

BY JENNA DEWITT

WHO IS

CORRIE TEN BOOM

One of the most enduring Holocaust stories comes from German-occupied Holland where a pair of middle-aged sisters and their elderly father decided to serve God and His people no matter the cost. Only one of the sisters, Corrie ten Boom, lived to tell their story of miraculous provision, remarkable courage and unlikely forgiveness. Most of all, their story reveals a Heavenly Father's unconditional love leading His beloved child through one of history's darkest times.

Corrie ten Boom was born into a Christian family of watchmakers. Despite growing anti-Semitism, the ten Booms were known for their selfless hospitality and support of the Jewish people. Thus, persecuted Jewish families sought shelter at the ten Booms' home.

Common sense and visions from God told Corrie that her work would one day cost her freedom, maybe even her life. Still, she trusted Him and committed to serving His people. **With the help of her friends and family, her obedience to His call saved the lives of around 800 Jews.**

Soon, Corrie found herself leading resistance efforts in her town. As her involvement with the underground network grew, she helped arrange housing, food ration cards, false documents and new lives for those in need. Even her bedroom was altered to make a hiding place for those hunted by the Nazis.

One day, the six Jews living with them were rushed into the hiding place just in time, but the Nazis took 30 of the ten Booms' friends and family to prison (including solitary confinement for Corrie).

Their elderly father died just 10 days later. The sisters were transferred to a factory-work camp before arriving at Ravensbrück concentration camp. **The sisters transformed that camp by holding daily worship services with a smuggled Bible.**

Days before Betsie died in the camp, she commissioned her sister to tell people what they had learned in their suffering. **"We must tell them that there is no pit so deep that He is not deeper still. They will listen to us, Corrie, because we have been here."**

Corrie was released from Ravensbrück due to a clerical error just one week before all the women her age were sent to the gas chambers. Upon returning to Holland, she set up a home for survivors of Nazi persecution, helping them heal and find forgiveness for their former captors. With forgiveness came true freedom.

As Corrie wrote in her book, "Tramp for the Lord":

"'God showed me,' Betsie said, 'that after the war we must give to the Germans that which they now try to take away from us: our love for Jesus.... We must tell them the Holy Spirit will fill their hearts with God's love.'"

With Betsie's vision fueling her faith, **Corrie organized a home for former Nazis to start a new life, to learn love instead of hate, to discover they too could be forgiven.**

Corrie's rehabilitation work for these two groups – both the victims and their former oppressors – was funded

largely through authorship of more than 20 books, a film adaptation of her most popular book, "The Hiding Place," and her speaking engagements which took her into countries considered "closed" either behind the Iron Curtain or too far from Western civilization to access.

Though her fame spread, her home became a museum, and she received honors from the nation of Israel and the queen of the Netherlands, Corrie always redirected the attention the One who really deserved the glory. She wrote, "the real sin lay in thinking that any power to help and transform came from me. **Of course it was not my wholeness, but Christ's that made the difference.**"

Corrie ten Boom died on her 91st birthday, April 15, 1983, in California.



Jenna DeWitt is the managing editor of MORF magazine. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from Baylor University, where she served as editor of Focus magazine and Arts and Entertainment editor of The Baylor Lariat. Jenna loves Christian music, Great Britain and all things Baylor.

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