

# Are You a Forgiver?

By Dave Mazanowski

*“Resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.”  
(Saint Augustine)*

I once lived by the opposite of this quote. I was quick to take offense, slow to consider others’ feelings, and reluctant to seek forgiveness. My self-righteousness cost me years of freedom. I held on to resentment, believing I was justified in my anger.

Then, something changed. I had an epiphany that turned my world upside down—I saw myself not as the offended but as the offender. Instead of dwelling on how others had wronged me, I realized how often I had wronged them. Over the last 10 years, I have sought to repair broken relationships by taking full responsibility for my actions and asking for forgiveness. To my surprise and gratitude, every person I reached out to forgave me, and those relationships have been restored.

What stands out to me is that every one of these relationships was with people I worked with.

## Work: A Crucible for Transformation

The workplace is one of the most powerful arenas for human transformation. Work brings out both the best and worst in us. It provides for our families, shapes our identities, and gives us purpose. But it can also expose us to hurt, humiliation, exhaustion, and feelings of being overlooked or unappreciated. The workplace is messy—and that is exactly why God calls us into it.

While marriage and family life may also refine us, work is a unique training ground for character development. It challenges us to navigate relationships with people we don’t choose, to face conflicts that test our patience, and to humble ourselves when pride tempts us to hold grudges.

This is why forgiveness in the workplace matters.

*Continued on page 6*

## INSIDE: REFLECTIONS

### Forgiveness in the Workplace

*Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. (Luke 23:34)*

Forgiveness is the core of our life in Christ. To see God’s heart is to see mercy and forgiveness. Among Jesus’ two acts on the cross was forgiving his executioners and the thief dying next to him.

Work is the place where we will spend most of our waking hours. Because of this, it is the place where we will usually be challenged to forgive coworkers. When



someone wrongs us, we can find ourselves in a very uncomfortable situation as we try to skillfully maintain a good working relationship in which we can influence our fellow workers and the company culture. We want to be righteous, but we also want to be merciful.

Let us lean into relying more and more on the Holy Spirit and each other to grow in our ability to forgive those who wrong us in the workplace.

April Reflections: Pages 2-4

REFLECTIONS WEEK 1

# True Forgiveness

By Steve Lieser

*“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:31-32)*

Several years ago, I had a frustrating encounter with a coworker. I scheduled a meeting with her but failed to clearly define its purpose or desired outcome. When the meeting began, my coworker, visibly frustrated, asked why we were even having it if there was no clear objective. Her tone rubbed me the wrong way, and I responded in an agitated manner. We both left that meeting frustrated and upset with each other.

Shortly after, I apologized to her for my response and tone. However, I still carried resentment in my heart. For

years, I held onto that frustration. It wasn't until I turned to God in prayer that he began to work on my heart. I asked him to help me truly forgive her, and over time, he did. As my heart softened, I began to see the lesson in that difficult moment.

Her feedback—though given in frustration—taught me something invaluable. I learned the importance of setting a clear purpose for meetings, having a desired outcome, and respecting people's time. What once felt like a painful interaction turned into a valuable life lesson, one that has made me a much better leader.

Forgiveness is powerful. It not only frees us from the burden of past hurts but also gives us clarity to see the good in difficult situations. Through God's grace, I now feel blessed by that interaction, rather than burdened by it. I am grateful for my coworker and for the wisdom God granted me through this experience. Let us always seek to forgive, for in doing so, we allow God to shape our hearts and reveal his greater purpose.

*Steve Lieser has been part of a Minneapolis/St. Paul WorkLight Small Group for over five years. He leads the Hilltop Small Group and together they are hosting a Challenge Weekend in May.*

## PRAY

*Soften my heart, Lord, and remind me to extend grace just as you have shown me grace. May your wisdom guide my actions, and may my words always reflect your love.*

## REFLECT

*Is there someone in your life whom you need to truly forgive, not just in words but in your heart? How can you invite God into that process?*

## DISCUSS

*How has forgiveness—either given or received—helped you grow or see a difficult situation in a new light?*

# Three Keys to Transformative Small Groups

For Small Groups to be effective, members need to work together to be **missional, formational, and relational**. All three are needed.

Learn more at [bit.ly/WLgroups](https://bit.ly/WLgroups)

## REFLECTIONS WEEK 2

## Trespases

By Carol Lopez

*Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. (Colossians 3:13)*

When my mom was diagnosed the second time with breast cancer, I retired from a fulfilling career in education to become her full-time care provider. Two years later, my mom lost her battle and Jesus called her home.

Before retiring, I worked for a manager who was brilliant, innovative, and very successful. However, I learned very quickly that in order to thrive in the workplace, I had to forsake most of my own creative ideas. Over time, I became very resentful and withdrawn, but I never made my feelings known. When he retired, I silently rejoiced.

Now that my mom was gone, the tasks before me were insurmountable. I alone

was responsible for clearing out her possessions and selling her house. I was afraid and wanted someone to tell me how to do this. I prayed relentlessly for guidance.

Then one night I was awakened from a deep sleep and the light of the Holy Spirit was before me. He imprinted within my heart that God loves my boss and I because we are his children. I had to forgive myself first for being an imperfect human. I realized that my boss was doing the best he knew how to do, so I needed to forgive him within my heart from a distance.

Over time, through deep prayer and communion with the Holy Spirit, I was able to let go of the past hurt and disappointments and sell my mom's house. A new sense of freedom, healing, and empowerment was now my reality. And, most importantly, my relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ flourished.

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*Carol Lopez is a retired educator, member of the Fresno WorkLight Women's Chapter and Service Council,*

her phone. I knew I had been rebuffed, but the Lord provided me with the grace to move on gently.

Later that night, she needed help with another resident and came to me rather vulnerably to ask if I would help her. "Yes, I'd be happy to," I said. We worked pleasantly together and then went on our way.

Weeks later, we were working on the same unit again, when I was asked to assist a resident on another floor. This coworker came up to me to make sure I had everything I needed in order to fulfill the request and then went out of her way to thoughtfully provide extra assistance.

Because the Lord had moved me to be patient and merciful during the difficulties in this work relationship, and to maintain a stance of wanting to serve the other person, our relationship had the opportunity to move forward in love, communion, and graceful forgiveness.

and a member of WorkLight's Editorial Team. She also volunteers as a Stephen Minister for her church.

## PRAY

*Dear Lord, help us to open our hearts to complete forgiveness. Show us how to see the good in all things, forgive what is hurtful, and how to surrender the burden to you.*

## REFLECT

*Consider the scripture teaching Matthew 6:15 and reflect on: "But if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."*

## DISCUSS

*When the opportunity to forgive someone face to face no longer exists, what possible avenues or solutions can free you from the grip of unforgiveness?*

## REFLECTIONS WEEK 3

## Grace

By Paula Lent

*Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (Colossians 4:6)*

When Paul says that God will supply all our needs in accordance with the riches of his glory (Philippians 4:19), that includes our spiritual needs—providing us with grace to respond to challenging situations, transforming them into opportunities which call forth greater forgiveness and love from us.

At a memory care unit where I worked, I once asked a coworker for help with an elderly patient who required two people to assist her. She responded that she'd help me later if she had the time and then sat down and began scrolling through

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*Paula Lent is a former member of the WorkLight Editorial Team who is currently studying at Holy Cross College in South Bend, Indiana.*

## PRAY

*When coworkers rebuff me on the job, please give me the grace to move on in quiet forgiveness.*

## REFLECT

*How do you "handle" difficult coworkers? How can you improve?*

## DISCUSS

*When have you been in need of grace to deal with a challenging situation at work? Where did you draw your strength from?*

REFLECTIONS WEEK 4

## Betrayal

By Laurie Primavera

*“You, O Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to you.”*  
(Psalm 86:5)

The ability to forgive others requires us to receive God’s gift of forgiveness in our own lives. But if we’re faced with the pain of betrayal at the hands of a coworker, the journey can be difficult to bear.

When I relocated to accept a new job, I fulfilled a dream to live and work by the ocean. I subsequently developed a friendship with a coworker and together, we shared our frustration about how the CEO of our company treated staff. I never imagined she would repeat our conversation with my boss. Other managers had cautioned me that she was untrustworthy, yet I trusted her. When the CEO stopped talking to me, I realized her betrayal.

This situation brought back something I experienced as a young hospice nurse. I had the privilege of working with a nun, and she furthered my faith journey by leading me to a silent retreat where I learned to pray in a deeper and more meaningful manner. Simultaneously, I left an unhealthy marriage, leading me to pray fervently for forgiveness. Then, I was able to collaborate with a Christian mentor who helped me experience a true sense of forgiveness.

With the betrayal by my coworker, I once again took a moment for reflection and quiet prayer. I was forced to wait on the Lord and trust that he would lead me in a new direction. Miraculously, after several weeks of sleepless nights, I was hired for a different job. Forgiving myself and the coworker helped me move forward with a different outlook. My sense of freedom from guilt and/or anger reminded me that God’s greatest gift to his faithful results in a life filled with blessings and joy!

*Laurie Primavera has been a nurse and health care leader for the last 30 years, overseeing outpatient programs such as hospice and home health. She currently coordinates a Stephen Ministry program at her church.*

### PRAY

*Father, thank you for the gift of forgiveness that has set me free. Fill me with your spirit that I may forgive others as Christ has instructed.*

### REFLECT

*Is there someone in your life you need to forgive? How can you begin that journey so that you can live more joyfully?*

### DISCUSS

*Read Psalm 41:9. Has there been a time when a coworker “has turned against” you? How did you handle that betrayal? How can the forgiveness exhibited by Jesus help you forgive others?*

## PRESIDENT’S NOTE



*Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep.*  
(Acts 7:60)

### Miraculous Forgiveness

There was once a person in my life who wronged me. So terribly, in fact, that I have often thought it would have been easier to have been stoned to death than to endure what this person put me through.

I tried everything in my power to forgive. I prayed, studied scripture, and read books. I spoke to trusted mentors, confessed my

unforgiveness in a Small Group, and received prayer on weekend retreats. But it was like emptying a cauldron using a fork. No matter how hard I scraped there seemed to always be that little bit of unforgiveness stuck to the bottom of my soul.

Even when God heard my prayers to repair my unforgiving heart and set me free, I found each time soon thereafter that my resentment had returned. It felt as if this person had a power over me that I couldn’t escape.

Finally, a brother from my WorkLight Small Group confronted me with the truth. I had been trying to forgive on my own. While scripture teaches how to repent, reconcile, and pray for healing—it never suggests that any one of us is meant to become

an independent source of infinite forgiveness. We need Jesus.

When Stephen was stoned to death he didn’t stand up to the Sanhedrin and say, “I forgive you.” He fell to his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” Here I am, 2,000 years later, realizing that I don’t have the power to forgive everything. But with Jesus all things are possible—even miraculous forgiveness.

With you all in Christ,  
Wes

## CHALLENGE WEEKEND

## Come and See

## Who is God Calling You to Reach?

*“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” (1 Peter 4:10)*

Individually, it’s probably not likely that any one of us will bring 500 new attendees to Challenge Weekends by the end of 2025. Yet we can each be part of that milestone when we remember the power of a single invitation to personal connections in our lives.

When you consider who to invite to a Challenge Weekend, begin with prayer. Ask God to show you clearly who needs the spiritual summit experience of a Challenge Weekend right now. Who expresses a desire to grow in their faith? Who shares frustrations with their current circumstances? Who is discouraged after a series of overwhelming setbacks? These may be just the people for whom God has a special gift planned through a Challenge Weekend.

People are generally more inclined to consider a Challenge Weekend invitation when it comes from someone they trust. Jesus’ focus on relationships gives us a model for effectively reaching others. Trusting relationships are built on connection.

In his book, *Parallel Faith*, Dave Boden writes:

*“Authentic, vulnerable relationships are foundational to helping those who don’t know Jesus move from a place of being uninterested to becoming spiritually curious. It’s rare that we can delegate this process to a celebrity Christian or a pastor on a screen or stage from afar. The name of the game is connection. God wants you to be confident to walk alongside people and help them start a journey with Jesus.”*

Here are just three ways we build connections with others:

**Proximity:** Certainly, time spent with others builds familiarity and deepens relationships. With whom have you built a strong connection with through the time spent together and long hours worked jointly to accomplish tasks and projects?

**Passions:** We often build deep relationships with people who share our interests, like similar hobbies, or love of family, or even favorite sports teams. These may feel superficial at first, but they can lead to deeper relationships. Who comes to mind when you think of someone with whom you share an interest, but who may be seeking a deeper friendship?

**Perspectives:** We benefit from a diverse range of friends and relationships, but sometimes the deepest friendships come with those with whom we share common outlooks or perspectives. Sometimes those bonds are built when we have endured challenging experiences together. Is there someone who shares your desire to grow their faith?

As you reflect on who to invite to a Challenge Weekend, consider with whom you have a relationship based on these (or other) connections. Those relationships may give you an opening to share a deeper perspective of your faith. If you have benefitted from a Challenge Weekend, then sharing an invitation for them to have the same experience is one more way to build your relationship with them.

An invitation to “come and see” can be a powerful gesture when it comes from someone close.

*This is the fourth in a series of articles designed to inspire WorkLight members to extend invitations to connect with others.*

WORKLIGHT

Challenge  
Weekend  
Toolkit

Is your group interested in putting on a Challenge Weekend? Will you answer the call? Find important planning and event materials in the Challenge Weekend toolkit!

[worklight.org/cwetoolkit](http://worklight.org/cwetoolkit)

# Grappling with GRUBB

By Greg Aitkens

In our workplaces, we've all had to deal with GRUBB (Grudges, Resentments, Unforgiveness, Bitterness, and Blame).

As a financial advisor in Orange County, California, I experienced this when my Christian mentor did not honor a handshake agreement after I was instrumental in landing two large cases for the firm. I asked: "How could this happen to me?"

I confronted my mentor about being paid; however, his default position was that the partner was to blame, or some other excuse. I was flabbergasted and soon became filled with anger and "GRUBB."

I prayed about what to do. Confront the mentor again? File a lawsuit? Move out? Try to reconcile and forgive? Or follow Matthew 18:15-17 and point out the offense to see if he would confess? Talk to others for confirmation? Take the case to this man's church/pastor?

While all this was going on, I attended a retreat facilitated by one of the founders of Christians in Commerce, the late Louie Grams. The retreat was silent, except for mealtimes. I was praying about what to do. It was heavy on my heart and mind. At one time, I sensed that Jesus was standing next to me with his finger in my chest. He said: "You need to get out of there because you are dealing with the devil himself!" This was a surprising answer to my prayer. I knew I needed to leave the firm.

In less than 30 days, I went to another firm, which was like going to Heaven after being pulled from the pit of devastation.

I left the firm, but I wondered, how was I going to move on, and be set free spiritually? The Lord encouraged me

to "forgive from afar," which is what I have done.

God has provided me with a few "go to" processes which always work well when I find I'm stuck in "GRUBB." One is what I call "Vent Letter Plus." It has five steps.

1. Write down what happened in detail. What caused you harm? Get it all out on paper, or on a screen. Let it fly. Transfer any rage you have on to the page. (Do not send this to anyone. It's only for you.)
2. Ask yourself: How did I contribute to this problem? Did I fan the flame of discord or animosity? Do I need to seek forgiveness from our Lord, or another person?
3. What are you learning from all this? Is Jesus asking you to muster mercy for a person you really dislike? Can I cut some slack? Have I forgiven myself?
4. Count your blessings! Yes, these tough situations help us to grow in him. Also, look back at all the ways our Lord has gotten us through these tough times in the past.
5. Define the opportunities now. We can forgive and move on. We can commit more to daily prayer. We can be kinder to our enemies.

In my life, I realized I could build his Kingdom if I wasn't stuck with all that nasty GRUBB. Forgiving sets us free!

*Greg Aitkens is a long-time member of WorkLight who lives in Cambria, California, with his wife Ginny. He is the author of A New Mindset for Forgiveness and can be reached at [greg.r.aitkens@gmail.com](mailto:greg.r.aitkens@gmail.com).*

## Are You a Forgiver?

Continued from page 1

### Taking Responsibility for Freedom

If you could wave a magic wand and create the best possible outcome in your work relationships, what would that look like? Harmony? Trust? A culture of respect?

I propose that forgiveness and reconciliation are what God has given us to restore relationships. Forgiveness doesn't mean excusing wrongdoing or pretending that hurt never happened. It means choosing to release resentment and partnering with God in setting others—and ourselves—free.

Jesus came to set us free. But free from what? Many things, but at the top of the list is resentment. He not only invites us to forgive but expects us to participate in this divine work. Forgiving others is one of the clearest marks of a follower of Christ.

### Forgiving the Inexcusable

*"To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you." (C.S. Lewis)*

There will always be reasons to hold onto offense. But as long as we do, we remain trapped. Forgiveness is not about ignoring injustice; it is about refusing to let bitterness define us. When we forgive in the workplace—whether it's a difficult boss, an unfair coworker, or even ourselves—we reflect the heart of God in one of the most influential areas of our lives.

So, take 100% responsibility for setting people free—including yourself. Let forgiveness be the defining mark of how you work, lead, and interact with others. After all, when we forgive, we don't just change the workplace, we change lives.

*Dave Mazanowski is a board member of WorkLight. He lives in Indianapolis, Indiana, with his wife, Donna. He is the co-founder of Mainscape Inc., a commercial landscape maintenance firm, and he can be reached at [damazanowski@mainscape.com](mailto:damazanowski@mainscape.com).*

## NEWS

## MONTHLY LEADERSHIP UPDATE

To help WorkLight highlight the exciting activities happening across the organization, the WorkLight communications team has begun producing a new monthly Chapter Leadership Update email for Chapter leaders. This email includes administrative and committee activities, progress on organizational goals, and news from individual Chapters, including Challenge Weekend updates and “Glory Stories” of blessings happening at local Chapters. If you aren’t already receiving this email and would like to, please contact [admin@worklight.org](mailto:admin@worklight.org) to be added to the distribution list.

## NATIONAL LEADERSHIP RETREAT POSTPONED

The volunteers who generously offered to plan and host May’s Leadership Retreat have decided to postpone the event to later this year. We will regroup to form a new planning task force under the leadership of our newly-hired VP of Ministry Programs, Seth Neistadt. Do you want to learn about all these initiatives, help us understand what’s happening in your community, and discern how it all fits together? Please pray and consider joining us to bring this new

initiative to life. Please send an email to [admin@worklight.org](mailto:admin@worklight.org) if you’d like to be a part of that process.

## TRIVIA

Chapters and Small Groups are the most common forms of ongoing community that embody the mission of WorkLight regularly. Many Small Groups are either formally or informally connected to a Chapter. Which of our Chapters would you guess has the most Small Groups within it?

*Last month’s answer: The founders of Christians in Commerce International (now WorkLight) were invited to the Vatican in 1985.*

## MORE LOCAL TRIVIA?

It’s been a few years now since we’ve included a trivia piece in the news. We pray that it’s been engaging, fun, and informative. Upon reflection we realize that most of the trivia we shared has been through the lens of the home office’s history. Going forward we would love to include more local trivia. If you have any fun facts you might share with us about your local Chapter or Small Group, please let us know by sending an email to [admin@worklight.org](mailto:admin@worklight.org).

## 2025 CHALLENGE WEEKENDS

## Fresno Women’s Chapter

- April 11–13 at St. Francis Retreat Center, 549 Mission Vineyard Road, San Juan Bautista, California.

## Phoenix Men’s Chapter

- April 11–13 at United Christian Youth Camp 1400 Paradise Valley Road, Prescott, Arizona.

## Salinas Men’s Chapter

- April 25–27 at Mission San Antonio De Padua, 1 Mission Creek Road, Fort Hunter Liggett, California.

## Minneapolis’ Hilltop Small Group

- May 2–4 at a member’s cabin in Mora, Minnesota.

## Duluth Men’s Chapter

- May 16–17 at St. Scholastica Monastery, 1001 Kenwood Ave., Duluth.

## Orange County/Mission Viejo Men’s Chapters

- September 5–7 at Prince of Peace Abbey, 650 Benet Hill Road, Oceanside, California.

Check out these events and more at [worklight.org/events/](https://worklight.org/events/).

WORKLIGHT

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Wouldn’t it be awesome if you could meet with other people in the workplace and openly talk about Jesus? You can! WorkLight has small groups and chapters that exist to help people like you shine for Christ at work.

Prefer to start a new WorkLight group? Great! We have proven tools and resources to help get you started.

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Learn more at [worklight.org/small-groups](https://worklight.org/small-groups)

*"I have been  
crucified with Christ  
and I no longer live,  
but Christ lives in me."*

Galatians 2:20

# APRIL 2025

[WorkLight.org](http://WorkLight.org)

## THE FLAME™

### WORKLIGHT PRAYER

Father,

*Fill us with your Holy Spirit  
that we may be made new  
and bring the presence of Christ into all we do;  
That we may grow in love for you, and for all;  
That we may be humble and wise stewards of your creation;  
That we may bring your light into our workplaces;  
That we may lead all to unity in you;  
Through Jesus, our Lord.*


Amen

**VISION** Being Christ in the workplace

**MISSION** To encourage and equip Christians to be God's presence in the workplace by the power of the Holy Spirit, exercising faith, integrity, and excellence

**VALUES** Christians in Commerce (DBA WorkLight) is an ecumenical organization committed to:

- Growing and being transformed in Jesus Christ
- Manifesting the gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Building strong brotherhood and sisterhood
- Serving God and expanding his Kingdom in all aspects of our lives

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