

TIMELY TICKET

Cornelia "Corrie" ten Boom was a Dutch Christian Holocaust survivor who helped many Jews escape Nazi Germany during World War II. She wrote 25 books, including the bestseller, *The Hiding Place*.

The following is excerpted from a letter:

Several years ago I was in Africa in a nation where a new government had come into power. The first night I was there some of the Christians were commanded to come to the police station to register. When they arrived they were arrested and that same night they were executed. The next day the same thing happened with other Christians. The third day it was the same.

The fourth day I was to speak in a little church. The people came, but they were filled with fear and tension. I told them a story out of my childhood. "When I was a little girl," I said, "I went to my father and said, 'Daddy, I am afraid that I will never be strong enough to be a martyr for Jesus Christ.'"

"Tell me," said Father, "When you take a train trip to Amsterdam, when do I give you the money for the ticket? Three weeks before?"

"No, Daddy, you give me the money for the ticket just before we get on the train."

"That is right," my father said, "and so it is with God's strength. Our Father in Heaven knows when you will need the strength to be a martyr for Jesus Christ. He will supply all you need—just in time ..." ■



Martin Zender's Clanging Gong News

"If I know all mysteries and all knowledge, but have no love, I am a clanging gong" --1 Cor. 13:1-2



Two out of three isn't bad.

Sufficient unto the day are *you* evils

A friend recently lamented the Japan tragedy. This man has a difficult time understanding how people can go through such trial. He tries to put himself in their shoes. He tries to imagine how it would be to see his house swept away by a tidal wave, or to have to live on the ragged edge of existence, without clean water, electricity, or shelter. He cannot imagine how people survive.

It depresses him.

I tell him that he is making a mistake to put himself into their place. As soon as he does that, he goes to a place where he is not meant to be. He is not the one called upon to endure what the Japanese people are now enduring. That is *their* struggle, not his. He has struggles that they don't have.

God gives each of us what we need for the day's trials—*our* day's trials. Not someone else's.

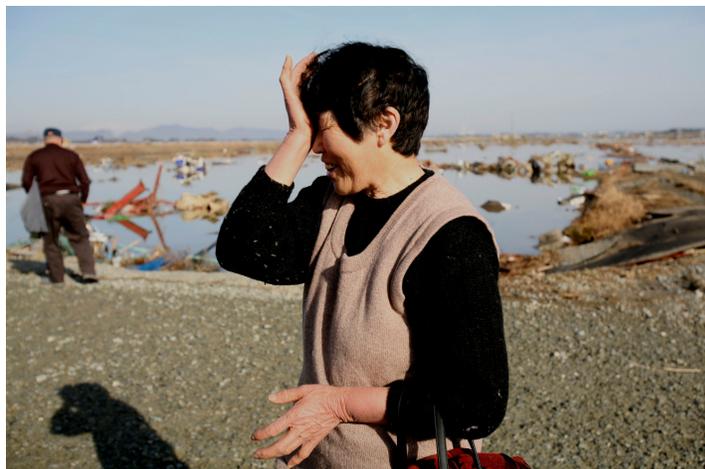
God meets us *now*

I told my friend that the relative cause of survival for any person enduring harrowing pain is the human instinct to survive. This is a gift of God. Most live their lives without ever having the deepest parts of them tapped. We can endure much more than we think we can. If we were in Japan, we would survive—just like those people are surviving.

After a terrible trial, we often say, "I don't know how I survived that." We say that because, after the trial, God takes away the tools that we needed *for* the trial. We don't know where such tools came from, or where they go. We don't need to. What does it matter? They are there when we need them. We say before trials, "I could never go through something like that." But then we do. We get the tools when needed.

Unnecessary burden

Do you carry a giant wrench around in your pocket all day? No. You only use such a tool when you're wrestling with some major plumbing job. Carrying a heavy wrench every minute of



I cry for her, but God does not ask me to *be* her

every day is too hard. We are not supposed to prepare ourselves for every contingency. The people who do so are called pack rats—or maybe "neurotic." They have to keep everything; they might need it some day. Their lives are cluttered, weighed down, and complicated.

That is exactly what worry is; it clutters our lives and weighs us down. It makes things unnecessarily complicated. When we worry—especially about the future—we are mentally preparing ourselves for something that may never (and probably will never) happen. If it does happen, then God will provide the wrench—but not until then.

God provides for our present—*our* present. It is senseless, then, to worry about our future, or about someone else's present. We can be empathetic, yes. But empathy is not worry. Empathy is not forcing yourself to imagine "what you would do."

If you want to worry about the future, or fret about the past, or project yourself into another's trials, you go it alone. This is why worry feels so terrible; it's a solo enterprise. When you live in the now and carry only those tools needed to survive your own trials—*this minute*—you find relative comfort. God is a *present* help. Okay?

Drop the wrench.
TRAVEL LIGHT.

The surreal composure of Christ



As He walked through His final hours upon this earth in His humiliated frame, Jesus Christ was in His own world. Every answer from His lips was calm, clean, and composed. He looked straight ahead. He did whatever people told Him to do. He did not yell back at any of the people yelling at Him. All around Him was hate. *His* aura, however, was a sheen of acceptance. It was as if He had seen it all before—and it was fine. Not easy, but fine. All of it was supposed to happen. There was one reason for such calm.

Of all unlikely people with whom to share the reason, He told it to the Roman procurator, Pontius Pilate. When Pilate spoke to Him and He did not answer, the procurator said: “To me you are not speaking! Are you not aware that I have authority to release you and have authority to crucify you?” Our Lord replied:

“No authority have you against Me in anything, except it were given to you from above” (John 19:11).

What was true of Christ then is true of us now: Nothing under heaven has any power over us unless God gives it. Thus:

EVERYTHING THAT IS HAPPENING TO YOU IS GIVEN FROM ABOVE.

The world seems so powerful and overwhelming. Your trials seem unconquerable. And yet, they have already been conquered. For it is not the power of this world that we are under. We are not under the power of the IRS, nor the power of our employers. We are not under the power of anyone who would seek to lord it over us. Even if we were literal slaves of a tyrannical government, we would still be free, because:

“No authority have you against Me in anything, except it were given to you from above” (John 19:11).

During His final hours upon earth, this was the key to the surreal composure of Christ.

Let it be the key for you today. ■

Gethsemane:

Recognizing a higher will

I contend that, for Christ, the most excruciating ordeal of His final hours was Gethsemane. Gethsemane was His last chance to affect God and escape the cross. His prayer was real; His prayer meant something, in that God heard it. God considered His agony. He still had a chance.

He asked.

Some angels suddenly appeared, to comfort Him.

Then He knew.

As soon as He knew, He surrendered. Gethsemane was the last of His resistance. After that, His acceptance became palpable. We behold His composure at its most surreal, in the presence of Pilate.

Gethsemane is the struggle to accept the complete sovereignty of God. Not everyone imitates Jesus and finds peace surrendering to a higher will.

Thus, not everyone finds the surreal composure of Christ. ■



Lindsey Corley, “Cramped.”
Oil on canvas 2X5, 2008

Nothing can separate us

What shall be separating us from the love of God in Christ Jesus? Affliction, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

Nay! in all these we are more than conquering through Him Who loves us (Romans 8:35, 37).

Read this verse anew, and think of how general the word, “distress” is. Few of us are being persecuted. Not many are undergoing famine. Affliction is much

more common, but one has to be going through a really bad thing to be afflicted. There are only two reasons the majority of us are ever naked, and one of them involves showering.

But what about distress? It’s a daily occurrence. The Greek word translated “distress” here is *stenochoria*. *Steno* is “cramp,” and *choria* is “space.” “Distress, then, is “CRAMP-SPACE.”

“Cramp-space” is the feeling that

everything keeps you down: the weather, your family, your job. Restriction is your reality. You have so many responsibilities; so many limits. You feel alone. Surely, God has left you. No. It’s just the opposite. *God is using you as an example of conquering.* How? To whom? You are a display vessel to the celestial world (Ephesians 3:10). They marvel to see sons of God *so* cramped, and yet still praising Him.

You are already cramped. Very good. Now finish the spectacular display by praising Him. ■

Rants & Stuff

The Apostle Paul says we should not murmur (Philippians 2:14). Therefore, I shall rant.

We barely get a foothold; most things are ugly; it doesn't matter.



Do you often find that a lot of the things you try to do in life are really hard? Me, too. Have you ever seen that Staples commercial with the “EASY” button? Just press a button, and everything works out. If only. This commercial is effective because everyone drools over the mere concept of an “EASY” button.

Most of us want to do things really well, but we are lucky if we do things adequately. Things do somehow always seem to get done, but barely, it seems. Most of us don't give ourselves enough credit. We habitually berate ourselves because we didn't do things better.

“Done is better than perfect.”

I read a great quote a while back from Michael J. Fox, and I

hope this helps you, as it helped me:

“I can aim for excellence; perfection is God's business.”

Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg was named Time Magazine's 2010 Person of the Year. At age 26, Zuckerberg is worth \$13.5 billion dollars. Who's going to say that the kid doesn't get things done? And yet I saw an online photo of a sign posted at a Facebook office, overseas, that said:

“Done is better than perfect.”

If Zuckerberg had waited for “perfect,” he never would have done anything.

D-Day

In June of 1944, the Allies prepared to land forces on the beaches of Normandy, France, to save Europe and the world from Adolph Hitler.

Many things went wrong, especially at Omaha Beach. The following is from Encyclopedia Britannica's *Guide to Normandy 1944*:

“From the beginning everything went wrong at Omaha. Special “DD” tanks (amphibious Sherman tanks fitted with flotation screens) that were supposed to support the 116th Regiment sank in the choppy waters of the Channel. Only 2 of the 29 launched made it to the beach. With the exception of Company A, no unit of the 116th landed where it was planned. Strong winds and tidal currents carried the landing craft from right to left. The 16th Regiment on the east half of the beach did not fare much better, landing in a state of confusion with units badly intermingled.

“Throughout the landing, German gunners poured deadly fire into the ranks of the invading Americans. Bodies lay on the beach or floated in the water. Men sought refuge behind beach obstacles, pondering the deadly sprint across the beach to the seawall, which offered some safety at the base of the cliff. Destroyed craft and vehicles littered the water's edge and beach, and at 0830 hours all landing ceased at Omaha. The troops on the beach were left on their own and realized that the exits were not the way off. Slowly, and in small groups, they scaled the cliffs. Meanwhile, navy destroyers steamed in and, scraping their bottoms in the shallow water, blasted the German fortifications at point-blank range. By 1200 hours German fire had noticeably decreased as the defensive positions were taken from the rear. Then one by one the exits were



opened.

“By nightfall the 1st and 29th divisions held positions around Vierville, Saint-Laurent, and Colleville—nowhere near the planned objectives, but they had a foothold. The Americans suffered 2,400 casualties at Omaha on June 6, but by the end of the day they had landed 34,000 troops. The German 352nd Division lost 20 percent of its strength, with 1,200 casualties, but it had no reserves coming to continue the fight.”

In this article, the key phrase is:

“... nowhere near the planned objectives, but they had a foothold.”

The Allies barely landed, but it was good enough. They aimed for excellence, and in this case got “good enough.” What did “good enough” accomplish? It saved the world.

Don't shoot for “good enough.” But if you land there, thank God and move on.

You may not save the world, but there is something to be said for peace of mind. ■

Photo # 26-G-2343 Army troops wade ashore on “Omaha” Beach, 6 June 1944

