

*“All the way to heaven is heaven, for he said, “I am the Way.” Catherine of Siena*

Elizabeth Sherrill grew through her experiences during her childhood, and adulthood to become to become the Godly woman she is today. Elizabeth pushed through trials of life and relationships to find her way to God. She has written books with Corrie Ten Boom, David Wilkerson, and many others. All of her books are “stories that reveal the power of God” (CBP 1). Even though she has gone through things such as clinical depression and a loss of close family relatives, these hardships have inspired her to write the stories that have changed the lives of so many people today.

Elizabeth Sherrill went through many trials before she began writing her novels. Her childhood was never easy because she was the oldest of three children and therefore had a great deal of responsibility on her shoulders. Elizabeth says, “In 1952 I was diagnosed with clinical depression, Daddy was outraged” She remembers her Dad responding, “You have no right to be sad!” (Sherrill, p.24). Contrary to the human expectation of compassion and understanding, Elizabeth received no sympathy; she was just expected to be strong to be an authority figure to her younger siblings. Her depression resurfaced during early adulthood, when she found herself “with a husband, two little boys, and a third child on the way-all the good things Daddy pointed out- when the void inside me became immobilizing, driving me to an attic room with a locked door and drawn shades” (Sherrill, p.26). Elizabeth was forced to grow up at an early age, causing bad childhood memories and a horrible case of depression. Because of her background, Elizabeth eventually found God and began to write of her new faith.

Elizabeth’s past is filled with people and signs that have helped her find God and inspire her to write “All the Way to Heaven.” During the beginning stages of John and Elizabeth’s marriage, neither were Christians wholeheartedly. In the younger years of

their marriage, John's doctor discovered a lump in the back of John's neck. One day Elizabeth and John went to a cathedral and asked reverend Marc Hall to pray over the situation, to ask for healing for John. Elizabeth and John went to church to have Marc pray over John. "Beside me I felt John's body give a jerk. And unaccountably, I began to cry. Later John told me that at the touch of Marc's hand a bolt of intense heat coursed like an electric shock down the side of his neck, stopping there, searing, burning, and then traveling clear to the soles of his feet. It was hours before he could speak about it. In silence we packed his suitcase for the hospital, each wrestling with the knowledge that something extraordinary had been present in that chapel. Something we couldn't name or describe, a reality that fit nothing we knew" (Sherrill 109-110). Later on when John was expected to have an operation on by Dr. Catlin there was a heart shriveled residue instead of a tumor. Along with this experience, the experiences of many friends and other personal experiences of God's hand working around her inspired Elizabeth Sherrill to see God's love, mercy, and strength.

Many Christian warriors such as Corrie ten Boom, David Wilkerson and C.S. Lewis influenced Elizabeth Sherrill. Corrie ten Boom was known as a Christian girl, who prayed for Jews daily. Corrie is said to be, "strong-willed, highly motivated, conscientious, humorous, and humane" (Ianniello, p. 7). David Wilkerson also influenced Elizabeth. She says that David, "introduced me to the concept of prayer not as an impulsive appeal to God, but as a discipline" (Sherrill, p.189). Influences of these people helped Elizabeth find God and learn how to write for Him and reach out to other people. Because of these influences and the struggles they helped her through, she now

says along with Corrie ten Boom, “No pit is so deep that God’s love is not deeper still” (Ten Boom, p. 217).

Many outside forces, such as friends, religion, and struggles, influenced Elizabeth heavily. All of her experiences have given her the inspiration for writing her books today. Elizabeth grew as a person and as a writer through influences in her childhood, in her adult struggles and in her relationships. Elizabeth will continue to reach people through her writing because God has given her a powerful, unique talent to reach people with His truth.

## Resources

Elizabeth Sherrill Bio. Retrieved February 18, 2005 from the World Wide Web. Christian Book Previews. <http://www.christianbookpreviews.com/christian-book-author.php?isbn=0800758722>

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Snyder, A. (1998) Corrie ten Boom: A Protestant Evangelical response to the Nazi Persecution of Jews. *Neo Politique*. Retrieved February 22, 2005 from the World Wide Web:  
[http://www.neopolitique.org/NP2000/pages/Essays?Articles?Ten\\_boom-oct'99.htm](http://www.neopolitique.org/NP2000/pages/Essays?Articles?Ten_boom-oct'99.htm)

Ten Boom, C., Sherrill, E., and Sherrill J. (1971). The Hiding Place. New Jersey: Bantam Books.