

Champion of Resistance: Cornelia Ten Boom

The life experiences of Cornelia Ten Boom challenge the belief that the only way to resist the status quo is through hatred, bitterness, and revenge. In a world where hate manifested itself in the discrimination and mass murdering of millions of innocent people, this little woman dared to practice quiet resistance. Born in 1892 in Haarlem, Holland to a devoutly Christian family, Corrie Ten Boom learned the importance of treating others with love and respect. In response to the German occupation, beginning in 1940, Corrie began her resistance with small acts of service for Jewish acquaintances. As the persecution of the Jews increased, she became part of the underground that protected the Jews.

If her life's work had stopped there she could have still been heralded a hero for saving the lives of the Jewish people who sought refuge in her underground network to freedom. However, she went on to fight the hatred and despair after her arrest by German soldiers in 1944, encouraging those with whom she associated in Scheveningen prison, the Vught concentration camp, and Ravensbruck, a women's concentration camp.

Corrie Ten Boom's work culminated in her efforts to provide healing to victims of the atrocities that accompanied World War II. When she was released as a result of a clerical error on January 1, 1945, she immediately went to work, sharing messages of helping and encouragement. With the help of Mrs. Bierens de Haan, Corrie Ten Boom established a home where victims of the ravages of World War II could go to find peace and safety. Then Corrie Ten Boom began to work to promote healing for the very people who had persecuted her and her loved-ones. She turned her own home into a place for the NSBers, Dutchmen who had sided with Germany during the war. Finally, she went to Germany and, with the help of the German Lutheran Church, Corrie opened a rehabilitation camp in Darmstadt in 1946.

Corrie Ten Boom passed away on her ninety-first birthday, April 15, 1983, in Orange City, California.