



(Title Slide)



To “go the extra mile.” If the preponderance of images that come up in a Google search are any indication, it seems that the world believes this is all about customer service.

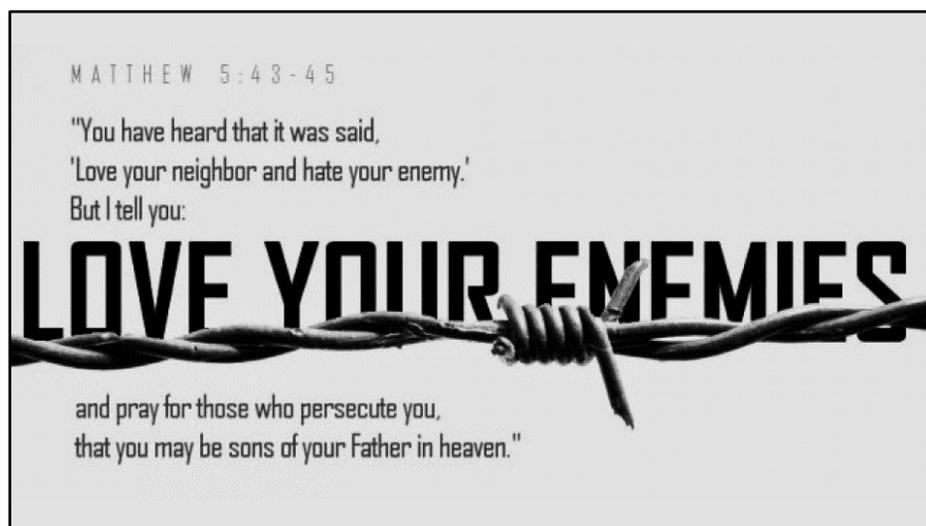
-- How do we exceed expectations to help make our customers into raving fans?

TR: But those of us who know Jesus, probably know that customer service was not what Jesus was thinking about when He first told us to go the second mile.



Nor was Jesus' teaching on turning the other cheek what many people seem to think it is.

TR: The context wasn't customer service, nor slight offenses, but it was about . . .



. . . dealing with enemies.

-- Interestingly, many Christians know that our Lord told us to go the second mile and turn the other cheek when dealing with enemies . . .

-- . . . but we miss how these principles apply to our day to day conflict challenges.

-- Perhaps His teaching seems so radical that we miss how it is at heart . . . relational.

TR: Today, I'd like us to spend some time thinking a bit more carefully about what the Son of God, Our Savior, taught in what is

called the Sermon on the Mount.

4

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'

³⁹But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. ⁴⁰And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.

ESV

5

Please turn in your Bibles to Matthew 5 . . . Page 899 in the Handout Bibles.

READ SLIDE (highlighted only)

- Found in Exodus 21, Lev. 24, and Deut. 19**
- It is prescriptive but also restrictive (D.A. Carson)**
- It was given to the nation, not to individuals.**
- So it was a misapplication of biblical truth that Jesus is correcting.**

TR: He goes on to say . . .

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'
³⁹But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. ⁴⁰And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.

ESV

6

READ SLIDE (highlighted only)

- May be hyperbole, like plucking out our eye or cutting off our hand.
- This is probably a backhanded slap, a vicious insult.

TR: Another example our Lord gives is . . .

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'
³⁹But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. ⁴⁰**And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.**

ESV

7

READ SLIDE (highlighted only)

- If someone is trying to get your suit or dress in a court of law, be willing to give them your cloak as well.
- The cloak, or outer garment, was a guaranteed right according to Exodus 22:26.

TR: A third example is found in verse 41

And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. ⁴²Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.

ESV

READ SLIDE (highlighted only)

- Most agree that this was talking about a Roman soldier's right to demand that any person could be made to carry his pack for a mile, but not further.
- How surprised they would be when someone voluntarily offers to carry it another mile.
- Wouldn't that encourage an opportunity for Gospel Fluency?

TR: The fourth example raises all sorts of questions about how we are to treat the poor.

And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. **42 Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.**

ESV

READ SLIDE (highlighted only)

-- Are we meant to apply this as an absolute standard and prescription or as an example of the general principles Jesus is teaching?

-- Should I give all I have to the man who sits at the southbound 139 exit near the BR campus on so many days?

TR: It isn't easier to ponder the next section. Jesus goes on . . .

Matthew 5:43-45 Page 899

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

ESV

10

READ SLIDE (highlighted only)

- The OT does say we are to love our neighbor, but it never tells us to hate our enemy.**
- There are rabbinic materials that say that.**
- And even those who weren't necessarily ready to "hate" were willing to debate "who is my neighbor?" (see the parable of the Good Samaritan) .**

TR: Jesus' correction to this twisting and misunderstanding of God's truth is found in verse 44

Matthew 5:43-45 Page 899

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴**But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,** ⁴⁵so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

ESV

11

READ SLIDE (highlighted only)

-- Instead of hate we are to love and pray for.

TR: The reason behind this is found in the purpose statement of verse 45

Matthew 5:43-45 Page 899

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵**so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.**

ESV

12

READ SLIDE (highlighted only)

- We are to pray for and show love to our enemies SO THAT we can be seen to be aligned with God.**
- God "common grace," as the theologians call it, is shown to all people.**
- Even the restraint of evil in this world, that it is not as bad as it could be, is because of the grace of God.**

TR: The reason we are challenged to go the extra mile of loving our enemies is because it will set us apart from others. The extra mile is often very uncrowded.

**For if you love those who love you,
what reward do you have? Do not
even the tax collectors do the same?**

**⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers,
what more are you doing than others?
Do not even the Gentiles do the same?**

**⁴⁸You therefore must be perfect, as
your heavenly Father is perfect.**

ESV

13

READ SLIDE (highlighted only)

- Tax collectors were Jews who worked for Rome. They often got rich by exploiting their positions.**
- Even these “bottom of the barrel” people love those who love them.**

TR: Verse 47

For if you love those who love you,
what reward do you have? Do not
even the tax collectors do the same?
**47 And if you greet only your brothers,
what more are you doing than others?
Do not even the Gentiles do the same?**
**48 You therefore must be perfect, as
your heavenly Father is perfect.**

ESV

14

READ SLIDE (highlighted only)

- Even the Gentiles, the non-Jews, the pagans and unbelievers, greet each other.
- If we only greet those we are related to, those in our little cliques . . . how does that set us apart?
- How does that make us so aligned with God that we would be called His sons?

TR: The standard is so high. This section ends with . . .

For if you love those who love you,
what reward do you have? Do not
even the tax collectors do the same?
⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers,
what more are you doing than others?
Do not even the Gentiles do the same?
⁴⁸**You therefore must be perfect, as
your heavenly Father is perfect.**

ESV

15

READ SLIDE (highlighted only)

- As Matthew 5:12 said, we can rejoice if we are persecuted, for then we will be aligned with the prophets who were before us.
- But Jesus goes further . . . if we show love to those who persecute us, then we will be aligned with our heavenly Father.

TR: These verses have been so often taken out of context, both of Jesus teachings and the NT, that we have to ask ourselves . . .

WHAT DOES THIS **NOT** MEAN?

16

What does this passage NOT mean?

TR: I can think of at least four things. First . . .

WHAT DOES THIS **NOT** MEAN?

- *Jesus is prohibiting the use of force by the government (police, army)?*

17

It does not mean . . . READ SLIDE

-- Elsewhere, John the Baptist tells soldiers to not extort money by threats or false accusations. He tells them to be content with their wages in Luke 3.

TR: The Apostle Paul is crystal clear in Romans 13 . . .

Romans 13:4

. . . for (the one in authority) is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, **for he does not bear the sword in vain.** For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.

ESV

18

READ SLIDE

-- Even taking up the defense of a third party is not the focus of Jesus' teaching. That is, me stepping in to protect you from an attacker.

TR: So, does this passage mean . . .

WHAT DOES THIS **NOT** MEAN?

- *Jesus is prohibiting the use of force by the government (police, army)?*
- *He forbids all self-defense?*

19

... Jesus is forbidding all self-defense?

TR: Our Savior's own words make clear that is not what He means.

Luke 12:11-12

And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about **how you should defend yourself** or what you should say, ¹²for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."

ESV

20

READ SLIDE

- This is modeled for us by Paul when he made a defense in Acts 22 and 24.
- Remember, the Apostle was in custody because he had asked the Roman government for protection from the crowds of Jews who wanted to kill him.

TR: Jesus even told His disciples . . .

Luke 22:36

He said to them, “But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. **And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one.”**

ESV

21

READ SLIDE

TR: So, our passage isn't an absolute statement of pacifism. But could it be . . .

WHAT DOES THIS NOT MEAN?

- *Jesus is prohibiting the use of force by the government (police, army)?*
- *He forbids all self-defense?*
- *He never wants us to flee from persecution?*

22

... that Jesus allows defending ourselves when facing a criminal attack, but to just stand and take it when we are being persecute for His name's sake?

TR: He certainly didn't model that. In Luke 4 we read . . .

Luke 4:28-30

When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath.
²⁹And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. ³⁰But passing through their midst, he went away.

ESV

23

READ SLIDE

TR: John 8 says similarly . . .

John 8:58-59

Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."
⁵⁹So they picked up stones to throw at him, **but Jesus hid himself** and went out of the temple.

ESV

24

READ SLIDE

- Jesus made a huge claim . . . that He was God and they understood it.
- But He did not allow them to stone Him.

TR: John 15 is another example . . .

John 10:38-39

. . . but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father." ³⁹Again they sought to arrest him, **but he escaped from their hands.**

ESV

25

READ SLIDE

- Jesus is claiming to be sinless and to be doing the works of God the Father.**
- But the time had not come, His hour was not yet, so He escaped.**

TR: What about the teaching back in Matthew 5 that says we are not to refuse the one who begs or wants to borrow?

WHAT DOES THIS **NOT** MEAN?

- *Jesus is prohibiting the use of force by the government (police, army)?*
- *He forbids all self-defense?*
- *He never wants us to flee from persecution?*
- *Jesus wants us to give indiscriminately to all who ask?*

26

Does Jesus want us to give without discrimination?

-- What about those who are professional panhandlers?

-- What about those who will spend what we give on drink or drugs?

TR: Jesus' words are very challenging and we must not water them down. But we also must remember He taught . . .

Matthew 7:6

27

“Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.”

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- We are also told in 2 Thessalonians 3 that people too lazy to work shouldn't get to eat.

TR: So, the extra mile teaching of Jesus, and the surrounding context, doesn't mean . . .

WHAT DOES THIS **NOT** MEAN?

- *Jesus is prohibiting the use of force by the government (police or army)?*
- *He forbids all self-defense?*
- *He never wants us to flee from persecution?*
- *Jesus wants us to give indiscriminately to all who ask?*

these common misunderstandings.

TR: But what does it mean? How can we faithfully apply His words to our lives?

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

29

- *Jesus does not want us to retaliate and “get even.”*

It seems clear that our Savior means . . . READ SLIDE

-- “Lex Talionis” (law of retaliation or retribution) is not for individuals.

-- God does not want us to retaliate, go tit for tat, nor play the quid pro quo game.

-- Even if we have to defend ourselves or someone else, we must use the least force needed.

TR: Jesus also means . . .

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

- *Jesus does not want us to retaliate and “get even.”*
- *He does not want us to harden ourselves to the needs of others.*

30

for us to not harden our hearts.

-- Our responses of, “They don’t deserve forgiveness” means that we haven’t understood and obeyed Jesus.

TR: Jesus is calling us to . . .

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

- *Jesus does not want us to retaliate and “get even.”*
- *He does not want us to harden ourselves to the needs of others.*
- *We must go beyond “justice” to mercy and even love. We must be willing to give up our “rights.”*

31

READ SLIDE

- This is not the feelings of love, but the actions of love shown practically.
- (D.A. Carson, Exposition, p. 52) “Christ will not tolerate a mercenary, tight-fisted, penny-pinching attitude which is the financial counterpart to a legalistic understanding of “An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.”
- Jesus has called us to be His bond-servants, His slaves. Our adamant claim to our rights seems out of place.

TR: Our generosity of spirit should garner the notice of pagans,

even as it did a Roman Emperor . . .

31

“The impious Galileans [i.e. the Christians] support not only their poor, but ours as well, everyone can see that our people lack aid from us.”

*Roman Emperor Julian in 4th Century AD,
in a letter to a pagan priest.*

READ SLIDE
(from When Helping Hurts, p. 43)

TR: This kind of practical love begins with . . .

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

33

- *We are to “go first” in prayer and then in action.*

... prayer.

-- “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”

-- Praying for those we are in conflict with begins to change things ... from the inside out.

-- EX: when someone thinks they have not sinned in a conflict, I sometimes ask if they have been faithful to pray for the other party (and not just prayers of cursing). It is sin to not do what we ought to do.

TR: In all of our interactions, with both our enemies and even those we call brothers and sisters, we must seek to ...

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

34

- *We are to “go first” in prayer and then in action.*
- *Jesus wants us to reflect the perfect character of God.*

READ SLIDE

- **Jesus came full of grace and truth.**
- **God has a resolute hatred of evil and sin. Yet, He went the extra mile to go beyond justice to mercy and grace.**
- **Our interactions with each other must show the same attitude.**

TR: Applying Jesus’ teaching, in the light of the rest of the Bible, I hear Him calling us to . . .

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

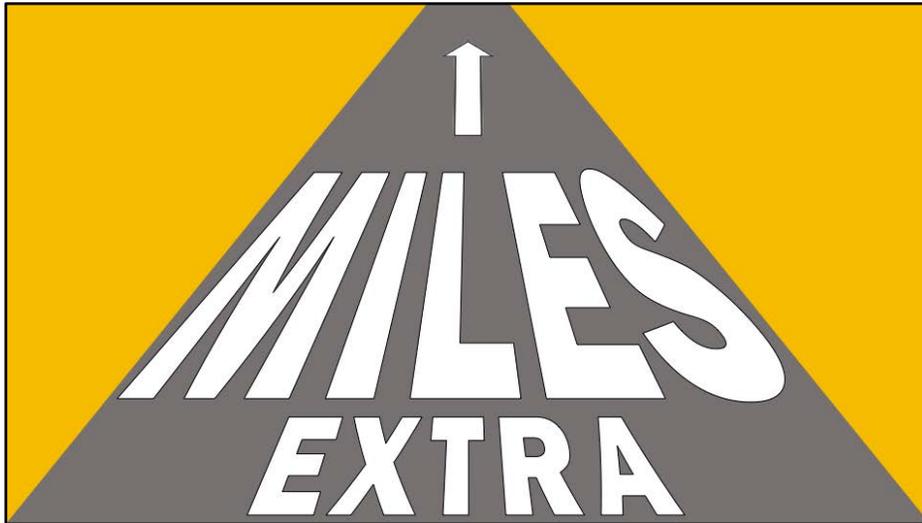
*Go beyond justice,
be tender-hearted,
act lovingly,
go first,
and be perfect, like God.*

35

READ SLIDE

- To go the extra mile means that we seek to be like our God.
- Instead of a tight-fisted justice, we are to be tender-hearted people, who show love by going first, loving even our enemies.
- If we are to love our enemies and even greet “Gentile dogs” (remember, the original audience was almost all Jews) . . . should these principles not apply to the lesser situations of our daily conflicts?
- EX: Pat Gusler: Never so hardened that I could never be swindled. Err on the side of grace.

**TR: As I pondered this teaching of Jesus, I wondered if the³⁵
idea of going the extra mile could apply even further to our
quest for peace in our relationships.**



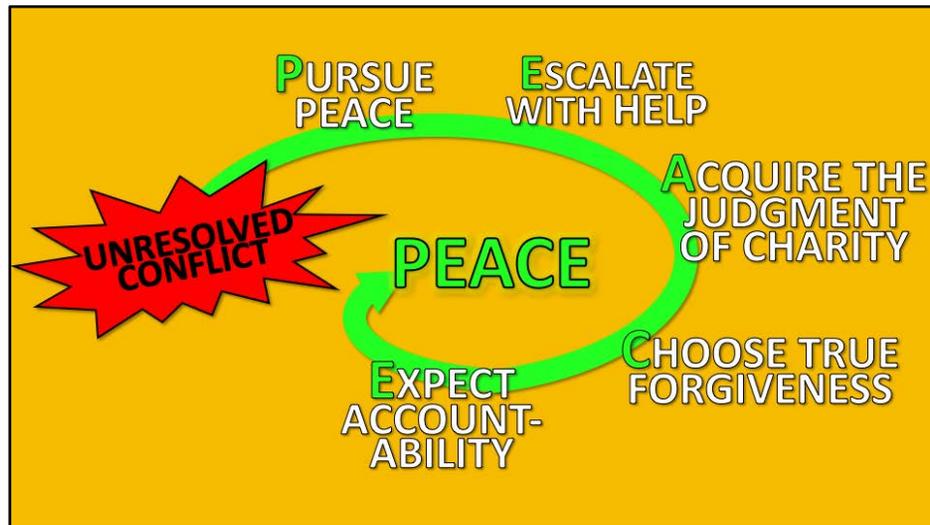
Perhaps there are extra MILES that we are being called to take as peacemakers.

TR: I wonder if we miss the point of the extra mile teaching by limiting its application to Roman soldiers, or providing customer service at work.



Perhaps we need to consider the path to peace to be made up of at least 5 extra miles.

TR: Maybe because they are extra miles, it explains why the path often seems so uncrowded.



It dawned on me that the 5 commitments of a peacemaker are extra miles.

-- At least I think they are. We are stretched by them to be perfect as God is perfect. To become a reflection of His character so that we might be called His sons and daughters.

-- This might explain why the Spirit showed me these five in answer to my question about why so few apply the principles of being a peacemaker.

-- Why so many just avoid the unresolved conflict and allow it to degenerate into divisiveness.

TR: Consider these five with me, and decide if I may be right .

..

Are there other “extra miles”
for us as peacemakers?

39

- ***“It’s their turn to go first!”***



The first commitment . . . to pursue peace seems over and above what many will do.

-- We whine, “It’s their turn to go first!” “They need to show some initiative.”

-- “I’ve hinted that I’m upset through my gestures and tone of voice . . . they are in the wrong for not noticing me. I have care-fronted them even though I’ve never actually gone up to them and said clearly how they’ve hurt me or sinned against me.”

-- To pursue peace rather than just avoiding conflict . . . by avoiding people . . . that seems to exceed expectations.

TR: Or the second commitment . . .

39

**Are there other “extra miles”
for us as peacemakers?**

- ***“I’m not going to embarrass myself by ‘Matthew 18-ing’ my spouse!”***



... to escalate with help.

-- We shake our heads and say things like, “I’m not going to embarrass myself by Matthew 18-ing my spouse.”

-- [Matthew 18-ing]

-- To love someone enough is to not let them remain confused about their place in the Kingdom of God.

-- How horrible for them to hear, “Depart from Me, I never knew you” because we did not want to go through the messy but loving process of discipline.

TR: As Galatians 5 says ...

Galatians 5:19-21

Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, **enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,** ²¹envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

ESV

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READ SLIDE

- leaving out the sexual and occult sins . . . look at the list of conflict-related sins.
- Those who practice those things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- But who will go the extra mile of escalating with the help of others . . . with their spouse who professes faith? their kids who profess faith?
- It is not up to us to judge outsiders, but those who claim faith in Jesus (see 1 Cor. 5).

TR: Jesus' radical call to go the extra mile certainly seems to have relevance for the third commitment, doesn't it.

41

**Are there other “extra miles”
for us as peacemakers?**

- ***“I know what they said about their motives, but I know better than that.”***



To acquire the judgment of charity . . . the old English way of speaking of the Judgment of Love.

-- When we gripe . . . READ SLIDE . . . we put ourselves in a position of being judgmental.

-- When we complain like that, we're still at the starting line of the race . . . plopped down with arms and legs crossed, throwing a little fit.

-- EX: Dealing with the poor . . . judge them as less spiritual because they are poor = acceptance of a health and wealth gospel

-- If we are to love our enemies, even those who persecute us,

then can there be any lower standard for our family and 42 friends?

TR: The fourth commitment seems like a real stretch as well.

**Are there other “extra miles”
for us as peacemakers?**

- ***“I’ll go so far as to forgive them, once they’ve shown me they are worthy of it.”***



The world speaks of forgiveness, but to actually be willing to bear the cost of the sin done against us . . . and never expect to be paid back . . . is going the extra mile.

-- We have taught on the difference between extended forgiveness, the granting of forgiveness to one expressing repentance, and the completed forgiveness of reconciliation as the fruits of repentance become obvious.

-- While it can seem confusing, the heart behind choosing true forgiveness, is the heart of a son or daughter of God . . . who goes the extra miles.

TR: Being peacemakers is not for the fans of Jesus, but only for His followers. His “all-in” disciples.

43

**Are there other “extra miles”
for us as peacemakers?**

- ***“I just want to get this done with. I don’t think I need to hold them accountable in any way.”***



Only those willing to go the extra miles will not short-change the peacemaking process by avoiding the expect accountability commitment.

- **When we roll our eyes and moan . . . READ SLIDE . . . then we may way be of a different ilk. We may be fans or Monday morning quarterbacks or color commentators, but we are not running the race Jesus called us to.**
- **Christ-followers go the extra miles . . . they allow themselves to be held accountable for their fruits of repentance. They are willing to help others win over the sins that so easily beset them by offering gracious accountability to them.**

TR: When I listen to Jesus through Matthew's words . . .

**For if you love those who love you,
what reward do you have? Do not
even the tax collectors do the same?
47And if you greet only your brothers,
what more are you doing than others?
Do not even the Gentiles do the same?
48You therefore must be perfect, as
your heavenly Father is perfect.**

ESV

45

. . . and hear Him say I must be perfect . . . I want to give up immediately.

-- Yes, I'm stirred by His vision for the Kingdom . . . but who can go these extra miles?

-- They are harder than a half marathon, a full marathon, a hundred miler extreme . . . they are beyond us.

-- We are called to a righteousness that far exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees.

-- We are called to be perfect.

TR: How can we do that? What does Jesus mean and not mean

when He says that?

45



The only way to do that is to be clothed in Jesus' righteousness . . . and become positionally perfect.

-- And then, in the power of the Spirit, manifest evident progress toward becoming practically perfect.

-- All while waiting for the return of our Savior to make us fully perfect.

-- Have we started the race?

-- Is the slope of our graph positive, going upwards even in the midst of the occasional downturns?

-- Are we encouraging ourselves and each other to look forward

to glory, keeping our minds on things above?

46

TR: You've seen people put stickers on their cars, with distances of various races they have run. You know, 26.2, 13.1, 5K, 10K, etc. There is one sticker I would love to be able to honestly have affixed to my casket, having finished the race and run my course . . .



. . . a sticker given only to those who have gone the extra mileS . .

**.
-- Can't you hear the whispered cheer of the Holy Spirit say to your spirit . . . I'm not going to leave you, I will strengthen you, go the extra miles to make obvious to all your progress toward your someday perfection.**