**“A Night to Remember”**

**By John Hobbs**

**Mailed to Tony Rankin by John Hobbs from Ft. Worth TX, 40 years ago after listening to Johns Sermon at the Hamby church of Christ one Spring Sunday Morning in 1981, 5.7 miles NE of Abilene Christian University TX.**

When our Lord Jesus was on earth, He taught using parables. A parable is defined as an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.

Jesus would take a story or true-life situation and then from that story He would apply Devine truths and give spiritual insight.

Some people say that you should not…(use this method of preaching)

Jesus was the Master Teacher and He used stories.

Therefore, if our Lord used stories as a basis to do his preaching, then…(by His example, we can as well.)

Now I admit it can…(it is possible to misuse this tool especially if used out of context.)

**The world situation in 1912** was one of **optimism**. For 100 years there had been **no world wars**. Man was at the crest of human confidence. Man could do anything. The sky was the limit. Scientific discoveries and the Industrial Revolution was changing the world. 1912 was a time of optimism and positive thinking. Nothing could hold man back.

One industrial achievement that was accomplished that seemed to show mans greatness was the production of an ocean going ship by the **White Star Line Fleet Company.** This ship was called the **Titanic.**

The Titanic was the pride of the White Star Fleet Company and man’s ingenuity. In 1912, the Titanic was the most expensive ship ever built ($7.5 Million to build in 1912 and roughly cost $400,000,000 today). In 1912 the Titanic was the largest ocean going sea ship. **The Titanic was called the safest ship ever built.**

The Titanic was 882 1/2 feet long and 175 foot high. In other words she was 11 stories high and 4 city blocks long. The anchors on the Titanic weighed 15 1/2 tons each. One chain link weighed 175 lbs. The Titanic had a double steel bottom 5’ to 6’ feet thick. She was constructed with 16 water-tight compartments. Even with 5 compartments flooded she could still float, but not with 6 flooded compartments. Since nobody would have dreamed or imagined or even thought of anything happening to cause 6 compartments to be flooded, the Titanic was given the name **“unsinkable.”**

One would have been called a lunatic to claim that the Titanic was sinkable. Some even said that **“even God Almighty could not sink this ship.”**

Lloyd’s of London (one of the oldest insurance companies in the world) said that the odds of it sinking was one in a million.

On the morning of April 15, 1912 after the Titanic had been resting at the bottom of the ocean several hours there were rumors of its sinking on Broadway Street in New York. The vice president of the White Star Line, A. S. Franklin, heard the rumors of the Titanic sinking and did not believe them. Franklin told the newspapers: “Even if she hit ice she could float indefinitely. **We place absolute confidence in the Titanic.** We believe the boat is unsinkable.

On April 10, 1912 the Titanic bound from Liverpool, England to New York, left Southhampton, England on her maiden voyage. The Titanic on her maiden voyage got world wide publicity.

This was a time before great athletes, or movie stars. People who were rich made the headlines. Someone said if you were to add up the cumulative wealth of everyone on board the Titanic it would be over $300,000,000.00. In 1912…There were unbelievably wealthy people on board. **There was nothing their money couldn’t buy…until that terrible night.**

There were people on board like John Jacob Astor with a fortune of **$150,000,000.00** **(today’s value $4,067,226,804.12 as of 6 April 2021).** He was returning from Egypt with his 19 year old bride. Also on board were Archibald Butt, Benjamin Guggenheim him with $95 million, Isadore Strauss with $50 million, and J. Bruce Ismay with **$40 million** **($1,084,593,814.43).**

The Titanic was a glorious floating palace. There was no expense spared in the building of the Titanic. It was a fun - tast - ic ship. No ship could compare with the luxurious Titanic. It had Turkish baths, tennis courts, gymnasiums, ballrooms and in 1912…elevators. Some people just rode on the elevators… (for fun)

The Titanic with every seat sold carried 3,000 people. Yet, the Titanic only carried enough life boats for 1100 people. The maiden voyage of the Titanic was a history making world wide publicity event. Believe it or not, all of the names of the passengers were printed on page one of the New York Times.

At 11:40 pm on April 14, 1912 on a could Sunday night in the Atlantic, 450 miles south of Cape Race, the Titanic struck a huge iceberg. The iceberg put a 300 foot gash in the Titanic flooding here first 6 compartments. Therefore it was a mathematical certainty she would sink.

At 2:20 am April 15, 1912 the Titanic went down. Out of 2207 people on board, only 705 people were picked up from 19 life boats. On that historic night, 1502 people drowned and went to meet their Maker. That night was a night to remember, and this morning I would like to remember that historic night and examine some very important spiritual lessons and applications that can be learned from the Titanic tragedy.

1. **Put Your Trust in God**

The People of the Titanic put their trust in its unsinkability. There was nothing to be worried about…money. **Captain Smith** was 59 years old. He had sailed for 38 years. He was almost worshipped by the crew and passengers. It was Captain Smith’s last voyage. He planned on retiring after he got to New York. With all his wisdom and experience the people trusted Captain Smith to take care of the problem **(even after they had hit the iceberg).** Many people on the Titanic, because of their immense wealth trusted in their riches. When they got on board…instead of trusting in the Titanic, Captain Smith or their money, they should have put their trust in God.

**5Trust in the Lord with all your heart**

**and lean not on your own understanding;**

**6in all your ways submit to him,**

**and he will make your paths straight. g**

**Proverbs 3:5-6**

When people have riches and trust in riches they get to thinking and eventually believe that they don’t need God. Because they have money they get whatever they imagine. Money can buy everything. They get to thinking that they, themselves, are the Master of their own destiny and captain of their own fate. But on April 14, 1912 the great fortune of **$150,000,000.00** of John Jacob Astor could not save him.

Let me make one point here, people can trust in riches and not have riches. It is our attitude toward money that is important and not the money itself. We may not have money but still we can sin.

**Mark 10:24** “…Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God.” Notice the Scripture did not say “have riches.”

**1 Timothy 6:17** “Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not high minded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.”

**October 29, 1929 Stock Market Crash**

**“…Naked I came from my mother’s womb,**

**and naked I will depart. v**

**The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away;**

**may the name of the Lord be praised.”**

**Job 1:21**

**15Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”**

**Luke 12:15**

**2 Corinthians 1:9**  “yea, we ourselves have had the sentence of death within ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead.”

**2 Corinthians 3:5** “not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to account anything from ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God.”

**II. Serve the Needs of Others**

**Matthew 20:28** “The son of…”

**28just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”**

**Matthew 23:11** “But, he…”

**11The greatest among you will be your servant.**

Christians are servants. Christians are to serve…not be served. I know you are asking Tony, how do you get the point of serving the needs of others out of the Titanic?

Imagine with me for a minute that you are one of the crew…working on the lifeboats…(great stories of heroism)…after working for everyone else…as you load the last life boat and watch it go away…death. Brethren, that is exactly what Jesus did. Jesus did not say now I am the Son of God…

**III. Fact Defeats Theory**

Shortly after the sinking of the Titanic in 1912 there was a cartoon in the newspaper that had a drawing of an iceberg and the Titanic.

**FACT** **THEORY**

On the Iceberg was written **FACT** On the Titanic was written **Theory**

When the Titanic hit the The Titanic is **UNSINKABLE**

iceberg, it **SUNK.**

**Theory: No Icebergs in the area.**

**Fact:** There were icebergs and the Titanic had been warned

**Theory: Lookouts could give warning.**

**Fact:** The Lookouts did give warning 37 seconds before the Titanic hit the berg and yet… (it obviously was enough time for it to avoid hitting the iceberg).

**Theory: The Titanic was unsinkable.**

**Fact:** It sunk.

Spiritual application…so many preachers today teach theory when the Bible contains the

fact.

**Theory: One can live a good decent moral life and still get to heaven without Jesus.**

**Fact:** **Matthew 12:30**

**30“Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.**

**Theory: You don’t have to take Christian religion seriously**

**Fact:** **Revelation 3:16**

**16So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.**

**Theory: A person can sin and get away with it.**

**Fact:** **Numbers 22:22**

**22But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the Lord stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him.**

**Theory:** **Baptism has nothing to do with ones salvation**

**Fact:** **Mark 16:15-16**

**15 He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned*.***

**Acts 2:38**

**38Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

**I Peter 3:21**

**21and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,**

**Theory:** **The church of Christ is not important.**

**Fact:** **Acts 20:28**

**28Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, y which he bought with his own blood. a**

**Ephesians 5:25**

**25Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her**

**Theory: God will not allow anyone to go to hell. Hell is a myth.**

**Fact:** **Matthew 25:46**

**46“Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”**

**Theory: One can get out of Hell**

**Fact:** **Revelation 14:11**

**11And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name.”**

**Theory: newspaper The New York Sun Evening Edition on Monday April 15, 1912 said “all saved from Titanic after collision”**

**Fact: Not all were saved**

**Theory: subtitle from The New York Sun Evening Edition April 15, 1912 said “Liner is being towed to Halifax, after smashing into an iceberg”**

**Fact: it sunk and was at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean**

**IV. The Folly of Hedonism**

**(the pursuit of pleasure; sensual self-indulgence.)**

Right before and right after the Titanic struck the iceberg people were dancing, drinking, laughing, playing, gambling, totally unconcerned about the iceberg and its effects.

As a group of gamblers were playing cards, they were told they had struck an iceberg and they said “Well, we’ll go to bed and help will be here in the morning.”

Some joked about the dirty life preservers. Many of the passengers had expensive clothes on and they didn’t… (want to get their expensive clothes dirty)

The women were wearing silk and satin and they didn’t…that would ruin their clothes.

I can just probably imagine…some lady who was already in bed…probably take off her makeup… (thinking that the eventful day and evening were over)

Believe it or not, some of these people were so pleasure mad that **they cut their life preservers open to see what was in them.** When the Titanic hit the iceberg, chunks of ice fell onto the Titanic. As the Titanic was sinking **some were having snowball fights.** Some were chiseling off hunks of ice and taking them to their cabins and saying “Look I’m going to keep this and show my friends a souvenir. **One lady had a Great Dane dog** - wanted…because she couldn’t…stayed on board…

The Bible teaches… **Ecclesiastes 12:13**

**13Now all has been heard;**

**here is the conclusion of the matter:**

**Fear God and keep his commandments,**

**for this is the duty of all mankind.**

**14For God will bring every deed into judgment,**

**including every hidden thing,**

**whether it is good or evil.**

**V. The Folly of Unheeded Warnings**

The Titanic was warned 7 times about icebergs on Sunday, the day it hit the iceberg.

The next-to-the-last warning came at 9:40 pm two hours before the Titanic hit the berg. The steamer Marava sent a message… “Much heavy packed ice. A great number of icebergs.” Jack Phillips the radio operator on the Titanic wrote the message down and just put it under a paperweight - meaning to give it to the captain later.

At 11:05 pm just 35 minutes before…radio operator Cereal Evans on the U.S. Californian about 15 - 20 miles away from the Titanic sent a message to the Titanic… “Say, oh man, we are stopped and surrounded by icebergs!” Jack Phillips, the wireless operator on the Titanic signaled back to Evans — “Shut up. Shut up. I am busy. I am sending messages back home.” Phillips wrote nothing down that Evans sent. Jack Phillips was busy sending chit-chat back to the continent.

At 11:30 pm just 10 minutes before…Evans, on the U. S. Californian, turned off the wireless and went to bed.

The Californian saw 8 flares going up from the Titanic. They thought she was just having a wild party and a good time. Then, the U.S. Californian noticed the Titanic was getting lower and lower in the water. They thought the Titanic was moving away but in actuality she was sinking.

The Spiritual Implication — Today many people laugh about religion. Many are lukewarm about religion. Many are unconcerned and apathetic about religion . If you try to talk to someone or invite them to church or ask they(them) if they would like to study the Bible they often act unconcerned, make excuses or laugh it off. They think religion is just for little kids (young children) and old women (elderly women).

**VI. The Folly of Procrastination**

Did you know that 400 more people could have been saved? The problem was they would not get into the boats. The did not really think the ship was going to sink. Their thinking was…why get in the life boat and go out there in the cold (water 28 degrees for a few hours? After the trouble is fixed by our great captain, we’ll just have to come back anyway.

There were different sizes of life boats on the Titanic. Some could hold 58 people, but the first few boats that were sent away had only 12 to 13 people in them. The problem was the passengers procrastinated. But, then there were a series of explosions and the ship started tilting. People starting (started) thinking… “Hey! This ship really is going to sink!” Then there was a mad rush to the lifeboats. But many were too late. They had procrastinated too long. By this time most of the lifeboats were already gone. **The last life boat left at 2:05 am on Monday morning.**

Some were begging for a seat. **John Jacob Astor had enough money to buy the Titanic, but he couldn’t buy a seat on one of the life boats.**

Eyewitnesses report that the parting scenes were horrible. Wives of husbands were torn apart as their husbands stayed on board the Titanic and the wives got into the life boats.

A seat was offered to a 12 year old boy, but the boy wanted to stay with his father…they both went down.

**The lesson is do not procrastinate.** **The lesson is do not put things off.**

**Acts 24:25** Felix told Paul “Go thy way for this time; and when I have a convenient season I will call thee unto thee unto me.” Christianity is not meant to be a convenient choice.

**2 Corinthians 6:2** - “…behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

**VII. The Folly of Being Unprepared**

The Titanic had 2207 on board and yet there were only enough life boats for 1100 people. The Titanic was not prepared. The life boats on the Titanic were not prepared to be seaworthy. There were no compasses in them, no water no food, and no snails. Some of they (them) had the plugs removed. They never thought they would have to use the lifeboats.

As the people boarded the Titanic, death was the last thing on their mind. After all, this was the Titanic’s maiden voyage and the Titanic was unsinkable. But, the completely unexpected happened…imagine going to bed at 10 or 11 pm and then being awakened in a few minutes to learn that the Titanic was sinking. Then, imagine the feeling of finding out that there were not enough life boats.

If you were on the Titanic, would you be prepared to die?

**Illustration:** As the 19 lifeboats rowed away, some of those that were left huddled on the Titanic sang “Nearer My God To Thee.”

**Amos 4:12**

**12“Therefore this is what I will do to you, Israel,**

**and because I will do this to you, Israel,**

**prepare to meet your God.”**

The sinking of the Titanic ought to teach us to prepare ahead of time. We need to get our life right with God so that when our time is up on this earth…(we’re ready). There comes a time when preparation can no longer be made… It is too late to call on God (when) we are dead.

**Conclusion**

We need to tell people to “redeem the time because the days are evil.” We need to tell people…Prepare!

After the sinking of the Titanic there was a Congressional inquiry by the United States Senate. Third Officer Herbert John Pittman was called to testify before the Senatorial Investigating Committee. He was asked the question - “Can you describe the screams as the ship went down?” When Pittman heard that question, he buried his head in his hands and cried uncontrollably. A silent hush went over that August Senatorial body as Officer Pittman cried like a baby. One man said… “The Senator did not mean to bring back bad memories. He was just trying to get all the information he could so it might be possible to prevent such a disaster from ever happening again.” Finally, Herbert John Pittman replied “It was one long continuous moan.”

If we could go to the corridors of Hell…Jesus said in **Matthew 24:51** there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Brethren, the Titanic might not have sunk and all those people drowned if just one of several things were different.

Walter Lord - “A Night to Remember”

1. **If the Titanic had heeded any of the 7 warnings**
2. **If the ice conditions were normal**
3. **If the night were moonlit**
4. **If the Titanic had hit the iceberg in any other way**
5. **If the water deck compartments were one deck higher**
6. **If she had carried more lifeboats**
7. **If the Californian had kept its wireless on for ten more minutes**

Someday we will all stand before God on Judgement Day and I wonder if we will say…if we only had listened to the pleas (of our loved ones in Christ)… if we only had studied and read our Bibles…

**Hebrews 9:27**

**27Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,**

**2 Corinthians 5:10**

**10For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.**

When we die, our destiny is sealed. When we die our destiny will never, never, never be changed. It will be eternally too late to do… (anything about our salvation)

Imagine with me that that you are in one of the lifeboats and you are rowing away from the Titanic and you are watching your loved ones die. There is nothing you can do (to help them). You are helpless. Do you not know that it would make you wish that there is something to change it?

Imagine what it will be like on Judgement Day. When we see our friends, our relatives, our loved ones condemned to an eternal hell of fire and there is nothing we can to (do).

If we tried to warn (them)… our soles have been delivered. If we did not try to warn (them)… their blood… John 9:4. I know you are saying to yourself…John (Tony), I didn’t like that, I didn’t want to hear that, that wasn’t pleasant at all… especially at a time like this… But, that is the whole point. The people on the Titanic did not want to hear…they were not prepared…they were not ready.

So, I am preaching this sermon to remind you. Let’s be prepared, why not get right with the Lord this morning as we stand and sing.