

Corrie Ten Boom
VERY SOBERING WORD

Miss Corrie Ten Boom was a Dutch survivor of the Nazi Concentration Camps, and a lifelong missionary. Corrie was a believer in facing tribulation. She was one of the many people who were persecuted in concentration camps during the World War II. Her family was murdered before her eyes, but though her life was threatened, God led her through that terrible time. She lived to testify all over the world of how God brought her out of that time of trouble. In the worst days in the concentration camp she and her sister Betsy discovered that "there is no pit so deep that the Presence of God is not there with us". **In an interview titled "Prepared for the Coming Tribulation", Miss Corrie Ten Boom held very definite view concerning the rapture.** In the following message she shared a plea for the saints to prepare themselves for the possibility that at some point their faith may be tested. It serves today as a timely warning to us in the comfortable and complacent western church as we approach the threshold of the end time drama.

Here is her exhortation to us from a letter she wrote in 1974:

ESCAPE TRIBULATION? —WRONG!

- Corrie Ten Boom -

"The world is deathly ill. It is dying. The Great Physician has already signed the death certificate. Yet there is still a great work for Christians to do. They are to be streams of living water, channels of mercy to those who are still in the world. It is possible for them to do this because they are overcomers.

Christians are ambassadors for Christ. They are representatives from Heaven to this dying world. And because of our presence here, things will change.

My sister, Betsy, and I were in the Nazi concentration camp at Ravensbruck because we committed the crime of loving Jews. Seven hundred of us from Holland, France, Russia, Poland and Belgium were herded into a room built for two hundred. As far as I knew, Betsy and I were the only two representatives of Heaven in that room.

We may have been the Lord's only representatives in that place of hatred, yet because of our presence there, things changed. Jesus said, "In the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." We too, are to be overcomers - bringing the light of Jesus into a world filled with darkness and hate.

Sometimes I get frightened as I read the Bible, and as I look in this world and see all of the tribulation and persecution promised by the Bible coming true. Now I can tell you, though, if you too are afraid, that I have just read the last pages. I can now come to shouting "Hallelujah! Hallelujah!" for I have found where it is written that Jesus said, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things: and I will be His God, and he shall be My son." This is the future and hope of this world. Not that the world will survive - but that we shall be overcomers in the midst of a dying world.

Betsy and I, in the concentration camp, prayed that God would heal Betsy who was so weak and sick. "Yes, the Lord will heal me," Betsy said with confidence. She died the next day and I

could not understand it. They laid her thin body on the concrete floor along with all the other corpses of the women who died that day.

It was hard for me to understand, to believe that God had a purpose for all that. Yet because of Betsy's death, today I am traveling all over the world telling people about Jesus.

There are some among us teaching there will be no tribulation, that the Christians will be able to escape all this. These are the false teachers that Jesus was warning us to expect in the latter days. Most of them have little knowledge of what is already going on across the world. I have been in countries where the saints are already suffering terrible persecution.

In China, the Christians were told, "Don't worry, before the tribulation comes you will be translated - raptured." Then came a terrible persecution. Millions of Christians were tortured to death. Later I heard **a Bishop from China say, sadly, "We have failed. We should have made the people strong for persecution rather than telling them Jesus would come first. Tell the people how to be strong in times of persecution, how to stand when the tribulation comes - to stand and not faint."**

I feel I have a divine mandate to go and tell the people of this world that it is possible to be strong in the Lord Jesus Christ. We are in training for the tribulation, but **more than sixty percent of the Body of Christ across the world has already entered into the tribulation. There is no way to escape it.**

We are next!!!

Since I have already gone through prison for Jesus' sake, and since I met the Bishop in China, now every time I read a good Bible text I think, "Hey, I can use that in the time of tribulation." Then I write it down and learn it by heart.

When I was in the concentration camp, a camp where only twenty percent of the women came out alive, we tried to cheer each other up by saying, "Nothing could be any worse than today." But we would find the next day was even worse. During this time a Bible verse that I had committed to memory gave me great hope and joy.

"If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on their part evil is spoken of, but on your part He is glorified." (1 Peter 3:14)

I found myself saying, "Hallelujah! Because I am suffering, Jesus is glorified!"

In America, the churches sing, "Let the congregation escape tribulation", but in China and Africa the tribulation has already arrived. This last year alone more than two hundred thousand Christians were martyred in Africa. Now things like that never get into the newspapers because they cause bad political relations. But I know. I have been there. We need to think about that when we sit down in our nice houses with our nice clothes to eat our steak dinners. Many, many members of the Body of Christ are being tortured to death at this very moment, yet we continue right on as though we are all

going to escape the tribulation. Several years ago I was in Africa in a nation where a new government had come into power. The first night I was there some of the Christians were commanded to come to the police station to register. When they arrived they were arrested and that same night they were executed. The next day the same thing happened with other Christians. The third day it was the same. All the Christians in the district were being systematically murdered.

The fourth day I was to speak in a little church. The people came, but they were filled with fear and tension. All during the service they were looking at each other, their eyes asking, "Will this one I am sitting beside be the next one killed? Will I be the next one?"

The room was hot and stuffy with insects that came through the screenless windows and swirled around the naked bulbs over the bare wooden benches. I told them a story out of my childhood.

"When I was a little girl," I said, "I went to my father and said, 'Daddy, I am afraid that I will never be strong enough to be a martyr for Jesus Christ.'"

"Tell me," said Father, "When you take a train trip to Amsterdam, when do I give you the money for the ticket? Three weeks before?"

"No, Daddy, you give me the money for the ticket just before we get on the train."

"That is right," my father said, "and so it is with God's strength. Our Father in Heaven knows when you will need the strength to be a martyr for Jesus Christ. He will supply all you need - just in time."

My African friends were nodding and smiling. Suddenly a spirit of joy descended upon that church and the people began singing,

"In the sweet, by and by, we shall meet on that beautiful shore."

Later that week, half the congregation of that church was executed. I heard later that the other half was killed some months ago. **But I must tell you something. I was so happy that the Lord used me to encourage these people, for unlike many of their leaders, I had the word of God.** I had been to the Bible and discovered that Jesus said He had not only overcome the world, but to all those who remained faithful to the end, He would give a crown of life.

How can we get ready for the persecution? First we need to feed on the word of God, digest it, make it a part of our being. This will mean disciplined Bible study each day as we not only memorize long passages of scripture, but put the principles to work in our lives.

Next we need to develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Not just the Jesus of yesterday, the Jesus of History, but the life-changing Jesus of today who is still alive and sitting at the right hand of God.

We must be filled with the Holy Spirit. This is no optional command of the Bible, it is absolutely necessary. Those earthly disciples could never have stood up under the persecution of the Jews and Romans had they not waited for Pentecost. **Each of us needs our own personal Pentecost, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We will never be able to stand in the**

tribulation without it.

In the coming persecution we must be ready to help each other and encourage each other. But we must not wait until the tribulation comes before starting. The fruit of the Spirit should be the dominant force of every Christian's life.

Many are fearful of the coming tribulation, they want to run. I, too, am a little bit afraid when I think that after all my eighty years, including the horrible Nazi concentration camp, that I might have to go through the tribulation also. But then I read the Bible and I am glad.

When I am weak, then I shall be strong, the Bible says. Betsy and I were prisoners for the Lord, we were so weak, but we got power because the Holy Spirit was on us. That mighty inner strengthening of the Holy Spirit helped us through. No, you will not be strong in yourself when the tribulation comes. Rather, you will be strong in the power of Him who will not forsake you. For seventy-six years I have known the Lord Jesus and not once has He ever left me, or let me down.

"Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him", for I know that to all who overcome, He shall give the crown of life. Hallelujah!