

# Practicing the Presence

*How to make our Heavenly Father real in the melee of everyday life*

*"Lives Transfigured by His Presence-I"*

**Desmond Ford**

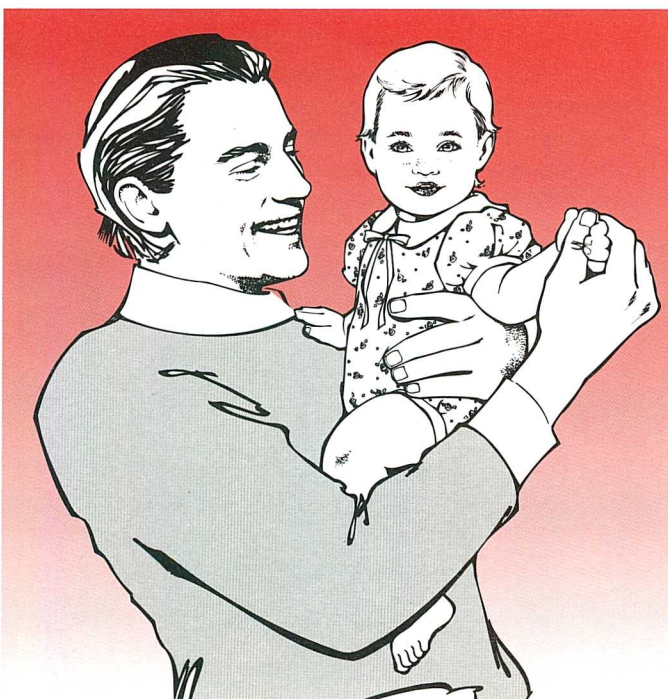
**T**he two leading teachers of the New Testament—Jesus and Paul—both make clear that there is a small company of people who will never marry. They choose to remain single, and God chooses to use them in a very wonderful way.

The best-known such person in the world, one that I have met, is John R.W. Stott. He is a minister in England, for many years rector of All Souls Church in London. He has had a tremendous influence on the world. He is a lovely, gracious, Christian scholar and preacher.

Dr. Stott decided in his very early years that, though heterosexual, he would forego the bliss (and the blitz) of marriage. He would give his whole life to the ministry of the gospel. This he has done very successfully.

## **Corrie ten Boom**

But it is a woman that I want to tell you about right now.



*Some Christians are called to practice the presence of God in singleness.*

*Corrie ten Boom was one such Christian.*

*Though she was a sickly child, she came from a strong family that loved the Bible and cared about people.*

When people first looked at this single woman, she seemed very blurred and unclear. This little old lady should be sitting with a cat on her lap and knitting in her hands.

Yet she was the most sought-after woman speaker in the world. Though she did not begin her ministry until she was in her 50s, she visited 64 countries, slept in a thousand beds, and even traveled by elephant.

I refer to Corrie ten Boom, who learned to practice the presence of God. Her life is a witness to the tremendous impact any life can have if the secret of walking with God is mastered.

## **Wonderful family**

Corrie was a premature baby, and was sickly throughout her childhood. At the age of four, she filled the house with her screams.

But she grew up in a wonderful home. Though her mother died early of tuberculosis, Corrie had two beautiful sisters. One of them, Betsie, went with Corrie through her concentration camp experience. (The other sister was in prison for a time, but released.)

Corrie also had a wonderful brother. Her father was a scholar, who knew several languages.

The family was a family of watchmakers, a family that practiced the presence of God, a family that was poor and rich—poor in material things but rich in the things of God. Every morning, they gathered to study the Bible, reading and comparing texts in various languages.

The ten Booms took joy in little things, seeing in every gift, a gift from a loving, heavenly Father. They cared for people, even adopting eleven foster children. They could never turn anyone away from their door.

Corrie, who started off premature and sickly, began conferences in camps for the mentally impaired. For 20 years she cared for those that were mentally handicapped.

Then came World War II.

