

Glory of God South Shore
Devotional by Pastor Paul Jehle at The New Testament Church, March 30, 2025

Pastor Jehle's notes from the book The Titanic's Last Hero – Olive Press, 1997
(a republication of the 1912 book on the life of John Harper)

INVITATION TO SPEAK AT MOODY MEMORIAL CHURCH - CHICAGO - 1911-1912

- In 1911, John Harper conducted the “*best meetings since the great D. L. Moody*” and was invited to return (p. 22) The numbers of converts were tremendous (p. 44)
- The Life of Faith told of the work in Chicago “*his services were attended with such rich blessing that the visit lengthened into three months, the Moody Church passing through one of the most wonderful revivals in its history. The Lord's own people also received a spiritual uplift, a practical illustration of which was seen in the fact that a debt of 1,000 pounds was wiped out in four days.*” (p. 55)
- In one of his messages here he stated “*Beloved, how few of us have the Master's vision, and hence, how few of us have the compassion-filled heart, the consequent ministry of intercession! If any one conviction has laid hold of my spirit more than another, and has held it in a grasp as solemn as eternity for some years past, it is that the overwhelming need of the church and the doomed world is intercessors - not so much preachers, however great that need is - but men of the mountain solitude and midnight watch, who know how to stand between God and men, in fasting and prayer, and who will not leave the throne of grace until from His presence will go forth times of refreshing and salvation that will make His name a praise in the earth.*” (p. 148)
- After returning to Scotland, he addressed meetings in Edinburgh, and his meetings were fully anointed though he was weary in body. (p. 55)
- Harper was scheduled to make the trip to Chicago aboard the *Lusitania*.... (p. 22) in April from Liverpool, England. (p. 55)
- He told the Seaman's Mission in Glasgow he was changed to the *Titanic*... (p. 22)
- Mr. Robert English stood up in a meeting at the Seaman's Center and begged Harper not to make the trip to Chicago. He even offered to pay for his ticket if he would delay the voyage. Willie Burns also echoed the prophetic warning that disaster awaited him if he went on this voyage. Instead, he felt he was going on a Divine purpose like the Apostle Paul (Acts 21:10-13) when warned by Agabus - (p. 23)
- Before leaving on the *Titanic*, he told Pastor William Wright that he was meditating on 1st Jn. 2:17 “*he that does the will of God abides forever.*” (p. 107)

THE TITANIC - 1912

- The *Titanic* was a ship built to reflect the Victorian-Edwardian era of luxury, security and elitism. (p. 16)
- The Associated Press declared that “*all that wealth and modern workmanship could produce was embodied in the Titanic.*” (p. 16)
 - Turkish baths with gilded cooling rooms (p. 20)
 - First swimming pool ever built in an ocean liner

- Three classes of people never had to meet each other and be “spoiled”
- It was the longest vessel ever built - 4 city blocks in length... (p. 16) - 883 feet long
- It was the largest man-made moveable object ever built in 1912 - (p. 16)
- It had accommodations for a crew of 860 and a capacity of 3,500 people. (p. 16) - 2,200 went on board
- She had 50,000 hp engines that could drive her 24 knots-per-hour (p. 16) - about 28 mph
- The engines were kept in 16 water-tight compartments protected by steel bulkheads (p. 16)
- The shipbuilder of the *Titanic* stated categorically that it was “practically unsinkable”. (p. 15)
- On May 31, 1911, an employee of the White Star Shipbuilding Company said “*not even God Himself could sink this ship.*” (p. 15)
- Mr. Bruce Ismay, part-owner of the *Titanic*, a managing director of the White Star Company, was responsible for not equipping the vessel with enough lifeboats - but became infamous when he crawled into a lifeboat while hundreds of women remained on the dying ship.

THE LAST HERO OF THE TITANIC

- It left Southampton, England, (on April 10), made two passenger and mail stops in Cherbourg and Queenstown, Ireland before striking an iceberg on its starboard side at 11:40 P.M. on the night of April 14, 1912. (p. 16)
- The night before the *Titanic* sank, John Harper was earnestly seeking to lead a young man to Christ.. Then, on the deck, he saw a glint of red as the sun set in the west and said “*it will be beautiful in the morning.*” Indeed, for him, it was beautiful in the morning. (p. 151)
- The iceberg ripped open six water-tight compartments, showering the decks with ice. (p. 16)
- Most passengers were unconvinced it would sink and would not enter the lifeboats until the crew began shooting flares into the air. (p. 16)
- Once the alarm had sounded, Harper handed Nana (his six year old daughter) to an upper deck captain with instructions to get her into a lifeboat. She would be an orphan now at six. (p. 17)
- As the water crept up the decks of the *Titanic*, Harper shouted “*let the women, children and the unsaved into the lifeboats.*” (p. 15)
- He gave his life-jacket to another man as an act of love of generosity. (p. 15)
 - An American banker managed to get his pet dog into a lifeboat, taking the place of others (p. 18)
 - Colonel John Jacob Astor, the richest man in the world at the time, tried to escape with his wife into a lifeboat and had to be stopped by Second Officer Charles Lightoller. (p. 18)
 - Daniel Buckley disguised himself as a woman in an effort to gain a place in a lifeboat. (p. 18)
 - First-class passengers on the first lifeboat to be lowered refused to turn back to pick up people who were drowning, though there was space for many others to have been saved. (p. 18)
 - Mrs. Rosa Abbott, the only woman to go down with the ship and survive, said a man tried to climb up

her back forcing her down under the water and nearly drowning her. (p. 18)

- John Harper kept asking people to do their best for the women, children and unsaved, and look out for others, while men like Captain Smith were giving orders to *"do your best for the women and children, and look out for yourselves."* (p. 18)

- Harper's ambition was kept clear and focused - preaching the gospel to the lost, while others' were shattered to bits with the boat itself: (p. 19) He knew there were only two classes of passengers - those saved and those that were unsaved (p. 23)

- Mr. Hoffman had abducted his children, Lolo and Momon, who became as the Titanic's "waifs", for his one ambition in life was to get his children away from their mother. In the face of death, he put them aboard a lifeboat, assuring that they would be returned to their mother in France. (p. 19)

- John Phillips, the self-sufficient crew member who told the *Californian* to "shut up" after they warned him of icebergs, cried out *"God forgive me.... God forgive me"* as the ship went down. (p. 19)

- Michel and Edmond Navratil's father had taken his two boys on the *Titanic* for a one-way trip to America to forever escape his wife, whom he found having an affair. When facing death, he placed his boys in a lifeboat with his last words *"tell your mother I will always be hers."* (p. 19)

- The designer of the *Titanic* spent the closing moments of his life in the smoking-room, looking at a mural on the wall with the caption *"the new world to come"* (his life-jacket was laid to one side due to his ruined dream) - p. 19

- Mrs. Isador Straus, whose husband owned Macy's Department Store, didn't get in a lifeboat. Instead she let her maid get in, and put her fur coat on her shoulders stating *"keep warm, I won't be needing it."* She had told her husband, *"where you go, I go."* (p. 20)

- Benjamin Guggenheim and his valet Victo Giglio, appeared on deck in full evening dress like two vain comics saying *"We've dressed in our best and are prepared to go down like gentlemen."* (p. 20)

- Card sharks, who sailed under assumed names and tricked passengers into losing over \$30,000, were stopped in their con tricks.

- T.W. McCawley, who was teaching people to ride on mechanical horses and camels, stopped his now fruit-less lessons.

- As the water crept half-way up the bridge, and the rear of the ship was totally out of the water, a crashing noise resembling millions of pieces of china breaking jarred the night as the ship broke in two, with the rear and stern going in opposite directions to the ocean floor and remaining a mile apart. (p. 17)

- Some people jumped off the boat into the water, others went down with the ship, but it sank at 2:20 A.M. on April 15, 1912. (p. 17)

- Of the 712 people saved, 189 were men of the crew (hardly going down with the ship) - p. 18

- Will Murdoch, the *Titanic*'s first officer, shot himself, not willing to die by drowning (p. 21)

- Hundreds of people were heard screaming as the boat went underwater (p. 21)

- Some were heard screaming in the water... (p. 21)

- A mushroom cloud of smoke and steam formed above her grave as she ended her one and only voyage on that fateful night (p. 17) - 1,522 people died that night!

- The dreadful silence that followed, while the whispers were heard in the lifeboats was almost unbearable

- As Harper struggled to stay afloat, a man clinging to a board drifted near Harper who cried out *"are you saved?"* - the answer was "no" Harper shouted out *"believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."* - the man drifted into darkness. Later the current brought him back again and they were in sight of each other again - once more Harper said *"are you saved?"*, and after the man again said "no", he repeated

Acts 16:31 *“believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved..”* Harper then drowned. But the man put his faith in Christ and was later rescued by the S.S. *Carpathia*’s lifeboats. In Hamilton, Ontario he testified that he was Harper’s “last convert”.

AFTERMATH

- The White Star Office in Liverpool, England placed a large board on either side of the main entrance. On one side it said KNOWN TO BE SAVED and on the other KNOWN TO BE LOST. Relatives and friends held their breath as news came across the wires as to which side their loved ones would be on. (p. 24)

- Nana was rescued, returned to Scotland, where she grew up, married a minister, and dedicated her entire life to the Lord her father had served.

- The Moody church in Chicago, upon hearing of the loss of Harper, had mid-week meetings of fasting and prayer and people could not get in the doors. It was reported that just the memory of the man in Chicago produced a tremendous revival for people remarked *“God used him while here as I never have seen a man used before.”*