



How to Fasten Our Seatbelts!

PRESENTED TO:
Ekklesia: December 13, 2025

Scripture

- Be **patient**, then, brothers, until the **Lord's coming**.
- See how the **farmer waits** for the land to yield its valuable crop and how **patient** he is for the autumn and spring rains.
- You too, be patient and **stand firm**, because the **Lord's coming** is near.
- Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or **you will be judged**.
- The **Judge** is standing at the door! (James 5:7-9)

Scripture

- Brothers, as an example of **patience** in the **face of suffering**, take the **prophets** who spoke in the name of the Lord.
- As you know, **we consider** those who have **persevered** blessed.
- You have heard of **Job's perseverance** and have seen what the **Lord** finally brought about.
- The **Lord** is full of **compassion** and **mercy**. (James 5:10-11)

A Commentary

Constructive Waiting



Introduction

- We don't like to **wait**.
- We check our phones when the **line at the drive-thru slows down**.
- We tap our feet when the **internet** takes more than five seconds to load.
- We **complain** when a **package** is marked "out for delivery" but hasn't arrived yet.
- We are a **people** trained by **technology** and **culture** to **expect** everything **now** — and maybe even faster.



Introduction

- But **James** has another word for us:
 - “**Be patient**, therefore, **brothers and sisters**, until the **coming of the Lord**.” (James 5:7).
- James says this because the **Rich** were taking advantage of them, and their **faith** in God to rescue them was faltering.
- James invites them and us to **wait** like a **farmer**, who knows something is growing even when sprouting crops have yet to emerge from the ground.



Introduction

- And James doesn't stop there. He tells us to **strengthen our hearts** (emotional and mental resilience).
- Why? For the “**Lord is (indeed) near!**”
- Which means that the **Day of the Lord** is coming, when the punishment of the **wicked** will be manifested!
- Therefore, as James says, “Stop **grumbling** about each other.”
- Implying that we ought to get **rid** of all resentment, bitterness, indignation, envy, jealousy, malice, and hatred.



Introduction

- Life throws **curveballs**.
- In **moments** of stress, conflict, and confusion, we are sometimes the **solution**.
- But other times? We are the problem.
- Our **vision** is clouded, our **patience** thin, and in the **pressure of the moment**, we turn on each other.



The Lord has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight. (Psalm 18:24)

Introduction

- You have probably seen it on a **flight**.
- The plane lands, the **seatbelt sign** dings, and before the **wheels have even stopped rolling**, **people** are **standing**, **grabbing bags**, and **jostling** to get off the plane first.
- We are often in a **rush**, not just to leave the airport, but in **life**.
- A **rush** to get ahead. A **rush** to be first.
- And the **tension builds** when there is a delay or uncertainty.
- Too often, we take it out on **each other**.



Introduction

- When we're **stressed**, it's tempting to **blame** and **find fault** in our politicians, neighbors, spouses, fellow church members, or pastors.
- But that only makes the **waiting** harder and heavier.
- It divides when it should **unite**.
- It distracts us from our real calling:
 - To **stand together**, especially when the pressure is on.
- James calls us to something better: **“Strengthen your hearts.”**



Remembering the Miracle on the Hudson

Fasten Your Seatbelts and Brace



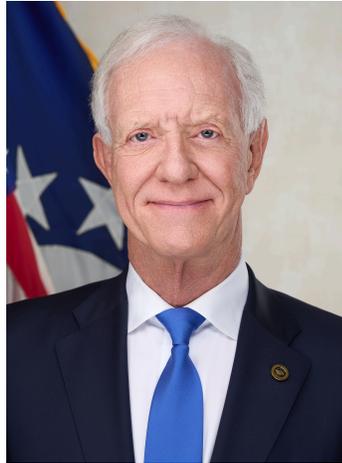
Introduction

- Remember **“The Miracle on the Hudson”**?
- On January 15, 2009, **US Airways Flight 1549** took off from New York's LaGuardia Airport bound for Charlotte, North Carolina.
- About two minutes into the flight, at an altitude of about 2,800 feet, the plane struck a **flock of geese**.
- Both engines **failed**.
- In an instant, what began as a routine flight turned into a **CRISIS**.



Introduction

- Captain **Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger** and First Officer **Jeffrey Skiles** had to act fast.
- With **no engine power** and no chance to reach a nearby runway, Sully made a **bold decision**.
- He would **ditch** the Airbus A320 in the Hudson River, right in the heart of **New York City**.
- As the plane descended, **Sully's calm voice** came over the intercom:
 - "This is the captain. Tighten your seatbelts and Brace for impact."
- The flight attendants repeated it down the aisle:
 - "Brace, brace, brace!" Passengers tucked their heads and held on.



Introduction

- With **extraordinary skill**, Sully glided the aircraft onto the river and landed it **miraculously intact**.
- All 155 people on board **survived**, most with only minor injuries.
- Ferries, police boats, and emergency crews rushed to the scene.
- The rescue was swift, the response **heroic**.



Introduction

- The media quickly dubbed it "The Miracle on the Hudson."
- For those on board, it wasn't just a **miracle**.
- It was a **moment** of mental clarity, emotional bracing, and collective courage.
- When Sully said "**brace,**" **people knew it was going to be rough**, but they could **survive** it — if they were **ready**.



The Promise of Safety and Protection!

Psalms 91



Psalm 91

- Whoever dwells in the **shelter** of the **Most High** will rest in the **shadow** (secret place) of the **Almighty**.
- I will say of the Lord, "He is my **refuge** and my **fortress**, my God, in whom I trust." (Psalm 91:1-2)
- Surely he will save you from the **fowler's snare** and from the **deadly pestilence**.
- He will cover you with his **feathers**, and under his **wings** you will find **refuge**; his **faithfulness** will be your **shield** and **rampart**. (Psalm 91:3-4)



Psalm 91

- You will not **fear**
- the **terror of night**, nor
- the **arrow that flies by day**, nor
- the **pestilence that stalks in the darkness**, nor
- the **plague that destroys at midday**. (Psalm 91:5-6)



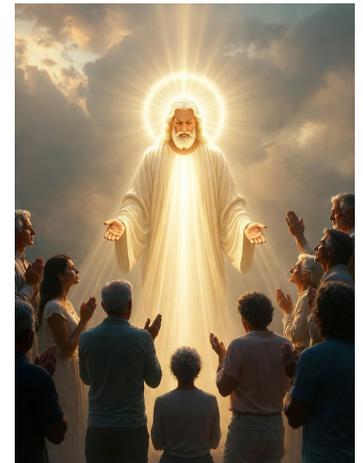
Psalm 91

- A **thousand** may fall at your side, **ten thousand** at your right hand, but it will not come **near** you.
- You will only **observe** with your eyes and **see** the punishment of the **wicked**. (Psalm 91:7-8)



Psalm 91

- "Because he **loves** me," says the Lord,
 - "I will **rescue** him;
 - I will **protect** him, for he **acknowledges my name**."
- He will **call** on me, and I will answer him;
 - I will be with him in **trouble**,
 - I will **deliver** him and **honor** him.
- With **long life**,
 - I will satisfy him and show him **my salvation**." (Psalm 91:14-16)



Finding the “Secret Place”

Abiding in Christ

To fully understand how to abide in the “secret place” of Psalm 91, we must turn to the New Testament—especially Johannine literature to learn how to commune with God.



Abiding in Christ - Gospel of John

- “**I am the vine**; you are the **branches**. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear **much fruit**; apart from me, you can do nothing.”
- **If** anyone does not remain in me,
 - he is like a **branch** that is thrown away and withers;
 - such **branches** are picked up, thrown into the **fire**, and burned. (John 15:5-6)

Abiding in Christ - Gospel of John

- **If** you **obey my commands**,
 - you will remain in my **love**,
 - **just as** I have **obeyed** my **Father’s commands** and
 - remain in his **love**. (John 15:10)

Abiding in Christ - Gospel of John

- My command is this:
 - **Love each other** as I have loved you.
 - **Greater love** has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:12-13)
- You did not choose me, but **I chose you** and appointed you to go and **bear fruit** — fruit that will last.
- Then the **Father** will give you whatever you **ask** in my name. (John 15:16-17a)

Abiding in Christ - 1st John

- But if we walk in the **light** (truth), as he is in the **light**, we have **fellowship** with one another, and the **blood of Jesus**, his Son, purifies us from all **sin**. (1 John 1:7)
- But if anyone **obeys** his **word**,
 - **God's love** is truly **made complete** in him.
- This is how we **know** we are in him:
 - Whoever claims to **live in him** must **walk** as Jesus did. (1 John 2:5-6)

Abiding in Christ - 1st John

- Whoever **loves** his **brother** lives in the **light**, and there is nothing in him to make him **stumble**.
- But whoever **hates** his brother is **in** the **darkness** and **walks around** in the **darkness**;
 - he does not know **where** he is going,
 - because the **darkness** has blinded him. (1 John 2:10-11)

Living in the "Secret Place"

The Anointing

Gaining the ability to keep ourselves in God's perfect and pleasing will and so avoid being seduced by false teachers, prophets, and apostles.



The Anointing

- Dear children, this is the **last hour**, and as you have heard that the **antichrist** is coming, even now many antichrists have come.
- This is how we **know** it is the **last hour**.
 - **They** went **out** from us, but they did **not** really belong to us.
- For if **they** had belonged to us,
 - they would have **remained** with us;
 - but their going showed that **none of them belonged to us**. (1 John 2:18-19)

The Anointing

- But you have an **anointing** from the Holy One, and all of you know the **truth**.
- I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no **lie** comes from the truth. (1 John 2:20-21)
- See that what you have heard from the **beginning** remains in you.
- If it does, you also will **remain (abide)** in the **Son** and in the **Father**. And this is what he **promised** us — even **eternal life**. (1 John 2:24-25)

The Anointing

- I am writing these things to you about **those** who are **trying** to lead you **astray**.
- As for you, the **anointing** you received from **him** remains in you, and you do not need **anyone** to teach you.
- But as his anointing **teaches** you about all things and as that **anointing** is real, not counterfeit — just as it has taught you, **remain** in him. (1 John 2:26-27)
- And now, dear children, **continue** in him, so that when he **appears** we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming. (1 John 2:28)

Prophet Forecast of

Severe Turbulance

Jesus warned us that a period of intense turbulence is approaching, and we will need to keep our **seatbelts** securely fastened.



Jesus' Warning!

- Jesus says that on that **day** there will be **great distress**, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now, and **never** to be equaled again. (Matthew 24:21)
- He says,
 - “Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and all **nations** will hate you because of me.
 - At that time, **many** will turn away from the faith and will **betray** and **hate** each other, and many **false prophets** will appear and deceive many people.
 - Because of the increase of **wickedness**, the love of most will grow cold, but he who **stands firm** to the end will be **saved**.” (Matthew 24:9-13)

The Key to Everything

- As we **abide** in **Christ's commands**, we will, "spiritually speaking", live in **Him** and **He** in us.
- In this **sacred union**, we will grow in Him, and He is in us, where we produce fruit in every **good work** produced by **faith**—becoming **blameless** in a crooked, corrupt, and perverse (rebellious) generation.
- Generally speaking, having the **"mind of Christ,"** we will be able to keep ourselves in God's good, pleasing, and perfect will so that all our **prayers** will be heard and **heaven** and God's response will be **yes** and **AMEN**.
- So why don't we make living out **Christ's commands** the number **one priority** in our lives?

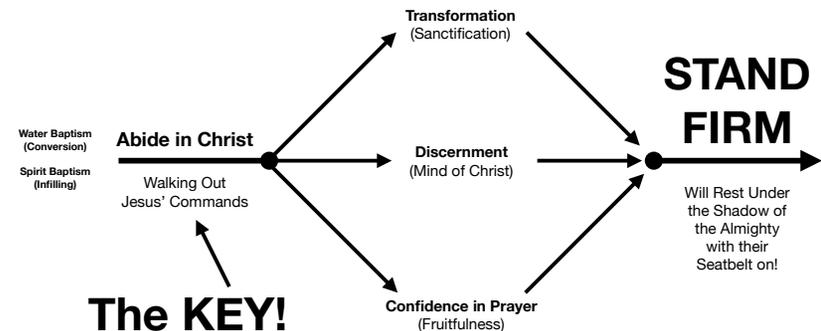
So Then How to Prepare

- Note this:
 - The whole purpose of **discipleship** is to help us, through the knowledge of God, to **stand firm** in the **faith** amid trouble, trials, or persecution that **tests** the faith of God's saints.
 - So then, let us make the most of every moment.
 - Emulate the **virtues** of **God's character** in everything, whether it is through the **words we say** or **what we do** in living out agape love.
 - Pray for our **enemies** and **do good** to those who oppose us.
 - Honor all who are in **authority**, for this pleases God.
 - Live a **holy life**, for without holiness, no man will see God.

So Then How to Prepare

- If we do **these things**, we will be a **mature saint** who not only discerns all things but also has confidence in our prayers.
- Just **think** about this for a moment.
- If you have **God** answering your **prayers**, what other thing do you need or want?

Diagram Illustration



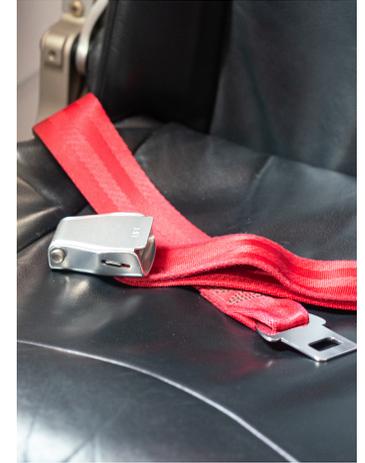
So Then How to Prepare

- As we get ready to celebrate the **birth of our Savior**, who purchased for us such a **great salvation**, let us understand that his **first coming was to equip a people to overcome the world** and the **spirit** that is in it.



So Then How to Prepare

- So then, let's put on the **seatbelt of protection** and **stand firm** in our **faith**.
- Therefore, my dear brothers, **stand firm**.
- Let **nothing** move you.
- Always give yourselves **fully** to the **work of the Lord**, because you know that your labor in the Lord is **not** in vain. (1 Cor. 15:58)



So Then How to Prepare

- Therefore, let us **abide** in Christ, and we will **rest** in the **shadow** (secret place) of the **Almighty**.
- "Because he loves me," says the Lord, "I will **rescue** him; I will **protect** him, for he acknowledges my name. He will **call** on me, and I will **answer** him; I will be with him in **trouble**, I will **deliver** him and **honor** him. With **long life**, I will **satisfy** him and **show** him my **salvation**." (Psalm 91:14-16)