

**A WORD WITH YOU - By Ron Hutchcraft**  
**# 10223 – “Stuck in a Holding Pattern”**  
**Philippians 3:12**

March 18, 2026

I was on a flight from Chicago to Newark, and I was busily working until suddenly the pilot put on the brakes. We weren't really near Newark yet, so I tried to figure out what's going on. It looked as if the plane was beginning to circle, and our wing was dipped down a little bit. So pretty soon I said, "You know, I believe I've seen that house before. Those trees look familiar." I got to see them again, and again, and another time. Yep, we were in that time warp that is dreaded by every frequent flier called the holding pattern. We weren't standing still. No, I'm happy to say we were not standing still. That wouldn't have been good. But we were using up time, we were using up fuel. We were in constant motion; we just weren't making any progress.

I'm Ron Hutchcraft and I want to have **A WORD WITH YOU** today about **“Stuck in a Holding Pattern.”**

That leads us to our word for today from the Word of God from Philippians chapter 3, beginning in verse 12, where Paul says, "Not that I have already obtained all this or have already been made perfect. But I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it, but one thing I do. Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

Now, if anyone could have been satisfied with where he was spiritually it would be the Apostle Paul. He was living one of the greatest Christian lives in history. You can tell from this passage that in spite of that he is refusing to stay in spiritual neutral. He's certainly not going to go in reverse and live on his spiritual memories. "Forgetting the things that are behind" he says. No, he's in high gear. He says, "I'm forgetting what's back there. I'm pressing on. I haven't got it all yet. I want the rest of Jesus. I want to know Christ!"

Paul never flew, but I don't think he would have liked the holding pattern. You know, maybe you're in a holding pattern right now spiritually. You started on your journey with Jesus. You've made some progress, but somewhere along the way you slowed down and you're circling ground that you've covered before. You're not standing still; you're just circling in this holding pattern.

Churches get in holding patterns. Ministry organizations get in holding patterns. Oh they keep their calendar full: time for the banquet, time for this activity, time for the board, time for the committee. But are they taking any new ground for the Lord?

Spiritually healthy people are restless people. They're aggressively pursuing more of God's power in their lives than they've ever tasted before. They want a more intimate relationship with Jesus than they've experienced yet. They desire to have a greater effectiveness in praying than they've ever had before. They want to make a greater difference with the rest of their life than they've ever made before. Am I describing you; this restlessness for more in prayer, more of God's power, more intimacy with Jesus; knowing Him better than you've ever known Him; making a greater difference for Him?

These kinds of spiritual healthy people want to make more of a difference than they've ever made. Is that you? Is that your church? Let it begin with you, breaking out of your holding pattern, getting moving again. See, it begins when you say, "Lord, I'm tired of this plateau. Activity is not obedience. I know that. Busyness is not power. I want all You have, Lord, I want more of You than I've ever tasted before. I want to make more of a difference with my life than I've ever made before."

Find some other people who feel the same way and pursue the Lord together in prayer times. Make it a discipline to find new ground in God's Word; to get to Him daily. Circling the same ground in that airplane, I was restless to get on toward the goal. And it was a good feeling when we finally started moving in the right direction.

Aren't you tired of a spiritual holding pattern?

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