

Escape from a Burning Plane

On May 7 of this year, an article in *USA Today* reported about the crash of an Aeroflot plane that killed 41 of those onboard.

Dramatic video showed passengers using emergency exit slides to escape the burning aircraft. Survivors suggested the plane was struck by lightning, but Russia's national carrier said only that it returned to the airport for technical reasons. Two children were among the dead. The jet had 73 passengers and five crew members.

The aircraft landed with full fuel tanks because the crew lost contact with air traffic controllers and decided it was too dangerous to dump fuel over Moscow.

According to an official involved in the investigation, there were 37 survivors – 33 passengers and four members of the crew. One witness said it was a miracle anyone escaped.

“Reports from people on the plane indicate the evacuation may have been slowed by passengers grabbing their bags,” said writer Bill McGee in the *USA Today* article. “Videos show passengers taking their carry-on bags with them as they exited they exited the plane.”

The Association of Flight Attendants said in a statement: “We will never know if more lives could have been saved if the bags were left behind.”

Jesus said: “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions” (Luke 12:15 ESV).

The New American Standard Bible version translates the first part of the verse: “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed.”

The video footage of those passengers making an emergency exit with carry-ons in hand is a graphic illustration of Jesus' point. Unfortunately, we do the same thing when we have the wrong priorities.

Consider that an inordinate focus on material things not only hurts you, it also affects the people who come along behind you – including your children, grandchildren and other people who are influenced by your example. They see what you value most and what has your greatest attention and affection.

Let's be careful not to allow the world to cloud our judgment, making the things of this world seem more important than the relationships and well-being of others.

And every day, in the centers of Life Care and Century Park, we have the opportunity to show where the true priority lies.

– Beecher Hunter

