

Tribulation

by Corrie Ten Boom

Corrie Ten Boom's sermon highlights the reality of tribulation for Christians and encourages strength through faith and the Holy Spirit amidst persecution.

Duration: 47:37

Scripture: Psalm 46:2, Matthew 5:13-14, John 7:38, 2 Timothy 2:3

Topics: "Tribulation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his personal experience of being in solitary confinement and how he found solace in singing hymns. He emphasizes the importance of memorizing and internalizing scripture, especially in times of persecution. The speaker also shares a heartbreaking story of a missionary in Africa whose students were killed for their faith, highlighting the courage and devotion of these young boys. He urges the audience to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to study and teach the Bible, as well as to prepare for times when Bibles may not be readily available.

Transcript

I am going to speak about tribulation tonight, about the tribulation that there is in this time for the children of God in many, many countries, and the tribulation that I expect will come all over the world. But also there is tribulation for you, several of you who have given your heart to Jesus, but your family does not agree, and you have to suffer for Jesus. And I will talk about how to be strong, for that is very necessary.

You see, when I think of the world of today, then I see two armies marching on, the army of Jesus Christ and the army of Satan, who is preparing for the time of the Antichrist. Both armies are strong, and you, who have chosen to be a soldier for Jesus, you are in Jesus' armor, and you stand and you walk, and you live on victory ground, because Jesus was victor, Jesus is victor, and he will be victor. 2 Timothy 2, 3 is written, Put up with your share of hardship as a loyal soldier in Christ's arms.

And I am going to speak to the young people also tonight. If you have never done it before, I hope you will enroll in the army of Jesus tonight. And when you do that, then the Lord will use you.

We all need vision. When there is no vision, the people perish. And we need vision, especially today.

Now everything is so very mixed up and so dark and so terrible. When you see the news on the TV, when you read the newspapers, oh, you tremble when you see how terrible people are suffering and sinning,

and how dark the world is. And now it is so necessary that you and I get the real vision.

We are citizens of heaven. Our outlook goes beyond this world to the hopeful expectation of Jesus' coming. And when you are not yet a citizen of heaven, when you have never received the Lord Jesus as your Savior, I hope and I pray that tonight you will say your yes to Jesus, that make the angels rejoice, for your soul is very precious in God's eyes.

Jesus loves you, and he will have your heart. And when you make a decision for him, he is happy and the angels are happy, and you become a child of God. You may say to God, Father, he says to you, my child, and I have worked in sixty-two countries in these last twenty-six years, and I have never found anyone who said, I am sorry that I have received Jesus as my Savior, for nobody is sorry when he has done that, for that is the great beginning of the riches of the Word of God, of the Bible.

There is written in the Bible, persecution is inevitable for those who are determined to live really Christian lives. When you receive the Lord Jesus, I don't promise you that it will be an easy life, it will be a victorious life, but it can mean suffering. And I am going to tell a little bit about that tonight.

You know, it is so good that we understand God's plan with this world. The world is so dark, so mixed up. I have here an embroidery that is so ugly.

It is just like the world history of now. It is just like that you read the newspapers, the magazines, that you see the TV. And this is also in our lives so often, that it is so dark, so mixed up, we do not understand.

And I learned in your country a little poem, my life is like a weaving between my God and me. I do not choose the colors, he works steadily. Of times he weaves sorrow, and I in foolish pride forget.

He sees the upper, and I the underside. Not till the loom is silent and the shuttle cease to fly, will God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why. The dark threads are as needful in the skillful weaver's hands than the threads of gold and silver in the pattern he has planned.

And that is not only for you and my life, but also for the whole life of the world. God has no problems with his world, only plans. There is never a panic in heaven, Major Thomas has said.

Isn't that a joy? And I have worked as much as my strength could allow me, as much as the Lord told me behind the Iron Curtain. I worked in Cuba, and it was a joy. But I had really to suffer a little bit persecution.

Oh, people, I have here in my hand a book. What a book! It almost bursts of good news. In this book is the answer for the two paramount problems in the hearts of men.

Every human being has two great problems, the problem of sin and of death. And here is the answer. For in this book you can read everything about Jesus Christ, who died at the cross for the sins of the whole world, also for your sins.

And when he died at the cross, he solved our sin problem, for he carried our punishment. And not only that, he did not remain dead. He is alive, and he is with us, and he fills our hearts with the Holy Spirit and makes us strong in our fight, not against flesh and blood, but against the very representatives of the headquarters of evil.

He makes us more than conquerors, and Jesus gives us everlasting life. That is the answer for our death problem. And the great joy is that in this book is written that Jesus has said, Come unto me all.

And all, that also means you there. That good, what a joy, that we have a message for the world. Oh, Jesus said, Come unto me all.

That means that you and I have a message for all. I once met Bishop Szabo in a congress in Berlin years ago. He had been 17 years a bishop in China.

And there he had been sent away, and he told us, We, clergy, are so happy and thankful that we could bring the gospel to our fellow Chinese people. We have brought the gospel, but when I look back on the 17 years that I worked in China, I neglected two important things. The first thing I did not do was to tell every lay person that he has to be a soul winner and a teacher of the Bible.

I did not teach the lay people to have Bible groups and prayer groups in their homes. Now there is no clergy, there are no churches in China. There are lay people who bring the gospel.

There are prayer groups and Bible study groups, but we have failed. We have not taught it. The other thing is that we have not told the people how to be strong in times of persecution.

Now there is persecution over whole China for all the Christians. We have not told them how to gather power, how to understand that we have to bring our spiritual riches for times that there will be starvation. Like Joseph.

Joseph, in the times of abundance, has brought on very much of the abundance in the barns for the times that there was nothing. And he said, we must bring our... He said to us, you have still an opportunity. And teach your people these two things.

First, that every Christian filled with the Holy Spirit, the Lord will make an open channel of streams of living water. For he has said, you are the light of the world, the salt of the earth. And he will use everyone when he belongs to Jesus.

Teach them how to study the Bible and teach the Bible. And the other thing, he said, tell the people how to become strong in times of suffering. I must tell you, since then, I write all these down when I find a word in the Bible about riches that we have for times of suffering and persecution.

And I hope you will do that too. For it is possible that there comes a time that we have no Bibles. I have seen so many, many people who had no Bibles.

What a joy when we smuggled the Bibles and gave them one. But then it is so good when we know by heart. I remember when my family and I went into prison because we had saved Jewish people in Holland.

We all had a chapter, no, a page of the Bible, somewhere hidden. And I asked my sister Nolly, she, what have you from the word of God? She said, Ephesians 1. I said, oh, that's good. I asked Peter van Gooden, my nephew, what did you take? He said, Romans 8. And we all could only hide one page of the Bible, but what a joy that we had that.

Later, I had the whole Bible, but in the beginning I had nothing else than that one page. There was one thing that people could not take away from me, and that was what I had learned by heart. The songs, the hymns that I was singing was when I was four months in solitary confinement.

Every morning I started to sing, stand up, stand up for Jesus, you soldiers of the cross. And after I had finished, I heard about four or five cells later the echo from someone who also sang, stand up, stand up for

Jesus, you soldiers of the cross. Every text that I knew by heart, I said it aloud that the others could hear it.

I will now tell you some of the texts that I have written down in this time, and I advise you, write it down and learn it by heart. Everything that could help you in times of persecution. We will not fear even when the earth will be moved and the mountains thrown in the depths of the sea.

The hairs of our head are numbered. God has not given us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, of love, and my opinion, whatever we may have to go through now is nothing compared with the magnificent future. God has, can you understand what such texts can help you when times will be difficult? And you who have now a difficult time, find your strength in the boundless resources of the Bible for it is a joy that there is so much good news.

What I said yesterday, this is a book full of texts written on your name and signed by Jesus Christ, and you must cash your checks. There was a missionary who went to China in the time that it was still possible. It was already dangerous, and he asked her, are you afraid to go? She said, I am afraid for only one thing, and that is that I should become a grain of wheat not willing to die.

Are you that? Are you a grain of wheat not willing to die? Then there will be no fruit. And then you say, oh, but I dare not, I have no strength, I have no courage. Oh, mother, I had no strength, I had no courage.

I remember that once I said to my father, Debbie, I was still a little girl, Debbie, I am so afraid that I will never be strong enough to be a martyr for Jesus. And father said, Corrie, listen, when you go on a trip with a train, when do I give you the money for the tickets for your train? Three months before? I said, no, dad, the day that I go to travel. And Debbie said, that's what God is going to do with you.

Today you don't need strength to suffer for Jesus, but the moment that you have the honor and the opportunity to suffer for him, he will give you all the power that you need. Now, I just went to play with my dolls, and I forgot all martyrdom and persecution. I was really comforted.

Some of you have read my books, and then you have seen that God gave me power to suffer and really to go through difficult persecution. And now when there are here who say, oh, but I am so afraid, I can never be in persecution and be victorious. No, don't look unto yourself.

Look unto Jesus. You know what I said? I believe I said yesterday, look around and be distressed. Look within and be depressed.

Look at Jesus and be at rest. Look at Jesus, and he will give you all the boundless resources that you need in his time. For our times are in God's hands.

And I see that the Lord is busy to prepare his children for the coming difficult time. Don't forget that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, of love, and a sound mind. To be filled with a spirit is not only that we have joy, or that we have vision, but it is that we have the power, a spirit of power and of courage.

And that is the great joy that I have not to try to be powerful, or for I am not at all. What I said yesterday, that the spirit gives us love, love even for enemies. I could not do that.

I could not give love for enemies. I could only hate them. But the spirit in me gave me God's love.

Romans 5, 5, Hallelujah! The love of God is set abroad into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who is given to us. That is very important. Be filled with the Holy Spirit, because then you are filled with God's love.

And you have the spirit not of fear, but of power and love and a sound mind. Some weeks ago I got a letter from a missionary from Africa. And he wrote, do you still remember, Corrie, how we worked in the boys' school? And I knew it.

Ah, I experienced so much that many things I forget very quickly, but I will never forget that boys' school. These boys were really so ready to give their lives as soldiers of Jesus. And he wrote, all these boys have been killed.

And he wrote about one boy. And that boy said, oh, before you kill me, let me sing a song. And he sang, out of my bondage, sorrow and night, Jesus, I come.

And then he was shot. See, that happened some weeks ago, in that time that you had such a good breakfast, and you had such a joyful meeting here, and you had all the great blessings of a free country. That same time that boy there sang, out of my bondage, sorrow and night, Jesus, I come.

And he was shot. The body of Christ is suffering. Some people say 70% of the body of Christ is suffering, terrible persecution.

And we are one body of Christ, and we must not be indifferent, but pray for the people behind the iron and the bamboo curtain. And you must feel the pain that a part of the body of Christ is suffering so terribly. I was so glad that I could go to them and that I could really comfort many of them.

I am so glad that I have written books. It is such a joy that we have to be ready, but our times are in God's hands. Some time ago I had a plan to go to Siberia, and I was very happy that I could go, but then I got ill.

And the doctor said, you may not go to Siberia. There is a great tension to be in these countries. And he was afraid that my heart was not strong enough.

And I said, Lord, if that is your will, then I stay at home, but I am so sorry that exactly Siberia has such a wrong spot in my heart. But it was in God's hands, and do you know what happened? Some weeks later I got a letter from a pastor in Russia, and he wrote, Corrie, I just have been in Siberia, and do you know that all your books are smuggled into Siberia? And they are translating it. And you have touched more people with your books than you ever could have touched by coming.

I said, thank you, Lord. You see, that is the joy when you see the pattern of God's plan. It is all so beautiful.

And once we will see God's pattern, but now we must trust that our times are in God's hands. But we must be willing to be used, even when it is difficult. A man from Sweden wrote after a visit in Siberia, in spite of 53 years of persecution, the Christians in Siberia are living in victory.

They take advantage of every good opportunity to proclaim the good gospel, the good news. We were ashamed when we thought of our freedom and how often it is misused. We compared our Christian work in Sweden with the commandment that the Lord has given us to go out with the gospel.

When we heard them pray, they did not pray at all for freedom or for release from difficulties, but only for power to endure to the end and power to walk the narrow way. Pray for them and for all the Russian

people and all the children who are grown up and brought up in atheism, who have no opportunity to find the way to God. Our Lord is able.

And we heard many young people who had as a motto, we have only one leader and he is Jesus Christ. That is the word that you can hear from the mouth of many young people in these countries. And that means that they cannot study and often they cannot get a job.

It means suffering, great suffering. But the boundless resources of the Bible are available. But we must learn how to act on the word of God.

You must now already learn it. I see that there is coming a terrific end battle between Jesus and the Antichrist. And Jesus will conquer.

Every knee will bow for Jesus Christ. But at the end battle, you and I will have to stand in the front line. And that will mean suffering.

And we may not be afraid, for in that end battle, we will experience that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but a power of love and a sound mind. And when you have a difficult time at this time, when you have persecution, for you, many of us have, a little bit, but it can be very dangerous, very difficult, I mean, when your family doesn't agree with you, with your follow of Jesus, when you have in your school that the other boys and girls laugh because you are a follower of that Jesus, that means a little bit of persecution. But don't be afraid, because it is a part of the training, the training for the great end battle.

And in my little booklet, Training for the End Battle, Marching Orders for the End Battle, I tell a little bit of how I was in training. It is so different when you understand a little bit of God's plan. When the devil tries to make you sinning, then there comes temptation, and there is more than ever temptation in the lives of the children of God.

I think you have experienced that. I have more temptation than I have had in years, and I believe that is because we are in training for the great end battle, and an athlete does not complain when the training is hard, he thinks of the great sports day. And you and I can think of the great future, when Jesus will come, and the kingdom of God will be on this world, the world of the future.

This world will be covered with the knowledge of God like the waters cover the bottom of the sea. And how it will be, I don't know. So I believe in all the prophecies of the Bible.

I do not always understand them. But you must not be worried about when you do not understand the prophecies, but never throw them away. I have had, for instance, in Ezekiel 38, that there will come a big army on horseback from the north, an army on horseback, and this time armies come with tanks and not with horses.

So Ezekiel 37 went on a hook. I didn't throw it away, but I had that hook. What did I read in the newspapers? That Russia had bought 70% of all the horses of the world for his army.

Ezekiel 37 went from the hook. Just to the same. But you do not understand it.

God's word is true. And what we do not understand it, because we can only think with the wisdom of the wise, but there are two realms, the wisdom of the wise and the wisdom of God, the foolishness of God, that is the greatest wisdom. And we may never bring the foolishness of God down in the realm of the

wisdom of the wise, for then we make such terrible things as God is dead and a terrible theology.

But the Holy Spirit, he is the spirit of power and of wisdom, and he teaches us how to lift up the wisdom of the wise into the realm of the foolishness of God, that is the highest wisdom. But that could be a whole talk in itself. I won't go on.

But, you know, the great joy that I have experienced when in my life I had to suffer terrible persecution was that I learned to know Jesus Christ better than ever before. It was a man who was in prison, and his hands were chained at the hands of the guards. He did not know what the enemy was intending to do with him.

His name was Paul. And he wrote to his friends. You can read it in Philippians 3.8, and I read it from the Amplified New Testament.

That man that was in danger of life and in terrible persecution, he wrote, I count everything as loss compared with the priceless privilege, the overwhelming preciousness, the surpassing worth, the supreme advantage of knowing Jesus Christ, my Lord, and of progressively, more deeply, and ultimately getting acquainted with him. And that hero, Paul, has written that. And the little Corinthian woman can say the same.

I have enjoyed it, that I learned to know Jesus Christ better than ever before, when my sister Betsy starved before my eyes, when I was surrounded by people who had had a training in cruelty. But I knew that Jesus was with me. And I had always believed, but now I know from experience that Jesus' light is stronger than the deepest darkness.

And now the Lord gave me a message for this world, because everyone has to know that. You know, it is so good that we are citizens of heaven, that we have the outlook beyond this world. I once was in Russia, and I gave a tract to a woman in my hotel room.

The tract was The Way of Salvation. They were with two, and that girl read it, and she gave it back. She would not take it.

It was a tract in the Russian language. I was sorry. Lord, I claimed the soul of that woman for eternity.

Then I was afraid. I had never claimed a soul. Was that good? May you do that? I said, Lord, was that a wrong prayer? Was I allowed to claim the soul of that woman? And then I heard myself saying this prayer, Lord, I claim whole Russia for you.

I said, Lord, oh, have you ever been frightened because of your own prayer? Oh, I stood, I trembled. I said, Lord, did you give me that prayer? Oh, Lord, was that wrong? And suddenly I knew it. The Bible says the earth is the Lord, the world and everyone who lives there.

And I said, thank you, Lord, although Russia belongs to that. We must think great of Jesus. I stood once with Betsy together in a concentration camp in Holland and with me a whole bunch of men.

We stood before the bunker and we did not know what was happening. We had hoped that it meant that we were set free. But suddenly one of these men said, is there not one here who can pray? And Betsy said, yes, I can pray.

But why do you ask that? Do you think that we are in danger? He said, we are all in danger of life. We stand here because perhaps they will all kill us this same moment. And Betsy started to pray.

I will never forget it. And she prayed for these people beside her and for me, for herself. And she claimed the salvation of Jesus Christ.

Oh, it was a beautiful prayer. And after she said amen, she started to sing a song. And that song was, let us think great of Jesus.

Let us expect much of his love, his faithfulness, his power. That was Betsy, a weak woman, so weak that she after some months died in prison because prison life was too hard. But Betsy had a vision.

She saw Jesus. She was acquainted with him who has all the power and never makes a mistake. She was a citizen of heaven.

Her outlook was beyond this world. And that is what the Holy Spirit gives. That is the great joy that we can know God's plan.

Once Brother Andrew wrote when he was in Moscow, I am so glad that I know that he that is in me is so strong. It has tremendously comforted me. I travelled in all the communist countries, stood on the Red Square in Moscow.

Tens of thousands of Red soldiers I saw marching with their missiles, singing and shouting, we are going to conquer the world. I stood there alone. I could get scared.

If I had not known scripture, he that is in you is stronger and greater than all the forces of the world. That's a good feeling. One man more than the whole Red Army.

It is good to know that. We have nothing to fear. For Jesus is victor.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1.7, you have been eager to receive his gifts during this time of waiting for his final appearance. And I believe that is a message for you and me. We must be eager to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Why is it that so many people in many different churches get the gifts of the Spirit, also the gifts of tongues? Why is that? Some years ago it was only the Pentecostal church who knew about it, but now you hear it in all the official churches. Hallelujah! You know, I heard a little story. There was a missionary from England who was brainwashed in China.

They told him, you are a betrayer, and you have ammunition in your house. And he said, no, you are a spy, they said. He said, no, I am not.

Oh, won't you tell that? All right, we have our way to make you confess. And they did that terrible, devilish, satanic way of brainwashing this man. And there came a moment that he could not stand it any longer.

And he knew, now I must confess something that I have not done. Suddenly he started to speak in tongues. And he was absolutely free.

His subconsciousness was absolutely free the moment that he started to speak in tongues. Is that why God gives it to so many, many children of God? That they be eager to receive his gifts during this time of waiting for his final appearance. I have seen suffering.

But I have also seen that it is true what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13. Love, God's love, still stands also when all else has fallen. Never forget that.

God's love still stands also when all else has fallen. Are you willing? Are you willing to suffer for Jesus? Emme Carmichael made a little poem. We follow a scarred captain.

Shall we not have scars? When there is faultless order, we are born to the wars. Lest we forget, Lord, when we meet. Show us your hands and feet.

Jesus died for you at the cross. Are you ready to suffer for him? Do you ever realize how terrible the cross was? One of the most terrible things, the most cruel things I have experienced was when we had to stand naked. They stripped us of all our clothing.

We had to stand there for many hours. It was so cruel. And I remember the first time that it happened, I said, Betsy, I cannot bear this.

I have never felt so cold, so ashamed, so miserable. And suddenly it was as if I saw Jesus at the cross. And the Bible tells, they have taken his garments.

He hanged there naked. And he hanged there for me. And by my own suffering, I understood a very little bit of the suffering of Jesus.

And it made me so thankful that I could bear my persecution. And I said, Betsy, Betsy, they have taken Jesus' garments. He hanged at the cross naked.

Love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my heart. Look at the cross. And then you will be ready to suffer when the Lord calls you.

There is a poem. Will your anchor hold in the storms of life? Who needs an anchor? Hebrews 6, 18 is written, The certain hope of being saved is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls, connecting us with God himself behind the secret curtains of heaven where Christ has gone already to plead for us from his position as our high priest. Who needs an anchor? I believe that water is an unstable element.

A ship is always in that unstable element. And the anchor is fastened on the shore or on the depth and a strong bottom. And the Christian's position in the world is unstable now like never before.

But the anchor reaches in the stable environment of heaven. Will your anchor hold in the storms of life? When the clouds unfold their wings of strife, when the strong tides lift and the cables strain, will your anchor drift or firm remain? We have an anchor that keeps the soul steadfast and sure while the billows roll, fastened to the rock which cannot move, grounded firm and deep in the Savior's love. And may the love, the mercy and power of Jesus Christ be multiplied to you during these days of titanic spiritual warfare.

The Lord wins and is able to hold you up and cause you to triumph in all situations that you may face. Hallelujah. Jesus is victor.

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