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This image depicts the site where Dietrich Bonhoeffer was executed at Flossenburg. His body was cremated thereafter and his ashes were reportedly scattered. Photo by Christian Kaiser Verlag; online via [The Bonhoeffer Center](#).

Before he walked out of his concentration camp barracks for the last time, [Dietrich Bonhoeffer](#) whispered to a fellow prisoner: "This is the end. For me, the beginning of life."

He was right. Unknown to Bonhoeffer, Nazi officials had discovered the diary of Admiral Canaris. Hitler himself ordered the annihilation of Canaris and his entire resistance group - a group that included Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

In spite of his firsthand experience with evil, Bonhoeffer went to the gallows with confidence, strengthened by the faith that kept him calm. In spite of the prospect of death at the hands of evil men, he clung to the beliefs he articulated in his books. Beliefs like:

- Only God is the final arbiter of good and evil
- What we despise in others is never absent from ourselves
- Face death daily and learn the true miracle of life.

As he stripped naked on April 9, 1945, Bonhoeffer knew his life on earth was over. He also knew that two other high-profile resisters would die that day: [Admiral Canaris](#) and his chief of staff, [Hans Oster](#).

What Bonhoeffer did not know was the Nazis had also targeted three members of his immediate family. His brother Klaus and two brothers-in-law (including Hans) were executed days later in different camps. All had fallen within the net of Hitler's rage over his attempted assassination.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/A-MARTYR-S-DEATH-Dietrich-Bonhoeffer>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

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Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Image online, courtesy the Biography Online website.

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Admiral Canaris

Image online, courtesy the German Federal Archives.

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Hans Oster

Image online, courtesy the German Federal Archives.

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Klaus Bonhoeffer

Image online, courtesy the [German Resistance Memorial Center](#) website.

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