

## Preparing to Crash

Author J. Allan Peterson tells about an airplane flight he took on a 747 out of Brazil. He was awakened from sleep by a strong voice announcing, "We have a very serious emergency." Three engines had quit because of fuel contamination and the fourth was expected to go at any second. The plane began to drop and turn in the night, preparing for an emergency landing.

At first, the situation seemed unreal to Peterson, but when the steward barked, "Prepare for impact," he found himself -- and everyone around him -- praying. As he buried his head in his lap and pulled up his knees, he said, "Oh, God, thank You. Thank You for the incredible privilege of knowing You. Life has been wonderful."

As the plane approached the ground, his last cry was, "Oh, God, my wife! My children!"

Peterson survived the crash. As he wandered about the airport in a daze, aching all over, he found he couldn't speak, but his mind was racing: "What were my last words? What was the bottom line?"

As he remembered, he had his answer: relationships. Reunited with his wife and sons, he found that all he could say to them over and over was, "I appreciate you! I appreciate you!"

If you found yourself in Peterson's predicament, with death staring you in the face, what would you say to God? And wouldn't it be true that your thoughts would be -- not about a house, a car, money or other "stuff" -- but about relationships?

As you go about your work today in the centers of Life Care and American Lifestyles, and in the assignments of Life Care at Home, how about greeting associates and residents with "I appreciate you!"

--Beecher Hunter