

# Harvesters Community

During June 3-24, 2018, I presented four lectures on the famed explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton entitled *Shackleton: A Study in Leadership, Perseverance, and Providence*. Now, over three years later, I decided to revisit one of those lectures on his *perseverance*. To prepare our Community for this final lecture, we watched the IMAX film about his and his crews journey on the *Endurance* to Antarctica. Before we watched the film on the two screens in the Ministry Center on Sunday, October 17, 2021. I read the following introduction which I had written before I presented the four-part series in 2018.

“For over twenty-six weeks, from May 24 to November 26, 2003, a new IMAX film about famed explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton was shown at the Fernbank IMAX Theatre in Atlanta. To complement ‘the greatest IMAX film yet’ (*Chicago Tribune*), approximately 150 photographs were displayed documenting the exhibition. The title of the 41-minute film was *Shackleton’s Antarctic Adventure: The Greatest Survival Story of All Time*.

“To the best of my recollection, I do not believe I had ever heard the name of Ernest Shackleton until I saw the notification of the film’s release in Atlanta. Out of curiosity, I invited a small group of friends to see the film with me at Fernbank fifteen years ago on Friday evening, July 18, 2003, after which we met for a time of reflection and discussion. The following Monday, I mailed a letter to a couple who, unfortunately, were unable to join us. ‘The Shackleton story,’ I suggested, ‘is so compelling that I would still like to encourage you to go see it at some point. There are many lessons that can be learned from his life and explorations.’

“Since that memorable night, this great Antarctic explorer’s story has taken a well-deserved and rightful place in my mind and has been a regular companion to me during many situations in which I have needed his courageous example and leadership skills. Longing to know more about Shackleton, I began to collect some of the best books on his life, including an A&E biography by noted author and journalist George Plimpton, *South with Endurance: The Photographs of Frank Hurley*, published by Simon and Schuster in 2001, and *Shackleton’s Way: Leadership Lessons from the Great Antarctic Explorer* by Margot Morrell and Stephanie Capparell. These and many other works on his life and his intended 1,800-mile crossing of Antarctica all capture what became a harrowing two-year fight for the lives of his entire crew. When it was all over, one writer summarized his life in this way: ‘Shackleton failed only at the improbable; he succeeded at the unimaginable.’”

“Ninety-six years after his death on January 5, 1922 (100 years on January 5, 2022), Shackleton is still studied as a ‘model of great leadership and, in particular, a master of guidance in crisis.’ Some have called him ‘the greatest leader that ever came on God’s earth, bar none.’ It would be a privilege to have you join us on Sunday mornings during the month of June as we sit at the feet of this great explorer and learn valuable lessons about leadership, perseverance, and providence – lessons that can shape our own lives, strengthen us in our resolve to discover the great purpose for which we have been made by God, and give us a steady confidence in our Invisible Companion during failure or success.”