

 **OpenDoors**

REMEMBERING 'GOD'S SMUGGLER'



BROTHER ANDREW VAN DER BIJL

11.05.1928 – 27.09.2022

REMEMBERING BROTHER ANDREW

Brother Andrew was a little boy when he first heard the story of God's creation. But it was only when he was lying in a hospital bed, after being injured as a soldier, that the story didn't seem so far-fetched. And it was then that he wondered whether all that the Bible spoke about is true.

This excerpt from Brother Andrew's biography, *God's Smuggler*, captures that moment of truth:

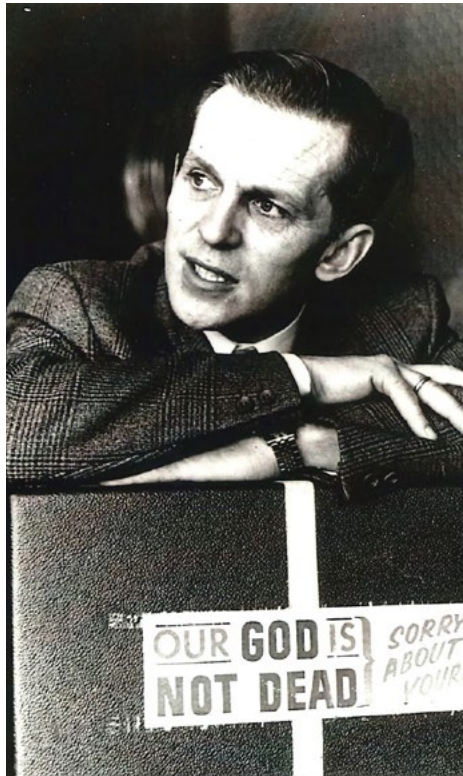
Finally, one night, a fragile little event occurred that changed my life far more radically than the bullet that had torn through bone and muscle a year before. It was a stormy night in the dead of winter, 1950. The sleet blew... as it can only blow in Holland in mid-January... There were many voices in that wind.

What was I hanging on to? What was it that was hanging on to me? What was standing between me and freedom?

The rest of the house was asleep. I lay on my back with my hands under my head staring at the darkened ceiling, and all at once, very quietly, I let go of my ego. With a new note in the wind yelling at me not to be a fool, I turned myself over to God – lock, stock and adventure.

It truly was just the beginning of Brother Andrew's adventure...

Five years after this young Dutch missionary gave his life to Christ, Brother Andrew went, in 1955, with a Dutch



delegation to the World Youth Congress in Warsaw, Poland. There he discovered a remnant of the Body of Christ behind the Iron Curtain that was desperately in need of Bibles. Brother Andrew distributed a suitcase full of Christian literature. This marked the humble beginnings of Open Doors.

Brother Andrew's story told in *God's Smuggler*, an international bestseller, details dangerous border crossings, KGB pursuits, and his courageous journey toward living radically for Jesus Christ.

In 1993, Brother Andrew was knighted by Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands. In 1997, he was the recipient of the World Evangelical Fellowship Religious Liberty Award, recognising his lifetime of service to the persecuted Church and his passion for spreading the Gospel. However, Brother Andrew says he was most proud of being named a "Blood Brother" of the Apache Indian tribe in the 1980s. As part of the ceremony, he was given an Apache name that means "He who breaks through the lines."

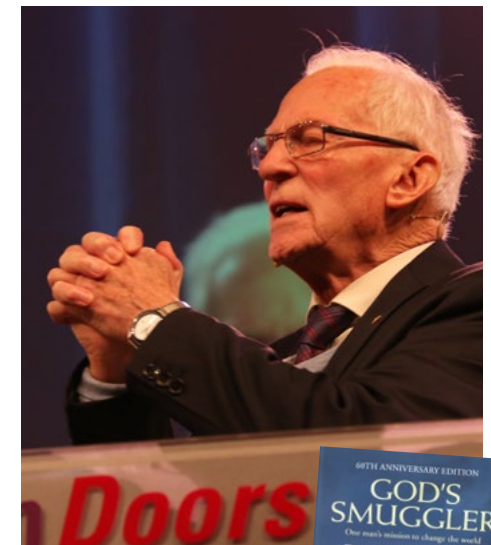
One more honour that Brother Andrew was proud of came after the fall of the Iron Curtain, when he obtained copies of the KGB reports, numbering more than 150 pages, about his work in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. He was surprised they knew so much about him yet couldn't stop his work.

Brother Andrew's work through Open Doors has brought the hope of the Gospel into places where most Christians are unwilling to go. His underground network of indigenous Christians in these high-risk areas has aided the secret distribution of millions of Bibles each year. And today, thanks to friends like you, Open Doors trains thousands of Christian pastors and lay leaders through seminaries and persecution seminars; and assists in

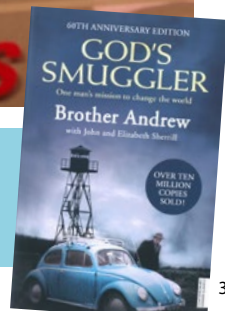
economic relief, literacy training and vocational training in the most dangerous countries in the world.

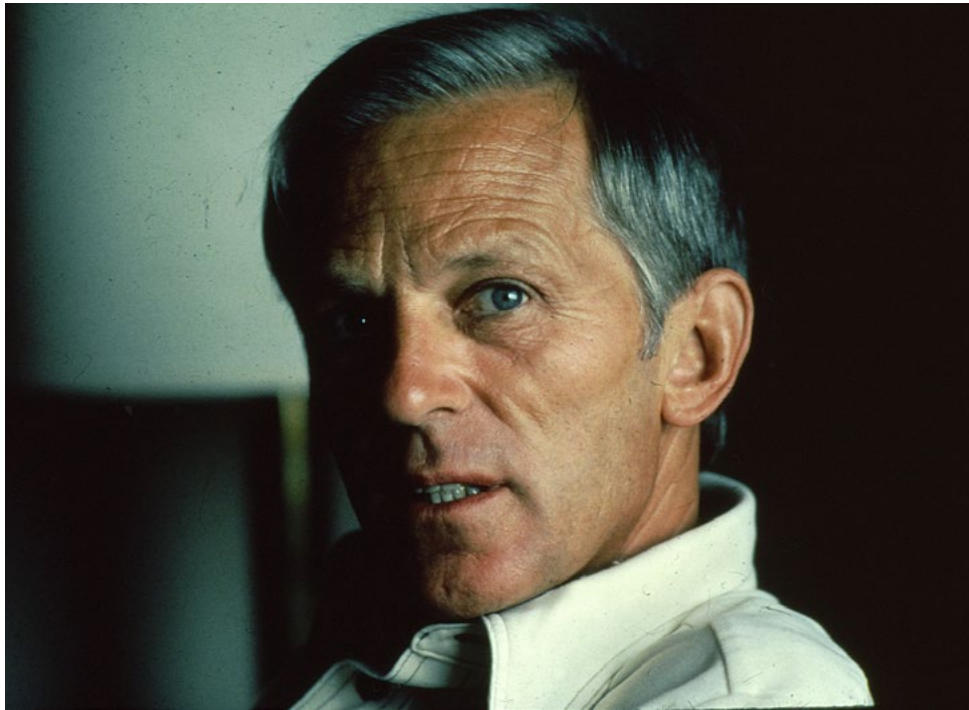
His friendships and the love of God have taken Brother Andrew into private meetings with numerous fundamentalist leaders from other religions. He's among the few Western leaders to have regularly gone to these groups as an ambassador for Christ. He has also broken through Christian religious barriers by preaching in Catholic and Coptic Orthodox churches.

Brother Andrew was married for 59 years to his wife Corry who passed away on 22 January 2018. They lived all their lives in Holland and are survived by their five children and eleven grandchildren. And, by courageously opening doors for God's Word through friends like you, their spiritual children here on earth and in heaven are countless!



Read about the adventures and miracles of Brother Andrew's journey of faith. Order your copy of *God's Smuggler* today on www.opendoors.org.za. Over 10 million copies sold worldwide.





TRIBUTES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

“The greatest impact that Brother Andrew had on my life was his tremendous love and commitment to the Word of God. During my many years of travelling together with him, I was always challenged by how Andrew was ‘a man of one Book’, the Bible. He didn’t just read a few verses; he read many chapters every day... When I think of Brother Andrew, two other things come to mind. One, he was a pioneer, always looking for new and unique things. Second, he was a prophet. Many times, he shared thoughts and ideas that we couldn’t ‘place’, but years later we discovered he was way ahead of us. Brother Andrew always liked to do unique, often impossible things. If a project was possible, he wasn’t interested. ‘Everybody can do that,’ he would often say. However, when he heard the word IMPOSSIBLE, he was very excited.”

Johan Companjen, Founding President, Open Doors International

“We believe Brother Andrew did [Project Pearl] because he was touched by the love of God. God carried out a miracle through him in smuggling one million Bibles into China. But we know there is no one-man show in God’s family. The great task couldn’t be accomplished by Brother Andrew alone. There must have been many, many Brother Andrews – big ones, small ones – who unitedly take up the burden. Here we give our thanks to all the ‘big’ Andrews and ‘small’ Andrews. May the Lord remember what you’ve done.”

A house-church pastor in China who was deeply involved in Project Pearl

Brother Andrew was one of my “heroes of faith”. For me, he was a modern-day apostle. He had a calling from the Lord and through him the Lord performed mighty things. He just followed where Jesus led him and because he was obedient, and the persecuted Church is so much better off. He truly “Did what he couldn’t”. May the peace of the Lord comfort all his loved ones and may Open Doors International go from strength to strength as they serve the most persecuted because of the foundation that Brother Andrew laid.

Jan Gouws, Former Executive Director Open Doors Southern Africa

“The best way I can characterise Brother Andrew is with the title of the book he loved most after the Bible, the devotional of Oswald Chambers called *My Utmost for His Highest*. That summarises best why Brother Andrew was who he was and did what he did. He always told me that his epitaph should be, ‘He did what he couldn’t.’ And yet he did it because he longed to give his utmost for God’s Highest.”

Ron van der Spoel, Pastor, the Netherlands



BOLDLY LIVING OUT CHRIST'S LOVE

In the 1980s, Hezbollah, an Islamic political and militant group in Egypt, kidnapped and held hostage a relative of someone Brother Andrew knew. The hostage was chained to a radiator for three years.

While attempting to get him and other hostages released, Brother Andrew arranged a meeting with Hezbollah's sheikh and representative, Fadlallah. While Fadlallah didn't have the authority needed to release the hostages, he could deliver a message to Hezbollah's leaders.

So in advocating for the chained hostage to be released, Brother Andrew said, *"I'm fully prepared to stay here and take the place of this man. He has suffered enough..."* Surprised, the sheikh asked, *"How can you say that?"*

Brother Andrew responded, *"This is the Spirit of Jesus."* He stood and spread out his arms to demonstrate. *"He died on the cross to let us go free. He died so we could live. Now I'm ready to give myself up so my friend can go free. This is what Christianity is all about."*

Fadlallah had never heard of this kind of Christianity. Although Brother Andrew's request wasn't granted, they stayed in contact for several years before Fadlallah died in 2010. (Brother Andrew's selfless request made a powerful impact on all who heard about it, encouraging the hostages as he boldly lived out Christ's love in the face of danger.)



Brother Andrew visits Ayatollah Fadlallah in Beirut

MEMORABLE MOMENTS IN HIS LIFE AND MINISTRY

BOLD BEGINNINGS

1955

Brother Andrew smuggles Bibles into Eastern Europe for the first time. The ministry of Open Doors begins.

BETLE DRIVE

1957

Brother Andrew makes the first of many trips to the Soviet Union in his blue Volkswagen Beetle, which was to travel over 321 900 kilometres.

GOD'S SMUGGLER PUBLISHED

1967

Brother Andrew's biography, *God's Smuggler*, becomes one of the best-selling Christian books of all time.

PROJECT PEARL

1981

Project Pearl sees one million Bibles delivered to a beach in China, in just one night. Thousands of waiting believers gather to receive them.

BROTHER ANDREW BUILDS BRIDGES

1996

Brother Andrew presents Yasser Arafat with a children's Bible for his daughter. Since their friendship began in the 1980s, Arafat received many copies of *God's Smuggler* to distribute among his officers.

FINAL TRIP

2018

Brother Andrew celebrates his 90th birthday and takes a private trip to a country in South Asia to visit many of his old friends and new ones.



MEMORABLE QUOTES

"If your vision does not scare you, then both your vision and your God are too small."

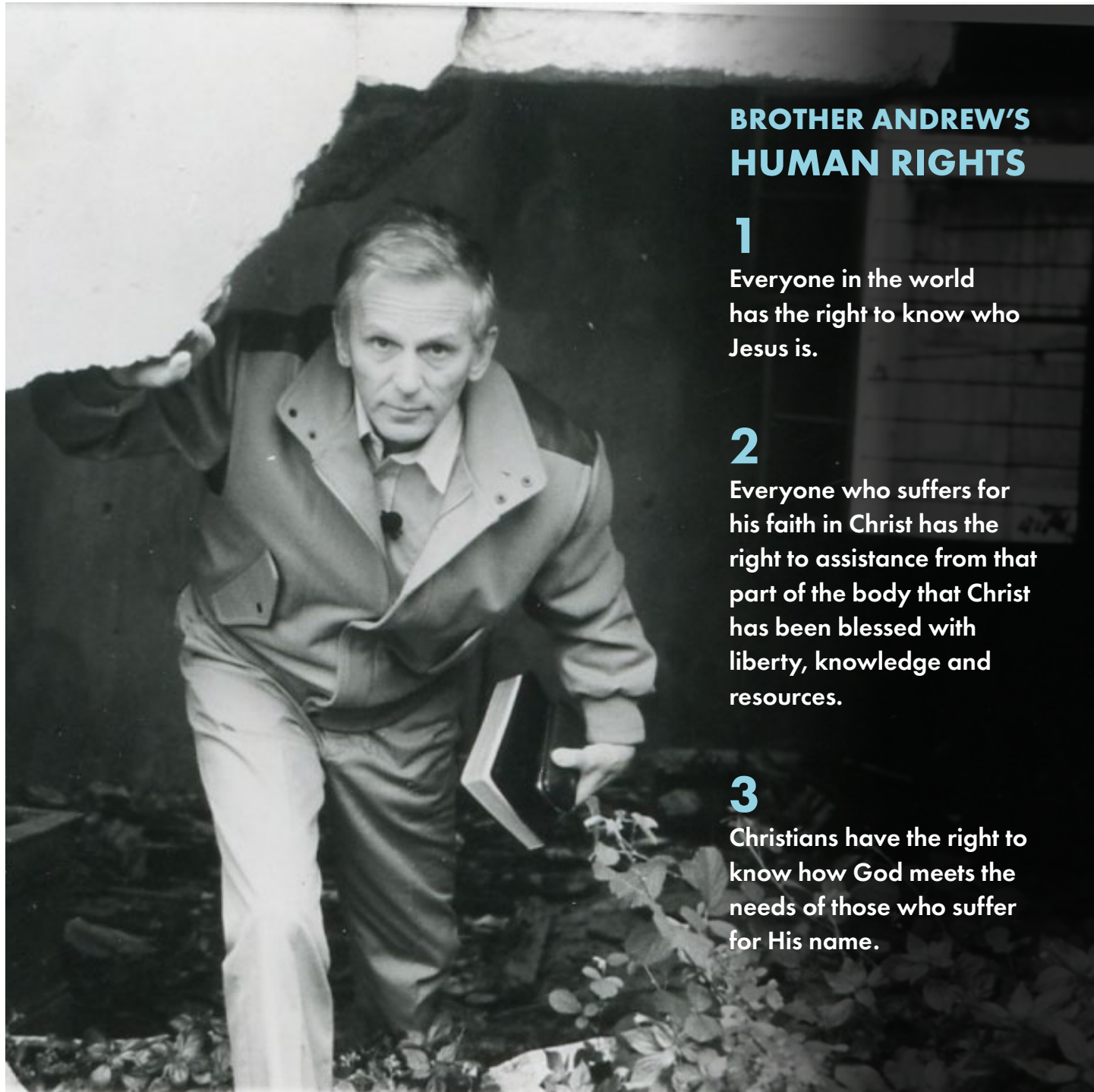
"We have to live a life that is more revolutionary than that of the revolutionaries."

"Don't ever forget we're here for the Book. If we're here for the Book and the One who gave us the Book, we have to obey Him. Obey Him. Be Jesus in your form."

"God said to go! He didn't promise that you would come back."

"The Word of God changes people, and changed people change the situations around them."

"We are Christ's ambassadors. Muslims cannot come to love my Saviour if they cannot first love me. You may be the only Jesus they will ever see."



BROTHER ANDREW'S HUMAN RIGHTS

1

Everyone in the world has the right to know who Jesus is.

2

Everyone who suffers for his faith in Christ has the right to assistance from that part of the body that Christ has been blessed with liberty, knowledge and resources.

3

Christians have the right to know how God meets the needs of those who suffer for His name.

BROTHER ANDREW TAUGHT US...

Not to wait for an invitation, but to go...

"Jesus' commission is our only strategy for attack. And attacking means not waiting for an invitation but going! Jesus is my friend, and this means that the Muslim is my friend, even if initially he behaves like an enemy. I constantly see how the relationship changes when I share my greatest treasure with a Muslim."

About prayer...

"We have to learn so much about the subject of prayer, but not for the sake of cultivating my prayer life, showing the world how many hours a day I pray, what a pious guy I am because I pray and I'm in all those organisations for prayer and intercession, and standing in the gap and all that. But always in relation to reaching out to a lost world with the message of Jesus."

The difference between living and dying...

Can be as simple as "Somebody finds you in time." In time to share the Gospel with you.

God chose you and me to be His fellow workers...

"It's a mystery that God chooses us to be His fellow workers! Why should the Lord of the whole universe decide to entrust feeble people like you and me with participating in the unfolding of His will? We'll never be able to fathom it – but we need to believe it! God wants to use us to work out His purposes. What a privilege and a responsibility! So, let's get on our knees and pray. And may God use our prayers to change the course of history in these nations. For the sake of His people – and for His glory!"

To reach out to our persecutors...

"They're not our enemy, they're our mission field." He often said in relation to this, "We're not against any group or ideology. But rather, we're pro-Jesus and pro His Bride, the Church."

"HE did what he couldn't."



THE GOD'S SMUGGLER FUND

Brother Andrew's life and ministry has inspired and challenged millions. Your support will help his legacy to continue and grow.

You can give a gift to the **God's Smuggler fund**, which will continue Open Doors' most strategic work strengthening and encouraging the persecuted Church.

Scan here:



From the heart



Dear partners and friends

Brother Andrew, as Anne van der Bijl was fondly known, had a profound influence on the generations he was a part of. His obedience, courage and determination brought the reality of the persecution of Christians into the public eye.

Brother Andrew moved from one frontier to the next in finding and supporting persecuted Christians. From visiting the communist regime in Eastern Europe in 1955 to his first trip to China in the 1970s, which culminated in Project Pearl with one million Bibles delivered in one night to a shore filled with expectant believers. He also visited Islamic regimes in the Middle East and North Africa, where there is no freedom of religion and belief.

God's Smuggler, which recounts his life and ministry, continues to inspire readers to act as a voice for the persecuted Church.

We're grateful for Brother Andrew's faith, obedience, and example. He leaves a growing legacy in the global ministry of Open Doors, reaching millions of the most

persecuted Christians in over 70 countries.

With more than 360 million Christians facing high levels of persecution and discrimination today, there is much more to do. So we continue the journey he started, working out the shared vision of engaging Christians everywhere in strengthening the most persecuted so that the global Church remains God's faithful witness to the world.

Today, a network of believers continues to faithfully answer the call to pray for, be with and give to support our persecuted family of faith so they can continue to represent the Kingdom of God in their communities and nations despite persecution. May we be encouraged and inspired in our walk of faith by the faith of those who've gone before us, like Brother Andrew.

Peace

Lynette Leibach

Executive Director

Open Doors Southern Africa



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Persecuted  But never alone.

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REG # 2004/023397/08 | Printing done by Resolution Litho