

# MADRID CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, 09/24/17

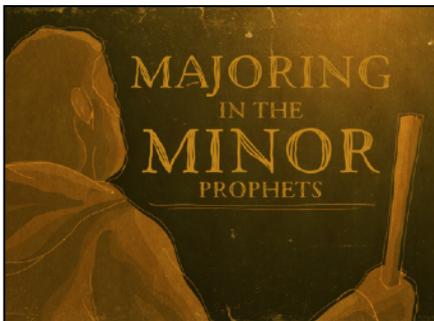


"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11).

## TODAY'S LESSONS:

**9AM**

**11AM**



"...lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You..." (John 17:1).

# Going the Second Mile

By Matthew Allen

“And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles...” (Matthew 5:41, ESV).

Are you familiar with the background of this statement? This, of course, is in the middle of one of the sections of Jesus’ *Sermon on the Mount*. In Matthew 5:38-42 Jesus challenges His followers to be initiators of peace. Contained here are a few core principles of Christianity:



- Return good to others, not evil.
- Use good means, not evil means.

It is almost certain that Jesus’ teaching would have been the inspiration behind Paul’s statement in 1 Thessalonians 5.15:

***“See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.”***

The bolded statement is rooted in the principle of going the second mile. It is the mindset of God’s kind of servant. *Forces*, as used in Matthew 5.41, comes from the ancient word “angareuo.” It means to “be pressed into service, or to be constrained.” It refers to a practice that began during the Persian Empire. A person, his livestock (horses, cattle, donkey, etc.), or his carriage could be ordered into action for the army. The task might have been as simple as carrying written correspondence to a neighboring post, or as burdensome as carrying a heavy burden for a wary soldier. If a person refused to comply to the order, it was an unpardonable offense against the king. During the time of Jesus, the Roman army adopted the practice. At any time, for any reason, a Jew could be pressed into service and forced to carry a soldier’s pack for a mile. (A Roman mile was around 4854 feet or 1000 paces.)

Social position, financial status, or age did not matter. Generally, this forced servitude was detested. The Romans were the invaders of the Jewish homeland. It was the height of degradation, a mark of shame, for Jews to submit to the control of these soldiers who enjoyed wielding their power. Matthew 27.32 highlights an example of someone being forced into action at the beckoning of a Roman soldier. Simon of Cyrene carried the cross of Jesus to the place of crucifixion.

The command in Matthew 5.41 is not only to go one mile, *but volunteer for two*. This would have been completely incomprehensible to Jesus' listening audience. *No one* would have ever thought of volunteering for *another* mile with an unclean, contemptible occupier. The typical Jew would have *counted every step*. As they bore the burden, they would have kept their head up looking for the next Roman mile marker along the side of the road. As soon as they reached the end, and not a foot farther, they would have immediately stepped away. There would have been as little interpersonal communication as possible. Besides, the law required no more.

So, *why go a second mile?* Jesus wants to challenge His listeners to denounce their personal rights and act above what the law commanded. The idea was not to grit one's teeth and help the soldier begrudgingly, but to serve with a purpose. This would:

- demonstrate kindness, not hatred.
- manifest a spirit of willingness, not obligation.
- project joy instead of bitterness.

Think on those three qualities. Kindness. Willingness. Joy. These are straight from the heart of God. It is clear that Jesus intended to raise the level of expectation for God's sons and daughters. By our actions, we reveal the character of God. We are to deliberately look for opportunities to show who God is to others – even those who we may detest and feel are totally uninterested in His ways.

Have you placed yourself in a position of servitude to God and your fellow man?

Is there anything holding you back?

# VISITORS: THANKS FOR COMING TODAY!

If you are visiting with us and have any questions about what you have seen or heard today, please fill out a visitor's card or contact us using the information below. We would be happy to schedule a time to sit down with you and to answer your questions from God's word. If there is anything we can do to help you spiritually, please let us know. We are here to serve!

Call or text Jason @ 412-999-4837 or email him @  
preacher@madridchurch.com

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## Upcoming Events:

- 10/01 - Song Service
- 10/29 - Next Invite Sunday – The Best Possible News: Jesus Will Return
- 11/12 - Shed Party/Potluck after services - Soup and a Movie

*If there is an event you are planning that you want in the bulletin, let Jason know!*

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## Daily Reading:

- 09/25 – Luke 4-5; Psalm 114
- 09/26 – Luke 6-7; Psalm 115
- 09/27 – Luke 8-9; Psalm 116
- 09/28 – Luke 10-11; Psalm 117
- 09/29 – Luke 12-13; Psalm 118
- 09/30 – Luke 14-16; Psalm 119:1-32
- 10/01 – Luke 17-18; Psalm 119:33-64



*“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”  
-Psalm 119:105*