

8 Potential Disasters That Could Jolt Us Into an Awakening

The stillness of the morning calm was about to be shattered by a series of explosions that would alter the course of human history. The time: 7:50 a.m. The date: Sunday, December 7, 1941. The place: Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

More than 300 Japanese airplanes were swarming toward the harbor. Within a short time, the bombers damaged eight battleships, destroying three—including the USS Arizona, which sank with 1,102 sailors on board. The Hickam and Wheeler air bases lost 177 planes. More than 2,400 servicemen and women lost their lives. The infamous, surprise attack would launch an entire nation into World War II.

But was this disaster really a surprise?

While the Japanese warplanes were still almost an hour away, two American soldiers on a small island in the Pacific scanned their radar and saw dots begin to fill their screen, representing the first wave of more than 180 bomber planes. The men notified their supervisor who unfortunately was an inexperienced novice. He shrugged off the situation with a ho-hum, “Don’t worry about it.”

Twenty-nine years earlier, a gargantuan “unsinkable” ocean liner left her British port on her maiden voyage to New York. Just before midnight on April 14, 1912, the Titanic struck an iceberg. Two-and-a-half hours later, the “unsinkable” vessel slipped beneath the icy waters with most of her passengers.

Such a large loss of life also didn’t have to be. At the time of the disaster, less than 20 miles away and in sight of each other, another ship, the *Californian*, sat stationary in the

Atlantic Ocean. With the time and capacity to save multiple hundreds of the Titanic's victims, what happened?

Someone on the Californian, who should have known better, ignored the potential for danger and simply decided to turn off the radio that night contributing to the loss of 1,513 lives.

Here's the deal: Scripture exhorts us to "make the most of every opportunity" (Col. 4:5, NIV). As strange as it may sound, I believe disaster is coming to our shores to help bring us back to God. Yet in the face of America's imminent judgment (although probably not the final one), multitudes go on with business as usual instead of readjusting priorities and better investing time to prepare for what's ahead.

Is it ultimately going to take a nightmarish calamity to jolt multitudes out of complacency and passivity in Christendom today? Remember what Jonathan Edwards in America's first Great Awakening said: The primary hindrance to revival is spiritual pride, and nothing obliterates this vice like being humbled and brought to new dependence on God alone amidst a disaster.

Remember Psalm 107:39, "Then their numbers decreased, and they were humbled by oppression, calamity and sorrow."

This is the first installment of a two-part series. Part Two will appear on this website on Wednesday.