

Russell Kelfer

Life on Two Mile Island

(Part 3)

553-B

Series: The Beatitudes

dtm DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.
INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230 • (210) 226-0000 / 1-800-375-7778 • www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org

Note: Russell wrote each of these lessons in a manner that would enable him to clearly communicate them to his weekly class. The grammar or punctuation you encounter may not be technically perfect, but you will certainly “hear” his unique gift for making the message applicable to the common man in everyday situations.

It’s been said of him that he was really a writer who read his stuff. And that’s a very accurate statement!

May you be richly blessed as you “hear” as you read.

Life on Two Mile Island

(Part 3)

In the last two lessons we have been passing through Two Mile Island. This is the island in the center of life that is designed only for Christians where all of the signs say “Yield.” In the first lesson, we turned onto Retaliation Road where all of the signs said “Yield.” We turned onto Possession Pathway where once again the sign said “Yield.” In the last lesson, we drove down Two Mile Avenue and once again all of the signs said “Yield.” All of these signs said “Yield” because Two Mile Island is where Christian Way and World Boulevard intersect, and all of the signs on Christian Way say, “Yield.”

If someone slaps you in the face, Jesus says, to turn the other cheek. You ask, “Where is my right to retaliation?” God says, “Yield.” If someone asks for your coat, Jesus says, to give them your most needful possession as well. “That’s unfair,” you say? “No.” God says, “Yield.” If someone presses you into service and forces you to carry their load a mile, Jesus says, to go gladly the second mile for God says “Yield.”

Yield and you become a peacemaker. God says to give up your right to your reputation and thus the right to retaliation. Give up the right to your possessions. Give up your claims to your time and your strength. Be willing to praise God for divine interruptions.

In this lesson we come to the fourth and the final “Yield” sign on Two Mile Island. As we turn right on Bankroll Boulevard, we see a tall sign that says “Two Mile National Bank.” At the entrance to the bank we see a sign that says, “Yield.” Paraphrased, Jesus puts it this way, “Give to him that asks of you and to him that wants to borrow, don’t say no.” We will take a look at the peacemaking possibilities when Christians relinquish the title to their checkbooks, when they pass on to God their savings passbooks, and when they give the Master their Master Card.

Our outline looks like this:

IV- Yielding the Right of Way to the Accumulation of Money or “Believers and Blank Checks”

A- Two Mile National Bank – what it is and what it isn’t

B- Making and meeting needs – God’s job

C- The vitality of sacrifice

D- Some questions and answers

1- What about the United Way?

2- To seek or not to seek, that is the question.

3- What about joining Dollars Anonymous?

4- What is the difference between borrowing and lending?

5- Are these corporate or personal principles?

6- What do you do with the phrase, “silver and gold have I none”?

7- How do we relate to Acts 2?

Two Mile National Bank is not like any bank you have ever seen. One reason is that all of the deposits are in one account. The only guarantor is Jesus Christ. He deposits at will different amounts in different trust accounts. Each trust account has a Christian’s name on it. Once again, remember the transaction that took place when you gave your heart to Jesus Christ. Before you came to Christ, the title to all that you possessed was in the name of Self. You had to clutch it. You had to hoard it. You had to build it. You had to own it. Then one day, you came to Calvary, and you invited Jesus Christ to come into your heart. As you gave Him your life, Jesus Christ gave to you the title to all of the treasures in heaven. You received all of the spiritual treasures that He possessed. He gave them to you. In exchange, He asks that you relinquish to Him the title to all of the temporal items of this life: your reputation, your possessions, your time, your strength and your money.

A more accurate way to do this, although I am not recommending that you do this, is to have your checks printed with “The Account of Jesus Christ. Money in trust to: _____” and then put your name. On your savings passbook, it would be more appropriate to have on the front, “These Funds the Property of Jesus Christ”. Your Master Card ought to be the “Master’s Card”. It ought to have

emblazoned on it not your name but the name of Jesus Christ. In other words, the key to understanding your responsibility to give comes from your understanding of the principle of divine ownership.

“You have been bought with a price,” Jesus said. The purchase included all of your money, all of your credit and all of your savings. God owns it now. He can do with it whatever He pleases. We somehow have missed the point, though, haven’t we? You and I don’t spend 90% on ourselves and give God the 10% and expect some kind of heavenly Brownie points, do we? It is all God’s. If I have been blessed with a goodly measure of blessings financially and you have fallen on hard times, some of Jesus’ money that has been entrusted to me is to be joyfully transferred to you. You may ask, “Is that communism?” No. That is Christianity.

Principle 1- God has developed a divine plan for meeting the needs of His people. He starts by creating the needs Himself that are to be met. You may have worked hard, paid all of your bills, given to the church, cared for your family and BOOM! The company you work for closes down, and you are out of a job. Your wife gets sick, and you have no insurance. The car goes on the blink, and you have no money to fix it. God has just set the stage for a Two Mile Island transfer of funds.

In Deuteronomy 8, which is the famous Lot passage, there is a lifetime of truth that I have repeated over and over. It would be good to memorize. The passage says this, “God caused them to go hungry.” God created hunger. Why? So that He could feed them and meet the need He had created. How? He fed them angel’s food. Why? The passage says that His purpose was to teach them that man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. So the first principle is that God creates and allows needs to arise so that He could meet them and so that He could teach us deeper spiritual truths. By removing our possessions or our money, He creates an atmosphere for spiritual revelation that is uncluttered by self-sufficiency.

Let me ask you a question. If you knew that you could know God more intimately and more personally if you lost your job, what would your attitude be about losing your job? If you knew

that you could come to know God more intimately if you lost your savings account, would you be able to praise Him if what happened to Job happened to you? When Job lost it all he said, “The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. It is His money. Blessed be the name of the Lord.” Could you do that?

God sometimes takes and creates needs so that He can reveal Himself more fully. James says that when He does that, we need to rejoice, for this testing of our faith produces patient endurance and character. When this character is fully developed, it manifests itself into maturity. God sometimes creates needs so that we can have an opportunity to watch Him meet them.

Principle 2- Once a financial need surfaces in your life or mine, it immediately becomes the responsibility of the body of Christ to meet that need. God does not plan to drop it from heaven like He did the manna, although He could. His plan is to take back a little of the surplus that you and I have and then give it to the ones in need. After all, it is His money. It is His family. He apportions it as the needs arise. This is not a new plan. It has always been God’s plan. Deuteronomy 15 says,

“At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release of debts.

And this is the form of the release: Every creditor who has lent anything to his neighbor shall release it; he shall not require it of his neighbor or his brother, because it is called the Lord’s release.

Of a foreigner you may require it; but you shall give up your claim to what is owed by your brother,

except when there may be no poor among you; for the Lord will greatly bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance—

only if you carefully obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe with care all these commandments which I command you today.

For the Lord your God will bless you just as He promised you; you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow; you shall reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over you.

“If there is among you a poor man of your brethren,

Life on Two Mile Island (Part 3)

within any of the gates in your land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother,

but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs.

Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand,' and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and he cry out to the Lord against you, and it become sin among you.

You shall surely give to him, and your heart should not be grieved when you give to him, because for this thing the Lord your God will bless you in all your works and in all to which you put your hand.

For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you, saying, 'You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.'

"If your brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you and serves you six years, then in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you.

And when you send him away free from you, you shall not let him go away empty-handed;

you shall supply him liberally from your flock, from your threshing floor, and from your winepress. From what the Lord your God has blessed you with, you shall give to him.

You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this thing today.

(Deuteronomy 15:1-15 NKJV)

We see this passage outline the precepts of giving to those in our fellowship who are in need. Then John the Baptist came in Luke 3 and he reiterated and began to make the way for the New Testament principle to be revealed. In verse 11 John said this,

He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise."
(Luke 3:11 NKJV)

Life on Two Mile Island (Part 3)

Jesus brings it all to light in Matthew 5:42, the passage we are dealing with right now as Jesus said, “Give to him that asks you and to him that would borrow from you, don’t say no.” Acts 2:44-47 reveals how this was to be taken care of in the young church.

Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,

and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,

praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:44-47 NKJV)

The principle here once again is you are a new creation because you have been converted. Suppose a neighbor comes to you and you see a need. The crux of it is that you see a way for God to reinvest His money. So through God you rechannel the money that belongs to Him to your neighbor. You need to do this in such a way that your neighbor who has a need will give the glory back to God.

Now I am not suggesting that we return to communal living and let the church portion out our finances. I am calling attention to God’s eternal principle. Among His people, each man has a responsibility for the needs of all men. It is not a governmental responsibility it is a spiritual responsibility. When Pentecost came, the drudgery became a joy and the burden became a blessing. Love came down and filled men with that love. They relinquished claim to their possessions and the rights to their money. It was now all God’s, and all was to be used for the glory of God. The principle hasn’t changed. We may have softened our interpretation of it, but God’s intent was and God’s intent is to create and to allow needs so that He can meet them through the rest of His spiritual body which is us.

Principle 3- By doing this, God blesses the recipient, the one in need. God also uses this to bless the giver. Everyone comes out ahead. II Corinthians 9:6-15 from the Living Bible says,

But remember this, if you give little, you will get little. A

Life on Two Mile Island (Part 3)

farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much.

Every one must make up his own mind as to how much he should give. Don't force anyone to give more than he really wants to, for cheerful givers are the ones God prizes.

God is able to make it up to you by giving you everything you need and more, so that there will not only be enough for your own needs, but plenty left over to give joyfully to others.

It is as the Scriptures say, "The godly man gives generously to the poor. His good deeds will be an honor to him forever."

For God, who gives seed to the farmer to plant, and later on, good crops to harvest and eat, will give you more and more seed to plant and will make it grow so that you can give away more and more fruit from your harvest.

Yes, God will give you much so that you can give away much, and when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will break out in thanksgiving and praise to God for your help.

So two things happen as a result of your gifts— those in need are helped and they overflow in thanks to God.

Those you help will be glad not only because of your generous gifts to themselves and to others, but they will praise God for this proof that your deeds are as good as your doctrine.

And they will pray for you with deep fervor and feeling because of the wonderful grace of God shown through you.

Thank God for His Son, His Gift too wonderful for words.

(II Corinthians 9:6-15 TLB)

Let's take for an example, someone in the body of Christ who has a very heavy medical expense, an unusual setback. You see them hurting. God says that four things happen when you give to meet their needs.

1- You will be blessed in return proportionate to your generosity for two reasons. The first is so that you can give

Life on Two Mile Island (Part 3)

praise to God and the second so that you can have more to give away.

2- The recipients will leap for joy that love has met their need instead of duty.

3- They will become prayer warriors on your behalf out of gratitude and love.

4- It will bring glory to God by yielding. The passage says that the recipients will overflow with thanks to God.

Principle 4- We must be careful if we give and then even allude to our own generosity. It destroys the very essence of scriptural sharing. It is not our money. It wasn't our idea in the first place to share. Apart from Jesus, we would hoard it all and not give any of it away. So if you respond by giving back to God that which is His own, be sure that you do it in such a way that it is in the name of Jesus and that it draws no attention to yourself.

This is a crucial principle that permeates all the four areas of Two Mile Island. Turn the other cheek, yes. Go the second mile, yes. Give up that cherished cloak, yes. Give up your funds to those who ask, yes. But if you do not say, "I do this because of Jesus," or "In Jesus' name I do this," and explain what you mean, you are saying, "Look at my righteousness." Whose righteousness? Self-righteousness. It is self-righteousness that is the enemy of the cross of Christ. Yes, God creates needs so that He can meet them through people, but the purpose is that the glory be given to Jesus.

Principle 5- Jesus didn't just tell us how, He showed us how. Let's look at II Corinthians 8:

Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia:

that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality.

For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing,

imploping us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the

Life on Two Mile Island (Part 3)

saints.

And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.

So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well.

But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—see that you abound in this grace also.

I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others.

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

And in this I give advice: It is to your advantage not only to be doing what you began and were desiring to do a year ago;

but now you also must complete the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to desire it, so there also may be a completion out of what you have.

For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.

For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened;

but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack—that there may be equality.

As it is written, “He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack.”

(II Corinthians 8:1-15 NKJV)

There are four benefits of giving in this passage:

1- Their poverty taught them the joy of giving found in verse 2. I don't know about you, but some of us have come so far from poverty that we have lost touch with generosity. A man whose hunger is still fresh has a great compassion for the hungry. Paul said that they mixed poverty with joy so they gave all the more.

Life on Two Mile Island (Part 3)

2- Real wealth springs from voluntary poverty as found in verse 9. It said that Jesus was rich, and Philipians 2 reminds us of this also, but Jesus gave it all up and became poor. Why? So that you and I could become rich. You cannot out-give God.

3- Greed is not okay and the lazy should take from the diligent, as found in verse 13. Verse 14 reminds us that either way, give others what they need. Later, this may be reversed. In the future, you may have a need, and they will be blessed, and they can return the love you gave to them. This is a seesaw of spirituality. Here we are on a seesaw. As your needs get heavy, others come and add the weight of their gifts and even it out. Later their needs may be heavy, and you can come and even it out. We see this principle in verse 15 as it says that if you clutch what you have, you will lose it all. If you give away what you have, you will always have enough.

4- How you deal with those in need is not simply between you and them, it is between you and God. God takes this very seriously and very personally. Let's look at Proverbs 17:5. It says,

He who mocks the poor reproaches His maker.

(Proverbs 17:5 NKJV)

The Living Bible says it this way,

Mocking the poor is mocking the God who made them.
He will punish those who rejoice at other's misfortune.

Proverbs 14:31 paraphrased says,

Anyone who oppresses the poor is insulting the God who made them. To help the poor is to help God.

Job 19:28-29 talks about the wicked man who oppressed the poor and foreclosed their homes. It says that he will never recover, and his wealth will disappear beneath the wrath of God. This is the way of the wicked man as God prepares it for him. As Christians, this is carried one step further in Matthew 25. This passage is very familiar to all of us.

Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in;

Life on Two Mile Island (Part 3)

I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

"Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?

When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?

Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'

And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

(Matthew 25:34-40 NKJV)

Jesus goes on to say to the others, "There are those who saw Me hungry and didn't feed Me, saw Me naked and didn't clothe Me, saw Me with needs and didn't meet them," and they said, "Lord, when did we do that?" And He answered, "When you did it not to the least of these brethren, you did it not unto Me."

There is too much in that verse to go into depth in this lesson, but we are looking for the principle. We found it in II Corinthians 8, II Corinthians 9, Matthew 5 and Matthew 25. These verses tell us that God expects us to meet each other's needs personally.

So then the vitality of sacrifice is at the heart of real Christianity. But the question is not our compassion, it is our response to that compassion. A good hard cry or an inner church mourning party over another's misfortune does not meet that person's need. It may satisfy our desire to be compassionate, but it does nothing for the person who is hurting. James 2:15,16 says it perfectly as it describes a man's "faith" that doesn't express itself.

If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?

(James 2:15,16 NKJV)

In I John 3:15-18 we read,

Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

Life on Two Mile Island (Part 3)

By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. (I John 3:15-18 NKJV)

Practically speaking, our inner church generosity is the real expression of our profession of faith. God's amazing welfare plan for the church has even one more amazing benefit. The giver, as he is responding God's way, stands to experience the most amazing phenomenon in all of history. It is called the miracle of multiplication. The miracle is that you can't out give God. In Luke 6:38 we see the principle stated,

Give and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over shall men give unto your bosom for with the same measure that you meet, it shall be measured to you again.

(Luke 6:38 NKJV)

The Jewish robe that they wore in that day was such that it could be pulled up and could easily create a pouch in which to carry things. Barclay says that a literal translation of it in today's English would simply be, you give and give and give and then God will stuff your pocket so full that you cannot walk.

In other words, this principle is demonstrated in many places in Scripture. I love I Kings 17:8-16 as Elijah had just come from a drying brook.

Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying,

"Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you."

So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, "Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink."

And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, "Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand."

Life on Two Mile Island (Part 3)

So she said, "As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son.

For thus says the Lord God of Israel: "The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth."

So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days.

The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by Elijah.
(I Kings 17:8-16 NKJV)

Another good illustration is Matthew 14:21 as Jesus feeds the five thousand. There are certain principles that are true in all of these multiplication stories in Scripture.

1- They all started with what they had. In Matthew, it was the loaves and the fishes. For Elijah it was the cruse of oil and a handful of meal. The widow didn't have much and neither did Jesus. They both just took what they had.

2- They blessed God and pointed to Him and said, "He is the one who will make it last."

3- They gave it all away. Jesus didn't keep back a little fish just in case so that he would have something to eat. Neither did the widow save a little of the oil and a little of the meal, she used it all up.

4- They always had enough.

What a God we have. What a privilege to give away in the name of Jesus what never really belonged to us in the first place and to experience the joy of being blessed as we give and to see the miracle of God in making our cruse of oil last and last and last and last. It is the essence of peacemaking. We heal hurts by giving. You meet needs by yielding. God's Son is exalted.

The essence of this study is that all the money we have belongs to God. He entrusts us with it to use wisely to meet our basic needs, yes, but why is it that the more abundantly we are blessed, the greedier we become? We get a newer car and now we want a brand new car. We know some who have no car at all. We get nice clothes, and we want nicer clothes. We have brothers comparatively in rags. It bothers us only enough to groan, but not enough to share. The height of our nobility is that often we give them our castoffs and swell with pride at our generosity. Would to God that we would learn to love enough to give them the new things and be satisfied with the old. That would be the essence of Jesus.

How many of us have gone without a meal within the last year so that someone hungrier than we could have the opportunity to eat? What power has been stifled in the church because of our greed to hold on to our possessions and our money? Some of you may be angered by what I say. Your mind may be racing with all of the exceptions and all of the questions men have always used when this passage has been shared. We will deal with those, but let's not dwell on the exceptions to the exclusion of the principle.

The principle is that we belong to a God who willingly gave up everything He had to demonstrate love to unworthy, ungrateful sinners like us. His life in us relinquishes claim to all we have and rushes out to give sacrificially to any brother or any sister who has a need. He replenishes the storehouse again and again and again.

There you have the principle and the practice. I want to share at least seven questions that arise when giving to those in need comes up. I will try to answer these quickly so that we can leave this subject.

1- Should Christians give to the United Way, the Heart Fund and the Cancer society? Some argue that to give to any group that does not name the name of Jesus is wasteful and has not spiritual consequence. There are some problems with that philosophy. I will share my conviction, and you can do as the Lord leads you. First of all, the church has not assumed the role of men's physical needs not even those of their own flock. Your testimony to that possible unbeliever who comes to your

door collecting for charity is zero if you refuse to give. Have you ever noticed how much the world gives? Have you ever looked at the chart when they come around for the March of Dimes or another organization? They show you the different houses and how much they gave. One house gives \$1.00. Another house has given \$2.50. Have you noticed the lack of generosity? You can show love to that person at your door and thank them for their faithfulness in willing to walk around to collect. You can give generously by the world's standards. Glorify God in the process, and you don't have to take it out of your gifts to the church or your gifts to the things of God. Do without a meal or another expense that you have that you can cut. This way, you don't have to mix the two. Be discerning however. If a group shows no credentials or is wasteful and dishonest, don't give. Of course, don't give to any cults or another group that comes in the name of God but really isn't. Let God lead you and be careful in turning them down.

2- To seek or not to seek? Matthew 5 says to give to those who ask. Suppose Billy Badtimes is a member of your church. You learn of a calamity that befalls him, but he doesn't ask for your help. He hasn't asked, so do you offer? In 1 John 3:16-18 that we read a few moments ago, like many passages tell us, Whoso seeth his brother hath need and closeth his heart against him is in trouble. James 2:15 tells us that if you realize that your brother or sister is naked or destitute you go and help them. I believe that if we started asking God to reveal needs and then met them God's way, we would often save men the embarrassment of having to ask. Aren't the most needful and the most deserving the least likely to ask? Surely God commends us to ask in our relationship to Him, but does He ever give when we don't ask? Our job is to find people with needs and to meet them. There are plenty around all of us if we would just look.

3- What is the best way to help and give the most glory to God? Matthew 6:1-3 tells us that when you give, don't let your right hand know what your left hand is doing. The secret is to do it quietly. All gifts cannot be anonymous. If someone comes to you with a need and asks you to help, obviously you can't give anonymously to them, but you can do it quietly. You don't have to pick up the phone to call someone else and say, "Guess what I just did!" Many gifts can be anonymous. In our church

we have a needy fund and requests that those funds be used to help a certain person are considered. Even if you can't give, you can make the need known to the deacons. There are many ways to meet needs anonymously.

4- If Scripture says that it is wrong to borrow, then why is it all right to lend? This is for the same reason it is wrong to slap your brother but all right to take it on the chin yourself. You are not condoning slapping—you are yielding. The Christian who has God's perspective can approach a loan in this manner. The giver, in his heart, considers it a gift. If God sees fit to return it, what a good surprise. God's timing will be perfect. I have had this happen to me several times when a friend has come to me to ask for a reasonable sum of money. I have loaned it to him and in my spirit I have said, "Thank you, Lord, for the opportunity to give that money away. I don't expect it back. If You choose to give it back, I will praise you again. If not, it is Your money anyway. If You do give it back to me, Lord, I will give it at such a time that You will get the glory." If you have this attitude, you will forget that you have loaned that money because you will consider it as a gift. Some time later you may be in a serious situation and all of a sudden you realize that you cannot cope financially. The doorbell may ring, and there is the friend who asked you for a loan a few years ago, and he is there to pay you back. Who gets the glory? Jesus does. Why? Whose money was it? His money and His timing are perfect. Secondly, let the borrower feel the pressure of repayment if he asks for a loan and no pressure if he asks for a gift. God will move in his heart to tell him which to do. If you later want to void the loan, you just say, "In Jesus' name I would like to make it a gift to you." But you and I shouldn't borrow if we can help it. God tells us that it makes us a slave to man, and we are to be bond slaves only to Jesus Christ. Are you teaching men to borrow by loaning? Not necessarily. If the borrower is teachable and in a Scriptural position to learn from you, then you share later God's best. But first, lend him what he has asked for.

5- Are these principles national, corporate or personal? These are personal principles. You may be in the position to collect debts for the person you work for. You owe it to your boss to collect his debts for him. But if you want to give it back personally, give it back. These are personal principles.

6- What about the passage, “silver and gold have I none but such as I have I give unto Thee”? If you are dead broke, use it. But it doesn't make much sense that if you have some silver and gold to refuse because you have none. I wouldn't use this as an excuse if you can afford to give.

7- How do we today relate to the second chapter of Acts? Why do we no longer throw all of our goods into the church treasury and let the church treasury divide it up? Some people say that this age has passed and the application was gone when the apostles were gone. I believe that it is mainly that the church you are in doesn't do it that way. They give you the freedom to find men's needs and give yourself either through the church or separately. If you belong to a fellowship that does differently, do it that way. Either way, the principle is what's mine is yours if you need it, and I need to find out if you need it.

I have told you that in this lesson we would cover the passage in Romans 12 concerning the issue of heaping coals of fire on someone's head. That passage bothers a lot of people. It says that if you do these things, go the second mile and give your cloak also, because in so doing you are heaping coals of fire on your neighbor's head. This really bothers a lot of people because it doesn't match the spirit of love in which the passage is given. I agree with this. Some people believe this causes them shame and because of that shame, you are bringing them to their knees.

Wuest has a better explanation. The people of this day needed to keep their fires going night and day for cooking and warmth. If it went out, the only thing they could do was to go to their neighbor, maybe someone he had offended in the past, and ask him for some live coals of fire to take back to restart his own fire. They would heap the container with live, hot coals and in the fashion of the day, carry it back on their heads to their house and thus take the warmth to their own homes. In the context of this passage, by doing these things, you are taking your fire and transferring warmth. It is a needed warmth, a giving of yourself to the person who has that great need.

Why don't you go before God this week and ask Him if you have a handle on first century love? If you understand the peacemaking principle of giving God's money back to Him when

Life on Two Mile Island (Part 3)

he presents you with a brother in need, if you understand that He refills the cruse of oil and that He replenishes the storehouse, good measure, pressed down and overflowing, do you dare to ask Him this week to test you, to send you needs that cry out? Would you even sacrifice, if need be, to fill that need? Do you dare to ask Him to open your eyes to see opportunities, the meaning of which would cost you something as you bring them to Christ? What joy there would be in the body of Christ. What power there would be in your testimony if all of your money was God's to use and all of God's children were yours to share with and to give to. If you really grasped that to give to the least of your brothers was to give it unto Him, then you have grasped what life on Two Mile Island is all about. There is no forced giving there. You can't stop people from giving and giving and giving. So the bank never closes on Two Mile Island. The bank never runs short of money, and the people never run short of love. This is true because Jesus owns the bank on Two Mile Island. Correction, Jesus is the bank on Two Mile Island, and all of the signs say "Yield."

dtm DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230

210-226-0000 or 1-800-375-7778

www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org • © Russell Kelfer