

Escape Plan in Jeopardy

When Communist forces invaded Vietnam in the 1950s, Hien Pham, like many Vietnamese Christians, was arrested and jailed for his beliefs.

After his release from prison, Pham made plans to escape Vietnam. He secretly began building a boat, and 53 fellow Vietnamese made plans to escape with him.

One day, four Viet Cong soldiers came to Pham's house and confronted him. They heard he was planning an escape. Was it true? Of course, Pham lied to them. If he had told the truth, the Viet Cong might have killed him and arrested the other 53 participants.

But after the soldiers left, Pham felt uneasy. Had God really wanted him to lie? Didn't he trust that God would provide for him under any circumstances?

Even though it made no logical sense, Pham believed that God wanted him to tell the truth, even at the risk of his own life. So Pham resolved that if the Viet Cong returned, he would confess his escape plans.

What would you do in Pham's place? What happens when our fears collide with our faith?

Pham finished building his boat, and his friends made the final plans for their daring escape. To their horror, the Viet Cong soldiers returned and demanded to know if the escape rumors were true. Hoping against hope, Pham confessed his plans to escape.

Imagine Pham's surprise when the soldiers replied, "Take us with you!" That evening, Pham, his 53 friends, and four Viet Cong soldiers made a daring escape under cover of night on a homemade boat.

But that's not the end of the story. They sailed straight into a violent storm. Pham reported that they surely would have been lost if not for the expert sailing skills of the four Viet Cong soldiers. The escapees landed safely in Thailand. Eventually, Pham emigrated to the United States, where he made a new life for himself.

Very few of us will ever be in a position where following Christ puts us at risk of imprisonment or death. Maybe if we were in that situation, our choices would seem clearer. For every day we live, however, we are being tested. Do we live according to the best that we know or do we settle for something less?

The integrity of the upright guides them (Proverbs 11:3 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter