

THE BULWARK

SET FREE

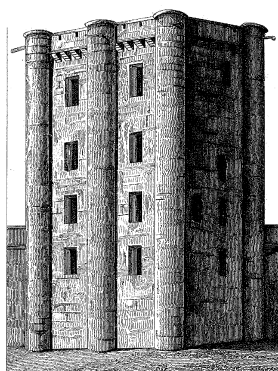
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*"Mark well her bulwarks,
consider her palaces, that
you may tell it to the
generation following"*
Psalms 48:13

The ravages of war stay with a person for a lifetime. Their memories are ever present ready to haunt them without a moments notice. Over the years I have known dozens of men and women who have served in the military during WWII, Korea, Viet Nam and the recent forays in the Middle East. Regardless of the theatre of warfare, the abject horror is universal. But perhaps the most poignant recollections are from those who were prisoners of war. The treatment meted out by the enemy was worse than one would give to a feral animal. The inhumanity of one human to another. Deplorable.

I recall talking with two brothers in Christ who served during WWII. One was taken as a POW by the Japanese, the other was taken prisoner by the Germans. While there were differences in certain respects to the treatment they received, however the emotions they experienced were the same. Even some twenty-five plus years after their ordeal ended both remained hyper vigilant. You didn't want to sneak up behind either one. However, as they spoke of when they were liberated the relief and absolute joy, even after all those years could be heard.

*"Who executes justice for the oppressed.
Who gives food to the hungry. The Lord
gives freedom to the prisoners."* (Psalms
146:7) Freedom, try to imagine the emo-
tions of being set free. Caged no more.

Not wanting to downplay the freedom

afforded to a POW, but the greatest freedom afforded, and that to all of mankind, is freedom from the guilt and shame of sin. Jesus noted, *"...and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* (John 8:32) Then shortly there after, in the same discussion He set forth, *"If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed."* (John 8:36) Physically man can set free another from captivity, but only in Christ can one find freedom from sin.

"But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness." (Romans 6:17-18)

Christ did indeed pay the ransom price for mankind sins, but it is incumbent on each one of us to be obedient. A fact that even Jesus, stressed right before going to the cross, as evidence in John 15:13-14. It is further echoed by Peter on the day of Pentecost, when he had convicted the multitude of putting to death Jesus, who was clearly innocent of any sin. *"What shall we do?"* they cried out as the pangs of guilt hit their hearts. The response was a simple one, *"Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins..."* Freedom is precious and it comes with a price. Jesus paid His price are you willing to pay yours by being obedient? (wbe)

