

# Voices: Lessons from Endurance shipwreck about Jesus' return

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Searchers announced March 9, 2022, [they found the wreck](#) of the *Endurance*, a 144-foot, three-masted wooden ship that sank in 1915. It was one of the most famous and celebrated shipwrecks that never had been found. They discovered the ship nearly 10,000 feet below the icy Antarctic waters of the Weddell Sea.

## Origin story

While on an expedition to the Antarctic, the ship became stuck in an ice floe. Eventually, it froze fast to the floe. The crew of 28 men, including their captain, the famous explorer Sir Earnest Shackleton, attempted to stay by the boat's side as it floated with the ice, but there was little they could do to free the ship.

Nov. 21, 1915, the entrapped ship started to be crushed by the ice and slowly started to slip beneath the icy water's surface. The crew had no choice but to abandon ship, unload their supplies and set up camp the best they could.

After months spent in makeshift camps on the ice floes, the party finally took to the lifeboats and perilously made their way to the inhospitable and uninhabited Elephant Island.

From there, Shackleton and five others embarked on a daunting 800-mile, open-boat journey in a lifeboat named the *James Caird*. They were attempting to reach a whaling station on South Georgia and organize a rescue party to return for the crew left behind.

After a grueling 17-day journey, Shackleton and his party finally reached shore. But it took another 36 hours of desperate hiking before they finally staggered into the whaling station at Stromness, South Georgia. The rescue party was organized and launched, led by Shackleton himself.

At last, on Aug. 30, 1916, the saga of the *Endurance* and its crew came to an end. The men on the island were settling down to a lunch of boiled seal's backbone when they spied Shackleton's rescue boat just off the coast.

It had been 128 days since the *James Caird* left. Within an hour, the crew broke camp, packed up and left that desolate island. Twenty months after setting out for the Antarctic, every one of the *Endurance*'s 28-member crew was alive and safe.

## **The rest of the story**

The miraculous rescue of the *Endurance* crew, and the equally miraculous discovery of the remains of the sunken ship 127 years later, certainly make for a fascinating story. Perhaps the most fascinating part is what the crew did every day while stranded on Elephant Island.

Each morning, Frank Wild, whom Shackleton left in charge, issued the call for everyone to "lash up and stow" their belongings, because "the boss may come today."

Every day for 128 days, they packed up and readied themselves to go, just in case *that* day was *the* day "the boss" returned to rescue them.

## **Our story**

Think about Wild's daily charge to his men: "Lash up and stow. The boss may come today."

That sounds like a pretty good wake-up call for those of us in “God’s crew” of believers, as we expectantly await the return of our “Boss,” our “Captain”—the Lord Jesus Christ.

The closing words of the Book of Revelation contain Jesus’ last and most reassuring promise: “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming soon’” (Revelation 22:20).

The fact is, “the Boss” is coming again. It’s imminent. He is coming soon. Are we ready?

We should be packed up and ready to go—spiritually—each and every day of our lives, because each day may be *theday* our “Boss” returns for us.

Is our spiritual life and relationship with the Lord where it needs to be today?

In addition, how well are we preparing “the crew” of people around us in light of the imminent return of our “Captain?” Are we sharing the good news of Jesus with others, so we’ll be able to bring them along with us when “the Boss” returns?

Every day, let’s be sure we are packed up and ready to go. And as we patiently wait for the glorious day when “the Boss” returns, may we expectantly proclaim to him, “Amen, come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20).

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