

How to Forgive

by Corrie Ten Boom

Corrie Ten Boom's sermon teaches that true forgiveness, empowered by God's love, is essential for spiritual peace and readiness for Christ's return.

Duration: 51:26

Scripture: Isaiah 11:9, Matthew 24:35, Ephesians 4:32, Ephesians 5:18, Hebrews 12:15, 1 Peter 4:10, 2 Peter 3:14

Topics: "Forgiveness"

Description

In this sermon, the pastor encourages the audience to find joy and strength in the knowledge that Jesus will come again and make everything new. He emphasizes that despite the difficulties and suffering we may face in this world, our source of strength is Jesus Christ and His cross. The pastor shares a personal experience of being in a concentration camp and highlights the importance of holding onto Jesus' hand during deep times of struggle. He also mentions a movie called 'The Hiding Place' that depicts both the happy moments and the suffering in the concentration camp, reminding the audience that even in the worst circumstances, the best remains. The sermon concludes with the pastor urging the audience to have courage and recognize the signs of the times, as Jesus' return may be imminent.

Transcript

It's a real pleasure to introduce Corrie Ten- Corrie Tenboom to you. To many of you, I don't think she needs an introduction. But I'm going to introduce her by what she calls herself, a tramp for Jesus.

That's just a servant of Jesus. I think that's the best way that we could say Corrie is just a servant of Jesus Christ, just like all of us are here this morning. And if his servant comes, as his servants are sitting out there, let's just listen to what Jesus wants to say to us in a personal way today.

Corrie? I'm so glad I am again here. And I know that I am speaking for praying people. And it's good, for there is a tremendous work to do for you and me in this time of intercession.

I even invite you to pray in the time that you listen. It's possible. You can have the horizontal and the vertical connection on the same time you can listen and pray.

And will you pray that the Lord will give that message that you need, and the people around you need. And will you pray for me, that I will not stand in the way, but that the Lord will use me as his channel, streams of living water. Let us first pray together.

Father, in Jesus' name, you know that we do not need only a small blessing, but a very great blessing, because we are all called to be children of the light in a very dark time. Open our eyes, that we may see the far vast reaches of eternity. Use me, Lord.

I thank you for the blessing that you have in store for us. Amen. It was some time ago that I have seen the movie, The Hiding Place.

That is an experience that very few people have, and will have. Just to see your own story in a beautiful picture. It is so beautiful and moving, but in some way it was difficult for me, for it showed not only the happy background, our life in Haarlem with Daddy and Betsy, but also the suffering in the concentration camp.

And when I saw it, there were moments that I thought, no, no, so bad it hasn't been. And then I remembered, yes, it has been so bad. But the great joy was that through the whole film, the whole movie, you see what it means when you go through very deep times with your hand in Jesus' hand.

And then the worst can happen, the best remains. So it is a message for everyone who will see it in the theatres. Yes? It is a movie for the theatres, not in the churches.

And you must pray for that movie, that it will be finished in time, at the end of December, it will have the premiere in Los Angeles. And pray for the people that God will reach you through that film. You know, it is a message for Christians, for there you see, it underlines the truth of Jesus' victory in the life of one of His followers.

But it is also a message for those who are, it is very clear that Jesus has said, Come unto me all. Well, have He laid them, and I will give you rest. And that word all, that makes that you and I have a tremendous message in this time.

I don't know how long ago it was that I was in this church, but I know one thing, that since that time it is far more dark and terrible in this world, now than a time ago. It is going down with this world. And it is so good that a Christian has to be and can be realistic.

Because we have a book, and in this book is written that we are citizens of heaven. Our outlook goes beyond this world to the hopeful expectation of the coming of our Messiah, Jesus Christ. And here in this book we can read the signs of the time.

And if I had never believed in the Bible, I should now believe in the Bible when I read the newspapers. For almost all the signs of the time you can read in newspapers. And I think it is a great joy.

I heard a colored pastor who said, when I read a book with very sad things, then I don't like it, but then I always look at the last page. And when I see at the last page, oh, they get each other and they lift further. Are you scared? When you read what is happening and will happen before Jesus coming, then do the same as that pastor.

Look at the last page. Isn't it a joy that Jesus has said, I come and I make everything new. And this world will be covered with the knowledge of God like the waters come.

That is the future. And that's why you and I can be strong even in times of very great difficulties and tribulation. Do you remember that I showed you my embroidery the last time? I have it still and I use it still

because it has helped me so much.

This side of the embroidery is terrible mixed up. I could say this is the side of the news over the television and in the newspapers and in time. There is no, you don't know what you want to think about it.

But in heaven there is no panic, never. God has plans, no problems. God's plan is beautiful and God is working His purpose out.

That is one of the beautiful songs in the Episcopalian song book. God is working His purpose out and the time is drawing near, nearer and nearer draws the time, the time that will surely be that this world will be filled with the knowledge of God like the waters cover the sea. And that's why we can be so full of courage.

But it is good to see that there will be a time that the swords will be changed in plowshares, that there will be peace on earth like it is now in heaven, that there will be a time when we will see Jesus face to face, when in the midst of the misery of this world the children of God will be translated and meet Jesus in the air. We have a future and I'm so glad that many of you look happy when I talk about that. Some of you do not and that is because you do not realize what it means that we live in a time that the signs of the time show us that Jesus can come very soon.

And I understand a little bit. You say, yes, that is coming, but now, yes, now, now we are going through a time that is described in the Bible as a time of terrible persecutions and tribulations. Some people say, oh, but before tribulations and persecutions come we will be translated.

No, that's not what Jesus said. Jesus said, pray that you will be strong enough to come through everything that will happen in these days. In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer.

I have overcome the world and perhaps you do not yet suffer tribulation, but do you realize that about 60% of the body of Christ is going through a tribulation so terrible, worse than at the time of Nero. Now, at this time, that we have had our good houses and a free country, 60% of the children of God are persecuted and in a terrible way killed. Thousands and hundreds of thousands are sitting in the concentration camps and slowly killed.

And you and I must realize that. And we must realize that we have to be one body of Christ. Watchman E said, when my feet were whipped, my hands suffered pain.

And so we must together with our fellow Christians suffer. And the other thing is that we have to be ready when it should come to you and me. For I do not read in the Bible that persecution will come everywhere but not in America.

Don't be afraid. Don't be scared. I can understand it.

Because you understand that what I am talking is a terrific reality. And it is time to wake up to reality. But I can tell you we have nothing to fear.

I remember when I was a little girl, I asked my father, Daddy, I will never be strong enough to be a sufferer for Jesus. A martyr for Jesus. And Daddy said, when you go to travel, when do I give you your train ticket? Three weeks before.

I said, no Daddy, the day that I go to travel. And father said, that's what God does. Have you no strength for persecution at this moment? Doesn't matter.

The moment that it comes, the Lord will give you your train ticket. And it is not only for persecution but for all our suffering. For I believe in this time we will go in training to become strong children of God.

Victorious children of God. And I can tell you everything that we need is in the Bible to make us strong Christians. Boundless resources are available.

And when you go in training and you get strong for coming events, then you are also strong for that difficulty that you have to face when you come home today. The difficulty in your office, in your home, in your kitchen, in your school, wherever you are called to be the light of the world. Because the source of our strength is Jesus Christ himself.

And his cross shows us that we can accept suffering as a part of God's plan for this world. When I was in the concentration camp one of the most terrible things I had to go through was that they stripped us of all our clothing and we had to stand naked. The first time was the worst.

I said, Betsy, I cannot bear this. And suddenly it was as if I saw Jesus at the cross. And the Bible tells, they took his garments, he hanged there naked.

And I knew he hanged there for me, for my sins. And by my suffering I understood a fraction of the suffering of Jesus Christ. And it made me so thankful that I could bear my suffering, love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my all.

Some people are afraid to look at the cross. Are you? Don't be afraid. The cross is terrible.

It is terrible how Jesus suffered. Not to describe, but you must not be afraid to look at it. For if you had been the only person in the world, Jesus should have suffered for your sins.

At the cross, at the cross, where I first saw the light. And the burden of my sins rolled away. It was there by faith I received my sight.

And now I have guidance every day. Jesus is coming soon. Are you ready? Peter says in 2 Peter 3, 14, Because you have a hope like this before you, I urge you to make certain that such a day finds you at peace with God and men, clean and blameless in His sight.

Say, are you ready when Jesus should come this moment? Are you right with God and right with men? I remember that when I spoke here one of the times that I showed you my flashlight. Some of you know that. I'm going to show it to you again.

You know this flashlight does not give light. It is not broken, but I have only one battery in it. And we all know that it cannot give light when there is only one battery in it.

But I could not get the second battery in it because it is full of rags. First I must remove these rags. Do you know what I mean with this? This is your heart and my heart.

And this first battery is that what happened when you and I for the first time in your life said a real yes to Jesus. Do you remember that moment that you saw that you were a sinner and that you needed a Savior? And you saw suddenly, it is Jesus who is my Savior. And you said, Oh yes, Lord Jesus, I need You coming to my heart.

I need Your help, Your cleanse and Your forgiveness. And you brought all your sins to the Lord. And I see many of you now with such happy faces because that was a moment that the angels rejoiced for a sinner was saved for eternity.

And some of you do not look so happy because you did not yet do it. No, don't laugh, for that is terrible. That should mean that when Jesus should come this morning, you should not be ready for Him, for His coming.

And when He comes, everyone will have to be ready. But the great joy is that this morning I can say, Jesus has said, Come unto me all. And that's also you.

And when you will come, then do it. And listen, perhaps you will see the way of salvation a little bit clearer than before when you listen this morning. And when I'm through with my talk, then we all be quiet then, just a few minutes.

And then ask the Lord, Have I to give an answer? And then give the answer. And I pray and I hope that it will be a yes for all of you. For not only you have never received Jesus Christ, but also many people who belong to Jesus.

There is a challenge that I must give you in the name of the Lord Jesus. And that is that you have to be right with God and right with man. And this is your heart and that second battery is the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

And it is written in the Bible, I believe it is also Peter who says, You have been eager to get His gifts in this time of waiting for His final appearance. And the Bible has no suggestions, only commandments. And one of the most joyful commandments is Be filled with the Spirit.

And these are sins. When there are in your heart unconfessed sins, then you cannot expect that you are filled with the Holy Spirit. To be right with God, we have to make clean deck with the rags in the flashlight with the sins in our heart.

This one is bad temper. Hebrews 12,15 says, A bitter spirit which is not only bad in itself but can also poison the life of many others. A bad temper is terrible for yourself and for your family.

This is pride. In the Bible it is written, Isaiah says, Pride, that is that feeling of holier than thou to smoke in God's nose. Yes.

This one is inferiority feeling. Hey, is that a sin? Isn't that humbleness? No, there is also pride. That is that you do not accept your limitations.

1 Corinthians 7,17 Each man should live his life with the gifts that God has given him. And in the condition in which God has called him. Isn't that good? Then you have no inferiority feeling.

She is far more beautiful than I. Doesn't matter. I have the gift of a face with many, many of these wrinkles. But it doesn't matter.

I have to live with the gifts that God has given me. And inferiority feeling is pride. Now this is worry.

This is jealousy. This is criticism. That is a rag that is in the heart of many Christians.

And do you know the danger is that we so often criticize other Christians. And Paul says when he uses the translation of Philippians, don't criticize somebody else's servant. Especially when that somebody else is God.

He is able to make him a servant that is satisfactory. Ellen said something about we have not to carry the burden for each other. We have not to protect each other.

It is, we have just to bring the other Christian to his master and say Lord, I see that she is not quite right. No, no, no Lord, it is God says don't criticize somebody else's servant and that somebody else is me. So leave it to me.

And I just tell it him. Now these are forgotten promises. Did you give a promise? Did you forget it? God did not forget it.

Unforgiveness. I will speak about that more. Stubbornness.

The Bible is written rebellion is as bad as the sin of witchcraft. And stubbornness as bad as worshiping idols. This one is lying.

When we lie to each other we are hurting ourselves. Lust. Disobedience.

Now, what can I do with these rags? No problem. What can you do with the rags in your flesh like? No problem. At the cross you see the answer.

And the Bible tells confess your sins and forsake them. And in the power of Jesus we can ask Oh Lord, forgive me that stubbornness. Forgive me that bad temper.

Forgive me that slander. That worry. Perhaps I am speaking here for very decent sinners.

There are some decent sins. But in God's eyes No, it is terrible. And we have to be at peace with God.

And we cannot be at peace with God when we keep our sins. So bring it to the Lord. And then the great joy is when we ask forgiveness the blood will cleanse us and not only that but the Lord will give us His victory through the blood.

We overcome by the blood of the Lamb. It is not only ask forgiveness but go in the strength and when you have a cleansed heart then it is a dwelling for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. And then you are the light of the world because the fruit of the Spirit is love and peace and kindness and goodness and self-control.

And it is the Holy Spirit who makes you the light of the world. But I see He doesn't do it. It is fear that I have left a few a few decent sins.

A few very little rags. Yes. I find some.

Oh no. No, this is not a rag. This is money.

Bermuda dollar. Oh, there is nothing wrong with a dollar. You know this is not a sin.

It was only in the wrong place. It must be in my purse. You know, it is possible that there is no no rag, no sin in your heart.

But that you are not full of the Holy Spirit because there is money in your heart. And there are here very able people who can help you with that money. So just come to us.

See, but isn't it a joy? For now I have spoken about be right with God. But now, be right with men. And there is a problem.

I could not forgive. It was some time ago that I was in Berlin. And there came a man to me and said, Ah, Mr. Bohm, I am glad to see you.

Don't you know me? Suddenly I saw that man that was one of the most cruel overseers, guards in the concentration camp. And that man said, I am now a Christian. I found the Lord Jesus.

I read my Bible and I know that there is forgiveness for all the sins of the whole world, also for my sins. I have forgiveness for the cruelties I have done. But then I have asked God's grace for an opportunity that I could ask one of my very victims forgiveness.

And Fräulein ten Bohm wants him here forgiven. Will you forgive me? And I could not. I remembered the suffering of my dying sister through him.

But when I saw, when I experienced that I could not forgive, suddenly I knew I myself have no forgiveness. Do you know that Jesus has said that? When you do not forgive those who have sinned against you, my heavenly Father will not forgive you your sins. And I knew, oh, I am not ready for Jesus' coming because I have no forgiveness for my sins.

But I was not able, I could not, I could only hate him. And then, I took one of these beautiful texts, one of these boundless resources, Romans 5.5, the love of Jesus through the Holy Spirit. And I said, thank you, Jesus, that you have brought into my heart God's love through the Holy Spirit who has given to me.

And thank you, Father, that your love is stronger than my hatred and unforgiveness. That same moment, I was free. And I could say, brother, give me your hand, and I shook hands with him.

And it was as if I felt God's love stream through my arms. You never touch so the ocean of God's love as that you forgive your enemies. Can you forgive? No.

I can't either. But he can. And that is the message that the film, that the movie will bring to the world.

It is possible to forgive when you cash your checks. The promises of the Bible are checks written on your and my name the moment that we were born into the family of God and signed by Jesus. And the bank account of the Bible is not.

It is all for you and me. And there is an ocean of God's love available for you and me. And that is why you can be ready for Jesus' coming and be clean and blameless in God's eyes and ready with God and men.

I spoke a time ago about this. And there came a woman to me afterwards. And she gave me a key.

I said, what's that for a key? She said, this key is of the house of the woman who has stolen the love of my husband. And I had that key because I hated that woman. And I will not tell you what I was planning to do.

But this evening God has given me His love. I can forgive and love that woman. Here is the key.

Will you destroy it? Is that a joy? Just imagine. Oh, what was that a rich experience. Can you forgive that woman that has stolen the love of your husband? That man that has stolen the love of your wife? You can't.

I understand it. But cash Romans 5.5 Take the love of God. And you will experience that you will be liberated.

You will be free. For forgiveness is the key that unlocks the door of resentment and the handcuffs of hatred. It is a power that breaks the chains of bitterness and the shackles of selfishness.

Do you understand that when you are filled with the Holy Spirit and through the Holy Spirit with the love of God that you are able to suffer persecution even if it should come in your days? For the love of God still stands also when all else has fallen. That's what I have experienced. I stood on the roll call and terrible cruelties were happening in front of me.

And suddenly a skylark came and started to sing in the sky and all the prisoners looked up and they listened to the bird song. And when I looked at the bird I looked at the sky and I thought of Psalm 103 where it's written, As high as heaven over the earth, so high is God's love over all that fear Him. And suddenly it was as if I wake up to reality.

Oh, love of God! How deep and great! Far deeper than man's deepest hate. And God sent that skylark three weeks daily, exactly during roll call time, to turn away our eyes from the cruelty of man unto the ocean of God's love. And we can see a little when we stand at the ocean, at His rocky shore.

But out there beyond the ice horizon there's more, there's more. We can only see a little of God's loving, a few rich samples of His mighty store. But out there beyond the ice horizon there's more, there's more.

Yes, the best is yet to be. But now already, now, there is a love of God available for you and me. And then you can, you can be victorious.

And you can be clean and blameless in God's sight. And you can be the light for your house and your work. And a light in this dark world.

I will never forget when I came for the first, when we came in the concentration camp, we had to live with 700 in a room. It was built for 200. And suddenly people started to fight.

That was a danger. Other people joined, and there came a great fight. And we were swearing and beating and crying.

And Betsy said, Corrie, let us pray. And Betsy prayed and prayed and prayed. And it was as if a storm came down and was stilled.

We didn't hear more swearing, crying. It was quiet. And then Betsy said, Amen.

Do you see the situation? Do you see here a room with 700 prisoners in a great danger? For if the guards had found that they had been fighting, we should have gone away. But there was a starving old woman, Betsy. And she prayed.

And so the situation was won. It was victory. Do you see what you have to do? Do you see what it means to live now in America? America that is wounded.

America that is suffering, that is sinning. That you are the children of the light in a world that is sick, a sick, death, ill world, then that is where you are called to live. And don't be afraid.

Think, oh Betsy, and you know how to pray. And if you don't know, go and study, go in training how to pray. And your prayer will be a tremendous help for this world.

I believe that when there had been ten, or it is in the Bible, when there had been ten righteous people in Sodom, Sodom should not have been destroyed. And a few praying people can make this world acceptable for God. Because this world is acceptable through the Holy Spirit.

And the Holy Spirit lives in you when you have offered Him a clean dwelling. I am so glad that it is possible and that we have never been in such an opportunity to help people around us. I believe we must understand in what kind of world we live.

Your bishop has said, there is no neutral world. The world is not neutral. The world is bad.

And it is in this time or either. It is Satan or Jesus. And when you deny Jesus and disobey Him, then you are in the power of Satan.

And Satan is working over the world in such a way that you don't know what you hear. And you hear about the celebrations of the Satan people, who this gives them all to the devil. And also the decent sinners.

When they do not turn away from their sins, they will be a tool in the hands of the enemy. And the Lord has told us, those who are clean will be cleansed. Those who are filthy will be filthier.

And that's the time where you and I live. It is time to be that serious with God. And He loves you and me.

And you can come to Him. And He will make you ready and strong. And in training.

He will train you. I'll never forget that I was in Ushumbura in Burundi, Africa. And there was persecution.

Yes. I asked a missionary, say, is it true that last year 10,000 Christians were killed in Africa? And he said, yes. And it is also true that this year 200,000 Christians were killed.

Yes, that's now. You don't know that. But I came in that town, Ushumbura, and there had come a new government.

Several Christians had got a paper, you must be registered in a police station. And during the night they were shot. And the next day other Christians, next day other Christians.

When I stood in the church that Sunday morning, I saw people who were scared. Terrible afraid. They looked at each other.

Will he be there? Next week? Will they kill her? Will I be still alive? And I said, Oh Lord, give me a message for these people. And the Lord gave me 1 Peter 4, 12. Dear friends of mine, I beg you not to be unduly alarmed at the fiery ordeals which come to test your faith as though this were some abnormal experience.

You should be glad because it means that you are called to share Christ's sufferings. One day when he shows himself in full splendor to men, you will be filled with a most tremendous joy. If you are reproached for being Christ's followers, that is a great privilege.

For you can be sure that God's Spirit of Glory is resting upon you. And there came a joy in that church. The people knew it is possible that I have to die very soon.

Do you know what I felt in my diary I wrote? It was the feeling perhaps, have you had that? That you were in a room where a child of God was dying and a child of God was ready? And you lived with that Christian and you experienced the joy that was in that room because there was one who went home and was happy. Such a feeling I had when I was speaking in that church. And I can tell you, every word that I said, I felt heavy of importance.

And the Holy Spirit gave a spirit of joy. I said, you have heard that the Spirit of Glory will rest on you when you have the joy of being killed and suffer for Jesus. And then one of them started to sing.

I will never forget. These Africans, they sang it in their language and the other people in the English language. There is a land that is fairer than they.

And by faith we can see it afar. For the Father waits over the way to prepare us a dwelling place there in the sweet by and by we will meet on the beautiful shore. And he repeated it.

And when they went home I heard in the sweet by and by we will meet on the beautiful shore. I met last month in Lausanne in a great congress a woman from Osumbura. I asked her, tell me, how is Radio Cordak? That was the place where I had worked.

Oh, praise the Lord! Two years it has been closed and now it is open 24 hours a day. And I asked her, how are my friends? She said, your friends? She said, they are all murdered. Oh! All killed.

She saw my face and then she laid her hand on my shoulder and she smiled and said, Corrie, they are promoted ahead of us. She saw the reality. I said, and you, are you going back to Osumbura? Oh yes, she said, but are you not in danger? Do you see the spirit of power was resting on her.

She had the train ticket and that's what you will have. Now we are citizens of heaven. Our outlook goes beyond this world.

The best is yet to be. And may the God of peace make you holy through and through. May you be kept in spirit, soul and body in spotless integrity until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Is that possible? You? In spotless integrity? I? Yes. For He who calls you is utterly faithful and He will finish what He has set out to do. Let's pray.

Thank you Lord. Thank you that we have only to surrender ourselves to You and You will do the job to make us ready. And Lord Jesus, You are You are longing to come to us and You will make us ready.

Oh Lord, You have spoken to us. I don't know if all of us have understood, but if there are who have not yet understood, Lord, keep talking to him. Keep talking to her.

And lay Your hand on their lives and on our lives so that we all may be ready Lord Jesus, when You come that we may be ready in peace with You and with men. Teach us to forgive. Show us our riches.

Show us Your ocean of love. Not far away, but available today. And use us as faithful ambassadors of Your light in this dark world.

And come soon, Lord Jesus, come and make everything new. Oh Lord, the restless millions await the coming of the light that makes all things new. You also wait, but men are slow and few.

Have we done all we could? Have I? Have You? Lord, speak to us. And we praise and thank You when we lay our weak hand in Your strong hand that You will use us. Hallelujah! Amen.

Amen. Please advance the tape so it will be ready for the next time.

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