

## *Captain J. Charles Plumb*

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### **Biography**

A testament to the strength of the human spirit, Charles Plumb endured the most extreme hardship and used the experience to transform his life in a profound way.

As a farm kid from a small town in Kansas, Captain Plumb fantasized about airplanes; he never dreamed that he might, one day, have the opportunity to pilot one. It would be the United States Navy that afforded Plumb the opportunity to live out that dream.

Captain Charles Plumb graduated from the Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland in 1964. In November 1965, Plumb earned his Navy Wings, becoming a United States Naval Aviator. From this, Plumb reported to Miramar Naval Air Station in San Diego. There, he made his mark helping to develop the Navy Fighter Weapons School, more commonly known today as "TOP GUN."

His next appointment was to the Aircraft Carrier Kitty Hawk where he was assigned one of the Navy's hottest jets, the F-4 Phantom. Captain Plumb flew 74 successful combat missions over North Vietnam and made well over 100 carrier landings. On his 75th mission, just five days before the end of his tour, Plumb was shot down over Hanoi, taken prisoner, starved, tortured repeatedly, and survived the next 2,103 days as a Prisoner of War, until he was released on February 18, 1973.

During his nearly six years of captivity, Charlie Plumb distinguished himself among his fellow prisoners as a professional in underground communications, and served for two of those years as the Chaplain in his camp.

Since his return home, more than 5,000 audiences in nearly every industry have been spellbound as Captain Charlie Plumb draws parallels between his P.O.W. experience and the challenges of everyday life. He has shared his message to an even wider public through appearances on Good Morning America, Anderson Cooper 360, MSNBC with Thomas Roberts, "The Seventies" with Wolf Blitzer, CNN New Day with Chris Cuomo, Yahoo! News with Bianna Golodryga, and The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer.

One of the most sought-after achievement speakers of his time, Charlie Plumb's presentations are as he is, sincere, straightforward, humorous, and tailored to motivate each specific audience he encounters. His insights on how to cope with the difficulties as well as the opportunities in life have a positive impact on those who hear his message, those who read his books, and those who come to know him as a friend.

Captain Plumb's Military honors include the Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, (2) Purple Hearts, and the P.O.W. Medal.