

Message Series: Famous Shipwrecks

Today's Message: "Titanic and America Today"



A SouthPointe Message

Further Study

Tuesday, April 14, 2009 marked the 97th anniversary of the sinking of the R.M.S. Titanic. When the ship struck an iceberg at 11:40 p.m. on the evening of April 14, 1912, it became the greatest maritime disaster in history. Of the 2,240 on board, only 706 people would survive. The last two known survivors were Lilliand Gertrud Asplund who was six years old when Titanic struck the iceberg died at age 99 in May 2006. Barbara Dainton, who was only 10 months old at the time of the accident, died October 16, 2007 at the age of 96. Both refused to talk about Titanic throughout their lives. The oldest known survivor, Mary Davis Wilburn, died on July 29, 1987 at the age of 104. She was 29 years old at the time of the accident. She provided valuable information about what really happened on that fateful night including the fact that she distinctly remembered hearing the orchestra playing "Nearer My God To Thee" as her lifeboat was distancing itself from Titanic.

Plans are now underway to remember the 100th anniversary of this tragedy in 2012 by duplicating every detail of the original voyage. Further information can be found at www.cruiselinehistory.com. Click [here](#) to view various clips of the original sinking of Titanic.

In order to understand the spiritual lessons of how Titanic is a perfect picture of America today; we need to examine some facts about Titanic.

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT TITANIC

1. The R.M.S. Titanic was owned by J P Morgan.
2. The cost to build Titanic was 7.5 million dollars. (about 500 million today)
3. It took 3000 men almost three years to complete Titanic.
4. There were 3 million plus rivets used in the hull of the ship.
5. The ship used 825 tons of coal per day.
6. The cost of a First Class ticket was \$4,700.00 (\$90,000.00 today).
7. Each engine provided 30,000 horsepower.
8. The ship was 882 feet 9 inches in length, 92 feet, 6 inches in width, and more than 100 feet high.
9. The total gross weight of Titanic was 42,329 tons.
10. The ship had a total capacity of 3, 547. Only 2,240 were on board including 889 crew members.
11. Titanic was the second in a series of three ships being built that were almost identical: Olympia, Titanic, and Britannic.
12. First Class passengers could choose rooms based on Louis the IV,XV,XVI, Empire, Italian, Renaissance, Regency, Queen Anne, and both modern and old Dutch styles.
13. Many rooms had fireplaces, sitting rooms, wardrobe rooms, and private baths.
14. Basic supplies included 35,000 eggs, 40 tons of potatoes, 1000 bottles of wine, 15,000 bottles of beer, 75,000 lbs of meat, 12,000 dinner plates, 1000 oyster forks, 15,000 champagne bottles, 1,750 quarts of ice cream, 40,000 towels, 45,000 napkins. It took experienced dockers one week to load the supplies.

This truly was the most luxurious ocean liner ever built.

FAMOUS PASSENGERS ON BOARD

It should not be considered strange that when the rich and famous heard that the most luxurious, expensive transatlantic accommodations that the world had ever seen were available, they spared no expense to be a part of this maiden voyage. That accounts for why so many of the world's most powerful, influential, and richest people were on board.

John Jacob Astor:

He was among the wealthiest men in the world at this time. He had a net worth of about 150 million. He had just returned from Egypt with his new 19 year old bride. He placed his wife in lifeboat #4. His body was discovered on April 21. He was wearing a shirt with the initials JJA on the collar.

Major Archibald Butt:

He was the military aid to President Taft.

Benjamin Guggenheim:

He owned the American Smelting and Refining Company. He had a net worth of about 95 million. He was said to be traveling with his mistress at the time of the accident. After realizing there were not enough lifeboats, he returned to his room with his personal valet and changed into his finest evening wear saying, "we've dressed up in our best and are prepared to go down like gentlemen". One of his final acts was to write out a message that said: "If anything should happen to me, tell everyone that I've done my best in doing my duty".

Isadore Strauss:

He was a famous clothing and merchant tycoon worth about 50 million. He was also the owner of Macy's Department Stores. His wife refused to board a lifeboat saying, "I will not be separated from my husband. As we have lived together, so we shall die together".

Joseph Bruce Ismay:

He was an international mercantilist and marine tycoon and president of White Star Line. He was worth about 40 million. His wife was said to be wearing a necklace costing about \$250,000.00 dollars.

Walter Donald Douglas:

Was a captain of industry worth about 4 million. He refused a seat in a lifeboat because so many were being left behind. He said, "I would be less than a man". When his body was recovered, they found a gold watch, 5 gold studs, and a wedding ring that were all engraved with the initials W.D.D. He was also carrying \$551.00 dollars.

Captain Edward J. Smith

He was known as the millionaire's captain. He was also the highest paid captain in the world. Interestingly, it was Captain Smith who was at the helm when Titanic's sister ship, Olympia collided with "The Hawk" as it was leaving dock. Titanic's maiden voyage was actually delayed because White Star Line had to cease work on Titanic to repair the Olympia. Smith was found 'not guilty' in the investigation. His last words to the crew of Titanic were, "every man for himself". He then retired to his cabin. The ship went under about three minutes later. Smith had earlier informed White Star Line that this would be his final voyage so he could retire to spend more time with his wife and daughter.

WHAT DOOMED THE R.M.S. TITANIC?

1. The voyage was based on false security: The false security was partially based upon the fact that Titanic was the largest and best built ship ever made. It was said to be practically "unsinkable". Who could ever have imagined that a ship almost 900 feet in length with anchors weighing 151/2 tons each, with a bottom more than 6 feet thick could possibly sink. You would have been classified a lunatic if you would have even suggested that the great Titanic could sink. How does that compare to America today?

2. The voyage was based on Theory over Fact: A cartoon appeared several days after the Titanic had gone down in the Atlantic. The cartoon showed a drawing of an iceberg that said "fact". The next picture was of Titanic that said "theory". Theory said the ship could not sink, but it did. Theory said nothing could tear through the six foot thick bottom; it tore through the side. Theory said that five watertight compartments could never flood; sixteen compartments flooded. Theory said there were no icebergs in

the area. The Atlantic was littered with icebergs. Theory said that we will be able to see any icebergs and we will have time to steer the ship clear of them. The fact is that they did not see the iceberg in time because of the speed of the ship and the stillness of the sea. Theory said that Titanic could cut through anything. Facts said everything except icebergs.

When it comes to America, theory says that God would never allow anything bad to happen to our Christian nation. Theory says that we are too powerful, we have too much military might, and that we are the greatest nation on the face of the earth. We are invincible. The facts are that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (nation).

3. The great Titanic was built using inferior steel!: Once the Titanic was found in 1986, it allowed many questions to be asked and answered. One of the first tests done was to examine the integrity of the steel used in the construction. The conclusion of the test showed that the iron had an extremely high sulfur content making it very brittle. The iron was likened to sheets of glass.

4. Titanic failed to heed six different warnings of icebergs in the area!: These warning actually came from other ships that had traveled the same path. Titanic was also going too fast for the conditions (22.5 knots). Titanic had a top speed of 23 knots. They were trying to arrive late Tuesday night rather than Wednesday morning.

5. The ship Californian had stopped for the night within sight of Titanic but the radio operator was now off duty and asleep!

6. There were not enough lifeboats on Titanic!: The ship was equipped with 16 lifeboats and 4 inflatables. If all boats had left Titanic fully loaded, they would have only saved 1200 of the more than 2,240 people on board. Some boats had no seamen assigned to them. Other had no provisions, no food and no water. Only 706 were saved.

THESE PEOPLE DID NOT NEED TO PERISH

During the Congressional hearings sometime later, the Captain of the Californian was asked, "Why didn't you come to the rescue?" His response was that he did not realize Titanic was sinking. "Why didn't you hear the distress calls from Titanic?" "The radio was off and the radio operator was off duty." "Couldn't you see that Titanic was sinking?" "We thought as the lights began to disappear, the ship was merely disappearing into the distance."

As the Congressional hearings were nearing an end, a member of Congress asked a strange question of 3rd officer John Pitman: "Mr. Pitman. Can you describe the screams as the ship was going down?" Mr. Pitman responded by saying, "It just sounded like one continuous long moan."

I will leave it to all of our readers to draw the comparisons to America today. I think I am safe in saying that America is on a collision course with an iceberg today. God has called us as Christians and as the church to be the light of the world. Interestingly, all of the men of Titanic responsible for keeping the lights on stayed in the belly of Titanic until it finally disappeared beneath the surface of the Atlantic. Eyewitnesses testified that the lights of Titanic did in fact stay on until the very end. May God impress upon us the joy and responsibility of keeping the lights on in the awesome days.