

1. Most people today recognize that the Holocaust was an atrocity predicated on hatred, prejudice, fear, and a false sense of superiority. Are there similar situations in the world today, even if on a smaller or subtler scale? Where do you see similar attitudes in your own community? What are some ways you can stand up for those who are being oppressed? (See Isaiah 1:17.) What was Jesus' response when he encountered prejudiced and superior people?

2. When Jacob loses his family, he and his uncle choose to participate in an active resistance cell. Would you have had the courage to stand up against an oppressive regime? When is it justifiable to oppose the law, even break it? How can we discern whether laws are just or unjust? Why is such discernment so crucial?

3. Many citizens of Germany and other Nazi-controlled countries were duped into silence by the Nazis' veneer that resembled Christianity and patriotism. How do people in your country and worldwide use such veneers to cover un-Christlike behavior and attitudes? What can sincere followers of Christ do to make sure the truth of the gospel wins out over such causes?

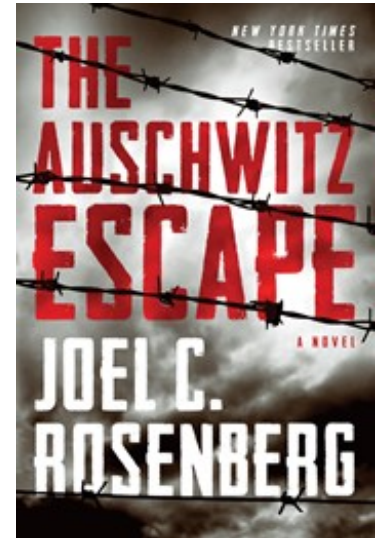
4. In chapter 60, Luc says, "I could never hate a Jew. . . . The Bible teaches me to love the Jews. To bless the Jews. . . . Didn't God say that those who blessed the Jewish people he would bless, and those who cursed you he would curse? . . . If you ask me, the question shouldn't be 'Why are you, a Christian, here in a death camp, condemned for trying to save Jews?' The real question is 'Why aren't all the Christians here?'" Why was Luc's attitude so rare in Europe during World War II? Is this perspective any more prevalent in the present?

5. What did you make of the relationship between Luc, an assistant pastor, and Jacob, a resistance fighter? Imagine they'd met outside of Auschwitz. Would they have become friends? What was your reaction in the scene where Luc dies and Jacob survives?

5. In the Auschwitz scenes, prisoners often did whatever it took to survive: pilfering, smuggling, collaborating with the guards. Think of yourself in such a situation. What do you think you'd be able or willing to do if your life were on the line?

6. Read Colossians 3:11. What does this verse suggest about the dignity and value of all human life? By contrast, how did the Nazis determine a person's value? What light does this verse shed on the events portrayed in *The Auschwitz Escape*?

7. In chapter 98, Von Strassen expresses his outright bloodlust for the Jews: "You are not human. You are a cancer. You and all of the Jews. . . . Exterminating vermin like you is my job. And how I love it." Others, like Dr. Josef Mengele—a historical figure who performed chilling experiments on live human subjects whom he deemed unworthy of life—also displayed a callous, diabolical attitude toward Jews, Gypsies, and other groups they targeted. But many average citizens were caught up in the Nazi movement without sinking to such depths. Can you think of ways that ordinary people today might blithely allow injustice around them? What can we do to oppose such injustices?



8. While Luc and Jacob are hiding in the woodpile, Jacob experiences pressing guilt over the people who are being shot because of his escape. Would you have risked escape, knowing that others would suffer for it?

9. Jacob feels a pressing urgency to tell others the truth of what is happening in Auschwitz so that the atrocities can be stopped. But many don't believe him, and even those who do believe him fail to buy into his objective. What was your reaction when, after his successful escape, Jacob's mission to save others was unsuccessful? Should Allied forces have made the attempt?

10. What were the key points in Jacob's spiritual growth? What kind of believer do you think he is by the end of the novel?

