

THE BULWARK

OH, SO ALL ALONE...

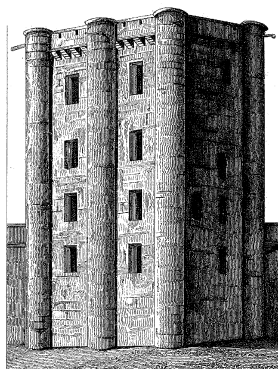
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"Mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that you may tell it to the generation following"
Psalms 48:13

"I'm sitting in a railway station, got a ticket for my destination", the opening line of the song "Homeward Bound". As the song progresses the melancholy resonates, and carries the image of an individual feeling alone and longing to be home; "every stranger's face I see reminds me that I long to be homeward bound." In an article dealing with notorious prisons (author: Noelle Talman, June 16, 2021), the ADX prison in Florence, Colorado is noted as being a "super max". The inmates are kept in solitary confinement. Such is viewed as extreme treatment, Alone, every day, three hundred and sixty five days a year.



Man, by design was intended to live and relate to others; construct a community and not exist in isolation. Whether we want to admit it, we do need one another. This is what makes solitary confinement such an excruciating punishment. While we may not experience solitary confinement, there is the gnawing feeling of being alone, even though surrounded by people.

"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body; whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many." (1Corinthians 12:13-14) By design we are called upon to be connected, but sadly many drift toward isolation. "No man is an island unto himself" is line in a poem penned by John

Donne in 1624 ad., wherein Donne was trying to make evident that humans cannot exist in isolation but need one another to flourish.

The apostle Paul in the twelfth chapter of 1Corinthians is stressing the import of each part of the spiritual body. The recognition of not being alone and being needed (see verses 15-27) is essential. In his epistle to the Ephesians, he wrote, *"from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies..."* (4:16)

For the body of Christ to function as design by God, which is a reflection of the *"manifold wisdom of God"* (Ephesians 3:10) it is imperative that we come together as one. *"Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you are also doing."* (1Thessalonians 5:11) Note as well Hebrews 10:24-25, *"and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another..."*

Above all, one should always be comforted by the knowledge that God is a constant, *"...I will never desert you, nor will I every forsake you."* (Hebrews 13:5) God is ever so close, and we need to pull ourselves closer to Him as James notes. *"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."*

(wbe)