

## FOREWORD

**Y**ou will be My witnesses,” said Jesus to His disciples, “to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Corrie ten Boom is one of that number. Having found for herself the victory that overcomes the world in the horrors of a concentration camp, she cannot keep her secret to herself. She has become a worldwide witness, a troubadour of Christ. She shares with us in these pages, with all the vividness of firsthand experience, contacts, and conversations with all sorts in camps and jails, with actresses and students, with sophisticated and illiterate; and I lay down this manuscript saying, like those two disciples of old, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road?” (Luke 24:32). For I met not Corrie, but Corrie’s Christ. I was blessed again and again by the instances of her own childlike dependence on Him as her wisdom, by His responses to her faith, and by the wise and winning ways in which she has been able to commend Him to so many. May many who read these living chapters see Him again, in the simplicity of faith, as our all-sufficiency, and be stirred, as I have been, to a bolder faith.

Norman Grubb



# 1

## PLANS

*Human hearts are amazingly alike.*

**T**he silence of night had fallen on seven hundred women, lying tightly packed together, asleep in the barracks of a concentration camp.

Bep, my sister, awakened me and repeated to me in a whisper what God had told her about the work that would be waiting for us after our release.

“We must open a home for people who have suffered so much here and in other places where life has been completely disrupted by war. But the most important part of our task will be to tell everyone who will listen that Jesus is the only answer to the problems that are disturbing the hearts of men and of nations. We shall have the right to speak because we can tell from our experience that His light is more powerful than the deepest darkness. Surely, nothing could be darker than our experiences here. I keep telling myself, ‘Things cannot possibly grow worse,’ but every day we see that misery only deepens. How wonderful that the reality

of His presence is greater than the reality of the hell about us! We shall have to do a lot of traveling, but we must never spend our energies in collecting funds. God will provide everything we need: money, health, wisdom, and the necessary languages. All of our efforts must go into bringing the gospel, for we shall have many opportunities.”

Bep’s eyes did not see the dirty throng around us. She was gazing into the future, and a glow of happiness brightened her emaciated face.

Three days later she passed away, and ten days later, just one week before all women of my age were killed, I was released from the concentration camp.

In this book I shall describe some of my experiences during the first years of my wanderings. Why should I do this? Because I have discovered that there are many people who need this message.

Human hearts are amazingly alike. As I talk with people in America, England, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland, I frequently find the same need, the same ignorance of what we can be in Jesus Christ if only we accept the Bible in a simple, childlike way as the Word of God, the Word that teaches us the foolishness of God that is wiser than the wisdom of men, the love of God that passes all understanding (see 1 Cor. 1:25; Phil. 4:7).

When we read the Bible, we should never use as our guide the wisdom of men or the standards of our own reason.

I was once a passenger aboard a ship that was being guided by radar. The fog was so dense we couldn’t see even the water about us. But the radar screen showed a streak of light, indicating the presence of another ship far ahead. The

radar penetrated the fog and picked up its image. So also is faith the radar that sees reality through the clouds.

The reality of the victory of Christ can be seen only by faith, which is our radar. Our faith perceives what is actual and real; our senses perceive only that which is limited to three dimensions and comprehended by our intellect. Faith sees more.

I am not a scholar, but much of the little I do know, I learned as I faced death in front of the crematorium in Ravensbruck. That is why God sometimes uses me to help people who know far more than I.



# 2

## FORGIVENESS

*And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.*

Mark 11:25

*Why should we hold on to the sins of others while our own sins have been cast into the depths of the sea?*

I was a guest on one of the farms on the vast prairies of Kansas. How far the horizons stretch out on every hand! And how clear the air! We Hollanders are accustomed to a shading of color and line in our landscape, due to the atmosphere. But here everything is clearly visible at three hundred yards or more and seems close by. When the sun sets, the shadows fall stark and clear from barn, cows, and even the tasseled corn.

The family with which I was staying was a large one, and I always have an especially good time when I am taken right in to the life of a typical American family. The youngest daughter

here was just finishing high school, and all of us planned to attend the graduation exercises the following week.

All of us? Something was threatening to mar the joy of that happy occasion. For months past there had been dissension between the father and his eldest son. In a fit of anger, the father had shown his son the door and forbidden him ever to cross its threshold again. The mother told me the whole story in confidence. For her the graduation festivities would be no joy. "My boy has a farm not far from here," said she, "but I'm sure he will not want to come."

We prayed together about it, and then I waited for the opportunity I knew God would prepare for me.

I was having quite a few interesting experiences on the farm. I had helped drive the tractor, and although the farmer stood behind me, I was still proud of having finished the corners so neatly.

One afternoon I went riding. The whole family stood watching as I mounted. The horse was being difficult, and, ignoring the reins entirely, he walked over to the watering trough, began to drink, and then put his feet into the trough. I had all I could do to keep from pitching forward over his head. Finally, with the efforts of all, the horse was led to the road; but I had to take a lot of bantering advice and laughter about my first riding lesson. Once on the road, however, everything was fine. The horse was walking quietly now. The whole prairie lay stretched out before me; I inhaled deeply the pure air. The corn rustled, and the wind played with my hair.

What a delight it is to look out over the world from the back of a horse!



Then the farmer rode up alongside me, and before I knew it, there it was, the opportunity for which we had prayed.

“Have you ever prayed, ‘Forgive us our debts, / As we forgive our debtors’ (Matt. 6:12, NKJV)?” I asked him. “Do you know what has become of your sins? If you believe in Jesus Christ and belong to Him, they have been cast into the depths of the sea (see Mic. 7:19), and that’s very deep. But then He expects also that you will forgive the sins of your boy and cast them into the depths of the sea. Just imagine how you would feel if there should be another war, if your son had to go back into service and was killed in action. Don’t you think you should forgive him right now? The love which God has for you in Christ Jesus is the same love that He will pour out into your heart through His Spirit. If you open your heart to receive it, then His love will become your love, and His forgiveness your forgiveness.”

All through the conversation I continued praying that the demon of bitterness would not win the conflict going on in the heart of the farmer.

After we had been riding for some time in silence, he said suddenly, “I’m going to see my son tonight. Will you go with me?”

And so we did. The old man was a bit uncomfortable as he stepped into the house. The son looked up in surprise. Then the father put his hand on the shoulder of the young man and said—was I hearing correctly?—“My boy, will you forgive me?” I turned and walked quickly around to the other side of the house, but I could still hear the son’s reply, “But Father, I should ask you for forgiveness.”

The graduation party was a great success.



# 3

## THE WAY BACK

*Yesterday is a canceled check.*

*Today is cash.*

*Tomorrow is a promissory note to those  
who accept the victory of Jesus.*

**Y**ears ago when my father was assisting in the rehabilitation of prisoners, he asked me if I would like to help him and become a regular visitor to prison cells. I answered, "Please, Father, don't ask me to do anything like that. I wouldn't dare even enter a prison, to say nothing of going into the cells." But now that I myself have been a prisoner this fear is completely gone, and I try whenever possible to preach the gospel in prisons.

I had received an invitation to visit Sing Sing and was now about to see this modern penal institution.

In the parking lot were the cars of a visiting football team that had come to match its skill with the Sing Sing eleven. Several gates were opened and closed behind us, and then we were driven in a real prison van up the high hill on top of

which the buildings are located. I couldn't help thinking of the van in which I had been taken to the prison at Scheveningen. Other than this, however, there was no similarity, for this did not look much like a prison.

On an open space in front of the chapel were many prisoners walking about freely, and here they did not wear uniforms. The view over the river was beautiful.

In the chapel there were about a hundred prisoners and only one guard. It looked like an ordinary church service. The men sang with enthusiasm, and one after another suggested a hymn. (Several of the prisoners were taking a correspondence course in Bible study from Moody Bible Institute.) There was an openness that made it easy for me to speak. My text was "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers . . . against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12).

I told the men how in Ravensbruck, where I so often saw death about me, I had suddenly realized that life is, after all, very simple but that it is we who make it involved. The devil is more powerful than we are, but Jesus is more powerful than the devil. Now if we belong to Jesus, we are on the victorious side. He came to destroy the works of the devil. We are not only striving toward victory but fighting from the position of victory.

After the service several of the prisoners came to shake hands with me. With one of them, a colored man, I had a long talk, and finally he said, "For a long time I have been unable to find the way back. Now I know—Jesus is the way."