

## When You Can't Get Out

- **Micah 7:7** Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.
- During the Second World War, Colditz Castle near Leipzig, Germany was supposed to be the Nazis' most escape-proof prison. Allied POW's who had repeatedly escaped from other concentration camps were sent to Colditz, the only German prison camp with more guards than prisoners.
- Those confined here were desperate, and they would do anything to get the best of their guards and escape. More than 300 would-be escapers were caught in the act, often the same people trying again and again. On 130 occasions escapers actually made it outside the castle walls, but the number who got clean away was only 30 through the entire course of the war.
- The head of security at Colditz was a German officer named Reinhold Eggers. He and his officers found the many tactics used by their prisoners to be amusing, and as they rounded up each new band of escapees they took photographs of the prisoners' disguises and other escape paraphernalia for the castle's museum. Their meticulous record-keeping tells a fascinating story ...
- Lieut. Peter Allan was smuggled out of the camp inside a straw mattress, but his plot was discovered when a soldier stepped on one of his accomplices as he lay on the ground in another mattress.
- Polish Lieut. Schmiel tried to slide down a rope of bedsheets hung from the castle's attic window, but the nails in his boots scraped on the wall and the noise gave him away.
- Captain Pat Reid slipped out of the prison through a drain cover, but was caught by a fluke when some Germans just happened to be standing on the very lawn where his escape tunnel ended.
- French Lieut. Bouley exited the prison disguised as a woman, but was discovered when a polite German guard chased him down to return a wristwatch he had dropped on the way out.
- Some Dutch prisoners tried to trick the guards into thinking they were all present at roll call by standing a dummy in the middle of their ranks. They were discovered when the guards discovered that some of the prisoners appeared not to have feet.
- Lieut. Perodeau disguised himself as the camp electrician to make his dash for freedom, and did such a good job that he was only caught when someone stopped him to check his pass.
- Ten prisoners attempted to escape through a hole into the lavatory in the German headquarters building, but were caught when a guard heard a scratching noise.
- A small English prisoner named Dominic Bruce tried to make his exit hiding in a Red Cross crate, but was recaptured just a few days later.
- The prisoners had a veritable storehouse of stolen uniforms and costumes hidden away to help them in their quest, but to no avail.
- Michael Sinclair had made seven previous escape attempts from Colditz and his forged papers were immaculate. However, he only got 150 yards from the gate when sentries shot him dead
- The greatest escape attempt from Colditz Castle actually never took place. Behind a dummy wall high in an attic, British prisoners had spent months secretly putting together a glider from wooden shutters, mattress covers and whatever else they could find. The war was over before they got a chance to prove it could work.
- Every escape attempt at Colditz Castle resulted in a few weeks of solitary confinement for the perpetrator. Can you imagine how disheartening it must have been to come face to face with the enemy time and time again as they smugly captured the would-be escapers and marched them back to their cells? Can you imagine the hopelessness of captivity without any end in sight?
- Some of you can, for that is where you are today in your personal life! No, it may not be a concentration camp, but it is a prison nonetheless ... a dungeon of depression, a jailhouse of jealousy, a cellblock of sickness, a reformatory of rage, a detention center of discouragement, a prison of pain, and worst of all ... the solitary confinement of sin.
- You may not be in Colditz Castle, but you can identify! Like those prisoners, you've literally tried everything to escape. That's why today we want to talk about what to do when you can't seem to get out of your situation!
- In the belly of the whale, Jonah chose to **REPENT**
  - **Jonah 2:4** Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.
  - **Lamentations 3:21-23** <sup>21</sup>This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. <sup>22</sup>It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. <sup>23</sup>They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.

- In Pharaoh's prison, Joseph chose to take on **RESPONSIBILITY**
  - **Genesis 39:22** And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.
  - **1 Corinthians 4:2** Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.
  
- In the fiery furnace, the Hebrew boys chose to **RELY** on God
  - **Daniel 3:16-18** <sup>16</sup>Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. <sup>17</sup>If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. <sup>18</sup>But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.
  - **Psalms 91:9-11** <sup>9</sup>Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; <sup>10</sup>There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. <sup>11</sup>For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.
  
- In the face of opposition, Daniel chose to maintain his **ROUTINE**
  - **Daniel 6:10** Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.
  - **Psalms 73:16-17** <sup>16</sup>When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; <sup>17</sup>Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.
  
- In their darkest hour, Paul and Silas chose to **REJOICE**
  - **Acts 16:25** And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.
  - **Matthew 18:20** For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.
  
- **Basically, what each of these great men of God were saying is: "God, I can't get out ... but I think You can get in!"**