* **Series Slide**
* One of the best ways to develop your moral imagination is to read a memoir or a biography. To get a good picture of what a person looks like who is Deeply Rooted in Jesus….and who is giving away to the Good Life to people they encounter.
* Any time you are developing habits- you need a good picture in your head at what that habits will form in you.
* That’s why I highly recommend you log off of the social media political rants this week…that are NOT going to develop your moral imagination…and pick up the book “The Hiding Place”.
* Its on the short list of essential reading.
* It is an absolutely stellar picture of you what a Deeply Rooted life does in the face of an enemy.
* It's the WWII memoir of Corrie Ten Boom.

Corrie and Betsie ten Boom grew up in a Christian home in Holland with their Father, Casper. They didn’t just grow up there. They lived there all the way into their 50s, as 2 single women.

They owned a family clock shop and lived above the shop.

In the years and months leading up to WWII, the Ten Booms witnessed the rise of anti-Semitism like a cloud of darkness rolling in before a storm. Star of David patches on the clothing of Jews. Acts of violence where Casper would step in and protect Jews who were being intimidated or physically attacked.

Eventually, the Nazi tanks and trucks rolled into town…and the German occupation of Holland began.

That’s when the Jews were rounded up and taken to ghettos and eventually, concentration camps.

Even though Casper, Betsie and Corrie- as Christians were not in immediate danger, they put themselves in the cross hairs of the Nazi’s when they built a false wall in their home that created a room for Jews to hide.

They became a part of the Dutch Resistance to the Nazi party. And led a network of safe houses that helped Jews relocate to get out of immediate danger. Through the leadership of the Ten Booms- an estimated 800 lives were saved.

Eventually, a neighbor turned them in to the Secret Police, and they were arrested. Casper was separated from his daughters and died 10 days after their arrest.

Betsie and Corrie were eventually shipped to a concentration camp together.

And that’s where I want to focus in on their story today.

The first thing you need to know, is that by an absolute miracle of God, Corrie was able to smuggle a Bible in.

This is what Corrie writes about the moments inside of their bunk house where the ladies would all gather around Betsie as she read the Bible

* + **“Whenever we were not in ranks for roll call, our Bible was the center of an ever-widening circle of health and hope.**
  + **"Like waifs clustered around a blazing fire, we gathered about it, holding out our hearts to its warmth and light. The blacker the night around us grew, the brighter and truer and more beautiful burned the Word of God.**
  + **"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."**
  + **"I would look about us as Betsie read, watching the light leap from face to face. More than conquerors...It was not a wish. It was a fact.**
  + **"We knew it, we experienced it minute by minute--poor, hated, hungry. We are more than conquerors. Not "we shall be." We are!**
  + **"Life in Ravensbruck took place on two separate levels, mutually impossible. One, the observable, external life, grew every day more horrible. The other, the life we lived with God, grew daily better, truth upon truth, glory upon glory.”- Corrie Ten Boom, *The Hiding Place***

When the Bible gets 2 dimensional for me. When it seems powerless to wake me up out of my suburban-do-the-same-thing-every-day disappointed sleep walk…I remember its power and beauty and hope in the hands of these tortured women…and I think, “My God, there’s not something wrong with the Bible, there’s something off about the way that I’m receiving it!”

Here’s the second thing I want you to know about Corrie and Betsie Ten Boom’s time in a concentration camp.- They slept in fleas. (Not fleece…fleas)

They were moved around to 2 or 3 camps…but

The last camp was the worst one of all- The death camp Ravensbruck.

Upon arrival, they were ushered into their barracks where their beds were stacked wooden platforms, that didn’t even allow them room to sit up…and they were covered in rotting straw. When they laid down- they felt fleas biting them all over.

At that point, Corrie said, “Betsie, how can we live in a place like this?”

Under her breath, Betsie whispered a prayer. “Show us. Show us how.”

Then she said excitedly “Corrie! He’s given the answer. Before we asked. In the Bible this morning. Read again what we read.”

**1 Thess 5:16-18**

**Rejoice always, 17 pray constantly, 18 give thanks in everything; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.**

Betsie said “That’s it!” That's what we need to do.”

Corrie sort of rolled her eyes as Betsie started to notice things to thank God for.

Like the fact they were still together. The Bible they were miraculously able to get past the guards. The new set of women who would hear the hope of the gospel from it.

And then, she went to far.

“And thank God for the fleas!”

Corrie responded, “Betsie, there’s no way even God can make me grateful for fleas!”

To which Betsie replied “Give thanks in all circumstances…it doesn’t say in pleasant circumstances. Fleas are a part of this place where God has put us.”

So- they stood there- and thanked God for fleas. Even though, Corrie KNEW that her sister was wrong and had gone too far in her optimism.

**Title Slide “Fleas & Thank You: How Joy Comes Through Notice & Gratitude”- Psalm 107**

Some of you, like me and Corrie Ten Boom, are self-proclaimed “realists”. In other words- pessimists. And when we hear someone “Thank God for the Fleas”…we tend to roll your eyes and think of those people as delusional.

Let me ask you this, though.

If you get a million compliments in a day, and you get one person that criticizes you…what consumes your thoughts?

Again- if you are anything like me…my default thinking is to dwell on the negative.

You know why? Because this world is broken. And everything- even our thoughts- tend toward death, despair, brokenness- they tend toward what is wrong. They tend toward BAD NEWS- not GOOD NEWS.

Remember what Jesus calls us to do. Repent and believe- the Kingdom of God is at hand.

In other words, even in the middle of flea-ridden concentration camps- the Kingdom of God is nearby. Even as our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed.

But without notice…without intentionality- Thanksgiving remains a holiday that happens once a year, instead of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit from the church.

So today, I’m going to show you how Betsie Ten Boom- who even in the middle of a concentration camp that would steal her life from her…oozed hope and joy…how she could even notice the Goodness of God in the middle of the most disgusting evil that man can offer.

**Psalm 107**

* **Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;**
* **his faithful love endures forever.**
* **2 Let the redeemed of the Lord proclaim**
* **that he has redeemed them from the power of the foe**
* **3 and has gathered them from the lands —**
* **from the east and the west,**
* **from the north and the south.**
* **4 Some wandered in the desolate wilderness,**
* **finding no way to a city where they could live.**
* **5 They were hungry and thirsty;**
* **their spirits failed within them.**
* **6 Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble;**
* **he rescued them from their distress.**
* **7 He led them by the right path**
* **to go to a city where they could live.**
* **8 Let them give thanks to the Lord**
* **for his faithful love**
* **and his wondrous works for all humanity.**
* **9 For he has satisfied the thirsty**
* **and filled the hungry with good things.**
* **10 Others sat in darkness and gloom —**
* **prisoners in cruel chains —**
* **11 because they rebelled against God’s commands**
* **and despised the counsel of the Most High.**
* **12 He broke their spirits with hard labor;**
* **they stumbled, and there was no one to help.**
* **13 Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble;**
* **he saved them from their distress.**
* **14 He brought them out of darkness and gloom**
* **and broke their chains apart.**
* **15 Let them give thanks to the Lord**
* **for his faithful love**
* **and his wondrous works for all humanity.**
* **16 For he has broken down the bronze gates**
* **and cut through the iron bars.**
* **17 Fools suffered affliction**
* **because of their rebellious ways and their iniquities.**
* **18 They loathed all food**
* **and came near the gates of death.**
* **19 Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble;**
* **he saved them from their distress.**
* **20 He sent his word and healed them;**
* **he rescued them from their traps.**
* **21 Let them give thanks to the Lord**
* **for his faithful love**
* **and his wondrous works for all humanity.**
* **22 Let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices**
* **and announce his works with shouts of joy.**
* **23 Others went to sea in ships,**
* **conducting trade on the vast water.**
* **24 They saw the Lord’s works,**
* **his wondrous works in the deep.**
* **25 He spoke and raised a stormy wind**
* **that stirred up the waves of the sea.**
* **26 Rising up to the sky, sinking down to the depths,**
* **their courage melting away in anguish,**
* **27 they reeled and staggered like a drunkard,**
* **and all their skill was useless.**
* **28 Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble,**
* **and he brought them out of their distress.**
* **29 He stilled the storm to a whisper,**
* **and the waves of the sea were hushed.**
* **30 They rejoiced when the waves grew quiet.**
* **Then he guided them to the harbor they longed for.**
* **31 Let them give thanks to the Lord**
* **for his faithful love**
* **and his wondrous works for all humanity.**
* **32 Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people**
* **and praise him in the council of the elders.**
* **33 He turns rivers into desert,**
* **springs into thirsty ground,**
* **34 and fruitful land into salty wasteland,**
* **because of the wickedness of its inhabitants.**
* **35 He turns a desert into a pool,**
* **dry land into springs.**
* **36 He causes the hungry to settle there,**
* **and they establish a city where they can live.**
* **37 They sow fields and plant vineyards**
* **that yield a fruitful harvest.**
* **38 He blesses them, and they multiply greatly;**
* **he does not let their livestock decrease.**
* **39 When they are diminished and are humbled**
* **by cruel oppression and sorrow,**
* **40 he pours contempt on nobles**
* **and makes them wander in a trackless wasteland.**
* **41 But he lifts the needy out of their suffering**
* **and makes their families multiply like flocks.**
* **42 The upright see it and rejoice,**
* **and all injustice shuts its mouth.**
* **43 Let whoever is wise pay attention to these things**

**and consider the Lord’s acts of faithful love.**

Transition: From the start of this series we’ve been talking a lot about attachment love. It's the Hebrew word “HESED”. Its what is translated in the first and last verse of this Psalm as “faithful love”.

You have attachment when you know that the person that loves you the most is not going to leave you.

So…in order to have joy in the darkest of circumstances…it takes noticing that attachment love.

**1) Gratitude flows from noticing the specific ways God loves us.**

* + In a concentration camp, that love is tested. At least our belief in that love is tested. Its always there. The Kingdom of God is at hand. Its available. The question is will you tap into to. Will you access it?
  + Likewise, the Psalmist here gives 4 different scenarios of the darkest times a person might experience in their life.
  + Before we go through those- lets look at the first and last verse.
  + **V 1**
  + This is a common refrain in this Psalm. Give thanks to the Lord for he is good. His faithful love never quits.
  + **v 43**
  + The Psalm ends with, literally, a word to the wise.
  + The Psalmist says- if you are wise, the word means skillful, or experienced…if you are a person who understands the natural grain of the Kingdom of God. I think that describes Betsie Ten Boom pretty well…
  + The Psalmist says, you will PAY ATTENTION to these things. These things are the specific ways that God helps these 4 groups of people when they cry out to him.
  + And then he calls the way the Lord answers their cry, “His acts of HESED…or his ACTS of attachment Love”
  + So if you want to see attachment love in action- watch what the Lord does in this Psalm.
  + **V3**
  + Look at the aim of God’s attachment love. It is to gather his people to himself. Because that’s what attached Father’s do…they gather their children in.
  + So now, lets look at the 4 different vignettes of people in situations where its hard-
  + **V4**
  + The first group are the homeless. Its people wandering in a desert.
  + **V5**
  + They are hungry and thirsty and it says their SOUL fainted within them.
  + That's a picture of total body exhaustion. Mind-spirit, emotion- physical…complete exhaustion.
  + Most of us don’t know what its like to be homeless.
  + We’ve been away from home for long periods of time, but we always have a plan and a clear way back. We know when the trip is going to end and when we’ll be back in our bed.
  + But the folks who sleep in this parking lot right outside our front doors- they don’t have that. They don’t know, many of them, where their next meal is coming from or if they will ever settle down in a permanent home.
  + This is a picture of a chronic hardship. Day after day being worn down by a life of lack and lost-ness.
  + **V 7**
  + Look at the specific way that the Lord’s Attached love comes this homeless group
  + First, he gives them a home.
  + **V9**
  + Then he satisfies their thirst and fills their belly with good things
  + You know what that is.
  + It's a good Father.
  + To the homeless children of men- he is a Father.
  + **V 10**
  + The next group are prisoners- who are in the shadow of death- darkness and gloom. They are chained up.
  + **V11**
  + But look- this isn’t a Nazi concentration camp with innocent victims of facist racism.
  + These are people who rebelled against God’s commands and are suffering from the consequences of sin.
  + They thought God’s commands were restrictive and keeping them from freedom, so they rebelled…and now the consequences of that rebellion actually has them locked up like a prisoner.
  + **V 14**
  + BUT- God in his mercy hears their cry and breaks their chains.
  + **v 16**
  + And then he breaks down the gates and cuts through the bars.
  + Again- God’s love is very specific to the need here.
  + God is answering this cry like a King. Because a King is the only one who has the power to both sentence to someone to chains…and then also release them from those chains.
  + **V 17**
  + The third group are fools. Idiots.
  + They are suffering because of their rebellious ways.
  + Instead of thinking they know better than God, this is more like people who ignore the warning signs at a beach. WARNING UNDERTOW- and then get sucked out to sea. That's a fool.
  + **V18**
  + The Psalmist compares them to people who don’t understand what’s good for them. They loathe all food, and then they get sick.
  + That’s a fool…you are running a fever…and you need to eat the chicken soup…but you refuse it.
  + **V20**
  + God hears their cry. And to them- he is a healer. A doctor or nurse with good medicine.
  + **V 23**
  + The last group are sailors.
  + They see the vastness and majesty of God’s work in the ocean, and then God causes a storm to blow and they get caught up in this storm.
  + **V27**
  + It says their “skill was useless”. That word skill is the same as “wisdom”. That comes in the last verse, where he says let the wise pay attention to God’s love.
  + Whereas the first group in this Psalm experienced long term homelessness of a chronic nature.
  + This is acute trouble. This is trouble that like a storm rises out of nowhere. These are the lives that are disrupted and sent in chaos in a single day…you are one phone call away from your world being turned completely upside down.
  + And when you get that phone call- it doesn’t matter how much money you have, how many degrees are on the wall…your skill is useless in the middle of a raging storm.
  + **V 29**
  + To these sailors in the Chaos- God is the sovereign creator who is still in control of his creation. They start these verses out by admiring God’s creation- they finish by admiring the creator who controlled his creation in order to save them.
  + BUT YOU HAVE TO NOTICE you have to consider. Pay attention to God’s acts of faithful love.
* **V 42**
  + In v 42- The Psalmist writes- the upright see God and rejoice…and all injustice shuts its mouth.
  + That word “see” means to spy
  + Remember when Israel had been led out of Egypt, and they were preparing to enter the promise land, and Moses sent in 12 spies to Canaan to see what it was like, and what they were up against.
  + And it was as God promised. A land flowing with milk and honey, grapes the size of your head.
  + But the opposing armies were also huge.
  + 10 of the spies came back and said- “Its impossible” we can’t go in there. It will be an absolute beat down.”
  + But Caleb and Joshua- they saw only God’s victory. The fulfillment of his promise. CALEB AND JOSHUA SAW. And they only were allowed into the promised land- Injustice shut its mouth.
  + How about Elisha- surrounded entrapped by an evil army- but calm as a meadow’s breeze? And his servant can’t understand why he’s so calm and confident. Then Elisha prays that God would show his servant what he sees- and the servant’s eyes are opened to see a heavenly army covering the hills like that final battle scene in Avengers: Endgame. THEY SAW- and Injustice shut its mouth.
  + What about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abdenego standing before a king and his soldiers and fiery furnace. Then one like a son of God appeared with them in the fire, and they stepped out- unsigned. They SAW- and injustice shut its mouth.
  + Daniel thrown into a Lions den for praying 3 times a day.….then the King looked in the next morning…and Daniel had the lions chasing a laser pointer on the wall. HE SAW- and injustice shut its mouth.
  + John the Baptist before Herod, underneath the guillotine. After his death- it was Herod who was eaten by worms while John awaits his resurrection. He saw- and Injustice shut its mouth.
  + Stephen- the first deacon- preaching the gospel as the stones hit his body in an attempt to shut his mouth. But from his death- the church spread out with the gospel to the known world. HE SAW- and Injustice shut its mouth.
  + Jesus- from the Cross- “It is finished”. And on the third day- He resurrected and gave birth to the church. He saw. And Injustice shut its mouth.
  + And- in all these things- we are more than conquerors.
  + **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**
  + **16 Therefore we do not give up. Even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day. 17 For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory. 18 So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal**.
  + And do you see this?- YOUR INNER PERSON BEING RENEWED is not dependent upon decay and death stopping around you. Its in spite of it.
  + Rather- your inner daily, renewal is dependent on whether you FOCUS on what is SEEN- the breaking down of the world through evil…or what is unseen- the renewal of the world in the HERE and now- and the THERE AND COMING Kingdom of God.
* **V 43**
  + Until you consider the Attachment LOVE of God- the specific ways that he loves you.
  + You won’t see the unseen. You’ll live only seeing fleas in a concentration camp.
  + You’ll see death. You’ll see hopelessness.
  + And you’ll miss the opportunity to witness God shutting the mouths of the unjust.

You have to notice the Kingdom of God.

You have to notice the SPECIFIC WAYS God has come to love you.

**2) Notice the gospel first- then look for Christ’s love everywhere and give thanks.**

* + The ultimate and central act of God’s attachment love- his HESED- his agape- is the cross of Jesus Christ.
  + That’s what cruciform means- it means FORM OF A CROSS. Cross-shaped.
  + Let me show you this in Scripture- then we’ll look back at the Ten Booms to see it there.
  + **Romans 5:2**
  + Paul writes that we get access to the Kingdom of God- where Jesus is LORD and reinging- by faith. By seeing the unseen- his grace. His attachment love given to those who cry out for his- salvation.
  + Now the thing about Psalm 107- is out of those 4 stories- 2 of them are groups of innocent people crying out for his help- the homeless and the sailors.
  + The other 2 groups are guilty- the rebellious prisoners and the foolishly sick.
  + Here in Romans…look what Paul does.
  + He puts us in both categories.
  + **Romans 5:3**
  + On one hand- he says when you are afflicted…unjustly in the darkness of a concentration camp you didn’t deserve…
  + We are to boast and rejoice in our afflictions- because God is using them to produce something in us- ultimately HOPE- in us that can overflow to others.
  + **Romans 5:5**
  + He says that this more than positive thinking- because God is administering his HESED Attachment love to us through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is reminding us- that we have a Father, and a King, and Healer, and a Powerful Creator who maintains the wind and waves.
  + **Romans 5:8**
  + BUT- Paul grounds all of this in our rescue from the situation for which we were at fault.
  + We were enemies of God, but he reconciled us to him.
  + God proved his love for us not MAINLY in rescuing innocent people, but in still showing up for the guilty ones. While we were sinners, Christ came and died for us.
* **Back to 2**)
  + That’s the secret of the story in Psalm 107 of the King who both sentences the guilty to die, but then, rescues them when they cry to him for help.
  + That’s who Jesus is. He is the one who stilled the storm on the bow of the boat when his disciples cried out in fear of death.
  + He is the one who fed 5000 homeless people with a fish and few pieces of bread and then had 5 baskets of leftovers.
  + He is the one who healed the sick out of his deep compassion.
  + And he is the King who died a criminals death on a cross- so the criminals could be with him in paradise.
  + Jesus is the King who died in our place to set us free.

Paul said he RECONCILED us to God. He gathered us in, just like God does with his Attachment love in Psalm 107.

* + This is always where you start remembering to bring up gratitude. It has to start with the truth that nothing can separate us from the ATTACHMENT HESED AGAPE LOVE FAITHFUL LOVE OF GOD.
  + And we know this from a King who took a Cross.
  + From there- well, lets watch Betsie Ten Boom do it.
  + **Fridays--the recurrent humiliation of medical inspection. The hospital corridor in which we waited was unheated and a fall chill had settled into the walls. Still we were forbidden even to wrap ourselves in our own arms, but had to maintain our erect, hands-at-sides position as we filed slowly past [the] grinning guards.**
  + **How there could have been any pleasure in the sight of these stick-thin legs and hunger-bloated stomachs I could not imagine. Surely there is no more wretched sight than the human body unloved and uncared for.**
  + **But it was one of these mornings while we were waiting, shivering in the corridor, that yet another page in the Bible leapt into life for me.**
  + **"He hung naked on the cross.”**
  + **...The paintings, the carved crucifixes showed at least a scrap of cloth. But this, I suddenly knew, was the respect and reverence of the artist. But oh--at the time itself, on that other Friday morning--there had been no reverence. No more than I saw in the faces around us now.**
  + **“Betsie, they took His clothes, too.”**
  + **Ahead of me I heard a little gasp from Betsie “Oh, Corrie. And I never thanked Him.”**
  + Betsie Ten Boom was so trained on the story of Jesus’ death in her place, that when she was stipped of her clothes in humiliation- she thought about Jesus being stripped of his clothes to hang on a cross.
  + And in that- she remembered- that he did that for her.
  + She noticed. And gratitude overflowed.
* **Back to 2)**
  + And remember those fleas?
  + Well, a few days after that- through another prisoner- Corrie found out why the guards never interrupted their Bible reading sessions- why they never came in and turned over the barracks looking for contraband- it was because of the fleas.
  + Betsie- could see the eternal- Betsie could see the son of God in the fiery furnace- she noticed- even her affliction- and could see the hand of God’s faithful love.

So today, I’m going to give you 2 more practices. Remember- these are HABITS. Don’t just do them the week I preach about them. Stack them up. And keep going.

Remember, our template for filling that 30 minute time-

* + Rooted practice is based on MEDITATION on SCRIPTURE
  + Then the Good Life practice- is OVERFLOW to OTHERS around us
  + So- first we talked about HEAR JOURNALING- or listening to Scripture.
  + Then Listening to others and sharing the gospel.
  + Then we talked about Exploring the Iceberg of our feelings during that meditation time.- Once a week.
  + Then Sharing that with someone else
  + Now- here is another once a week practice to root yourself in Christ and overflow to others. 1 day a week. Pick a day. Thursday Gratitude day.
  + **ROOTED PRACTICE- Gratitude journal.** **1 thing in Scripture. 1 person. 1 provision.**
  + Maybe do them as a voice memo- to keep up with them.
  + **GOOD LIFE Practice- Text or call the person who made the list and tell them why.**
  + You might even stretch yourself to 4. Do 2 people every week. Make one of them ALWAYS inside of your family and outside your family…so Roomates, Parents, and Spouses- you are regularly- at least once a week telling those closest to you where you are grateful for them. How they are God’s gift in your life.
* Think about the juxtaposition of that life-giving language as opposed to the political vitriol we have been submerged in for months. I think the Holy Spirit can overflow through our gratitude to produce some real emotional healing this week in the face of a very contentious election. Lets do it City Church.
* **LORDS SUPPER**- Jesus gave us a discipline to remember gratitude. To bring it all to mind.