

MARKED BY FORGIVENESS

February 2018

Many churches sing the hymn “Let It Be Said of Us” (Fry, S. 1994 Maranatha!) so you may recognize the partial lyric that states, “we were marked by forgiveness.” One could be led to believe then that forgiveness would be a not so unique character trait of a true believer. Are you known for having a forgiving spirit? A recent very unscientific Twitter investigation revealed a total of zero (0) people had used the term *forgiver* or similar term in their profiles. The same number of people (0) was found to use that description of themselves in their Facebook profiles. Is it safe to assume then that forgiveness as a character trait has gone the way of the DC-9’s or the ‘back of coach’ smoking section? Hopefully the answer is, “No!”

So what does it take to be a forgiver? There are several tools at the Christian’s disposal — prayer, scripture, meditation, and practice. Forgiveness is something very near to our Lord’s heart. If we would converse with Him about our struggle, or even perhaps complete lack of forgiveness towards others, He would no doubt bring about a change of nature from within these wretched vessels, would He not? The Word of our Lord has much to say as well about forgiveness (76 times in my quick search, to be exact), and simply studying through what He has said allows the depths to be plumbed on the subject. Meditation may be a lost discipline, but it is essential in allowing fervent prayer and thoughtful study to do their intended work. Finally, you know what happens next, right? The opportunity to forgive will avail itself, and you will be at once in the presence of God as you do it.

Through the years I have used a book by Donald Whitney entitled *Ten Questions to Diagnose Your Spiritual Health* as small group study material. Question 8 asks, “Are you a quick forgiver?” and gives as a reference Ephesians 4:30-32. Whitney assumes forgiveness is already being practiced in the life of each child of God, and wishes instead for us to focus

on the speed at which we are forgiving.

You may have heard the story of the father in Spain who had a son and the two had become estranged. The son ran away, and the father had searched tirelessly in hopes of finding him but to no avail. After many months of searching and now desperate, the father took out an ad in the Madrid paper. The ad stated: “Dear Paco, meet me in front of this newspaper office at noon on Saturday. All is forgiven. I love you, Your Father.” On Saturday 800 Pacos showed up looking to be forgiven by their fathers.

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32). Look at the price whereby we were forgiven of our sin, “in Christ”! Let us adorn those who’ve offended us with this same jewel. Should they receive any less from us than what we ourselves have received from our Heavenly Father?

I confess my sin in this way ... I fear I would not be one who could testify as someone marked, but that some would be left to wonder, “*Did he forgive?*” As the Apostle Paul attempted to encourage the early church, I wish also to encourage you, praying that the Spirit would work through this article to bring about action towards forgiveness.

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” (Colossians 3:12-14)

(This article was written by Tim Files. Tim is an Aircraft Systems Analyst with Delta Air Lines and also serves on our FCAP Board of Directors. He and his wife, Carol, have traveled extensively to help us with training and encouragement among airline people throughout the world.)

THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN AIRLINE PERSONNEL

History:

The ministry of FCAP began in 1971 and was incorporated in 1973 when 50 people from eight different airlines in the United States and Canada met to consider how God wanted them to serve Christ in and through the airline industry. Since that time, the ministry of FCAP has spread in over 90 areas of the world. We are a fellowship among Christians in the airline industry worldwide that share a common commitment and focus.



Perspective & Focus:

Most people look at work primarily as a source of income. Some even view it as a curse imposed on them as punishment from God. *The Fellowship of Christian Airline Personnel* believes that God places a high value on work and is deeply interested in our work, our performance on the job and our relationships with our co-workers. We recognize that both our work and the way we relate to people in the workplace are of great importance to God. So it is our mission: *“To represent Christ in the airlines through meaningful relationships and quality work.”*

FCAP’s two-fold purpose encourages people to *know and experience God’s presence with them at work* and to *trust Him for the enabling strength in the responsibilities and challenges of work*. We see authentic ministry in the workplace as a result of our displaying this relationship to our Lord within the sphere of our influence at work, without being coercive or self-serving.

Values:

- We value doing our work wholeheartedly as unto the Lord, knowing we represent Christ by the quality of our performance while on the job (Ephesians 6:6).
- We value intentionally engaging our faith in the workplace by expressing it in both deeds and words (1 Timothy 6:17-19).
- We value influencing the people around us by creatively building relationships with them and looking out for their interest just as we do our own.
- We value connecting the church in the workplace by seeking out other Christians, to mutually show our love for one another and our care for the people God has placed around us (John 13:35).

Making Your Connection:

Like the airline industry is all about making connections, so FCAP is all about Christians making their connection in the workplace in three basic ways:

- Connecting God’s purposes in the details of your work.
- Connecting ministry to God working through you to influence the people and circumstances of work.
- Connecting the church in the workplace in unique and creative ways, in order to extend and strengthen its influence.

- WE OFFER:**
- Training that helps Christians integrate the Christian faith into the everyday details of our work and its challenges.
 - Free publications and weekly thoughts that offer encouragement, gives focus, and provides information.
 - Support and fellowship through local groups, prayer network, training sessions, special events and conferences.



The Fellowship of Christian Airline Personnel

The ministry of FCAP is carried on by everyday ordinary people throughout the airline workplaces of the world who go to work with an extraordinary calling. The FCAP ministry does not focus on specialized people, nor are we a special interest group focusing on certain issues. FCAP is a fellowship of Christians who identify with one another through a common focus and purpose. And we desire to demonstrate how our faith in Jesus Christ can influence the people and circumstances of our workplace. We are blessed to have both airline and non-airline people who encourage and support this ministry.

Your Next Step:

Check on the FCAP website to see if there is a group in your area, or seek out and connect with other Christians at your workplace. Contact us at the international office for further assistance or click on [“Connect With Us”](#) on the website.



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OVER TWO MILLION AIRLINE EMPLOYEES IN THE WORLD