

# The King's Highway

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### THE EXTRA MILE

By Rev. Peter Wiseman

"And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain" (Matt. 5:41).

If the Roman government had need for transportation help, a man or his beast or both may be compelled to go a mile. This was well understood in the days of the Master. Legalism was the popular standard in both church and state. The Master used the Roman requirement to illustrate the extra of the Christian spirit of life. The climax and ultimate meaning of the whole section of Scripture is reached in verse 48: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

What is this extra? and where may it be seen?

There is the extra mile in Christian principle. There is a difference between the principle of revenge and the principle of protection. The former is condemned in the Scriptures, the latter commended. "Resist not evil" finds explanation in "avenge not yourselves" (Romans 12:19). There is, however, a sense in which we resist evil, and in this respect we resist it in every form and place; but when suffering persecution for righteousness' sake, we resist not evil. We do resist it in the liquor menace, and other aspects of evil. On the other hand, when it is a matter of protection, as in the necessity of the case, being responsible for the protection of home, loved ones, country, liberties as dear as life itself, we resist, though never in the spirit of revenge and hate. The extra in spirit is necessary.

This whole paragraph of Scripture affords a good illustration of the extra. "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also, and if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." On the occasion when such action as offering the other cheek to an enraged enemy might enrage him still more and result in much harm, might it not be better to stop at the smiting of one cheek? This might take more grace, and may, under the circumstances, be the mind of the Lord. If by offering the other cheek would bring glory to Christ, then by all means offer it. No situation in life dispenses with one's God-given judgment. Because the enemy won out at the court and went off with our coat, it surely does not carry that we should give him our cloke or our other coat, if we have one; not legally, anyway, but spiritually, yes. This is the great spirit revealed. There may be cases when to give to those who ask may encourage dishonesty. The same may be true of lending, hoping for nothing in return. Spiritually the lesson is obvious.

There is the extra in vital Christian experience. There is religious living which could not be called Christian living, just as there is a difference between religious education and Christian religious education. The mere religionist may not salute the brother who will not salute him, but the Christian religionist does. The same may be said concerning loving his enemy and praying for those who persecute him and despitefully use him. The Christian will meet those requirements. There are many religious people in America, but not so many Christians. There is surely need for the extra in this respect, namely, in a vital Christian experience. Nothing else will meet the need and nothing else will do.

There is the extra in Christian religious education. Religious education has become popular in recent years. Our institutions of learning have their "divisions of religion" and rightly so. Any teaching in the realm of religionism with the purpose of teaching religion is religious education; but to teach Christian religious education, the sacred fundamentals of Christianity are necessary; and to have Christianity we must have the Christ of Christianity; and to have Him means that we accept His deity, His atonement by blood, His physical resurrection, His endless life, His saving ability, His promised return: in a word, Christianity, and Christianity means Christ with all that belongs to His sacred Person and work! This is the extra needed in religious education.

There is the extra in evangelism. It has been a great joy to note the emphasis in recent years on evangelism. It may be that this emphasis arose out of the failure of the social program and mere religious education (not Christian) and modern human preaching and human endeavors to hold the youth and to advance the kingdom of God. Anyway, evangelism is here; but the question is, What kind of evangelism is the church ready to seek and adopt? Is it evangelism without the sacred belief and acceptance of the blessed old Book, the Word of God, and the wonderful Christ and blessed Holy Spirit of that Book, or is it an evangelism based on a human Jesus, a great leader and thinker merely, a Spirit as a mere influence, an atonement without blood, a heaven without hell? Evangelism to be Christian must be Biblical, and Biblical evangelism is Christian Evangelism. Christian evangelism has the Divine Book and the God-man with His deity, His virgin birth, His atonement by blood, His endless life, His saving ability, His promised personal return for His own. Thus Christian evangelism is more than a mere social "get together," more than a mere resolution, more than religious education (training), more than special efforts and methods of conducting them, more than missionary activity, more than church-joining, more than observing the sacred sacraments: Christian evangelism is a spirit, a fellowship, a holy passion, an attitude toward God and human

beings. It is the result of the glorious Christian experience arising out of the wholehearted acceptance of God, His Book, His Son, His Spirit. Christian evangelism is not possible on any other basis. Let this be clearly realized. God honors His Son. He does not and will not honor any other set-up or any non-Christian attitude. Let us read again the Book of Acts and see Christian evangelism at work; its secret and its results! There is surely need of the extra in evangelism.

There is need of the extra in worship. How empty and dead the ordinances and ceremonies of the Christian church without the Christian extra! May not this very thing be the cause, to a large extent, of the falling away from the church! The worship of the church of Jesus Christ should be bubbling forth with the glorious life of the risen Lord! Did He not say, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me?" Such a heavenly atmosphere would enrich and draw. "We worship God," cried Paul, "in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." The church of Jesus Christ is His holy bride, and she should act like one. She should labor unceasingly to bring others to Him. She should love Him affectionately and be looking steadfastly for His return. This should be the spirit of worship. She should have this extra.

There is need of the extra in the proposed union of the holiness denominations. The extra will bring them together; theories and non-essentials will divide. A union, a holiness union, for the extension of the kingdom of God among men; a union for the spread of scriptural holiness. To spread scriptural holiness over the land was the purpose for which the Methodist Church came into being, and is it not the purpose of the existence of the holiness bodies? If so—and it is so—then why not get together and do the job in a real, challenging way? "That they all may be one \*\*\* the world may believe \*\*\*." With the extra we feel confident that this can and will be accomplished; get together on the essentials on which we are already agreed, and let the non-essentials take care of themselves. Like the extra itself, who could anticipate the glorious results!

There is need for the extra to solve the problems which arise among Christian people. If, for instance, two offended persons would go the extra mile in the matter of adjustment, the problem would be solved. Lower Brighton N. B. the problem would be solved. Lower Brighton N. B. miles to go on! If two persons would go the extra mile, something against each other, would take all the blame they could find to take, there would not be any blame left. The extra works. We have seen it work. Hallelujah!

What a need there is for the extra mile! It is estimated that in America alone only fifty per cent have any attachment to any sort of religion, and twenty-five million young people

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