

Denise ([00:03](#)):

Women have been a part of carrying the gospel where it's not for generations. And part of the legacy they've left can be found in the courage their stories inspire in an entirely new generation of women who would go. But that legacy can only be realized if their stories are told. Welcome to the Velvet Ashes Legacy podcast.

Denise ([00:44](#)):

Hello and welcome to the velvet ashes legacy Podcast. I am Denise Beck, the executive director here at velvet ashes. Excited to be here to bring you the story this month.

Sarah ([00:55](#)):

And I am Sarah Hilkemann, the program director. Today we want to tell you the story of Corrie Ten Boom.

Denise ([01:02](#)):

And I, Sarah, am really excited about this. Corrie Ten Boom is one of my faves. I have been to Holland to the place where she was, but a lot of people might hear her name and think, well, this doesn't fit the traditional stories that we tell of missionary women. She may not seem like a missionary in what you know of her story, but we are here to tell you that you're probably gonna be surprised to hear all of her story and how she actually fits that mold. But actually that story starts for Corrie way before her birth. And it begins with a legacy of her family and how that created the lifestyle that we are going to talk about today.

Sarah ([01:47](#)):

Yeah, so I loved this quote from Corrie, um, in her book, the hiding place, she said, "I know that the experiences of our lives, when we let God use them become the mysterious and perfect preparation for the work he will give us to do". And I just felt like that. So captured Corrie's experience and that really started with her family. So she grew up in Holland in this area called Haarlem. She was the youngest of four siblings. And I think Corrie would probably describe her family life as pretty ordinary, but as I was reading and listening to things about her life, um, it really felt like it was this full, rich experience, her parents and her relatives loved the Lord. And so prayer and Bible reading and loving and serving others with God's love, they were just an everyday part of their lives. So one story that I loved was that, um, Corrie's father felt like language learning was really important, but it should also be fun for them.

Sarah ([02:53](#)):

And so their family had different games or fun ways of learning language. One of the things that they would do as a family was everyone would have a Bible in a different language. Corrie's older brother Willem would usually have the original Hebrew or the Greek. Corrie would have English. Her mother would have Dutch, her sister Nollie would have French and her sister Betsie or her father would have German. So her father would call out a verse. So John 3:16 and then they would all take turns, responding with the verse in the language that they had.

Denise ([03:28](#)):

I have four kids, maybe this is something I need to do Sarah, like, you know, family, family game night.

Sarah (03:35):

Yes. With all these different languages. I know I, it just is so fun. And this was one of those threads, like in that quote, um, that God wove into their lives later because Corrie would definitely use English and Betsie was able to use German, even though at the time they were playing this game as a family, they never would've imagined how that could be. Well, prayer was also an important part of their lives. Way back in 1844 Corrie's grandfather was working as a watchmaker and he had a little shop in Haarlam where Corrie and her family eventually lived. Her grandfather's pastor came to visit him one day. And he talked about the importance of praying for the Jewish people, for the peace of Jerusalem. And so Corrie's grandfather felt this burden and this love for the Jewish people. And so he started a prayer group that met weekly, I think, to pray specifically for the Jewish people. And this passion was passed on to Corrie's father, Casper too. Um, when he and Corrie's mother were first married, they lived near the Jewish quarter in Amsterdam. And so got to know many of the Jewish people there. This prayer group for the Jewish people continued for one hundred years until 1944.

Denise (04:55):

Well, know much about history, you know, what's happening in 1944 and maybe why that prayer group ended. Sarah, you know, even just like, as, as people might get the opportunity to read and hear, her father was such a great man, Casper. In his own right. The stories about him that we won't have time to get into today are so inspirational. And I just, I hope that our listeners have the opportunity to dig deeper into this rich heritage of this family.

Sarah (05:23):

Yes. I mean, we are just scratching the surface of the stories that we could tell about Corrie and her family. And, um, so yeah, definitely read her books and learn more about her and her family as well. So the house where the Ten booms lived, um, was called the Beje and it sounds like it was usually full, you know, all the kids were there. There was usually something happening where people are stopping in or staying there. Three of Corrie's aunts, her mother's sisters actually came to live with them as well. And they brought, you know, their quirky personalities and their different experiences as a pastor's wife or a nanny, but then also their help with the household.

Denise (06:09):

You just have in your mind that house that just constantly felt welcoming, always had people in and out. That's what comes to mind when I hear this it's like the house you wanted to be at because it was always enjoyable. You always felt welcome. There was always people there.

Sarah (06:24):

There was always a warm cup of tea or coffee, you know, for even the delivery boys who came to the door and there would be a warm drink for them. It was just so welcoming for whoever was around. And, you know, we talk about Corrie's missional lifestyle and the ways that she went on to share Jesus with others, but that this idea of a missional life was so modeled in her family. Um, you know, with her aunts, one of them starting Sunday school classes or ministering to soldiers, but then also the ways that, they showed hospitality and welcomed people in. And there were actually a couple of different times that the Ten Booms opened their home for children to come and stay. The first one was after world war 1. Now Holland had stayed out of the conflict, but they knew that there were children in Germany and across Europe who were really malnourished.

Sarah (07:23):

They didn't have enough food. So Corrie's father helped organize homes for these children so they could just really recover and gain back their strength. And he organized all of these different places for them. But then they also had several come and live with them in the Beje as well. Well later in the 1920s Corrie's mother and her aunts had passed away. And so for this little time, you know, it was just Corrie and her father and her older sister, Betsie in the house. And they had known for a while that there would be families that would go to serve in Indonesia as missionaries. But sometimes the children, especially the older children, would have to return to Holland, um, you know, or have to stay behind. Usually this was because of education. As they got older, they needed, um, different education. So Cory and her family learned that there were three children of missionaries that needed a home. And so they brought them in made room for them, gave them a home while they were going to school. And, you know, neither Betsie nor Corrie ever got married, but they were able to just love these children and receive the love from them. And it was just such a sweet gift for them to have, you know, they even called them their foster children. They welcomed them into their home.

Denise (08:47):

Well, you know, and foster children today for people that listen to that have maybe a different connotation of parents that are having a rough time, neglectful, don't have the resources, but that wasn't necessarily the case here. There's a lot of these children, you know, their parents were serving as missionaries somewhere else and had to make that hard decision at the time to leave children behind for educational reasons. So, yeah, just interesting how the words and the connotations have changed since the writing of the book,

Sarah (09:15):

Right? Yeah. Well, as we move through the years and things, you know, started to heat up again with Germany and world war II, uh, Corrie and Betsie and their father were deeply impacted by what they saw happening, you know, to their Jewish friends and neighbors. And they'd had these years and years of praying for the Jewish people and really caring about them.

Denise (09:39):

Yeah. So as you know, as world war II heats up and this anti-Semitic tendency, you know, that wasn't just for Germans, there were, you know, people in Holland that also had that prejudice, you know, and they said if their hearts were inclined to it, this, you know, idea that was infiltrating everywhere, even those people, you know, that weren't German were starting to behave badly toward the Jews. And it was just not okay with the Ten boom family and one by one word spread that the Ten boom residence, the Kool-Aid house is what I call it. That's what, you know, like all the kids felt welcome there, um, was a place that they could go for help. So one by one people came to the door and what indicated that it was okay, that it was safe for them to come to the door was a triangle shape sign.

Denise (10:28):

That was actually an advertisement for the Alpine watch company. So remember the watch company is in the bottom, the home is built haphazardly around it really narrowly. Um, so they could, you know, go down to work. So it wasn't, it was easy for them to, you know, have business operating for people to be coming and going and it not look odd because it was a business in the bottom. And so people who knew that they needed help, Jewish people, people that wanted to help Jewish people and be secretive about it would look for this Alpine watch company sign. And if it was up, they knew, okay, it's safe to come in.

If it's not, they would come back at a different time. So women whose husbands had already been taken to prison or Jewish rabbis that were seeking safety, the elderly, pregnant, the young and old, they all found their way to the hospitality of the Beje, the hospitality that had been a generational hospitality for this family.

Denise ([11:23](#)):

And, and so Corrie, you know, led by the Spirit, began making inquiries of others. Who'd be willing to help in what was now being called the underground, the underground work of people that wanted to help the Jews. And so as people came to her, they knowing their house is in the heart of Haarlem. It's where there's a lot of military action. She knew it was really not safe for them to keep people there, but they became kind of a funnel for people into areas that were least populated with German soldiers, um, so that they were more safe there. And among those that Corrie began to know in her network, in the underground, there were doctors to help with medical situations, for those that are in hiding. I mean, you couldn't just take them to the hospital, you know, if something happened, there were people in places of influence, um, who could, you know, kind of help the wrong people to look the other way when they needed to.

Denise ([12:17](#)):

And there was even an architect that was really skilled in looking at a home and helping to create pockets in rooms for people and things to hide in. So things that they hid in Corrie Ten boom's house were, um, meal ration cards. You couldn't survive without a meal ration card. So they had a whole system to create these cards that they could send with these Jewish people in hiding. Um, they hid a radio and they also, he created this spot in Corrie's room that over the course of two years hid over 600 people as they passed through. And it was small and narrow. And we actually found a picture of Corrie in her later years, posing in front of this small narrow way that this architect found to totally conceal a room where 6, 7, 8 people could stand and hide out of sight from anyone who knew what they were looking for.

Denise ([13:16](#)):

And so their house became known as the hiding place. And the small area in her room eventually was able to secret away six people that were never found when an informant initiated a raid on their residence. But Corrie wasn't always, you know, when this happened, this, she was in her fifties. I think she was 50 years old when she began to kind of become the leader of one of these underground organizations. But that, that wasn't always her thing. She, wasn't always a strong leader and wasn't aware of this gift. In fact, she, when she was a small girl, she tried to get out of going to school. She just wanted to stay home. She was a homebody. And, um, as she, you know, began to get older and her hopes of getting married, you know, it became evident that that wasn't what God had for her.

Denise ([14:06](#)):

And in fact, that's a whole story in itself that we don't have time to get to today, but we would, we're going to record some special stories for our membership community. And that's one of them that we're going to record. But when it became evident that her job would be in her home, her father and Betsie together, um, she kind of took over the home things, taking care of the house and, and it, it wasn't her favorite thing. She didn't love doing it, but she's like, that is where I'm at and Betsie was working in the watch shop. And so as Corrie would tidy up, Betsie would work in the watch shop. Well, one day Betsie

gets sick and her father needs Corrie to step up. And so Corrie begins to help out in the watch shop and realized she has a love for business.

Denise ([14:52](#)):

She has a great mind for it. She began to tidy up the books and, and she also was gifted in the skill of intricate repair that was needed for watches. And so she became the first female licensed watch repairer. And, and so as Betsie got better, they realized our gifts are probably better used swapped. And so Betsie flourished and the home flourished, and there was more food because she was gifted at stretching out food and making it feel welcoming, like for the tea that you said was always there for people, that's Betsie's touch and under Corrie's leadership at the watch shop, it enjoyed some of the most successful years that it ever saw. And so it was in the confidence of her new giftings that when the mistreatment of Jews reached Holland and it was apparent that action needed to be taken. She was brave enough to take action because she, she recognized some gifts.

Denise ([15:49](#)):

God had given her, it began with a small choice to hide a radio, you know, during the invasion that they were all being collected. And she bravely made that decision to, to defy that, to hide a radio so they could stay informed. And there was, there was one night the invasion had happened and it was loud things happening outside. They could hear raids happening and Corrie woke up and heard Betsie in the kitchen. And so she got up knowing she wasn't sleeping either. And Betsie was fixing her glass of tea and they just listened and prayed. And, and then later when Corrie went back up to her bed, she reached for her pillow and drew her hand away as sharp pain and blood began to pool. And she realized that through the window in her room, shrapnel had come and landed on her pillow.

Denise ([16:36](#)):

And if she hadn't gotten up and gone to the kitchen, she probably would've been killed. And so she and Betsie, you know, began to recognize this. And she's telling Betsie, you know, if, if, if, if I hadn't gone to see you and Betsie tells her, there are no ifs in God's world and no places that are safer than another place, the center of his will is our only safety. Let us pray that we will always know it. And, and they began to realize, you know, we have been saved for a purpose. God has something for us. And so as they began to notice more of their friends wearing the yellow star, indicating they were Jews, they also began to notice that these friends were disappearing, what's happening to them. And so their family conversations began to circle around, well, what can we do? What is God asking us to do?

Denise ([17:28](#)):

And they knew that her brother had already kind of been doing this work. He had the connections with people that lived out. And so as, uh, they noticed one morning, it was a, a drizzly cold morning. It was 1941. And one of their neighbors was outside and they saw soldier knock on the door, come in and just began to throw valuables outside, throw his clothes outside. And they're like, realizing something is not right. So Corrie and Betsie run out and began to help him gather some clothes and bring him inside. And, and this was the first moment that they realized we have to do something about this. So they began with his name being Mr. Vile, they contacted her brother and said, can you help us? And actually in the contact, they knew they needed to contact her brother because they had already taken all of the phones out.

Denise ([18:18](#)):

The only way to do that was somebody had to actually go, they had to get on a bike and go to her brother. And Corrie was like, that's me, I'm the person I'm gonna go in contact. And so when she gets to her brother's house, her nephew who, who has grown, answers the door, and he's like, we will help you tell Mr. Vile to be ready this evening. And so sure enough, at nine o'clock, her nephew shows up gathers Mr. Vile and his small bundle of belongings under his arm and takes him away. And Corrie realizes I don't, I don't know what happened. I don't know whatever happened to him. And so she sees her, her nephew a couple weeks later and says, you know, she inquires after Mr. Vile. And he says, Tante Corrie, if you are gonna work with the underground, you have got to learn, not ask questions. And with that, she was awakened to her purpose for the season. And she became what would be called the ring leader of the underground work, hiding and protecting Jews from the Nazi efforts, basing the operations out of the Beje.

Sarah ([19:22](#)):

Yeah. And so Corrie, and even, you know, her sister and her father are involved in this work, and then on February 28th, 1944, Corrie was actually sick in bed at the time, she had influenza, and the buzzer sounded so they had this sort of warning system for the Jewish people that they heard this buzzer, you know, they had a very short amount of time to get into this secret hiding spot. Well come to find out they had been betrayed by a man who had come saying his wife had been arrested for helping the Jews and asking for money. But the Gestapo, the secret police came back and harshly interrogated them all and arrested Corrie and her family. There were some resistance workers who came by the house. So the secret police kind of waited through the day, set up this trap for anyone that came to the house that day. And there was also people there for a prayer meeting. And so this was, you know, we were talking about the one hundred years, this was the end of that prayer meeting that had gone on.

Denise ([20:31](#)):

Well, didn't they like figure out the sign in the window was the sign that it was okay. So they put the sign up, even though they were in the house to arrest them. So people just kept coming and coming.

Sarah ([20:43](#)):

Yeah, yeah. It was really a trap set for people. Amazingly, even though, you know, there was like 20 to 30 people arrested, including Corrie's family, they didn't find the Jewish people that were hiding there. And actually most of them survived the war. So Corrie and her father and sister and other family members actually, who were there that day were taken to prison. Corrie's father didn't survive that initial imprisonment. He died about ten days later, but he was able, you know, even in those last moments, he was able to speak encouragement and his steady faith and love for the Lord was lasting, that really encouraged Corrie for what was ahead of her. Um, so because she was sick, actually, when she first arrived, she was put in solitary confinement because they were afraid of spreading that sickness. And she was there in solitary confinement in the prison for four months. Her other, um, family members, her sister Nollie and brother, they were really released at first, but Betsie was also there in the prison with her in another cell, uh, with other inmates. So after these first few months, Corrie and Betsie were taken to a concentration camp for political prisoners that was in the Southern part of Holland. They were reunited, they saw each other, you know, after these months of being separated. And so even though this concentration camp was more difficult, they were together and could encourage each other and pray together. And actually at this camp Corrie's work assignment was to work on radio assembly. And so she was able to take some of her skills that she had learned in watchmaking and actually apply them.

Denise ([22:33](#)):

And, you know, it's interesting to see how the Lord, like the skills that he equipped them with, watchmaking, you would never imagine, but that gave her a job that she could work on that was gifting, but then also not physically difficult and demanding, it actually gave her joy. But I would say the other skill that was given to them is their deep love for the word and their ability and desire to share that they did that at their home. And so what was the glaring lack that they faced in this work camp, in the prison before, when she was sick was they had no Bible with them that, you know, the only thing they had is what they remembered of the Bible. And so when you mentioned that Corrie was really sick when she was first arrested, she was taken to a clinic and, and while she was there waiting hours and hours, she finally asked, can I please use the restroom?

Denise ([23:24](#)):

And as a nurse ushered her into a restroom, she actually closed herself in with her and said, what can I do to help you? She was sympathetic. And, um, and Corrie's immediate was like, can you get me a Bible? You know, a sewing kit, soap, anything, but I would love a Bible. And the nurse was like, that's really difficult, but I'll do my best. And so after her, you know, diagnosis and as she's being carried or taken back out to be driven back to solitary confinement, the nurse places something in her hand, and, you know, Corrie slips it in her pocket and she doesn't wanna look at it until she gets back to her cell. And when she opens it, she realizes that it is soap, safety pins, and four little bundles of the gospel, separate gospel bundles. And I mean, the joy of this long lost friend returning to her that she can, you know, have that encouragement, um, of the Bible once again and, and, you know, the time and in solitary confinement helped her to realize that, you know, her joy is in sharing anything with others and there's no richness in keeping things to yourself.

Denise ([24:29](#)):

And so as one day when she was let out to get a shower and she was like, this is my only opportunity to be with other people, I'm in solitary confinement. She's like, I can't keep these four gospels. And so she shared them with others and she only kept one for herself. And as she then began to get moved to another camp, she, she gave even her last gospel away. But at this new work camp that they were at, she befriended a Lieutenant who was, you know, working for the opposition, but he was obviously weighed down by the weight of what he was being asked to do. You know, we, we have to remember these are humans that not all of them agreed with what was being happened. And they felt themselves a prisoner of their work that they were being asked to do as well.

Denise ([25:18](#)):

And so he began to have conversations with Corrie and he began to fall in love with her stories of her family, this family that we've talked about. And, you know, he wanted to know about her father and her brothers and sisters. And he eventually, you know, was upset to discover her father had passed away. You know, you mentioned Ten days was all he lasted. And so through a little, you know, finagling, he arranged because it was the law that all family members had to be present to read a will. And so he invited her brothers and sisters who had been released from prison. He arranged for Betsie and Corrie to get a moment out of prison in his office was this beautiful reunion of all of them under the guise of reading the of the will. And so in this moment, Nollie, who had been in prison remember, so she understands what you need and the drabness of prison.

Denise ([26:11](#)):

And she brings a gift to Corrie, and it was the complete Bible in a pouch, on a string that could be tied and worn around your neck. And so from that moment on Corrie wears this Bible backwards around her neck to have it with her at all times. And, and as they, the next phase of their imprisonment was to take them to the extermination camp is what it was. Ravensbrook was a women's extermination camp, a work camp where 96,000 or somewhere in that range, women died at this camp. And so as they begin being, they press them into this, you know, cattle car, 80 women in a cattle car that probably could have housed 20, you know, and they take them to Ravensbrook and they get out knowing we are gonna be stripped all of our possessions taken away, examined how in the world are we going to keep this Bible?

Denise ([27:07](#)):

And, but they know Lord, you have given it to us. And you have given us a task to share this good news with whoever we are around. And so we trust and pray that you're gonna help us. And so they get in this line and Betsie has to go to the bathroom. Her stomach is not okay. And so Corrie sees that and begins to beg a guard. How can, can we please use the bathroom? And they send them into the shower room that they're going to be entering soon. And an idea comes to Corrie and she's like taking off the Bible. She wraps it in a sweater that they have and hides it among these slimy wooden benches that are propped against a wall. And she's, she sticks it over there. So then when they, when they leave and are stripped and showered, the Bible is nowhere on them.

Denise ([27:53](#)):

And as soon as they're done with the shower and they're given these thin gowns or dresses, to put on, she runs over grabs, the Bible, puts it on and conceals it under this thin gown. And then they're marched out to another thing and they realize we're, we're not just being looked at, we're being patted down. And so they're in a line and Corrie's like, Lord, this isn't my problem. This is your problem. I know that you have given us this and you want us to have it. And so she's like, I just am gonna keep walking ahead. And so sure enough, the SS military people patted down everyone thoroughly before Corrie and everyone after Corrie. And nobody touched Corrie as she walked by with that Bible hanging behind her neck. And so they, you know, rejoice as they are led to their barracks with this treasure.

Denise ([28:39](#)):

And when they arrive into, you know, bunks, stacked, barely any room to walk, multiple high, they get to this bunk where three women are already laying on their bed. And now Corrie and Betsie are being added. So five women on a bed that was probably made for two, you know, and they begin to lay down and jump up because fleas are biting them. And, you know, Corrie's just like over it. She's like, I, I can't handle this. What are we gonna do? You know, this place is swarming with him. How can we live in this place? And Betsie began saying, Lord, show us, show us how we are gonna live in this place. And then almost immediately, she's like, we're reading through first Thessalonians right now. And, and I know what he's asking us to do. It says to rejoice always and pray continually give thanks in all circumstances, that's it Corrie.

Denise ([29:32](#)):

That's what we're supposed to do. She says, and, and Corrie's like, excuse me, we're supposed to rejoice that we're here. No, thank you. Yeah. Why can we rejoice in, you know, and so Betsie decided, no, we're gonna give thanks for every single thing in our new barracks. And Corrie's just like staring around this dark, foul smelling room full of fleas. And so Betsie goes such as I'm thankful we were assigned here together. I'm thankful that we have this Bible. Lord, thank you for all of these women here in this room



who will meet you in this, in the pages of this Bible that you've given us. Thank you for the overcrowding, because that means there's so many more that can hear. And for the fleas and at this, Corrie was like, no, that is too much Betsie. Why in the world, can we be thankful and grateful for the fleas?

Denise ([30:23](#)):

And she's like, well, I don't know yet. But God said to be thankful in every circumstance, not just in the easy ones. And so, so they sat there and they thanked God for the fleas. And I'm sure Corrie is just like I have no, there's nothing good that could come of this. So as time went on, you know, they began having these Bible meetings on their bunks and, and they recognized, you know, everywhere else in the barracks. When we go to work, there are soldiers everywhere. There, there's not a moment of peace that we get from them. And yet, for some reason, in our dormitory where we hold our worship service, there is not, we we're never bothered. You know, we get our small light bulb we read. And, and so the numbers keep growing because there's not this fear because for some reason we are left alone.

Denise ([31:16](#)):

And so what began really timid as Bible studies, they began to get more brave because they enjoyed this level of freedom. And, and so one day Corrie comes back from her shift, working and notices Betsie is waiting there with a little smile and a twinkle in her eye. And she's like, well, you look like you have something to share, you know? And, and Corrie asks her and Betsie's like, I do actually, do you know what I found out today? So she goes on to explain that there had been some confusion happening around something. And she had tried, they had tried to invite the guards into their barracks to settle a question that they had, but they would not. They refused to enter even to settle a dispute. And they began to understand that the guards were well aware of the fleas and the lice that seemed to inhabit this barracks. And they, because of that, left them alone and stayed away. And both of their minds immediately went back to their thanking God for the fleas. And they laughed as they realized, yes, Lord, we thank you for every circumstance.

Sarah ([32:26](#)):

I don't know how Betsie did it, but she was so steady and joyful through every circumstance. And even before all of this in their growing up years, she, she had encouragement. She had wisdom to share with Corrie. There was one time when Corrie last minute was asked to give a study, give a presentation. And she came to Betsie and she was like, you know, I'm on my way to the church. What do I say? What do I do? And Betsie is just calmly, like fixing Corrie's dress, just helping her get ready. And she's like, okay, here you go. Here's what you're gonna say. And she had hymns that came to mind that she gave Corrie, she had this message that she gave her and just so steady and calm and what a gift that they could be together, you know, even in these horrible, horrible circumstances.

Sarah ([33:18](#)):

And unfortunately in Ravensbrook, Betsie's health was just steadily getting worse and worse, and she grew more and more weak. Even in the midst of this as really, she was so sick and starving, she started to share these dreams or these visions that God had put on her heart. Um, and she shared them with Corrie, these visions for the future really. So there were three things. The first was a home, a house in Holland where people who had been imprisoned during the war could come and just rest and have a peaceful place to heal. And she also spoke about taking a concentration camp, which, you know, they're in the midst of this suffering to imagine that someday this horrible place could be one of beauty and

refreshment, but that's what, that's what she dreamed of. That it would be a place for people to learn to love.

Sarah ([34:19](#)):

Um, and then at the end, really, as Betsie was dying, she reminded Corrie that they had a message of hope to tell people. They had experienced, you know, really the deepest darkness. They knew the depths of suffering, but Betsie said, we must tell people that there is no pit so deep that God is not deeper still, that he is with us and Betsie died, but she left this legacy of, of hope really for the future of what God had put on her heart. And then it was just a few days after Betsie passed away that Corrie was called into the camp's headquarters and given papers that said she was to be released. You know, I cannot imagine going through all of that. And then all that was going on in her head and her heart, seeing that word released, thinking of Betsie and her father and all that they had gone through.

Denise ([35:21](#)):

And there was this one thing that I remember reading about Betsie is that she knew by the next year Corrie, we will be released. And so I imagine when she gets these papers and realizes, wow, Betsie was right, we are both released in different ways.

Sarah ([35:40](#)):

Right. Corrie learned later that it was actually a clerical error. She wasn't supposed to be released, but the clerk accidentally or miraculously, depending on how you look at it, put Corrie's prisoner number on the release list instead of what was meant, uh, to be on the execution list. It was just a week after she was released that all the women Corrie's age and older at Ravensbrook were executed.

Denise ([36:07](#)):

Oh my goodness. Well, and, and we know now, obviously, and I bet Corrie had this, you know, because of Betsie's conviction about their work afterwards, that this was not a mistake. This was the Lord working as he had in so many ways. And, and so as she makes her way back to what was home for her, the Beje the place where her family had been, she remembers, you know, well, what did we do, who trying to figure out who am I now that I am not with my father and my sister. And, and so she goes back to what they had always done, being hospitable. And part of her work before was even being hospitable and caring for persons with disabilities. And so this war had been especially hard for them, as well as many of their programs and care had been totally stopped. And so she opened up the Beje to become a place for these persons with disabilities.

Denise ([37:06](#)):

And, you know, she, she tried to get back into her life of hospitality and caring for them. But, you know, Betsie was just the person that made it feel like home. Betsie, you know, even though she wasn't the, the one executing a lot of the things that took place, she, she was the heart of a lot of what they did. She gave them courage and she inspired them. And, and so Corrie just floundered a bit feeling like I'm doing the things, but I don't feel like rest in what I'm doing. Like, I don't feel like this is what the Lord has for me. And so she was, she was wondering, maybe I'm missing the excitement of the underground, maybe, you know, and, and there was work still going on. And so when the underground reached out to her with a simple task to take false release papers, to the prison, to release someone who was in jail in Haarlem, she jumped at it feeling like, okay, this is gonna help me feel more settled.

Denise ([37:59](#)):

But when she got to the to the prison, we now would call this PTSD, but she began feeling this great anxiety and this, what, what if the door closes? And they don't let me out, what if they put me in prison, you know? And she begins to just feel insecure and areas where she had been totally confident before she was not anymore. And one of the lieutenants turns around and she recognizes him as someone from the underground that she had worked with before. And he acts like he doesn't know her at all. And she's like, don't you remember me? You know? And then he's like, oh, I believe you were the clock maker's daughter. I, I heard you were gone for a while. You know? And, and it begins to dawn on her. I am in a prison. I cannot let on that.

Denise ([38:42](#)):

He knows me that he is playing his part well, but to her, it didn't come naturally anymore. And she realized that any bravery or skill or courage or organizational leadership she had for the underground was a gift of God for that season of her life. And it had been removed. Her work with the underground was gone. Her calling was different. And it was in these moments that she realized, she was missing Betsie. She was missing her anchor, her encouragement. And so she began to wander back in her mind to what Betsie had said, what were Betsie's words of encouragement to her? And she remembered about this home that Betsie had spoken of with such clarity. She remembered about turning a concentration camp into a place for others. She remembered about her, her last words to her to speak about this, tell people about the hope that can be found in the darkest places. And so she, Corrie, realized this was her gifting for the next season, was to speak about what the Lord had done through them in their time at the concentration camp.

Sarah ([39:51](#)):

Yeah. So Corrie had, like you were saying, these three visions that Betsie had had. And so the first one was kind of a rehabilitation house in Holland. So through an old connection from one of her aunts, she was able to fund this house to help Dutch people who had collaborated with the enemy. And this was not popular with the local people necessarily, but she wanted this house to be really peaceful and lovely where, you know, people could come and recover and rest and find peace. And eventually that purpose was fulfilled. It was no longer needed in that way, but it became kind of a nursing home, um, for people there. And then the second part of what Betsie had hoped for, like you were saying, was seeing this concentration camp. And I, it had to have been the Lord giving her this vision, you know, to be in the midst of that suffering and imagine that it could be anything else than what it was, but Corrie was able to see this happen.

Sarah ([40:55](#)):

So Germans actually contacted her after they heard what she was doing with, um, this first house in Holland and asked if she would be interested in coming and ministering at a former concentration camp. So she went, there were already people staying there. It was quite crowded, actually. Um, people who had lost their homes were staying there and Corrie could have stayed somewhere else. She could have been more comfortable, but she was right there in the midst of these people, helping see the camp get cleaned up, painted, you know, a lovely, bright green, and just adding flowers, making it beautiful and then ministering and sharing with the people at this former concentration camp.

Denise ([41:39](#)):

And so, as you know, the first two of Betsie's visions for their future were fulfilled with such exact specifications. You know, it just actually confirmed in Corrie. The last thing is I'm supposed to just keep talking and I am going to tell people. And so she really felt called to be a missionary to America. And so that, you know, almost seems a little backwards as America has been known for generations, although that's changing now as the sending country of missionaries, but it was needing to be received of what the Lord had done during the war that happened off of the soil of America. And so, but the thing is, is it was really impossible to get passage to America, but she felt so strongly and had seen the Lord work that she prayed. Lord, if you want me to go, you're gonna have to make it possible.

Denise ([42:28](#)):

So as she waited for her paperwork to be approved in the office, everyone was coming out saying that man is impossible. No one is getting approved. And then a woman recognized Corrie as her cousin and introduced her to her husband who happened to work in the office and moments later Corrie's paperwork was approved and she had her passport and was ready for passage. And so she heads to, you know, hop aboard a ship and to secure her passage and is told, all right, you have things in order. We'll put you on a list. It'll probably be about a year before your name comes up. And she is like, I don't accept this. I, the Lord has prepared the way so far. So I'm just gonna ask him to, to prepare a way now. She looks across the road and there is an American express cargo company.

Denise ([43:14](#)):

And so she marches over there and she says, Hey, do you have accommodations for passengers on your freight ships? And they agreed to let her on. They're like, you know what, not many women your age would want to, but if you're up for it, you can leave as early as today. And she's like, well, how about not today? Maybe in a couple of days, <laugh>, you know, and so she gets her things together. And so she winds up in America and is ready for the next stage of what the Lord has asked her to do. Totally believing he has a plan for her to be there.

Sarah ([43:47](#)):

Well, there are so many stories from her time, not only sharing in America, but traveling all over the world and sharing and not all that long after the war, Corrie was actually sharing her story in Germany, talking about forgiveness and the hope that comes from believing in God. Well after it was over, she saw a man coming toward her after the talk and realized it was one of the guards from Ravensbrook who had been particularly cruel to her and Betsie, he came up to her and he said that since the time at the concentration camp he'd become a believer. And he knew that God had forgiven him, but he asked if Corrie would forgive him. You know, it, it was probably just a matter of seconds. But in those moments, Corrie was just wrestling so much in her heart with what to do.

Sarah ([44:44](#)):

She knew in her head that she should forgive him. But goodness, all of the memories were just racing through her mind of, of what had happened. And so she just prayed. Jesus help me. She knew that she could not do it in her own strength at all. And so then she reached out her hand to take his, you know, he had extended it to her and she said, yes, I forgive you. It was a choice. It was not like, oh yes, I feel like I, I can do this. And it wasn't even once and done, like these memories kept coming up and she kept having to make that choice. But she knew that God would help her in those moments to choose to forgive even, you know, the unimaginable.

Denise ([45:33](#)):

And I, I can't imagine a situation that is harder to forgive than that. And I've thought of that when I think the Lord asking me to forgive somebody, I'm like, if Corrie Ten boom could raise her arm to the guard at Ravensbrook, I can forgive, yeah. This guy that cut me off in traffic or whatever, you know what I mean? <laugh> but, um, and so this, this tenacious woman who ministry began in this way at 50 is now 80 years old and, and she's continuing to travel. And if you read a lot of those stories are captured in the book, Tramp for the Lord, um, which we all know that that word has different meaning now, but she's meaning she, she tramped all over the world for him. And there's a story about even when her health is just in jeopardy, she keeps checking with the Lord.

Denise ([46:22](#)):

Am I good? And so at 80 years old, Corrie arrived at the home of some friends in Florida for a speaking thing. And her travel companion at the time said, you know, Corrie's having some chest pains. And so they lead her to lay down, assuming she's gonna rest the rest of the night. And within 15 minutes, she's up. And she's like, that's all I need. I'm ready to work. You know, she's having chest pains, but she's good. And, and then another instance, she's one of the main speakers at a conference she'd already spoken three times that day. And that evening, her assistant is frantically looking for help. Corrie is actually having a heart attack right now. And you know, when help was arriving, her face is contorted in deep pain. And she's like, you know what? God has told me my time isn't up.

Denise ([47:05](#)):

I just need a pastor to pray that the pain leaves. And so a pastor arrived and prayed and you could see her features soften as the pain melted away. And she thanked God for taking the pain away and said, okay, now I'm gonna sleep. And the next morning she was up at eight, o'clock speaking again at the conference. I mean, she is just tireless in what God has asked her to do because she, she, she actually believed on him to meet her every need, her need for courage and stamina and health. And, and, you know, that's even reflected in earlier stories. When we talked about her securing her passage to America, when she arrives in America, she wasn't allowed to bring more than \$50 with her. She didn't know where to stay. She actually only knew God told her to come. And so she made her way to the YWCA, where she left her bags.

Denise ([47:55](#)):

And then she contacted a group of Hebrew Christian immigrants and asked to speak there. And so did she just, you know, began asking the Lord, provide me with opportunity to tell your story. And, and after a week went by, you know, she's kind of wandering around New York in the days and realized, okay, I've been here a week. I need to go pay my bill. So she goes to the YWCA desk and, like I'm here to pay my bill. And they're like, I'm really sorry, but we have such a need for beds that we can't let you stay here for over a week. So you have to check out, we can't let you continue to stay here where what's your forwarding address? And she's like, oh, well, God hasn't told me what it is yet. And, um, she's like, I don't understand. She goes, I don't know where I'm going, but God does.

Denise ([48:39](#)):

He's gonna provide a room for me. And so the clerk standing there and she remembers, oh, a letter was actually delivered for you here. And Corrie's like how, nobody even knows where I'm staying. And, and she opens it up and she reads it and she turns back to the lady and she gives her an address. And she's like, well, what are you doing? She goes, well, I've just been told my forwarding address. The Lord has

revealed to me where my next place to stay. And so if you remember that, you know, Hebrew Christian immigrants, there was a woman there who had heard her speak and said, Hey, in this letter, I know how hard it is to find a place to stay. So if you need a place, come and stay with me. And so just at the right moment, the Lord provided her with her next place to stay.

Denise ([49:21](#)):

And she actually stayed with that woman for five weeks. And, you know, money was just a real trial for her because she, she really felt convicted by the Lord that she wasn't going to ask for money. And so, um, through a series of events of different places that she was asked to speak, um, she really was asking the Lord to provide her with money. So she didn't have to ask. But what she was met with was people saying, you're outta money. Nobody here wants to hear the ravings of an old woman, go back to Holland. We don't want you here. And she's like, well, I know it doesn't make sense to anybody else, but it makes sense to me because I know I'm doing what the Lord asks. So your trying to get rid of me, doesn't deter me it anyway, I'm gonna keep pressing forward and watch the Lord provide.

Denise ([50:09](#)):

And so she was eventually, um, asked to be in attendance of a church. And there was a Reverend there who said Ten boom, that name sounds so familiar to me. He goes, I was actually made aware of a story of a nurse who was in Ravensbrook. And there were these vitamins that never ran out and, and she kept giving them. And the Lord just kept providing it was a miracle. And Corrie's like, that wasn't a nurse. That was me. That happened to me. I was the one who had the vitamins that never ran out. And she was just, you know, and because of this word spread about Corrie in different circles in, in higher circles of education, of influence to the point where she not only now was not just trying to find places to talk. She was turning them away. She was trying to protect her time because she was so sought after.

Denise ([51:02](#)):

And she began to be totally funded by people who compensated her for her speaking, for her writing. And she never had to ask for money to fund her travels around the world. And she ended up traveling well into her eighties, over 61 countries. She brought the message she had learned at Ravensbrook that Jesus can turn loss into glory over the entire world. Her final years were spent in a home that was provided for her by a friend in Orange County, California, where she stayed as she had a series of strokes that, um, took away her ability to move eventually her ability to write, and finally her ability to speak. She died on her 91st birthday, April 15th, 1983. And we really have just scratched the surface of the amazing stories that are tucked away, hidden in the books and writings of Corrie Ten Boom. And I just hope that people use this as a springboard to go and learn more about that. Sarah, what is your takeaway from this amazing woman that we have gotten to study and read about this month?

Sarah ([52:09](#)):

I know, I had so much fun, actually learning more about Corrie and her story and her family. And I think one of the things that stuck out to me was the way that God wove the details together through her lifetime, even these little things, you know, like at the beginning, we talked about this game with the languages that her family played and this work that she did with clubs, for girls and young people that came into her life, the work that she did with, um, the kids that stayed there. And it just reminded me, I think how God can redeem even the hard things in our lives. You know, the way that she was able to take this horrible experience and be a light for the Lord around the world, really, and God can redeem

those things. And even the things that don't make sense to us, you know. I, as I was reading and listening to things about Corrie, I was thinking about the five years that I was overseas.

Sarah ([53:12](#)):

And sometimes I wonder, like, what, what was that for? You know, I can speak this language that doesn't do me any good where I'm living now and the things that I hoped to see while I was there didn't happen. But, but it was so encouraging for me personally, in learning about Corrie's life, to think who knows when God might bring an opportunity to speak into someone's life or use those things that I have experienced that I can't even see or imagine now. And Corrie just kept trusting the Lord and, and seeing him do these things in her life.

Denise ([53:50](#)):

You know, I love that. And it kind of actually just builds on what I feel like I was learning was two things, is we have a lot of hope and inspiration when we're young, when we're 19, when we're 20, when we're 22, we're graduating college. And we have this vision to do great things for the Lord and Corrie's ministry that we are most familiar with started when she was 50 and the hope and inspiration that that gives to an entirely different generation of people who wanna be used of God, I think is priceless. This story to me means so much to people who think I, I wish I could have been used. No, it's like, you still can be used. It gives me hope. And also, I feel like if you look at her life, there's really three different sections of ministry. The before, the during, and the after, and Corrie was ministering out of each section and each section prepared her for what was to come.

Denise ([54:46](#)):

And I think sometimes as missionaries, when we have a begin and an end date on our time, that was our overseas service. Sometimes we feel like that's the end and I will never be used again in that way. And that is the epitome of what you're supposed to, you know, accomplish for the Lord. And yet it isn't, it is something that God uses, like you were saying, Sarah, we don't know what that might be, but he was preparing in us for this next season that we continue to be sent used and, um, you know, used of him whatever season we're in, we're not finished. And so this story to me, brings so much inspiration for us of all ages to continue to look for how God will weave our stories together, um, for him. And so loved this, loved getting to dig into Corrie Ten Boom this month.

Sarah ([55:38](#)):

Well, there were so many stories that we would've loved to get to, and just didn't have time for this episode. And so we have a special bonus episode, for Velvet Ashes members where we tell stories a little bit of her singleness, her furlough that she took in Africa, her opportunity to visit the queen. Um, so Velvet Ashes members, check out that bonus episode.

Denise ([56:02](#)):

And we're so thankful that you joined us this month for the story of Corrie Ten Boom. We invite you back next month when we share another story of an amazing woman. And as always, we're so thankful to Eine Blume for the use of their song, Daughters and Sons, in our podcast. And remember until next time, you may be living the story that will be the courage for someone else's legacy.