

Going the Extra Mile

1 Samuel 25:2-9

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 12-4-2011

Introduction – this principle was found throughout David’s life

This chapter deals with the story of David and Abigail. And on many fronts it was a test of David’s character. So far in the previous chapters David had beautifully illustrated Christ’s words in the Sermon on the Mount. For example, he had refused to take personal vengeance into his own hands against the civil government. He had shown love toward one who had hated him. He left the issues of revenge where they belonged (that’s Romans 13) and he focused on Romans 12. But in this chapter he almost violated that principle when he got mad at Nabal and tried to take revenge.

In previous chapters David had blessed those who cursed him, done good to those who had done nothing good to him, and had gone the extra mile in his duties as a citizen. But in this chapter he almost got to the point of being fed up with being Mr. Nice Guy, and in verse 13 he let his anger get the better of him and told his men to strap on their swords because he was going to get even. And actually, it would have been more than getting even. Rarely when men give in to anger do they get even. Almost always they give more. And they regret.

We will look at those issues later on. Today I just want to focus in on one principle that was about to go out the window in this chapter. It was the principle of going the extra mile. Let me explain that phrase. In Matthew 5 Jesus said, “**And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.**” Jesus was referring to the Roman law that allowed a Roman soldier to compel any Israelite to carry his load for one mile, and one mile only. Roman soldiers could not force them to carry the load for more than one mile. But Jesus said that you can demonstrate divine grace far more powerfully if you willingly offer to go a second mile for that soldier. That second mile could not be compelled. It was freely given. It showed that you were not conquered. You were going above and beyond the call of duty. I was going to include a picture of Jesus walking beside a Nazi soldier, and carrying his load while witnessing to him. But I don’t like to have any pictures of Jesus in church literature. But I thought it very literally captured what Jesus was talking about.

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That second mile shows that Christians should never be satisfied with simply doing an adequate job. No matter what a Christian does, he should go the second mile. When you work for your boss, you should give more than was contracted for. We still have vestiges of this in the restaurant industry where you give a tip – you go beyond what is contractually required. And if your whole life is characterized by this, you will see God’s blessing. It’s guaranteed. It is the law of harvest that is promised in 2 Corinthians 9.

David consistently did this in the past, and it explains why he was so successful, so popular, and developed such loyal people around him. Let me give you some examples of David going the extra mile in the previous chapters. In chapter 17 David didn’t just bring food for his *brothers*; he brought a gift of ten cheeses to the *commander*. Did he have to do that? No, but he was going the extra mile. When he fought against Goliath, he didn’t just bring one stone. He selected five stones. David never stopped at one. He always went beyond. In chapter 18 when Saul asked for one hundred foreskins of Philistines as a dowry, David gave double, and he counted out the two hundred in full measure. The same chapter says that David behaved “more wisely” than everyone else. He didn’t just put in his time as a soldier as was expected. He was always thinking of how he could make improvements, and it brought him constant advancement. In chapter 20:41 it says that Jonathan and David “**kissed one another; and they wept together, but David more so.**” That phrase, “more so,” was true of David in everything that he did. It was a principle of his life. And I believe it was one of the key principles that explain why he was so successful.

I. The Principle Explained

A. *Blessing those who don’t deserve it (v. 6)*

Let me try to explain this principle more fully as we go through verses 6-8, and then I will back up and put the principle into context. In verse 6 David sent ten young men to bless Nabal. Why did he bless Nabal? Was it because Nabal deserved it? No. Everything we know about Nabal shows that he deserved the opposite. In verse 17 one of his servants is quite blunt when he says about his master, “**he is such a scoundrel that one cannot speak to him.**” This was a guy who had acquired wealth the wrong way. In fact, as we will be seeing under Roman numeral II, Nabal was totally indebted to David that he even had any wealth. The Philistines had confiscated everything in the region in chapter 23, and it was only because of David’s courageous action as a fellow citizen that Nabal got it back. Did David take any booty as a reward? No. He did it as a good citizen. It was a Good

Samaritan Act. It was going the extra mile with a person that was somewhat hardheaded.

I have had three jobs where my supervisor was rather hardheaded. They were hard to get along with, they took me for granted, they chewed me out for things I didn't do, and what was hardest to take was that they took credit for my successes and made money off my hard work. But the Lord was teaching me through those times that you go the extra mile for God's glory, and when you do it for God's glory, it ends up working for your own good. You are not doing it just for what you can get out of it. When Jesus commanded us to give that Roman soldier a second mile, was not a saint. If he were a saint, he would likely not have compelled you to go one mile. More likely than not he was a Nabal. And he was a Nabal that you might not ever see again. From a human perspective you are not going to get anything out of this going a second mile.

I love what one author said about giving the extra with an ungrateful boss. He said,

If you serve an ungrateful master serve him the more. Put God in your debt. Every stroke shall be repaid. The longer the payment is withheld, the better for you; for compound interest on compound interest is the rate and usage of this exchequer.

Well, there is a sense in which we can never put God in debt to us. Even after we have done everything that we should, Jesus says that we should have the attitude that we have only done our duty. But God has promised to bless such behavior. *He* has committed Himself.

The reason there are so few people who are willing to go the extra mile is because they are present oriented and blinded by their circumstances. But going the extra mile has been a principle of life for me, and I have always found that God blesses. In the three jobs that I mentioned, I was blessed with job security. While fellow employees told me to quit working so hard because it was making them all look bad, all three bosses told me that I could have a job anytime that I wanted. I made myself a valuable asset by applying this principle.

B. Blessing those who are better off than you (v. 6)

The second principle that I see in verse six is that when David protected and served the citizens of the region of Judah where Nabal lived, he didn't just serve those who were poor. He served and blessed those who were better off than him. Now this grates on some people, but it is an important part of the principle. Verse 6 says, "**And thus you shall say to him who lives in prosperity: 'Peace be to you, peace to your house, and**

peace to all that you have.” And think about whom it was that he is wishing would have more prosperity – it’s a person who has 3000 sheep and 1000 goats. This isn’t quite as wealthy as Job, but it was almost half the amount of sheep and goats that Job had. So this shows to me that David had no class envy; no resentment. Contrast David’s willingness to seek the welfare of a wealthy investor with at least some of the Wall Street Protestors who would love nothing better than to string up a Nabal. They have nothing but envy and resentment. They don’t bless, they curse. But if you envy the boss that you work for because he is so much more wealthy than you, and if refuse to pray God’s blessings upon him, you won’t have the kind of attitude that will let you succeed. It is when you serve him faithfully that God will bless you.

Read Napoleon Hill’s book sometime, *The Habit of Going the Extra Mile*, and you will see example after example of people who went the extra mile for rich bosses and found themselves becoming so indispensable that they began to receive of that wealth or got hired by other companies that saw the potential. I don’t agree with everything Napoleon Hill says, but I think he illustrates this well. Those who are gripped by resentment over the wealth of others and envy over the wealth of others don’t have this essential qualification for true success.

C. Wishing even more success to those that you work for (v. 6)

And of course, that is principle C – wishing even *more* success to those that you work for. David said, **“peace to all that you have.”** The Hebrew word Shalom means prosperity, success, health. It’s in blessing your boss that you get blessed.

D. Going beyond the call of duty in respecting and benefitting the stewardship of others (v. 7, 16,21)

Related to this is point D – “going beyond the call of duty in respecting and benefitting the stewardship of others.” In verse 7 David says, **“Your shepherds were with us, and we did not hurt them, nor was there anything missing from them all the while they were in Carmel.”** And according to the servants, this was not an exaggeration. Verse 16 has a servant saying, **“They were a wall to us both by night and day, all the time we were with them keeping sheep.”** That implies the threat of Philistine marauders, and David’s men protected them. Look down at verse 21: **“Now David had said, ‘Surely in vain I have protected all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missing of all that belongs to him. And he has repaid me evil for good.’”** Of course David

was beginning to doubt the law of the second mile. But the point is that He had previously been practicing it. And David's reputation of a second-mile kind of a guy was already beginning to be well known.

You all know how the Woolworth Five and Ten-cent stores started, don't you? Woolworth was a young salesman in a hardware store. He was paid to do what every other salesman was paid, but he was never satisfied with that. Though he didn't get a cent extra for going the extra mile (at least initially), he always did it anyway. One time when business was slow, rather than sitting around like the other sales people, he got the bright idea that he would put all the odds and ends that were not selling and that were out of date into a bargain bin priced at a dime a piece. To everyone's surprise the gadgets sold like hotcakes and made the boss a lot of money. Over time Frank Woolworth became indispensable, and his habit of going the extra mile got him a fortune of fifty million dollars.

Now, does everyone who goes the extra mile get wealthy? No. Obviously not. But everyone who goes the extra mile is rewarded by God for living by faith. And that's what it is.

E. The habit of serving people and developing relationships rather than simply focusing on money (vv. 7b,14-19)

Point E gives another principle that is involved in going the extra mile. It involves serving people and developing relationships rather than simply focusing on money. The second phrase in verse 7 says, "**Your shepherds were with us.**" David developed a relationship with these people when he served them. And it paid off. In verses 14-19 we see that the shepherds respected David and spoke highly of him. Why? Because he was with them when he served them.

Napoleon Hill tells the story of the woman who came in from the rain and was wandering around a Pittsburgh department store, obviously killing time till the rain stopped. She passed counter after counter without anyone paying any attention to her. All the clerks spotted her as an idle "looker" who had no intention of buying, so they ignored her. But he tells of one clerk who bowed politely and asked if he might serve her. She said, "No, I am just killing time, waiting for the rain to stop until I can get home." He said, "Very well, Madam. May I bring out a chair for you?" And he brought her a chair without waiting for her to even answer his question. After the rain slowed down, the young man took the elderly lady by the arm, escorted her to the street, and bade her good-bye. As she left, she asked for his card."

And of course, those of you who have read the book know who she was. She was the mother of Andrew Carnegie, the second richest man in history.

When she got back to Scotland she contacted the store and asked for this young man to work with her to furnish Skibo Castle, which ended up being an unbelievably profitable order for the company. The owner said that the young man did not work in the furniture department, but they could send another man. But she insisted that if they wanted her business, it was to be this young man. She liked the way that he went the second mile.

F. Not stepping on others to climb the ladder (v. 7c)

Verse 7 also says, “**we did not hurt them.**” This shows that David’s men were not a mafia seeking to sell protection. They never threatened the shepherds at all. David did not step on others in order to climb the ladder of success. That is the evolutionary way of the survival of the fittest. That was a corruption of the free market system under the evolutionist, Spencer. Spencer taught corporations the cutthroat evolutionary principle of the survival of the fittest. It was a corruption of Biblical free market economics, and it encouraged robber barons to use the government to enrich themselves.

But the biblical method for advancement is service and treating others as we would want to be treated. You may think that the Sermon on the Mount is naïve, but it embodies the principles in one of the most successful methods of sales out there, *The New Conceptual Selling*. Ken Cope highly recommended this book. In fact, this whole approach to sales has been so phenomenal that many corporations are ditching the old and bringing in the new. Of course this new method is not new at all. It’s the kind of service and washing of people’s feet that Jesus commanded. Jesus worded it that those who put themselves first will always eventually end up being last, and those who serve so well the interests of others that they put themselves last, will end up being first. Going the second mile is in many ways putting yourself last. And Napoleon Hill documented in his huge study of 500 successful businesses that they embraced this paradox that those who put themselves last by going the extra mile in their service find that others value them enough to put them first.

G. Not taking from “the rich” out of envy (v. 7c)

Verse 7 goes on to say, “**nor was there anything missing from them all the while they were in Carmel.**” Not once did David steal from the rich. A lot of people justify ripping off a rich business owner with the thought that they aren’t being paid enough as it is. “I deserve this.” They don’t have the

patience to wait for God to bless. Initially it did not look like David would be prospered by following these kingdom principles, but over time he was. And going the extra mile was one of the central kingdom principles that he embodied.

H. Letting your work speak for itself (v. 8a; 16)

Point H is “letting your work speak for itself.” The young men were instructed to tell Nabal, “**Ask your young men, and they will tell you.**” If your work ethic embodies the second mile, your reputation will go before you. Certainly there will be Nabals who won’t care. You are always going to have those. But there will always be others who will care, and who will value your work, and will recommend you. Certainly the young shepherds in verse 16 valued the work of David immensely. They were his good references.

I. It takes faith to live by this principle

But I would conclude the first point by saying that it really takes faith to live by this principle. And the reason I say that is because it doesn’t always seem to work. David almost threw this principle out the window later on this chapter. You can go the extra mile for a long time without seeing results. You can have a lot of Nabals in your life. But going the extra mile in everything that you do is a faith principle that is preparing your fields for rain (as Kendrick brothers like to word it). It’s putting yourself in the path of God’s blessing. And God loves to bless those who by faith go against all evidence, go the second mile, and embody the other principles in the Sermon on the Mount.

In contrast, some people are so driven by past bad experiences that they just will not live by faith. Their attitude is poisoned, and they keep finding themselves reverting to the way the world works. Let me try to illustrate this. You have perhaps heard of the fable of the farmer who found an abandoned eagle’s nest with an egg in it that was still warm. He took the egg back to his farm and laid it in the nest of one of his hens. The egg hatched and the baby eagle grew up alongside the other chickens. It pecked about the farmyard, scrabbling for grain. It spent its life within the yard and rarely looked up. When it was old, one day it lifted its head and saw above it a wonderful sight – an eagle soaring high above in the sky. Looking at that flying eagle, the old creature sighed and said to itself, “If only I’d been born an eagle.” Now, that parable may seem silly. But failing to implement the principle of the extra mile by faith is just as silly.

Those who refuse to walk by faith are like that old eagle, eking out an existence like a chicken. And every time they are challenged to go the extra mile they think, “I can’t. I’m a chicken. And it’s no use anyway.” Well God says that all those who have been born again have been born to soar like an eagle. Isaiah 40:31 says,

But those who wait on the LORD [and like David, it does sometimes require waiting]

**Shall renew *their* strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint.**

God doesn’t want us to roost like chickens, or think inside the box like slaves, or simply put in a day’s work like most Americans. He wants us to *think* outside the box, and to have *aspirations* outside the box, and to believe that God can multiply the seed that we have sown outside the box. But one of the conditions for success that God puts upon us is that we must go the extra mile in everything that we do. And it’s one of the laws of harvest in 2 Corinthians 9, Galatians 6, and so many other passages.

II. The Principle Exemplified

A. Even when you are as remote as possible from success (v. 1)

Let’s look at how this principle was exemplified in David’s life. Let me read verse 1: **“Then Samuel died; and the Israelites gathered together and lamented for him, and buried him at his home in Ramah. And David arose and went down to the wilderness of Paran.”** As we saw last week, the wilderness of Paran was outside of Israel. David is as remote from the throne of Israel as he could be. There were no people of influence who could see his hard work and reward him. So why even try? No one is noticing. Yet he still practiced the habit of going the extra mile because his goal was to please *God*, not to get on the throne.

There was a minister on a short-term missions trip who had taken a train, then a car, and then a boat to get to the island he was working on. When he arrived, he turned to a local villager and said, “You’re very remote here, aren’t you?” She responded, “Remote from what?” In her eyes she was not remote from anything that mattered to her. And if you are serving God first and foremost you are never remote from success in His eyes.

Let’s apply that story to this principle of going the extra mile. If you are going the extra mile to please God, there will never be a time when this principle doesn’t make sense. But if you are going the extra mile to

manipulate the favor of your boss, you will lose motivation to go the extra mile when the boss is not around.

I worked at a job where one guy would slack off unless the boss was present. He was a lazy bum. All he cared about was the check coming in twice a month. When the boss was present he would work his tail off. He gave the illusion of going the extra mile, but when the boss was not present, he was utterly unmotivated. And I was a janitor at that time and was responsible for moving everything off the floors of various rooms when I cleaned the floors in the hospital. Some of the rooms had never been entered during the day, and the temptation was to do a quick mopping of the main areas, but not go to the trouble of moving furniture and trash cans as I had been instructed to do. This was a hospital, and everything needed to be sterilized once a day. But the thought came into my mind – “Nobody has even been in this room. It’s clean. It doesn’t need to be sterilized.” But then I would tell myself that I had contracted to do the full job and I was doing the full job for God. And as I moved furniture and garbage cans to mop underneath them, I noticed that there were little strips of paper under some of the pieces of furniture. So I would throw those away. Much later my boss told me that she had secretly been putting pieces of paper there to see if I moved the furniture. She had been testing my character, and I was the first one to pass every test. I thought she was remote, but she really wasn’t. And the same was true of David. Because he implemented this principle to serve the Lord, He did it always. And there were observers who spread this information later in the chapter and later in the book. But the reputation only spread because it was a habit done everywhere and all the time, even when David was remote.

B. Even when dealing with a fabulously wealthy man who has failed to reward you adequately (v. 2)

Point B - David engaged in going the extra mile even with a fabulously wealthy man. Some people think, “Wealthy men don’t deserve to have you to go the extra mile.” It doesn’t matter. God deserves it, and when you serve that wealthy boss, you are serving God. Some might think that a scoundrel like Nabal doesn’t deserve the extra mile. But again, why are you allowing *your* reputation to be sullied simply because your Nabal has a bad reputation. Let me read verse 2, and then comment on some of the intangible benefits of going the extra mile, even with someone like Nabal. Verse 2 says, **“Now there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel, and the man was very rich. He had three thousand sheep and a**

thousand goats. And he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.” It may have seemed fruitless to David to go the extra mile with this man. In fact, in verse 21 David says as much. But David was forgetting that going the extra mile gives many intangible benefits that go way beyond wealth. Let me just list a tiny sampling.

1. First, since most people do not practice this principle, when you do it as a habit of life it sets you apart from the herd.
2. Second, it gives you a mental habit of thinking outside the box that enables you to be a leader rather than a follower. Followers just put in the day's work that is required. Leaders are always thinking outside the box. They are trying to improve themselves.
3. Third, the constant attempts at seeking new and better ways of rendering service develop your imagination and creativity, again setting you apart from the herd in terms of your own personal development.
4. Fourth, it causes the characteristic of initiative to develop.
5. Fifth, it strengthens a God-centeredness in all that you do.
6. Sixth, it gives others confidence in your integrity.
7. Seventh, as the Sermon on the Mount points out, it forces you to depend upon the supernatural grace of the Lord Jesus.
8. Eighth, it develops a Galatians 1:10 attitude. Paul said, “If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.” (NASB)

And there are at least a dozen more benefits to going the extra mile even with people who won't reward you and who don't deserve your extra mile. It is because of such reasons that Napoleon Hill said, “Speaking once more in terms that seem paradoxical, be reminded that the most profitable time a man devotes to labor is that for which he receives no direct or immediate financial compensation.” You *yourself* are strengthened when you go the extra mile for a Nabal.

C. Even when dealing with a jerk (v. 3; 23:1-5; 25:17,25)

Verse 3 shows that the guy that David went the extra mile for was a guy who was a jerk. Though he was one of the leading families of the area, he apparently did not have the respect of anyone. Though he was related to

David, he showed no interest in anyone but himself. Listen to one commentator's description of Nabal.

His name meant 'fool' and he is described as harsh and evil (v. 3). A casual reading of the narrative would also reveal that he was arrogant, insensitive, self-centered, lacking discipline, and not terribly bright.

But what is most remarkable about David's going the extra mile with this guy was that he got zero financial benefits from doing so. In chapter 23 the Philistines had captured vast amounts of sheep and goats from this area, and some commentaries are convinced that Nabal's sheep and goats were among those captured. And it makes sense. He was from that area. This means that if it was not for David's fighting against the Philistine's, Nabal may very well have become poor. You would think David would have been rewarded, but he was not. Secondly, David *continued* to protect the district from reprisals from the Philistines – and as the servants testified, he even protected *Nabal's* flocks. Yet there does not appear to be even so much as a "thank you" from this man. Here's the question: Could you go the extra mile for someone like that? You see, it is situations like this that help you to realize whether you are living by grace or not. Apparently David did serve this Nabal for quite a while after Nabal's sheep were returned.

So the contrast between Nabal and David may seem to prove the exact opposite of everything that I have said. Nabal who never went the extra mile was rich, and David who always went the extra mile was poor. But that's only looking at the surface. That is only measuring success by money. Nabal was *not* successful if you measure success by what his servants thought of him, or what his wife thought of him, or by the impact that his money had or didn't have upon the country, or even by what he could take with him to heaven. He was *not* a success because he wasted enormous opportunities to be a steward of his wealth, and he blew it selfishly.

In contrast, David had built such a profound reputation in Israel that the servants respected him and Abigail says that she knew that David would be king and that God's blessing was so richly upon David that to give in to revenge at this point would be a huge loss to David that would bring him grief in years to come. From her perspective, David was the one who was being prospered and Nabal was the one who was losing everything. And I think her perspective is exactly right. It would have been an enormous loss to David's reputation in the area if he had killed Nabal. And David admits later that it would have been a great sin. Who knows? Maybe he wouldn't have even gotten to the throne.

By the way, people do tend to live up to their view of themselves, and are often driven by the view that other people have of them. Just take the names that were given to Nabal and Abigail. Verse 3 says, “**The name of the man was Nabal...**” As I’ve already said, Nabal means “fool.” Now that seems like an awfully cruel name for a parent to give to a child, and so at least one commentary thought that this must be a nickname that the servants gave him. But most commentaries believe that this was his real name. It has to be if you take the text seriously. Why in the world would a parent give a name like that? We don’t know. Perhaps he was an odd looking baby with a face that didn’t look right. Or perhaps the father was just mean spirited. But people will often live up to the expectations that you have of them. When you constantly make negative statements about your children, your children may start living like you call it. Why would you go the extra mile if you were convinced by your parents that it was useless to do so? Why would you go the extra mile if your parents never modeled generosity? Why would you go the extra mile if it has been drilled into your consciousness from the time you are a baby that the only way to survive is being the upper dog in a dog eat dog world?

But if you are convinced that God is for you and will prosper your labors, and will reward going the second mile, 1 Corinthians 15:57-58 becomes a passion that energizes you to go the extra mile. Those verses say, “**But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.**” That verse indicates that God is not like Nabal’s father. God believes in you and is affirming your success. He is telling you that it is not in vain to be abounding in your work; it’s not in vain to go the extra mile. Don’t act like your name is Nabal, and don’t make such negative affirmations about your children as Nabal’s father made about him.

Now in contrast, think about Abigail. Abigail must have been a woman who was convinced that her labors in the Lord were not in vain, despite the fact that her husband was a scoundrel. The text says, “**and the name of his wife Abigail. And she was a woman of good understanding and beautiful appearance;**” Here was a woman who was living up to the meaning of her name, which meant, “father’s joy.” She was her father’s joy. When you have a father who casts that kind of vision into your life, it will make you want to abound and want to bring joy to him. But the point again is that she lived up to her parent’s expectations. So one of my questions to you is this: What are your expectations for your children?

David up to this verse had been living in the vision that God had given to him that his labors in the Lord were not in vain. Now, if you have had parents like Nabal's father, you can break out of the mold. You can start things afresh for the next generation.

1. **The name Nabal**
2. **Nabal's lack of gratefulness for David's rescue of his livestock (23:1-5)**
3. **Nabal's lack of generosity**
4. **Nabal's lack of care for David, a kinsman**

D. Going the extra mile gives the courage to ask for advancements when it is warranted (vv. 4-8)

Point D says, "going the extra mile gives the courage to ask for advancements when it is warranted." Some people expect a raise from their boss no matter what, even though they have not distinguished themselves by going the extra mile. But that was not the case with David. He first proved himself. Most commentaries see verses 4-8 as a very legitimate request because of four things that were true. Let me read the text, and then I will list the four reasons.

1Samuel 25:4 When David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep,
1Samuel 25:5 David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, go to Nabal, and greet him in my name.
1Samuel 25:6 And thus you shall say to him who lives *in prosperity*: "Peace be to you, peace to your house, and peace to all that you have!"
1Samuel 25:7 Now I have heard that you have shearers. Your shepherds were with us, and we did not hurt them, nor was there anything missing from them all the while they were in Carmel.
1Samuel 25:8 Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Therefore let *my* young men find favor in your eyes, for we come on a feast day. Please give whatever comes to your hand to your servants and to your son David.' "

Here are four reasons why I believe that this was a perfectly legitimate request: 1) Nabal owed the return of his flocks to David, 2) Nabal owed the ongoing safety of his flocks to David, 3) It was a festival day when God required the rich to bless those who were poor, and 4) the protocol of Eastern hospitality made this request quite proper.

It would be like you asking for a bonus from your boss at the end of the year, and backing up your request with the fact that you have saved the

company several million dollars that year because of your initiative. Going the extra mile gives people the realization that they are an asset to a company, and gives them the courage to ask for advancements. There is nothing wrong with that. And eventually you will probably start working for somebody other than Nabal because you will recognize that the company is boxing you in. And those who go the extra mile always think outside the box.

Napoleon Hill gave his QQMA formula that he had distilled from 500 successful businessmen. And they themselves were successful because they constantly elevated people of initiative who went the extra mile. He summarized QQMA this way: “The quality of service you render, plus the quantity of service you render, plus the mental attitude in which you render service, determines the space you occupy in your chosen calling, and the compensation you get from your services.” That’s not in the book; that’s in one of his lectures. If you can prove that you are an indispensable asset, then there is no reason why you shouldn’t ask the boss for more, and if he is not willing to do so, to go to another company with resumes from people who know your abilities.

E. Though going the extra mile may not guarantee advancement in one area (vv. 9ff) God blesses the faithfulness with advancement (Prov. 22:29)

Of course, point E admits that some people will never recognize or reward the fact that you go the extra mile. But, while going the extra mile does not guarantee advancement in one area of life (and verses 9 and following show that the ten men waited in vain for advancement from Nabal), God still blesses the faithfulness with advancement. Over time there were many, many Israelites who noticed David’s character and valuable skills. But certainly God did. And He is the most important person in this equation.

Let me tell you the story of Carol Downes. He was a junior officer at a bank. And one day, William Durant, the founder of General Motors, walked into the bank after banking hours were over and everybody else wanted to go home. But Carol Downes invited him in, served Durant with efficiency and courtesy, and even made Durant feel like it was a real pleasure to serve him. Now to Carol Downes that was a trivial incident. There was nothing special about doing that. That was business as normal. He always bent over backwards to go the extra mile. But to the president of General Motors, it was unusual, and it set Downes apart from the common herd. So Durant

asked Downes to his office the next day and gave him an offer of a position. Downes accepted, and he had a desk in a large room where nearly one hundred others worked, and his salary was fairly modest. At the end of the day when the gong rang to announce the close of the workday, everyone grabbed their hats and coats and rushed for the door. But he stayed at his desk thinking of how he could go the extra mile. Mr. Durant noticed that he hadn't gone home and asked if he knew that the workday ended at 5:30. And Carol said, "Oh yes, but I did not wish to be run over in the rush." And then he asked if he could be of any service to Mr. Durant. He was told that he was looking for a sharp pencil, and Carol quickly sharpened a pencil and gave it to him. And Napoleon Hill outlines some of the many ways (some very trivial and some rather profound) in which Carol Downes went the extra mile.

Initially it didn't make any difference. But several months later he was asked to go out to a new plant and oversee the installation of the plant machinery. He knew nothing about installing machinery, but he accepted the task anyway. When it was all done three months later, Mr. Durant asked him where in the world he had learned about machinery. He said, "Oh, I never learned, Mr. Durant. I merely looked around, found men who knew how to get the job done, put them to work, and they did it." So he was an honest fellow and a humble fellow as well. He gave credit to others where credit was due. Mr. Durant said, "Splendid! There are two types of men who are valuable. One is the fellow who can do something and do it well, without complaining that he is overworked. The other is the fellow who can get other people to do things well, without complaining. You are both types wrapped into one package." Mr. Durant gave him a huge salary to run the plant, and over the next ten years Carol Downes kept getting advanced because he distinguished himself from the herd by going the extra mile. Let me give you some proverbs that talk about this:

**Proverbs 10:4 He who has a slack hand becomes poor,
But the hand of the diligent makes rich.**

**Proverbs 12:24 The hand of the diligent will rule,
But the lazy *man* will be put to forced labor.**

**Proverbs 12:27 The lazy *man* does not roast what he took in hunting,
But diligence *is* man's precious possession.**

**Proverbs 13:4 The soul of a lazy *man* desires, and *has* nothing;
But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich.**

**Proverbs 21:5 The plans of the diligent *lead* surely to plenty,
But *those of* everyone *who is* hasty, surely to poverty.**

**Proverbs 27:23 Be diligent to know the state of your flocks,
And attend to your herds;**

Conclusion – Recommended reading for young people: free pdf of Napoleon Hill’s book, *The Habit of Going the Extra Mile*. While I don’t agree with everything Napoleon Hill says, this book illustrates this sermon rather well.

Some of you distinguish yourselves by going the extra mile for church. Without being asked you volunteer. And you don’t do a half way job as a volunteer – you go the extra mile and do a great job. Let me tell you something – that does not go unnoticed. And you never know how God might use your reputation in the future. You may think that you are working out of the limelight, but people who value this characteristic will notice. Of course, that was one of the characteristics that I was looking for in a spouse for Ruth. I’ve been watching David for years. I’ve seen that he’s got an unusual work ethic. So does Seth, and Michael, and there’s others of you that I have noticed go the extra mile.

But there are many ways in which going the extra mile can be seen. It can be seen in a fine young man who picks up plates and serves in various ways on Sundays, without being asked. And I think all of you know who this unusual man is. He is going the extra mile. It can be seen in a quiet but fine young girl who does more than the basics in chores, baking, and hospitality for her parents. I love the way some of the young people dive in and serve – and serve with a smile. It is a characteristic of David’s success that all of us should emulate. And the Sermon on the Mount says that if you are a believer, you have all the grace of God that is needed to accomplish this difficult task. Actually, the Sermon on the Mount says that this ought to be the characteristic of all Christians.

Deuteronomy 6:17 says that this is the way we should pursue sanctification – not just putting in the minimum effort to satisfy social righteousness (in other words, other people thinking you are good, or being satisfied with being just a little bit above average). No. Deuteronomy 6:17 says, “**You shall *diligently* keep the commandments of the LORD your God.**” And Deuteronomy 28:1 says that when you diligently pursue sanctification God will set you high above everyone else. You will distinguish yourself. That’s going the extra mile in your sanctification.

Proverbs 8:17 applies the extra mile to growing in wisdom. It says, **I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently will find me.**” And having diligently sought wisdom, it says that God prospers them hugely with their dominion.

I Timothy 5 tells us why some widows were singled out for financial support in their old age. He didn't do that for all the Christian widows. It was because they excelled in going the extra mile in their ministry, and they continued to do so. Paul said that this kind of widow is “**well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.**” Such widows distinguished themselves from the common herd and became an asset to the church.

How do you apply the extra mile to your studies? Proverbs 1-2 says it is by the diligence with which you mine for truth in the Bible, digging for it as for silver and gold, sifting, analyzing, and going the extra mile in your studies. You will distinguish yourself from the bulk of Christians who study just enough to get by.

Let me end this sermon by one more quote. Napoleon Hill said,

Let us now observe that the admonition to render more service and better service than that for which one is paid, is paradoxical because it is impossible for anyone to render such service without receiving appropriate compensation. The compensation may come in many forms and from many different sources, some of them strange and unexpected sources, but come it will!

The worker who renders this type of service may not always receive appropriate compensation from the person to whom he renders the service, but this habit will attract to him many opportunities for self-advancement among them new and more favorable sources of employment. Thus his pay will come to him directly!

Now he is applying it to the workplace. But this principle is simply one of the laws of harvest that God has put in place for every area of life. 2 Corinthians 9 promises that “**he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully... And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.**” It's a law of harvest. It's built into God's very structure of your life. In the next verses David was tempted to give up, but Abigail kept him from missing out on the reward from this law of harvest. Going the extra mile only pays off when you persevere and make it a habit of life. That's why Galatians 6 says, “**And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.**” And so brothers and sisters, when a Saul contracts for a hundred foreskins, give him two hundred. By God's grace emulate David in going the extra mile. Amen.

Going the Extra Mile

1 Samuel 25:2-9

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 12-4-2011

Introduction – this principle was found throughout David’s life

I. The Principle Explained

- A. Blessing those who don’t deserve it (v. 6)
- B. Blessing those who are better off than you (v. 6)
- C. Wishing even more success to those that you work for (v. 6)
- D. Going beyond the call of duty in respecting and benefitting the stewardship of others (v. 7, 16,21)
- E. The habit of serving people and developing relationships rather than simply focusing on money (vv. 7b,14-19)
- F. Not stepping on others to climb the ladder (v. 7c)
- G. Not taking from “the rich” out of envy (v. 7c)
- H. Letting your work speak for itself (v. 8a; 16)
- I. It takes faith to live by this principle

II. The Principle Exemplified

- A. Even when you are as remote as possible from success (v. 1)
- B. Even when dealing with a fabulously wealthy man who has failed to reward you adequately (v. 2)
- C. Even when dealing with a jerk (v. 3; 23:1-5; 25:17,25)
 - 1. The name Nabal
 - 2. Nabal’s lack of gratefulness for David’s rescue of his livestock (23:1-5)
 - 3. Nabal’s lack of generosity
 - 4. Nabal’s lack of care for David, a kinsman
- D. Going the extra mile gives the courage to ask for advancements when it is warranted (vv. 4-8)
- E. Though going the extra mile may not guarantee advancement in one area (v. 9ff) God blesses the faithfulness with advancement (Prov. 22:29)

Conclusion – Recommended reading for young people: free pdf of Napoleon Hill’s book, *The Habit of Going the Extra Mile*. (While I do not agree with everything Napoleon Hill says, this book illustrates the sermon very well at points.

