On April 10, 1912 Sylvia Caldwell boarded the HMS Titanic. As she boarded she asked one of the deckhands, “Is this ship really unsinkable?” He replied, “Yes lady, even God Himself couldn’t sink the ship.” This month we are marking the one hundred year anniversary of the Titanic disaster. Popularized in many books and films, including James Cameron’s 1997 blockbuster movie, the sinking of the “unsinkable” remains perhaps the greatest human tragedy at sea. Recently the sinking of the Costa Concordia has brought the Titanic to our minds.

I believe more than anything that from the Titanic we learn about the power and wisdom of God as opposed to the frailty of human ingenuity. Paul writes that “the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Cor 1:25). It seems that any time Bible characters became overconfident and forgot God that He brought them low. “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (James 4:6).

It is easy to point to the failure of the builders and designers of the Titanic and criticize them. We could ridicule the captain and the crew of the ship. Far more valuable to the believer in God would be to look at failures like the sinking of the Titanic so that we can avoid the same mistakes those individuals made. “Therefore let him who thinks he stand take heed that he does not fall” (1 Cor 10:12).

In this month’s bulletin we will look first at God’s unsinkable ship; Noah’s Ark. We will contrast the attitude of Noah with those of the world around him. Next we will look at the modern day “ark” that God has given to Christians to save us from sin. Finally, we will end with an exhortation to learn from events like the Titanic and to put more faith and trust in God. –Jeremy Jones
God’s Unsinkable Ship

Just ten generations after God created Adam and Eve, it was said of the world, “Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen 6:5). How terrible that all of mankind had turned away from their Creator. This was the world that Noah was born into, but Noah was different! He “found favor of the Lord” (Gen 6:8). Noah trusted in God. So God made plans to destroy the entire earth EXCEPT Noah and his family with a great flood.

God told Noah to build an ark (i.e. box) to save himself, his family, and the animals of the earth from the coming destruction. He was to make this ark from a specific type of wood, according to God’s exact specifications. After receiving the plans the Scriptures tell us, “thus did Noah according to all that God Had commanded him, so he did” (Gen 6:22). What great faith!

The feat that God asked of Noah was remarkable for many reasons. The first was simply how big of a task that it was. Noah was to build a tremendously large structure the likes of which no one had ever seen. God gave men 120 years from the time he commanded Noah to start construction until the flood and it took Noah every one of those years to complete this boat (Gen 6:3).

Another reason that the request to build an ark was so amazing is that up until that point in history there had never been rain on the earth. We are told by Moses earlier in Genesis that God watered the earth with mists from the ground (Gen 2:5-6). Noah built the large boat believing God that water would fall from the sky even though he had never seen it happen before.

The completeness of Noah’s obedience is yet another amazing part of the Biblical account. Noah built everything according to God’s commands, exactly like he had been told. He didn’t substitute oak or pine for gopher wood. He didn’t change the shape or the dimensions to make the ship look better or to be more hydrodynamic. He didn’t add more windows to let it a breeze or more light. “Noah did according to all that the Lord had commanded him” (Gen 7:5).

After 120 years of preaching to an unrepentant world and building the huge ark, God commanded Noah to bring his family and the animals and to board the ship. After every person and animal got on the boat, God closed the door behind them (Gen 7:16). The reason that Noah’s ark floated and did not fail and why boats like the Titanic have gone to the bottom of the sea is that God does not and cannot fail like man can. When we rely on our own strength, wisdom, or ability, we will eventually fail. However, with God behind our plans nothing is impossible (Lk 18:27).

Most of us know how things turned out with Noah’s ark. For 40 days and 40 nights God caused it to rain. The entire world was wiped out and reshaped by the flood. Noah and the ship’s residents survived to repopulate the earth. We will now look to the commentary of the apostle Peter to learn some ways that we can apply this Biblical account to our lives. JJ
The Christian’s Ark: Baptism

Perhaps no New Testament writer has had as much to say about the worldwide flood and Noah’s salvation from it in the ark than the apostle Peter. Both of his letters are filled with important applications of this event for the modern believer.

In chapter three of his first epistle, Peter compares Noah’s salvation by ark to our salvation by baptism. Just as those on the earth in the days of Noah had a chance to hear God’s Word and respond, sinners today have a chance to respond to the Gospel.

Peter writes that God was patient in the “days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is eight persons, were brought safely through the water” (1 Pet 3:20). Noah preached for all of that time, but in the end, only eight were saved.

Peter continues, “Corresponding to that, baptism now save you- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ…” (1 Pet 3:21,22). Ultimately, God saved Noah, but in order for that to happen, Noah had to trust God and to obey all that He commanded. It is the same with us today. God would love to save all people…but he requires us to put our trust in Him and to obey His commands. Our “ark” is the literal plunge we take in the moment we are baptized so that the death and resurrection of Christ will give us a good conscience before God. How sad that so many refuse to “board the ark” of baptism to be saved from their soul’s destruction!

In Peter’s second letter he gives us more applications to be made from the Flood account. Many in Peter’s day were mocking religion and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation” (2 Pet 3:3-4). Just as many boarded the Titanic thinking that the ship was unsinkable, the people of Noah’s day were arrogant enough to think that God would not let them die. As the Proverbs teach, “Pride goes before destruction…” (Prov 16:18). Peter’s answer to these objections was simple: look to the Flood and realize that there will be a final judgment!

Our world is really no different than Noah’s, Peter’s, or those in 1912 who thought that their cruise ship Titanic could not sink. People today doubt that there is a God, a judgment, or even an afterlife. Do not be deceived; God is in control of everything and he has declared that there will come a day when “the heavens will pass away with a roar and its works will be burned up” (2 Pet 3:10). Despite what doubters and mockers say, the world will end and there will be a final judgment.

Do you believe this? If you believe this, do you like it? There will be a judgment, and since we “look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless” (2 Pet 3:14). JJ
How Can I Be Kept Afloat?

Many have not realized the real danger that they are in because of their sinful lifestyles. Even if people realize that they need saving from sin, they often put their trust in human ingenuity. Man-made denominations, creeds, and traditions are not guaranteed to keep floating. No matter the faith that someone puts in these institutions and doctrines, they are all sinkable because of one fact: they are not from God. The reason the Ark floated and the Titanic sunk goes back to that simple idea found in the verse which says that God closed the door behind them (Gen 7:16). When God has promised us a way out of danger we can be sure that His promise will not fail.

Here at the South Marion church of Christ we try our best to stick to God’s simple plan of salvation. As Noah was saved by the ark, so we, too, are saved by baptism through the resurrection of Jesus (1 Pet 3:20-22). Jesus said, “I am the Way, and the truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father but through Me” (Jn 14:6). We would love nothing more than to see you start on the right path through faith and obedience in Jesus today. The Titanic proved sinkable, but God’s promise of salvation to the obedient will never fail! JJ

**FREE BIBLE COURSE**

We would like to offer you a free Bible correspondence study that you can complete at home, at your own pace. The course is called, “Know Your Bible” and includes these six studies:

- **Lesson 1**: Understanding the Bible
- **Lesson 2**: Sin and the Blood of Christ
- **Lesson 3**: What Must I Do to be Saved?
- **Lesson 4**: The New Testament Church
- **Lesson 5**: Denominationalism
- **Lesson 6**: Baptism

To request the course, please write, call or send an email to Alan Jones @ ajones1959@hotmail.com.

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**South Marion church of Christ**  
3629 South Washington Street  
Marion, IN  46953

**Schedule of Services:**

**Sunday**
- Bible Study  9:30 AM
- Worship  10:30 AM & 5:00 PM

**Wednesday**
- Bible Study  7:00 PM

**Elders:**
- David Huber  998-7134
- Alan Jones  922-7602

**Deacons:**
- Mike Huber  998-2520
- Gary Pickering  384-4347

**Evangelist:**
- Alan Jones  922-7602

A Warm Welcome Awaits You!