

## **GOING THE EXTRA MILE**

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From time to time, we all find ourselves in a position of being in service, irrespective of whether a person is a Christian, or non-Christian. We are all 'serving' someone else at work, in our families, or our communities. Being in service to someone else is a natural part of modern life. However, being in service is particularly true for Christians. And as Christians, we should aim to be 'going the extra mile' in our service to others.

Going above and beyond whatever is expected, makes a lasting impression with those around us, but more importantly, it shows God our commitment to being in servitude and being Christians. Going above and beyond what is expected is also a key component to doing 'whatever it takes' to achieve a goal. I am sure many of you have heard of the term 'going the extra mile' before, in reference to doing this. As Christians, God expects us to go the extra mile in our service to those around us.

In fact, the term 'the extra mile' has its' origins with Jesus Christ. Back in the time when Christ walked our Earth as man, the soldiers of the Roman empire had to carry heavy packs for great distances, similar to soldiers of today. However, many of these Roman soldiers, walking through a civilian area, would therefore order a person to carry their backpack for them as a servant to the soldier. This practice was so common, that a law was passed in the Roman empire that required a young boy given this order to carry the soldier's backpack for a Roman mile, in either direction from his home. Because this practice was so widespread in his time, Lord Jesus used it in his Sermon on the Mount as a means of teaching. As one can imagine, none of Jesus' audience liked being forced to carry anything at any distance for anyone, and particularly not for a Roman soldier. However, Jesus preached not only that the listeners should follow the law. Instead He said that if they were ordered to carry a soldier's burden for a mile, then they should carry it two miles - they should quite literally go the extra mile. And this can be argued to be one of the most important lessons about servitude and relationships ever taught. When there is an expectation from us regarding our service to others, we should be doing something above and beyond what is required. We should, as Jesus preached, go the extra mile.