



THERE IS NO PIT SO DEEP

September 2013

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

John 1:4-5

In her book *The Hiding Place* Corrie ten Boom tells the true story from the Second World War when she and her family had risked their lives hiding Jewish people in their Amsterdam home. She wrote about how they were discovered and she and her sister Betsie were taken to Ravensbruck, one of the worst concentration camps in Germany.

The camp was a horrendous place: Food rations were half a pound of bread and one half litre of soup per day. The work the women were made to do was hard and they often had swollen legs and constricted circulation. The stench of burning flesh frequently hung over the camp, reminding them that they too might at any time be gassed and burnt. The inhumane conditions made the women fight, curse, shove, claw and kick each other.

Fleas were so thick in Corrie and Betsie's bunkroom that the women were swarmed by them as soon as they entered at the end of the day's work. Yet those fleas turned out to be a blessing.

Corrie and Betsie had managed to smuggle a Bible into the camp with them, an act that would have meant execution if they had been found out. In the evening they read the

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Bible, gathering strength and comfort from it. Eventually they learned that they were able to read the forbidden book without being detected. The guards did not check on them, not wanting to enter the bunkroom because of the fleas.

Gradually groups of women started gathering in the evening to study God's word, taking turns to read aloud, and praying together, always expressing their gratitude for the fleas that allowed them this freedom to worship. Thanks to the Bible readings, a new atmosphere developed amongst the women. They became kinder towards each other, more polite, more caring.

Betsie began talking to her sister about a plan: "We must go everywhere and tell everyone. There is no pit so deep that God's love is not deeper still." She knew that people would believe because of how God's light of love had shone so brightly there at Ravensbruck.

Even in a concentration camp, the darkest, most evil place one could imagine, God's light shone through and lives were changed. Even there . . . or maybe *especially* there?

God's love can penetrate our darkness too, whether it's the night within us or the night surrounding us. It's amazing how what he has to say to us through his word often rings clearer and is more powerful during times of pain and struggle. *"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*

marja