

The Hiding Place

In God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me? Psalm 56:11 ESV

You are a hiding place for me; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with shouts of deliverance. Psalm 32:7 ESV

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation. Isaiah 12:2 ESV

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalm 23:6 ESV

In 1940 the Nazis invaded Holland. Because of their strong Christian beliefs the Ten Boom family wanted to save their Jewish friends from the death camps. Corrie, who had come to think of herself as a middle aged spinster, soon found herself involved in the procurement of black market goods, bribery, smuggling rations, and the forgery of documents in order to feed and save the lives of the people who came to their home for refuge. Do you think you would have helped?

The Dutch Underground arranged for a secret room to be built in the Ten Boom home in case there was a raid. Extra dishes on the table, a warm bed, a piece of trash in the wastebasket -- any small thing could give away the presence of someone hiding. The family and guests practiced to be able to get everything picked up and the people into the hiding place as quickly as possible.

Has someone ever had to protect you? Have you had to protect someone else?

When Corrie asked her father why some Christian people would not help those in need, her father replied, "If a mouse is in the cookie jar that does not make him a cookie." Corrie's father, Casper, was resolute in his commitment to help others. He was well into his eighties at the time of their arrest. A Nazi official offered to let him go if he promised that he would not make anymore trouble. He could not agree that he would not help more people and went to prison instead. Do you have any resolute convictions?

In prison Corrie and Betsy had to live through very difficult conditions. Although life was hard for Corrie, she was most concerned about Betsy who was not strong and struggled with illness. The barracks they lived in was infested with fleas. It was unpleasant, but Betsy insisted that God could use the fleas for good. Later they realized that the fleas gave them freedom and protected the women in their barracks from being molested, because the guards didn't want fleas.

Can you trust that God can take the problems in your life and use them for your good if you ask Him?

Corrie was amazed by her sister Betsy's strong faith. In every camp they used a hidden Bible to teach their fellow prisoners about Jesus. Life was difficult for both of them, but Corrie and Betsy thanked God for the blessings that saw in their lives. While they were in Ravensbruck, Betsy had a vision of a large mansion where former prisoners could go to heal after the war. The vision came true when Corrie was able to minister to those who were hurt by the war using their old home and a donated mansion.

When Germany occupied Holland during WW2 the Nazis took everyone's radios to cut the people off from news of the outside world. Abusive people isolate their victims to destroy their hope and also so that others can't see the cruelty that is happening. In prison Corrie was told, "You think that you can last by praying, the only way you can exist here is hate." Corrie replied, "Hate can put you in a worse prison than this." It has been said that hate is like acid. It causes the most damage to container that holds it.

Dear Lord, we ask You to search our hearts and lives. Where we have stored disappointment and grief, fill us with hope and joy. If there is any hate or bitterness in us, wash it away with Your healing love and grace. Fill us with Your joy and strength. Give us the courage to protect those who cannot protect themselves. Bless and keep us for Jesus' sake, Amen.