

## **Contrails**

### **Ready:**

*“Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’” - Matthew 28:16-20 (NIV)*

### **Set**

On any given day you can look up and see planes crisscrossing the sky, with many of them being more than 50 miles from our viewing position. For us down on solid ground, it would be hard for us to spot these planes if it weren't for their telltale condensation trails, or “contrails.” Although often mistaken as smoke, contrails are actually clouds formed when water vapor condenses and freezes around small particles in aircraft's exhaust. It's a similar phenomenon to seeing your breath when you exhale warm air on a cold day.

Many factors such as altitude, temperature, humidity and engine type determine whether a contrail is formed, but all contrails share a few certain aspects. First, they're all made up of the same materials and formed in the exact same manner, but exist for different durations. (Some are visible for only a few seconds (short-lived), some for hours as a straight line (persistent non-spreading), and others for hours and spread to be several miles wide (persistent spreading).) They also, as long white streaks against the blue sky, cannot be hidden. And all contrails show direction. When a contrail forms, it's easy to spot where the plane has been and where it is headed.

So, why are we talking about contrails? Let me, explain. As Christian coaches and athletes we all have contrails. As we continue to grow in discipleship and develop our lives in Christ, we can go through times of uncertainty. There will be periods when we identify with the short-lived contrail. Our fire will be visible for short amounts of time and then will disappear. We are inconsistent at best. There also will be periods of time where we will mimic the persistent (non-spreading) contrail. We are on point with our walk and presentation of Christ's message, but our impact is limited. And, finally, there will be periods of time when we become like the persistent spreading contrails. It is here where, as true competitors for Christ, we have the most impact.

Today, let's examine our contrails and make sure we're leaving a lasting trail. Are we loving our teammates, opponents, coaches, managers and supporters with the love of Christ; seeking to replicate our faith by making disciples; living lives of integrity when no one is looking; etc.? Like the contrast of the white streak against the blue sky that cannot be hidden,

neither can our Christian contrails when we're living what we believe. Our direction—where we came from and where we are heading—also will be easily visible, and we will produce a continuous and spreading trail of God's great love.

## Go

1. What does my Christian contrail look like?
2. What would it look like ideally?
3. How can I change my game plan so that my Christian contrail becomes persistent and spreading?

## Workout

- Matthew 25:14-30
- John 15:5-8
- Romans 10:14-15
- 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

## Bible Reference:

Matthew 28:16-20

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