



The Hiding Place: Introduction and Reading Schedule

God is Not in a Panic: An Introduction to Corrie ten Boom and *The Hiding Place*

By Marti Ensign

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When we were serving in Medical missions in the mountains of Central Africa, the thing we looked forward to the most was Kumbya Conference. This was like a big Family Camp and was held on a beautiful Peninsula on Lake Kivu in Rwanda. The missionaries who attended were not only from our denomination, and not only Americans were included in this camping experience. There were Baptists, Presbyterians, Quakers, and Pentecostals from Denmark, Sweden, Great Britain, and, of course, those of us from the United States. Each group had a "cabin" and since it was on our mission's property and we had a hospital station nearby, our cabin was the largest with lots of space.

In this very special place on the lake—with a view of the volcanoes on a clear day—we missionaries gathered for rest, fellowship, and encouragement. We had been blessed with some very prominent and wonderful evangelist speakers over the years who loved this spot the way that we did. We had had the famous revivalists, Dr. J. Edwin Orr and Dr. Stanley Voke from London, as well as other gifted evangelicals.

In the early 1960s, the time was coming for planning our conference and our mission group was on our hospital station, Kibuye, for mission meeting. During a lull in the business one of the young men asked, "Who's going to be speaking at Kumbya this year?" Our representative on the Kumbya board said, "It's some old Dutch lady." The fellow who had originally asked then blurted out, "Some old Dutch lady? Who will do the morning Bible study?" Our Rep said, "She wants to do both." There were groans and comments and we carried on. "Ten days of some old Dutch lady. Good grief!!"

Need I tell you that by Day 2 of the conference all these groaners were following that "old Dutch lady"—Corrie ten Boom—around the grounds and vying to sit beside her at meals? All of us were captivated by and in love with her. She and her companion, Connie, were looking for some place to have afternoon tea, as was their custom. I offered our cabin right away and volunteered to make and serve each afternoon. That is where our friendship started. Corrie was busy traveling all over the world wherever she was asked, or on occasion, just going where she felt the Lord was leading—whether she had been asked or not. She came to Burundi several times and spoke at the Teacher Training College and in the prisons. She was writing a book entitled, *Tramp For The Lord*.

About this time, she was experiencing frequent illnesses and fatigue. One of her doctors told her, "Corrie, you can keep doing what you are doing and changing time zones and diets and



you will soon die. Or, you can settle down somewhere you like and get really well and you may have a long ministry and win many souls.” She prayed about it, considered her options, and found an estate near the capital of Uganda, which she purchased to use as a missionary rest house. She furnished it with lovely carpets, china sets, and linens. I objected and told her how hard on lovely things the African helpers could be—to say nothing of the missionaries’ kids! She looked me in the eye and said, “NO! You have enough ugliness and dirt around here—so here at Lweza (meaning Light) you shall have some beauty.”

Many times and in many trips to this retreat house, we were the beneficiaries of her resolution to create a beautiful space. We became fast friends and prayer partners with “Tante Corrie.”

By the time we had moved back to the West Coast in 1970, Corrie had made the decision that she would not go back to Holland or keep up the international travel. She had settled into a home in Southern California. When we reconnected, Corrie had a new companion who had worked with Brother Andrew, distributing Bibles in the most dangerous parts of Eastern Europe.

Pam Rosewell was from England, but she spoke fluent Dutch, so she was loaned to Tante Corrie for a few months. It turned out to be more than six years. Because I was the one of Corrie’s friends that connected her to that part of her life in Africa which she loved so much, we often were together at her American home in Placentia, California and also in many meetings and speaking engagements. If there were a quiet moment or a lull in the program at a conference, Corrie would put a little tape recorder between us on the sofa and say, “Tell dat story of Binyoni.” So, I would repeat whatever story she asked for—about Lweza or the martyrs of the genocide during the tribal wars in Central Africa, and so on.

Corrie was my mentor, a second mother, an advisor, and a dear friend. After she suffered the second of two serious strokes and lost her ability to speak, I often went down to her home to help care for her or just ask her for prayer on my way to some Women’s Retreat or conference. Prior to that stroke, I had heard her retell many of the stories that you will read about in *The Hiding Place*—and several more that were too awful to put in print.

Through my times with Corrie, I learned more of what it means to be totally dependent on the Lord and how to have peace in doing that. Sometimes, when we were traveling and the airlines would mess up the schedule, or we would be late getting to a venue ... well, you can imagine that I would get very fussed! But Tante Corrie would say, “Mawti, God is not in a panic!!” As we go through this extremely dramatic story, I hope you will see areas of your life where you can trust God more, be more courageous to “dare” for Him, and be awed at His care for His children in every circumstance.

2017-2018



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BOOK CLUB

(Please see Reading Schedule on next page.)

Ready to read? Here's the schedule we're going to be following together:

Week One, January 15-20	Foreword through Chapter Three (pp. 7-61)
Week Two, January 22-27	Chapters 4 & 5 (pp. 62-90)
Week Three, January 29 – February 3	Chapters 6 & 7 (pp. 91-124)
Week Four, February 5-10	Chapters 8, 9, 10 (pp. 125-170)
Week Five, February 12-17	Chapter 11 & 12 (pp. 171-199)
Week Six, February 19-24	Chapter 13 & 14 (pp. 200-230)
Week Seven, February 26 – March 3	Chapter 15 – “Since Then” (pp. 231-253)