

# Miracle on the Hudson

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**By Dave Havir**

BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently I was emotionally moved when watching accounts about the miracle on the Hudson. You know what event I'm talking about.

US Air flight No. 1549 encountered difficulties upon its initial ascent from JFK airport in New York City on Jan. 15, 2009. The pilot, Chesley B. "Sully" Sullenberger, had to make a quick decision when he learned that two of the airplane engines were not working properly. He decided to put the plane down in the waters of the Hudson River.

There were two reasons for my emotional reaction.

First, I listened to what the passengers endured during this experience.

It was amazing that the passengers survived the crash landing. Yet surviving the crash was not the end of their challenges. As you have probably heard, those in the front of the plane had an easier time than those in the rear of the plane. Water was rushing into the back of the airplane, and some of the people in that area of the plane expressed their concern that they were going to drown in the plane after they survived the landing. And then getting to the wing did not guarantee that the crisis was over. You probably saw the remarkable video or photographs of the passengers standing on the wings of the aircraft as various boats came to their rescue.

I heard of some who jumped into the frigid water because they thought the plane might sink and kill them at that point.

After a few days to process the event that occurred to them, various passengers described the roller-coaster of emotions that they felt. Fear turned into appreciation. Appreciation turned back into alarm. Back and forth. Alarm finally morphed into relief. It was riveting to hear them tell their story.

Second, I listened to Sully give his description of the episode. I had to admire his levelheadedness in handling the crisis. I appreciated his commitment to the safety of the crew and the passengers on his aircraft. But what really struck me was his response days later. He was questioning whether he did enough to fulfill his responsibilities.

When observers psychoanalyze why a person doesn't feel that he did enough in a crisis, it is easy to spot a person's "feet of clay." However, I prefer to enjoy the heroism of the moment.

I appreciated observing the good news in a darkening world. I know that we as believers need the ultimate brightness of the Kingdom of God. But I personally appreciated the flickering light of the miracle on the Hudson.