

Will You Sink?

Introduction. On April 10, 1912 the Titanic left Southampton, England. This was the maiden voyage for the 882-foot-long ocean liner that had been billed as unsinkable. She carried with her 2,228 passengers and crew. Four days into the voyage, on April 14, 1912 severe ice warnings were received for the area through which the Titanic was sailing. These warnings were ignored and the Titanic maintained her course for New York harbor. At 11:40 p.m. the Titanic struck an iceberg. She began to take on water at an alarming rate and within three hours the Titanic and 1,523 of her passengers were at the bottom of the ocean. Only 705 of the 2,228 persons survived that great shipwreck.

Of course, the Titanic is just one of many famous shipwrecks, and the facts behind the great shipwrecks of history makes for a fascinating study, but I want to look at the potential of a spiritual shipwreck. The New Testament even records the names of two men who experienced such a shipwreck: Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Timothy 1:18-20).

In Matthew 14:22-33, Jesus went to a mountain to pray while the disciples crossed the Sea of Galilee in a boat. When the storm blew in, Jesus went to the boat by walking on the water. As the disciples were afraid, He said, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Peter wanted to come to him on the water. As he walked on the water, he became afraid of the conditions and began to sink. The Lord caught him and said, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" When they came into the ship, the disciples worshiped Him and said, "Of a truth thou art the Son of God."

I know that we cannot sink in a physical way in the same fashion as Peter and the disciples, but we can suffer shipwreck and sink spiritually. But what could make you or me sink? As we observe life, there are several issues that can cause us to sink.

I. If You Doubt The Father And The Son You Will Sink

- A. A Christian must have full assurance of faith in God (Hebrews 11:6; James 1:6).
 - 1. I found an article, "The Problem With Faith: 11 Ways Religion Is Destroying Humanity," written by an atheist, that claims religion has "left a trail of destruction in its historic path."
 - 2. But it fails to account for all of the positive good that Christians have accomplished in the world because they believe in God.
- B. And while a lot of people believe in God, they reject Jesus. But if someone understands that an obedient relationship with God is necessary to go to Heaven, they must accept and follow Jesus (John 14:6). Believing becomes a critical point in someone being saved (John 8:24; Mark 16:16).

II. If You Doubt The Gospel You Will Sink

- A. Sadly, the number of people who believe the Bible is the actual word of God is decreasing over time because we are living in a more skeptical, secular society.
- B. The Thessalonians received the preaching of the gospel as the word of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13). It is the only power that God manifests toward man's salvation (Isaiah 55:11; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23).
- C. You can't find God on your own terms. You cannot feel God and make a god that you want because Satan will blind the mind of the unbelieving (2 Corinthians 4:4). If someone does not obey, they are lost (2 Thessalonians 1:6-10).

III. If You Doubt God's Forgiveness You Will Sink

- A. Sin is first mentioned by God in Genesis 4:7. All through the Bible, God provides the possibility of being forgiven through the blood of Christ (Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 1:7). Peter was forgiven even when he denied Christ and even after being warned (John 21:15-19).

- B. And because God has forgiven us, we need to forgive one another (Matthew 6:14-15; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13). The Christian's forgiving of others is to be as free and complete as that of God, who puts away a person's sins as far as the east is from the west, and holds them against him no more.

IV. If You Doubt Christ's Church You Will Sink

- A. The church, which was founded by Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:18) and bought by His blood (Acts 20:28), is critical to the faithfulness of God's people.
- B. A big part of what the church accomplishes is the assembling of saints (Psalm 122:1; Hebrews 10:25). We try to encourage and build one another up (1 Thessalonians 5:11).
- C. Do you want to go to worship? Being built up and building up is vital to our spiritual health. Some many say, "I have a Bible; I don't need church." Or a member may say, "If I don't go, I'll get calls and texts. It's best just to get it over with." This is not the attitude that God ordained for His saints meeting together (Psalm 95:1-5; 100:1-5).

V. If You Doubt God's View Of Morality You Will Sink

- A. God has been pretty specific about sins and moral issues that will condemn someone (Romans 1:29-31; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:9-11).
- B. It is easy for people to say, "Things have changed." But God calls us to strength so never lose your uniqueness and never ride the fence on moral issues.

VI. If You Doubt Prayer You Will Sink

- A. The Lord wants to hear from His people (Psalm 145:18-19), and He will answer your prayers. Do not doubt that He hears prayers. God answers your prayers, but those answers are not always what you want.
- B. Prayer is a great spiritual barometer. When you examine the greatest people in the Bible, they were people of prayer (Daniel, Nehemiah, and Ezra). If I want to be closer to God, then I must communicate with Him (Hebrews 4:16; James 4:8; cp. Psalm 51:1-2).

VII. If You Doubt The Judgment You Will Sink

- A. Man will taste death (Hebrews 9:27) and be judged for all that he has done (Romans 2:16; 14:12; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:12).
- B. This is a tremendous motivator for people to correct their lives, but people say, "It's discouraging and will run people off." But one day it will be my turn, and we will be glad Jesus dove in to save us. Repentance of sins is paramount (Ezra 9:6).

Conclusion. You have to remove doubt. Proverbs 24:10 says, "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small." What will be said about your life? Will men be able to quote the words of Paul in 2 Timothy 4:7, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" and apply them to you? Or will your life stand as a memorial to those who veer off course, only to be wrecked on the jagged reefs and rocks of sin? You may scoff at this message, but the fact of the matter is this: there is an iceberg out there with your name on it. If you are unprepared when you arrive at its location, you will sink like a rock. What will be the outcome of your life? Regardless of the tragedies, regardless of the temptations, you can safely navigate the seas of life and land safely in the pristine harbor of glory with your witness intact. I pray you will!

We are open to receive all who will come. If you are lost and need to be saved, you come. If you headed for shipwreck and it is clear to you, you come. If you want to prevent that from happening in your life, then you come. There is help for you in the presence of the Lord!