

News Story Summary

In recent years, several celebrities have had frightening experiences on private planes. The latest was Jennifer Lawrence who boarded a plane in Louisville, Kentucky after visiting her family. At 31,000 feet, an engine failed and as the pilot was initiating an emergency landing, the other engine failed. Though it was close, the plane made a safe landing.

Other celebrities who have had trouble in the air include Harrison Ford who suffered face and head injuries after he crash landed his plane on a golf course in 2015, and Morgan Freeman whose private plane blew a tire on takeoff, also in 2015. Freeman commented, “Thanks to my excellent pilot Jimmy Hobson, we landed safely without a scratch.”

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the phrase “Jennifer Lawrence landing.”)

Focus Attention

To supplement the Focus Attention idea ask: *Does the reason for our thanks change its degree of passion?* Read the news story summary. Ask: *How thankful should the three celebrities be that they survived potentially disastrous plane issues? How do you think you would have responded if you had been in their situation?* Highlight responses that point to wholehearted thankfulness.

In Psalm 138, David helps us to understand the nature of wholehearted thanksgiving to God. This type of thanksgiving should be an integral part of our praise to God.

Summarize and Challenge

To supplement the Summarize and Challenge ideas, say: David’s thanksgiving was not just lip service; he thanked God with all his heart. Remind group members of the news story summary. Ask: *What difference would it have made if Freeman had expressed thanks to God and not to his pilot?* Explain that God is not a mere human but is our holy, loving God who created us and has blessed us beyond measure. No one else deserves our wholehearted thanks more than God. Challenge group members to take time this week to recall God’s protection, love, strength, patience, comfort, and other blessings in their lives and spend time in wholehearted thanks and praise to God.