The 2nd action step is to put that 2nd mile Rebekah philosophy into action with a loving and willing spirit.

ASK YOURSELF: "Do I have a genuine smile on my face while I'm watering this camel?"

ACTION STEP #3: See the second mile through to the end.

The 3rd action step is see it through to the end. We often get tired of watering the camels because we did the first mile already. And, in that no one is holding us accountable to go the extra mile, we tend to do it haphazardly, without energy, often times giving it a lack of effort and often quitting before the job is done.

My father has had a motto that he's instilled into us as boys since we were young. "When you borrow something from someone, always return it better than when you got it." For example, if you borrowed someone's car, give it back filled up with gas, washed and cleaned. If you borrow someone's equipment, give it back fixed, cleaned and better than when you got it. If someone

gives you a vacation home or place to stay, you leave it better than when you got there. You see it through to the end.

ASK YOURSELF: “Is the camel still thirsty?”

Conclusion:

Where can we water the camels?

Water the camels in your relationships.

Water the camels in your workplace/school.

Water the camels in your neighborhood.

Water the camels in your serving.

Water the camels in your giving.

Put this principle of "watering your camels also" into your marriages and significant relationships. What do you think would happen to your marriage if you were to go home today and quietly determined to go out of your way to do not only what your partner expected of you and asked you to do, but you joyfully and lovingly did the unasked and the unexpected? If you took care of watering the camels in your marriage as well. Don't you think that would transform your marriage?

What would it mean for your job or your school work? If a teacher or boss gave an assignment, you did it with quality, not sloppily, not at the last minute, but you showed your willingness to do it. And you performed that task with integrity, willing to go the 2nd mile, because the 1st mile was accomplished so well.

What would it mean in volunteering at church or any organization? Too often I witness people who just want to get by, do the least amount of work, get the job done and who cares what it looks like. It does not matter whether you are preparing communion, cleaning the church, ministering to the youth, visiting a member at the hospital, cutting the grass, or preaching, we must do it with integrity, because remember, you are serving God. He is watching all you do.

Listen to this example of where you can water some camels this Christmas season....

Illus: Pastor Joel and Tracy Frame on the 12 Days of Christmas Ministry

Now: THE BENEFIT...

In closing, there is the benefit — Jesus said, according to the measure you give, so it will be given and measured to you.

Luke 6:38

“Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full--pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.”

Little did Rebekah know what was in store for her. She didn't realize that this one action would determine the rest of her life. By going the 2nd mile she sealed her destiny, she would become the ancestress, the great, great (lots of greats) grandmother of the Messiah, Jesus. Think of it, when she said those words, at that very moment something clicked in the plan of God, and she became part of God's plan for the salvation of you and I.

And that's the essence of the story. She didn't know what would happen. Jesus said that in the final judgment the sheep will say "Lord, we didn't know we were giving you food, or drink or clothes. We didn't know we were loving you or healing you." Of course not, and that is the point. The same thing happens to you and I when we go the extra mile in the spirit of Jesus. We become part of the divine chain of events that may lead to the salvation of others.

I'm sure Rebekah was tired at the end of that long day, drawing 200 - 300 gallons of water from that well. But it did turn out to be surprising, rewarding and wonderful.

My hope is that this week when you are at work or school, shopping or wherever you might find yourself and someone asks for a drink, you will say to your friend or enemy "Here drink and when you finish I will draw water for your camels also." When we do this we become part of God's plan of salvation. We become part of the answer to a world that is hurting and wanting proof that someone loves them.

Go water a camel... and as you do... you watch, you wait, you'll see!