

Survivor of Mutiny on the *Bounty*

One of the fabled stories of the sea was what happened to the British Royal Navy ship the HMS *Bounty* on April 28, 1789.

A mutiny by the crew was led by Fletcher Christian against the captain, Lieutenant William Bligh. Why? Accounts at the time, according to *Wikipedia*, reported that the sailors were attracted to the “idyllic” life and sexual opportunities afforded on the Pacific island of Tahiti. It is also believed the mutineers were motivated by Bligh’s allegedly harsh treatment of them.

The rebel crew members, 18 in number, set Bligh afloat in a small boat, along with 18 of the 22 crew still loyal to him. To avoid detection and prevent desertion, the mutineers then variously settled on Pitcairn Island or on Tahiti and burned the *Bounty* off Pitcairn.

Meanwhile, Bligh – in an extraordinary feat of seamanship – navigated the 23-foot open launch on a 47-day voyage to Timor in the Dutch East Indies, equipped with a quadrant and pocket watch and without charts or compass. He recorded the distance as 3,618 nautical miles.

Alexander Smith was the sole survivor of the band of mutineers. The natives for which Smith found himself responsible on Pitcairn Island were defeated, diseased and despondent – until Smith discovered the *Bounty*’s Bible, which he began to teach them. Twenty years later, a visiting ship found a thriving Christian community – the fruit of the Word of God.



Because the Word of God is living and active, and because it never fails to accomplish the purposes for which it was given, we should not be surprised when we read stories like that of Alexander Smith. Multitudes of lives throughout history – including yours? – have been transformed by responding to the teaching of Scripture. Some Christians have the spiritual gift of teaching, but all Christians are responsible for knowing God’s truth and communicating it to others as the Spirit gives opportunity.

God has chosen preaching and teaching the Bible as the means for announcing the good news of salvation. How shall people otherwise hear?

(more)

For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it (Isaiah 55:10-11 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter