

"He called to me, 'Is your soul saved?' I replied, 'No. It is not.' Then he said, "'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.'" Later he "heard him call out this message to others as they sank beneath the waters to eternity. There and then, with two miles of water beneath me, in my desperation I cried to Christ to save me. I believed on Jesus and I was saved." After a few minutes he heard Harper say, "I'm going down, I'm going down." Then, "No, no, I'm going up!" As the Bible puts it, he was 'absent from the body, but present with the Lord.' It was said, "In a single night, between sunset and sunrise, during a few short hours, many passed away from this earth. But the Christian constancy and courage and unflinching heroism with which so many met their doom helps us realise that death is not the end of all things, but the portal of eternity."

LEONARDO DI CAPRIO

Leonardo di Caprio said of the film in which he starred, "This movie is a piece of history. It is like a religious tale, almost like a real story from the Bible. How is it that an event that occurred (so long ago) on Easter Sunday still magnetises millions!"

It is easy to point blame for the tragedy in many directions. The route: the Titanic should have sailed in a more southward direction, and reduced speed as night approached.

There were insufficient lifeboats, and many of those were not filled. Finally the warnings of icebergs went unheeded. Passengers dined and danced never dreaming that this floating palace would soon be two miles down on the ocean bed.

James Cameron, director of the blockbuster film Titanic said, "1912 was a very interesting time... there was no end to what man could do. Everything was going to get better and better, nicer and nicer. And what was in store for the people beyond that first decade: two world wars, nuclear weapons and all the many problems that we live with... Titanic is a wonderful metaphor for all that."

Titanic's voyage began with three classes of passengers. At the end, there were two. The White Star office in Liverpool placed a large board on either side of the entrance. On one were printed in large letters 'Known to be Saved' and on the other 'Known to be Lost'!

John Harper was lost at sea, but because he had trusted Jesus, he was saved in eternity. It was as Jesus gave His life, dying on a cross, that He carried the sin and guilt not only of John Harper, but of us all. We have all chosen to ignore God's warnings, and so live pushing Him to the margins of our lives and society.

As the Titanic sank the band on board played, '*Nearer my God to Thee, nearer to Thee!*'

When you and I follow the hundreds who died a century ago, and stand before God in judgement, whether we will be saved or lost for eternity will depend on whether we have trusted Jesus. He loved us, and came from heaven to earth to rescue us. He died for us. Buried, He rose again from the dead.

A Belfast man who was a stoker on the Titanic stayed for drink in a bar in Southampton and missed the ship. He was replaced by another stoker who was sitting at the quayside awaiting work. The Belfast man was reported as having perished. Three days later, to his wife's surprise, he returned home. He used to say "someone else died for me." It is a reminder of Jesus and His supreme sacrifice for us. Today, before it is too late, will you ask Jesus to forgive you; to become your Lord and Saviour, your God and Friend? The Bible says, "*Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved!*"

If you would like to know more about being a real Christian or you have a question about what you have read, please contact:

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Titanic

A Night To Remember



By Stephen Wright & Roger Carswell

The largest passenger liner of her day, SS Titanic was launched from Belfast's Harland and Wolff famous shipyard in 1911. She was sumptuous and luxurious, having cost £1.5 million to build and weighing 46,329 tons. Thousands of people lined Belfast Lough to watch her sail majestically after her launch.

The Titanic's first and final voyage began at Southampton, leaving at 12.15pm on Wednesday April 10th 1912, and calling at Cherbourg in France where she was boarded by wealthy American tourists. The next day she docked at Queenstown (now Cobh) in Ireland where many Irish emigrants, travelling steerage, went on board.

On Sunday April 14th at 11:40pm the Titanic struck an iceberg, and the damage done to five compartments sealed the doom of the ship. Water filled them, pulling the Titanic deeper into the ocean until the water flowed over the top of all the other bulkheads. At 2.30am on April 15th she sank into the icy Atlantic waters. Of the 1,343 passengers and 885 crew only 705 survivors reached New York, in the SS Carpathia. Instead of fulfilling the vision of her builders and owners, Titanic entered the realms of legend.

Harland and Wolff has built over 1,550 ships in the last 150 years, but in 1908 the White Star Line of Liverpool gave them a contract to build three massive ships, the second of which was to become the most famous ship built since Noah's ark. She was called Titanic. It was a glittering reflection of the age of luxury.

SS Titanic became a metaphor of the 20th century. 17 millionaires were on board. The first class one-way fare cost over £800 and included an 11-course meal each evening! The poor were on board, too: some had paid just £2 hoping to start a life in the brave new world of the USA. But the icy waters of the Atlantic made no distinctions as rich and poor both perished in the inky blackness of the night. How wrong was the employee of the White Star Line who allegedly said, "Not even God almighty could sink this ship!"

THE STORY OF ONE PASSENGER

Born in 1872 in Houston, Renfrewshire, John Harper grew up in a godly home. As a teenager, though, he recognised that this did not make him right with God. He eventually became a Christian through the Bible verse,

'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.' He prayed and welcomed Jesus into his life as his Lord and Saviour.

At the age of 31 he married, but was widowed two years later when his wife died in childbirth. He was the minister of a church in Glasgow, whose congregation grew from 25 to 500. Today it bears his name: Harper Memorial Church. John Harper was going to the USA to become pastor of the large Moody Church, Chicago. In his life, he had been saved from drowning three times, but he died after giving his life jacket to another as the Titanic went down. The tragedy left his daughter Nana, aged 6, an orphan. She returned to Scotland, and eventually married a Christian minister.

The sea around the sinking Titanic was littered with a mixture of rubbish and remnants of the good life on a dream voyage that had suddenly turned into a nightmare. The water temperature was well below freezing and it was like a ticking time bomb that would overcome the less hardy in a matter of minutes. Swimming in the carnage, amidst the cries and screams, John Harper urged the people around him to trust Christ.

Four years later, one man speaking in Ontario testified that when he boarded the Titanic he was "a careless, godless sinner". When he found himself struggling in the ocean, he "caught hold of something and clung to it for dear life." He said, "The wail of awful distress from the perishing was ringing in my ears, when there floated nearby me a man who, too, seemed to be clinging to something.

