

# Parable of the Life-Saving Station



## A Parable of a Lighthouse

On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occur there was a once a crude little life-saving station. The building was just a hut, and there was only one boat, but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea, and with no thought for themselves, they went out day or night tirelessly searching for the lost.

Many lives were saved by this wonderful little station, so that it became famous. Some of those who were saved, and various others in the surrounding areas, wanted to become associated with the station and give of their time and money and effort for the support of its work. New boats were bought and new crews were trained. The little life-saving station grew.

Some of the new members of the life-saving station were unhappy that the building was so crude and so poorly equipped. They felt that a more comfortable place should be provided as the first refuge of those saved from the sea.

So they replaced the emergency cots with beds and put better furniture in an enlarged building. Now the life-saving station became a popular gathering place for its members, and they re-decorated it beautifully and furnished it as a sort of club.

Less of the members were now interested in going to sea on life-saving missions, so they hired lifeboat crews to do this work.

The mission of life saving was still given lip service but most were too busy or lacked the necessary commitment to take part in the life-saving activities personally.

About this time, a large ship was wrecked off the coast, and the hired crews brought in boatloads of cold, wet, and half-drowned people.

They were dirty and sick, some of them had black skin, and some spoke a strange language, and the beautiful new club was considerably messed up. So the property committee immediately had a shower house built outside the club where victims of shipwreck could be cleaned up before coming inside.

At the next meeting, there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's life-saving activities as being unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal life pattern of the club.

But some members insisted that life-saving was their primary purpose and pointed out that they were still called a life-saving station. But they were finally voted down and told that if they wanted to save the life of all the various kinds of people who were shipwrecked in those waters, they could begin their own life-saving station down the coast. They did.

As the years went by, the new station experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old. They evolved into a club and yet another life-saving station was founded.

If you visit the seacoast today, you will find a number of exclusive clubs along that shore. Shipwrecks are still frequent in those waters, only now most of the people drown.

**--Author unknown**