

A Lesson from the Titanic



There were over 1,500 who perished in those icy waters that fateful night (1912). Of the women and children, 70% were saved (374 saved; 157 died). Of the men only 20% were saved (332 saved; 1360 died). Why did so many men die and so few women and children? That was a day when most *acted like men*. Captain Smith's orders were to place women and children in lifeboats with just a few men chosen to be able rowers. The order was, "Women and children first!" To carry out this order required courage and sacrifice. The men acted in the spirit of love. They were willing to give of themselves and even sacrifice their own lives for the sake of others. It was not the survival of the fittest. The men made sure that the weakest survived. Captain Smith led the way and went down with the ship, along with more than thirteen hundred other brave men. "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave [*andrizō*, act like a man], be strong. Let all *that* you do be done with love" (*1 Cor. 16:13-14* NKJV).

One hundred years later (2012) another ship sank which was much larger than the Titanic. This was the Italian cruise vessel "Concordia." Thankfully only 32 lives were lost. In this case, the captain gave a far different order by his own example: "Every man for himself!" The captain himself abandoned ship leaving many still on board. He was later convicted of manslaughter. What a lesson! It was once, "Women and children first." Now it is "Me first!" Selfishness, not sacrifice, is the sad norm of our day. May we return to the Biblical norm: "By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (*1 John 3:16* NKJV).

May God raise up such men!

~George Zeller, 2016: www.middletonbiblechurch.org

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