

## We Will Wait



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At ten o'clock at night, October 23, 1918, the ship the Princess Sophia with over three hundred passengers on board steamed out of the Skagway Harbor in Alaska on its way to Seattle. The first part of their journey lay through the seventy mile long Lynn Canal. Captain Locke, a long time veteran of shipping in the Northwest Pacific was at the helm.

Most of the passengers were in their berths sleeping, when at three o'clock in the morning there was a screeching of steel, and a tremendous jolt which sent many of the sleepers reeling out of their beds and rolling on the floors. The Princess Sophia steaming along at cruising speed had suddenly run aground on submerged rocks which make up part of the Vanderbilt Reef. The double plated steel hull of the ship had become firmly wedged into the space between two rocks. To the credit of the shipbuilders the ship held together in the impact, and crew members were relieved to discover the ship was not breaking up in the water.

Captain Locke sent out a call for help over the ship's wireless or radio which had been recently installed. The message asked for all ships in the area to come to their aid. Within a few hours, a couple of nearby vessels had reached the stricken passenger ship. Captain Ledbetter, in the dawn's early light, brought his vessel as close as he safely could in the rough seas to the Princess Sophia. On board his ship he had all the ropes necessary to set up a pulley system between the two ships by which they could transfer the passengers one by one. From the pitching deck of his ship he called out through a megaphone, Do you want to transfer the passengers from your ship to mine?

Captain Locke gave the request serious consideration for a minute before shouting his response back, No we will wait for the weather to get better.

The ships which had come to rescue the passengers off the stricken ship backed off and began to cruise slowly in a wide circle. For a day and a night they circled nearby hoping for the weather to change. It did change. The next day the winds grew so fierce that the rescue

ships had to seek shelter for themselves behind nearby islands. The weather was so bad that a rescue operation like Captain Ledbetter suggested was out of the question.

The rescue ships were nervously waiting behind the islands when they received an urgent cry for help over the wireless. Come and save us. The room is taking on water. They heard over the wireless before the transmission was abruptly ended. The rescue ships headed out into the stormy night. They went to the spot where the Princess Sophia had been stuck fast. In the darkness they could find nothing. By the light of the dawn the next day they discovered the grim truth. The Princess Sophia had sunk in the night with all hands and passengers on board. Only the topmost part of the mast was visible above the waves.

Do you want to transfer your passengers to my ship? Captain Ledbetter had offered. We will wait came back the fateful reply. And what followed was the worst maritime disaster in the history of the Pacific Northwest.



To a world of sinners trapped in darkness and tottering on the brink of eternal disaster, God is offering a full and free salvation. Through the preaching of the gospel he is calling out to men and women everywhere, and telling them that if they repent and believe in Christ that he will deliver them from all the trouble they have gotten into through sin.

A verse that is often used to share the gospel is John 3.16. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but have everlasting life. In this wonderful verse many important truths are revealed. The verse reveals the motive God has in making the offer God so loved. It reveals the basis of the salvation offered he gave his only begotten Son. It reveals to whom the offer is made whosoever which means the offer is made to everyone and that no one is excluded from receiving it. It reveals that souls are perishing which means not only are there endless woes because of sin in this life, but a real hell with endless suffering waiting to swallow them up when this life is over. The verse also reveals the great gift being offered everlasting life which is to be received only by those who believe.

God is offering to save you from you from your sins and give you the gift of eternal life. If you were wise you would realize the danger you are in and believe on Christ at once. There is no reason at all to wait to receive the gift of eternal life. We will wait... came back the fateful reply from the Princess Sophia, and it cost them terribly. Waiting was foolish in their case and it is foolish in the case of anyone who hears the gospel message but puts off receiving Christ until a more favorable time. Dont let another hour go by without being saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but have eternal life.