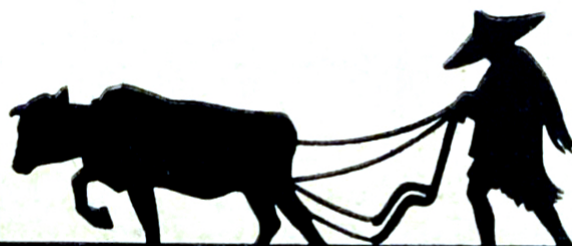


BY LIFE AND BY DEATH

EXCERPTS AND
LESSONS FROM

THE DIARY OF
JOHN C. STAM

OF CHINA



E. SCHUYLER ENGLISH

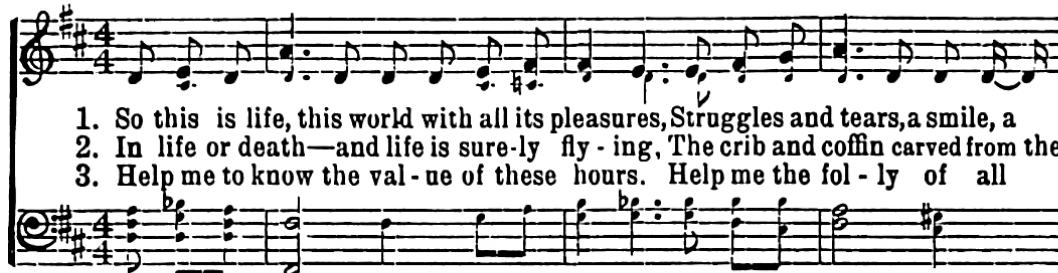
As sung by Douglas Davies—Radio Station WMBI

By Life, or By Death*

WILL H. HOUGHTON

PHIL. 1: 20

GEORGE S. SCHULER



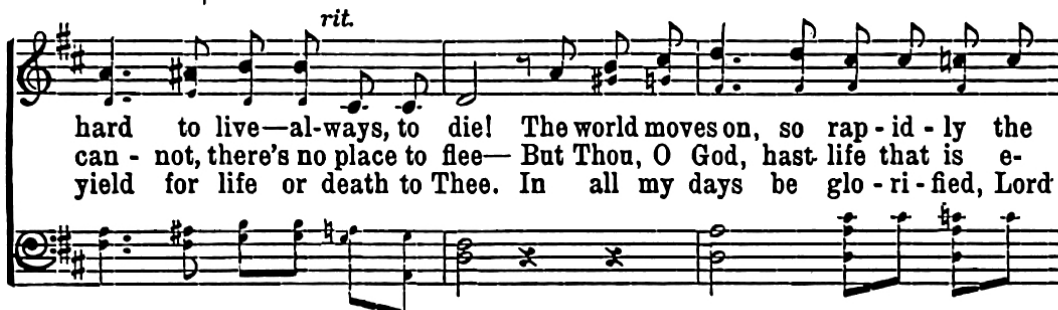
1. So this is life, this world with all its pleasures, Struggles and tears, a smile, a
2. In life or death—and life is sure-ly fly-ing, The crib and coffin carved from the
3. Help me to know the val-ue of these hours. Help me the fol-ly of all

rit.

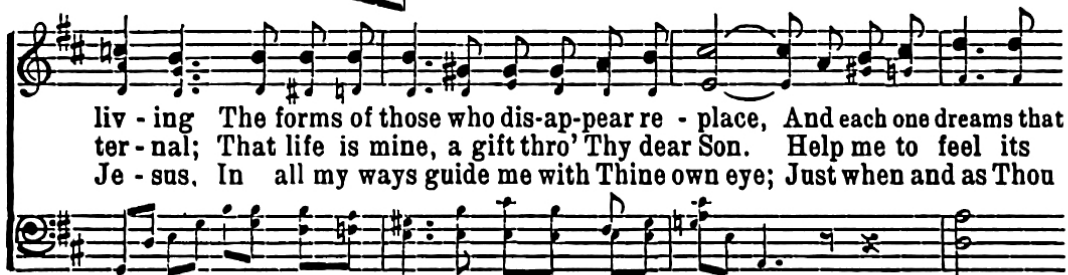


frown, a sigh, Friendship so true, and love of kin and neighbor? Sometimes 'tis
self-same tree. In life or death—and death so soon is com-ing—Es-cape I
waste to see; Help me to trust the Christ who bore my sorrows, And thus to

rit.

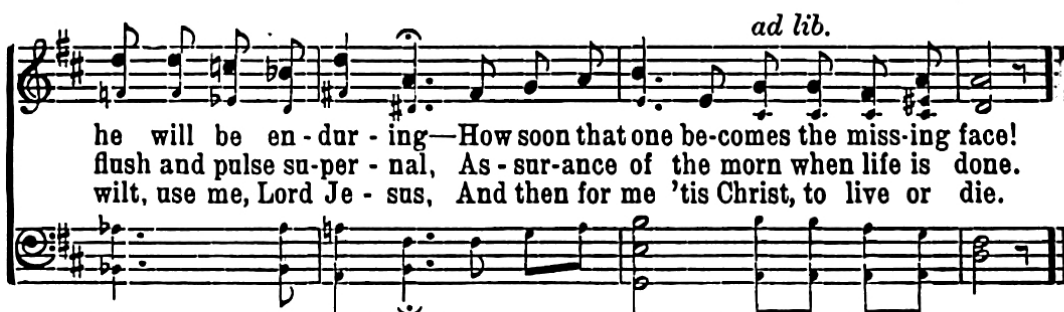


hard to live—al-ways, to die! The world moves on, so rap-id-ly the
can-not, there's no place to flee—But Thou, O God, hast life that is e-
yield for life or death to Thee. In all my days be glo-ri-fied, Lord



liv-ing The forms of those who dis-ap-pear re- place, And each one dreams that
ter-nal; That life is mine, a gift thro' Thy dear Son. Help me to feel its
Je-sus, In all my ways guide me with Thine own eye; Just when and as Thou

ad lib.



he will be en-dur-ing—How soon that one be-comes the miss-ing face!
flush and pulse su-per-nal, As-sur-ance of the morn when life is done.
wilt, use me, Lord Je-sus, And then for me 'tis Christ, to live or die.

*In loving memory of John and Betty Stam, martyred in China, December 8, 1934
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BY LIFE AND BY DEATH

EXCERPTS AND LESSONS
FROM
THE DIARY OF JOHN C. STAM

by
E. SCHUYLER ENGLISH. LITT.D.
Member, China Inland Mission Council
Author, "Studies in the Gospel According to Matthew"
Associate Editor, OUR HOPE

FIFTH EDITION



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DEDICATED
TO THE
PARENTS OF
JOHN AND BETTY STAM
TO WHOM THE LORD GAVE AND FROM WHOM THE LORD HAS
TAKEN AWAY
AND TO
THE MIRACLE BABY
HELEN PRISCILLA STAM
FOR WHOM SO MANY PRAYERS ARE BEING OFFERED
AND
IN WHOM SUCH HIGH HOPES REST

FOREWORD

ON THE desk in my study there rests a paper-weight of black ebony wood, oblong and triangular in shape, inscribed on one of its surfaces with the design of the lotus flower. It is not an ornament of visual beauty, but because of its history it is a treasured possession. I do not know its age, whence it was fashioned, or whose hands carved the rude image that it bears. I only know the source from which it came to me, and that not so many years ago it served another master, through whom God has been glorified, both by life and by death. For this little piece of ebony was handed to me by the godly father of one who had been a godly son, for on the paper in which it was wrapped when I received it were stamped these words:

JOHN C. STAM
Rescued from the Loot
Tsingteh, China
December, 1934

Sometimes when I have looked at this remembrance, my thoughts have wandered across the seas. "You were present when Communist soldiers pounded on the door of that home in China and broke it in, but you did not hear. You were in the room when a young father was bound by rough hands and carried away from his beloved wife and their precious two-months' old baby, and later, when she too was taken with her

child, but you did not see. Would that you had lips to tell me something of those brave hearts, and of the peace of God which possessed their souls during their hour of trial and at their triumph!"

It would be presumptuous and bold indeed for another to attempt to write the life story of John and Betty Stam, when the tale has already been told so ably and beautifully by others.¹ This little book is not a biography in any sense of the word. But there has come into the author's hands recently something which, though like the ebony paper-weight it cannot speak of the hour of trial, can tell us of the melting and moulding of a soul. I speak of the original diary of John C. Stam, rescued from the home in Tsingteh, which reveals in a striking way the love and grace of God in dealing with His servant through the years, as we are sure He dealt with Betty also, to temper and prepare them both to face the executioner's sword and to wear victors' crowns.

These pages contain, therefore, selected excerpts from the diary of John C. Stam together with comments by the author. Some might question why there is so much comment, and so little of the diary. The answer is twofold: in the first place, approximately one-third of the full diary has been quoted in this book, for there are many occasions when Mr. Stam made no entries for periods of from a week to three months.

¹ *John and Betty Stam, Martyrs*, by Dr. Lee S. Huizenga, published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan
The Triumph of John and Betty Stam, by Mrs. Howard Taylor, published by China Inland Mission, Philadelphia, Pa.

It is obvious, also, that not every line of a personal diary is of great interest to all readers, and the excerpts chosen comprise what we might term the "meat" from the whole body of John Stam's experience. Secondly, the author is convinced that John Stam would prefer that lessons of practical value to young men and women should be drawn from his diary, if possible, rather than that an unedited publication of it should draw much attention to himself instead of to his Lord. Excerpts were chosen, therefore, to illustrate how a red-blooded young man of this day and age discovered that Christ preëminent was the answer to all his problems and hopes, and in the prayerful belief that other young people will find something in the experience of John Stam which will be of vital help to them in their Christian lives, and that they too may find the Lord Jesus Christ to be their "All, and in all."

The author is truly honored, and at the same time deeply humbled, that he has been entrusted with the preparation of this work. He wishes to express his warm gratitude to Mr. Peter Stam, Mr. Peter Stam, Jr., Mr. Jacob Stam, and other members of the family, for their confidence in him, and their hearty coöperation with him, in making available the diary, and in many other ways. The author also acknowledges here his grateful thanks to Dr. Will H. Houghton, President of the Moody Bible Institute, and to Dr. Robert Hall Glover, Home Director of the China Inland Mission. These beloved friends had priority rights to a part in this book, because of their connections with the Bible

Institute where John Stam was trained and the Mission which he served, and they graciously withdrew. The final acknowledgment is happily rendered, again to Dr. Houghton, and to Mr. George S. Schuler, for permission to use their beautiful song *By Life or By Death*, which in part inspired the title of this book, and which is printed herein.

And now we leave it all in God's hands. May He be glorified on every page.

E. S. E.

Philadelphia, Pa.
September, 1938.

INTRODUCTION

THE DIARY of John Stam is a rich treasure-house in which there are to be found many priceless gems concerning Christian life, growth, and consecration. We have reached into this stronghold of the experience of another and have withdrawn certain choice jewels, in the hope that under close examination they may reveal to us some reflection of the one whose diary they adorn, and through him, a richer vision of the One Whom he served, our Lord Jesus Christ.

But before we inspect the diary, suppose we introduce its author to you, though who is there who does not know him? John C. Stam, who was the seventh of the nine children of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Stam, of Paterson, N. J., was born on January 18, 1907. While he was the son of Christian parents, for his father was already the Superintendent of the Star of Hope Mission of Paterson, John was not converted until he was fifteen years of age. He used to relate that he would do anything, run a mile out of his way, if necessary, to avoid being seen at or near one of the Mission's street meetings. But when, during a message by a blind evangelist at his father's Mission, John *was* converted, the Lord got hold of him in a real way, and from that time onward he knew that he was called into the Lord's service. It was six years later, however, before he went into training for his future work, for it was in September, 1929, that John entered the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.

Meanwhile another life, which was to touch his and

become a part of it, was being guided by God along a similar path. On February 22, 1906, there was born to a Presbyterian minister and his wife, in the state of Michigan, the first of their five children, a daughter, Elisabeth Alden Scott. Within six months after the baby was born, Dr. and Mrs. Charles Ernest Scott accepted the call to Shantung Province in China which they had long heard, and they took their little daughter with them. Thus it was that Betty Scott developed a love for the Chinese early in life. Though Betty received her elementary schooling at the feet of her mother in China, she completed her education in the United States, receiving her A. B. at Wilson College in Pennsylvania in the spring of 1928, and from there she went on to the Moody Bible Institute in the autumn. It was after Betty Scott's freshman year at Wilson College, at a summer conference in Keswick, New Jersey, that she gave her life to the Lord Jesus Christ in full surrender, and it was not long thereafter that her call to China became an irresistible magnet.

It was at the Moody Bible Institute that John Stam and Betty Scott met for the first time. It was there that their romance blossomed, there that John, at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Isaac Page of the China Inland Mission, first set his face toward China. In 1931 Betty Scott sailed to the Far East under the China Inland Mission, and a year later John followed her. The two were married in Tsinan in October, 1933. For a while the young couple were stationed in Suancheng, Anhwei Province, and it was in a little city not far from there,

Wuhu, that their baby daughter, Helen Priscilla, was born, in September, 1934.

In November, 1934, they were sent to their final station at Tsingteh, Anhwei. Not many days after, the city was attacked by Communist bandits, and on the morning of December 6, 1934, John and Betty and their precious child were captured; two days later the father and mother, their mutilated bodies lying silent and still on a hillside at Miaosheo, were with the Lord Jesus, Whom they loved so much and served so devotedly, by life and by death.

The story of how Helen Priscilla was spared is too well known to repeat more than briefly. In some miraculous way the baby was left untouched in a house outside of the city of execution, where the parents had been confined, and after two days a Chinese Christian, Evangelist Lo, found her resting in her sleeping bag on a bed, warm and comfortable. By the quickest possible means she was transported to her grandparents, Dr. and Mrs. Scott, in Tsinan, where today she is the joy of all who see her, and a testimony to the goodness of God.

In John's diary, which is before me, I find the last entry written on December 5, 1934, the night before his capture: "*Rumours are around about Reds east of Chiki—they say Chiki people have been losing sleep on account of the fear!*"¹ But one cannot imagine fear in the heart of John Stam, who trusted God so wholly. Upon another occasion he had written to his parents: ". . . If we should go on before, it is only

¹ See facsimile reproduction of this page from the diary, on page 60.

the quicker to enjoy the bliss of the Saviour's presence, the sooner to be released from the fight against sin and Satan. Meanwhile we can continue to praise Him from Whom all blessings flow." No fear!—Did not the Saviour say: "Go . . . Lo, I am with you alway"? John's trust and hope can best be expressed by the words of one of his favorite poems, written by another missionary to China, the Rev. E. H. Hamilton, at the martyrdom of a coworker, the Rev. J. W. Vinson:

"Afraid? Of what?
To feel the spirit's glad release?
To pass from pain to perfect peace,
The strife and strain of life to cease?

Afraid — of that?

"Afraid? Of what?
Afraid to see the Saviour's face,
To hear His welcome, and to trace
The glory gleam from wounds of grace?

Afraid — of that?

"Afraid? Of what?
A flash, a crash, a piercé heart;
Darkness, light, O Heaven's art;
A wound of His a counterpart:

Afraid — of that?

"Afraid? Of what?
To enter into Heaven's rest,
And yet to serve the Master blest,
From service good to service best?

Afraid — of that?

"Afraid? Of what?
To do by death what life could not—
Baptize with blood a stony plot,
Till souls shall blossom from the spot?

Afraid — of that?"

For John Stam, for Betty Stam — 'twas CHRIST to live *and* to die.

I AM HIS, AND HE IS MINE

EXCERPT FROM ONE OF THE FIRST PAGES
OF THE DIARY OF JOHN C. STAM—
NOVEMBER 23, 1930

"I have been reading 'The Growth of a Soul,'¹ and have been much blessed by it. I have long been praying that God will keep me from foolishly looking for experiences such as others have — each life is planned separately, I know. But I could not fail to notice that in many experiences and in many spiritual struggles and strivings there are likenesses. One does wonder, however, how these men of old learned to express themselves and their states of mind so fully on paper. I find it rather hard — perhaps it is just another form of a modern complex — A FEARFULNESS OF COMMITTING ONE'S SELF TO PAPER, FOR FEAR OF WHAT OTHERS MIGHT THINK SHOULD THEY CHANCE TO READ IT LATER."

¹ *Hudson Taylor in Early Years*—The Growth of a Soul, by Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor, published by the China Inland Mission, Philadelphia

CHAPTER ONE

I AM HIS, AND HE IS MINE

January 6, 1932 (While a student at Moody) —“*I myself have had a harder time spiritually this last term than ever before. Oh, for the power of God in my own personal life, and oh, to see souls saved.* BUT PRAISE THE LORD, I AM SAVED, AND I AM HIS, AND HE IS MINE” (John C. Stam).

JOHN STAM was the possessor of the greatest heritage in all the world, without which there can be no hope, which, having been gained, is the source of peace, of strength, of power, of all true riches, of lasting joy, and of eternal fellowship with God. He was *saved*, that is, he had become the recipient of life eternal, through faith in God's Word about the gift of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Because there was not the slightest doubt in his mind, because he *knew* this to be true, he was filled with praise toward God, with the desire for a holy and empowered life, and with a burden for the souls of men. It was through *faith* that John Stam was saved;¹ it was the *assurance* of that salvation which spurred him onward in the Christian life.

What is this faith? Is it mere speculation, some vague fantasy, without any sound basis? Does it cling to

¹ Ephesians 2:8

bare conjecture, or does it rest on a sure foundation? How may one know that he is saved?

“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”² It is not the nature of the *faith* that counts, it is the nature of that *in which that faith rests*. Faith in the word of man is a fragile thing, for man’s word is often broken. But faith in the Word of God is sure and unfailing, for God’s Word “liveth and abideth forever.”³ So then, we are “saved through faith,”¹ and faith comes by the Word of God.²

It behooves every man, therefore, to determine what God has to say concerning his condition and his hope. Are we worthy in our natural state to come into the presence of a holy God? The search-light of God’s Word finds us out, and reveals that “the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,”⁴ being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, malice, murder, hatred, pride, disobedience, without understanding and without mercy.⁵ “There is none righteous, no, not one . . . for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”⁶ Worthy to enter the presence of God? Ah no; worthy of death:⁷ “For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,”⁸ and “the wages of sin is death.”⁹ All that man can do is to plead the mercy of God. In His love and kindness God has already heard and answered that plea, and has provided a way of salvation according to His mercy

² Romans 10:17

⁶ Romans 1:29-31

⁸ Romans 1:18

³ I Peter 1:23

⁶ Romans 3:10, 23

⁹ Romans 6:23

⁴ Jeremiah 17:9

⁷ Romans 1:32



John Stam, at the time of his graduation from the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, in the Spring of 1932.



John and Betty Stam, in Shanghai, on November 11, 1933,
two weeks after their wedding day.

through the Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁰ “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,”¹¹ Who came to earth, Who suffered and bled, and died on Calvary’s Cross; that we, who once were lost and without hope, might be redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.¹² God has ordained the way of salvation and Eternal Life; it is a free gift.¹³ There is only one condition: that we *believe*;¹⁴ for whosoever believeth in Him, in Christ, shall not perish, but have everlasting life.¹⁵

Does this mean then, that if we believe in Christ, our sins are to go unjudged? No — for *our* sins have *already* been judged, for when Christ died, He died in our stead, “the Just for the unjust,”¹⁶ and bore our sins in His body;¹⁷ and we are thus justified by His blood,¹⁸ and our sins and iniquities will be remembered no more.¹⁹ We are “justified by faith,”²⁰ we are “saved through faith,”²¹ faith in the testimony of God’s Word about the Gospel of His Son, which “is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”²²

John Stam was not only saved, but he *knew* it, he was *sure* that life eternal was his present possession. The question might arise: How could he be so sure? How could he so presume as to his own soul’s condition? The assurance which John Stam had is the right of every believer, for it was not presumption on his part, but an absolute confidence in the inerrancy of

¹⁰ Titus 3:5

¹³ Ephesians 2:8, 9

¹⁶ I Peter 2:24

¹⁹ Romans 5:1

¹¹ John 3:16

¹⁴ Acts 16:31

¹⁷ Romans 5:9

²⁰ Ephesians 2:8, 9

¹² I Peter 1:18, 19

¹⁵ I Peter 3:18

¹⁸ Hebrews 10:17

²¹ Romans 1:16

God's Word. What shall I do to be saved? God's Word says: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."²² John Stam believed. Salvation became a fact. And so God says: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, *that ye may know* that ye have eternal life."²³ There it is—do you believe God's Word, or do you make Him a liar?²⁴ You believe Him, of course, and therefore you may *know* that you possess eternal life at this moment; that you are saved for ever more. Salvation is not dependent upon *feelings*, or upon an *experience*; it is yours because God says so. And as you lay aside all doubts and questionings, and rely simply on the inviolate Word of God, so increasingly will you find it true that the Holy Spirit will confirm with your spirit that you are the child of God.²⁵ And then, fears and difficulties being dispelled, you will be unhampered in your love for Christ; your joy will be full,²⁶ and the desire of your heart will be for a close fellowship with the Lord, and your only burden, for the souls of men.

"Praise the Lord, I am saved, and I am His, and He is mine." That was John Stam's testimony. Is it yours? Have you received the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour? Do you know the joy of being *sure* that you are His, and that He is yours? If these things are not true of you, then now, at this moment, will you not get down on your knees before the Lord, and open your heart to Him, and let Him come into your life from this time and for ever? Only believe and live!

²² Acts 16:30, 31
²⁵ Romans 8:16

²³ I John 5:13
²⁶ I John 1:4

²⁴ I John 5:10

NOT I, BUT CHRIST

S U R R E N D E R

Excerpts from the Diary of John C. Stam, while
a student at the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.

November 21, 1930—"I have been thinking that our God never gives us too many lessons at once. While I am having training this term in learning to trust Him alone—God grant that I may learn it fully—last term I had some severe struggles and lessons in self-denial. I remember promising the Lord that I would deny myself after refusing to . . . pass out tracts. . . . What misery I had, when I did not want to deny myself for His sake. God grant that the lesson is learned, but I fear I have further instalments still to come. 'Fear,' did I write? 'His way is perfect—He will make my way perfect.'"

December 15, 1930—"I was elected President of the Prayer Fellowship today. . . . At the first the election seemed to be going to ———, and I had an opportunity quickly to search my heart whether I would be grieved at not getting the election, and whether I was just looking for an office."

May 24, 1931—"When I went to ———¹ I asked the Lord to work there no matter what it would cost me, if I had to preach more poorly than I ever preached before. He took me at my word! It's dangerous to pray like that, as I have since found out. I have never had a harder time preaching . . . I know the people were disappointed, but the Lord did begin to work. . . .

"Betty² is in Philadelphia now, but I have not been able to write her a letter. After much searching of my heart and of the Scriptures, I feel that the Lord would be displeased at my going forward in this direction. And only last week a man came up to my room to have me type a letter for him. A former student, he told me with tears in his eyes, that he had gotten out of the will of the Lord when he stopped his studies and got married. 'What grief he has had since. And now, while Betty and I are looking forward to the same field, I cannot move one step in her direction until I am sure that it is the Lord's directive will. I don't want to wreck her life and mine too.'"

¹ A city in Ohio where Mr. Stam held a series of meetings.

² Elisabeth Alden Scott, whom Mr. Stam married in China in 1933, was at that time at the China Inland Mission Home in Germantown, Philadelphia, as a candidate for foreign service.

CHAPTER TWO

NOT I, BUT CHRIST

January 17, 1933 (While at China Inland Mission Headquarters in Shanghai)—*“Today one quarter of a century of my life comes to an end. Tonight I have been much mindful of many failures and many opportunities missed, but I do thank God for those countless blessings all along the way, and look for His leading in the future. I GIVE MYSELF TO THEE, LORD JESUS. USE ME AS THY TOOL FOR THY GLORY. AMEN”* (John C. Stam).

SOMEONE has very aptly described Christianity as being *“Christ-in-you-ity.”* John Stam lived in the consciousness of that fact, for it is a fact that the Eternal Life which we receive when we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour is a new Life which is not an abstract thing—it is a Person, Christ Himself.¹ Every one that was ever born on this earth in the natural way (and that excludes Adam and Eve, of course, who were created by God, and the Lord Jesus Himself, Who was miraculously born of a virgin) has a sinful nature, spoken of in Scripture as “the natural man”² or “the flesh.”³ But when one becomes a believer, that is, when one is converted, he is *born again* of the Spirit of God,⁴ he becomes “a new creature,”⁵ and

¹ Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:27

³ John 3:6; Romans 7:5

⁵ II Corinthians 5:17

² I Corinthians 2:14; 15:46

⁴ John 3:5; I John 5:1

receives a new nature, which is nothing else than the Life of Christ, manifested by His Holy Spirit Who dwells within the heart.⁶ This is a stupendous reality which is guaranteed by the Word of God.⁷ He, the Holy Spirit, is God's provision toward holiness in the Christian life and victory over sin, and is His pledge that we are sealed securely unto the day of redemption.⁸ But alas, it is to our shame that we enjoy so sparingly, as a practical reality, Him Whom God has provided as our present heritage.

Unless or until a man has been born again, he is possessed of only one life, which is his own, and which cannot please God,⁹ for in the *flesh* there "dwelleth no good thing."¹⁰ At the moment of regeneration, however, that miracle of God occurs, when the Holy Spirit is implanted in the heart, and from henceforth there are two natures in the believer: the old man, the flesh, which has not been annihilated by any means; and the Spirit. The heart becomes a daily battle-ground. The flesh and the Spirit are contrary to each other, and there is constant warfare.¹¹ The outcome of this conflict is the manifestation through the believer of either the works of the flesh, which is all manner of evil,¹² or the fruit of the Spirit, which is all manner of good.¹³ "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit."¹⁴ Here is the difference between the carnal (fleshly) Christian, and the spiritual Christian.

⁶ I Corinthians 6:19, 20 ⁷ Romans 8:9

⁸ Ephesians 1:13, 14; 4:30

⁹ Romans 8:8

¹⁰ Romans 7:18

¹¹ Galatians 5:17

¹² Galatians 5:19-21

¹³ Galatians 5:22-24

¹⁴ Romans 8:5

On the one hand the old nature is predominant, while on the other the Holy Spirit prevails. Herein rests the secret of a defeated or a victorious Christian life.

John Stam knew the answer to that problem: "*I give myself to Thee, Lord Jesus. Use me as Thy tool for Thy glory.*" Victory in the Christian experience is not gained by *trying* and *conquering*; it is obtained by *trusting* and *surrendering*. Christ is the Victor, and Satan already a defeated foe through Calvary! It is in the Lord Jesus that we find our triumph,¹⁵ being made "more than conquerors through Him that loved us."¹⁶ Positionally, that is, in the reckoning of God, it is a fact, that the old man was crucified with Christ, that henceforth sin should no longer be served.¹⁷ Likewise it is also positionally true that the Christian is risen with Christ through faith,¹⁸ dead to sin and alive unto Christ.¹⁹ These are theological facts—but how may they be made *real* and *effectual* in our day by day experience? By *putting off* the old man, as we would discard an old suit of clothes, being *renewed* in the Spirit, and by *putting on* the new man,²⁰ Who is Christ living in us. The whole transaction is best understood in the words of the Apostle Paul: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet *not I, but Christ* liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me."²¹ It is *not I, but Christ*. Here is the secret: there must no longer

¹⁵ II Corinthians 2:14

¹⁸ Colossians 2:12

²¹ Galatians 2:20

¹⁶ Romans 8:37

¹⁹ Colossians 3:3

¹⁷ Romans 6:6

²⁰ Ephesians 4:22-24

be any self effort, but an acceptance by faith of all that God has done, and a whole-souled surrender, a complete abandonment to the Lord Jesus Christ. Let Him Who lives in my heart *reign* in my heart! Let the Spirit of Him Who dwells within me, *fill* me!²² Then filled to overflowing with all the fulness of God,²³ let me live out the inliving Christ. Let me say with our martyred friend: "*I give myself to Thee, Lord Jesus. Use me as Thy tool for Thy glory. Amen.*"

"Not I, but Christ."²¹ "Not my will, but Thine be done."²⁴ Not *my* desires, not *my* success, not *my* plans, not *my* ambitions, not *my* popularity, not *my* comfort, not *my* service—use me as *Thine* instrument that *Thy* will may be done, and *Christ* glorified. It is because John Stam knew this as his own experience that he was found worthy to bow before the executioner's sword, "only the quicker to enjoy the bliss of the Saviour's presence."

²² Ephesians 5:18

²³ Ephesians 3:19

²⁴ Luke 22:42

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS

DEPENDENCE—AND GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Excerpts from the Diary of John C. Stam

December 13, 1930 (While a student at the Moody Bible Institute)—*"Truly the Lord is good. One of my shirts began to tear today, and I was afraid I wouldn't have enough to take home with me, and that I would have to take a patched one, which would show the folks the state of my wardrobe. However, the King of kings is the 'Keeper of my wardrobe,' and when I was crossing Michigan Avenue, I found a perfectly good wet \$5.00 bill. Hallelujah!"*

March 20, 1932 (While a student at the Moody Bible Institute)—*"Had a rather interesting experience. . . . Last year Jake¹ gave me a blue suit to give to some boy who needed it. I looked for months for somebody the right size who could use a suit, and failing, finally had about decided to give it to a mission. Then . . . I happened to see — — in Fellowship, and having heard of his being hard up, the thought occurred to me that he might be able to use it. Found him alone downstairs, and he told me that in the afternoon he had begun to pray for a suit. Of course it fits him!"*

October 12, 1932 (at C.I.M.² Headquarters, Shanghai)—*"Hallelujah! Wonders will never cease. Our heavenly Father so arranged it that Betty³ was here in Shanghai instead of being away up in Northern Anhwei. She had to have tonsil tissue removed, and was told to come on down for that. And she has promised to be my wife! How I do praise the Lord for all His ordering and arranging. He will not fail those that wait for Him."*

May 24, 1933 (on the march in China)—*"Went off with Li Lao Hsien Seng. . . . Took biscuits along and expected to have eggs boiled for dinner. Don't seem to have much in the way of green vegetables or good cooks around here. Old Li, however, ordered a meal for us, and our delight was great to find, instead of a greasy meal with half-cooked rice, eight bowls of stuff, five or six of green vegetables! Can God provide a table in the wilderness?"*

¹ Jacob Stam of Paterson, N. J., John's brother.

² China Inland Mission

³ Elisabeth Alden Scott. John had not seen her since she had left Chicago en route to China in October, 1931.

CHAPTER THREE

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS

November 15, 1930 (while a student at The Moody Bible Institute)—*"Life has become exceedingly interesting lately. Since I have acted on the assumption that whether I work for the Lord at home or abroad I need to be ready to trust Him for my temporal needs, I have had some opportunity to prove that God is faithful. . . . Now I am at the end of my rope. Next Tuesday I owe the Accounting Department ten dollars. If I do not pay it, I am in debt. The clear command is: 'Owe no man anything.' God's commands are His enablings, but He cannot answer our prayers if our lives are not cleansed. 'Search me, O God.' 'In Thee do I trust.' 'Put me not to shame.' Oh, for a closer walk with God."*

November 17, 1930—*"This evening . . . walked up with Mr. Page¹ for some distance . . . describing the Lord's dealings with me in the matter of living by faith last summer. Before he left he pushed a five-dollar bill in my pocket. He certainly is a great, good-hearted man. Praise the Lord, it is half toward what I need tomorrow, when ten dollars is due the Accounting Department. 'My God shall supply.'"*

November 18, 1930—*"In this morning's mail I found an Institute envelope, with no name on it and \$7.33 in it. Praise the Lord, that bill has been paid on time. He is faithful. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul.' 'The Lord wrought a great deliverance'" (John C. Stam).*

HUDSON TAYLOR,² in the days when he was dreaming and planning his answer to God's call to China, de-

¹ Dr. Isaac Page, the Chicago District Secretary of the China Inland Mission for the Middle West, who is now located in Toronto, Ont.

² J. Hudson Taylor (1832-1905), founder of the China Inland Mission.

terminated that the principle of his life's work should be "to move man, through God, by prayer alone." It was a very grave thing which he contemplated: to go out to a foreign land, removed from any human assistance, dependent upon God alone, not only for spiritual strength, but for protection, for funds, and for help of every kind. He was convinced that if he was to go to China trusting God to meet his needs, he must be ready in England to exercise a like trust.³ How could one who was not willing to live by faith at home expect to live by faith six thousand miles away from home? The biography⁴ of this great man of God was used of the Lord in a marked way in the life of John Stam, who came to a similar conviction on his own part, not because he desired to "ape" Mr. Taylor in any sense, but because he concluded, that dependence was the essential pathway to fruitfulness. Through the "faith principle," John was to find that living "from hand to mouth" is a thrilling and satisfying experience when the *hand is God's and the mouth is one's own*. His diary is filled with examples of the faithfulness of God in supplying his every need at the appointed time.

The Word of God tells us: "Be careful (anxious) for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."⁵ Christians are instructed not to be concerned about their needs. They are to lay hold upon God, entreating Him in earnest prayer; but they are to *believe*

³ *Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret*, by Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor, published by the China Inland Mission of Philadelphia.

⁴ See Note 1, on page 14

⁵ Philippians 4:6

God also, for these prayers are to be offered *with thanksgiving*. This is the "faith principle" by which John Stam lived. We dare not presume to prescribe this as the only pattern for a life of faith, but we *do* know that God honored it in the case of John Stam, as he had done with Hudson Taylor, George Müller,⁶ and as He has with a host of others of His children before and since. It is this: to live in perfect peace in the assurance that, having brought one's requests to God, in supplication and trust and thankfulness for His faithfulness and what He is going to do, one need ask no help of men. It is "*to move men, through God, by prayer alone.*"

The Apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote to the Church at Philippi: "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."⁷ This is a promise of God! I think that sometimes we fail in coming even close to comprehending the full significance of what this means. "*According to His riches!*" Did you ever think of that phrase alone? Not *out of His riches*, but *according to them*; that is, *in proportion to their amount*. If some very wealthy person were to present you with a gift *out of* his riches, it might be a small token indeed; but should he offer you something *according to* his wealth, you should be an extremely fortunate person. Our heavenly Father, the owner of the universe, has promised us that He shall supply our need *according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus*.

⁶ (1805-1898), Founder of Orphanage in Bristol, England. See *George Müller of Bristol*, by A. T. Pierson.

⁷ Philippians 4:19

But someone may say: "I have told the Lord about such and such a need, and He does not seem to hear me." It may *seem* as though He does not hear, but that is simply because the *expected* answer does not come. Our trouble is like that of many little children—*we do not know what our NEED is. But our heavenly Father DOES know.* The need may be quite different than the request, than what we *think* we need. The need may be chastening, in order that some coarse spot in our Christian testimony might be refined; the need may be testing, that our Christian characters might be strengthened; the need may be sorrow, that our hearts might be softened; the need may be privation, that our stewardship might be appreciated; the need may be unanswered prayer, that we might search our lives to discover unconfessed sin;—God knows, He understands, and He supplies *all our need*.

God cannot deny Himself.⁸ His Name is Faithful and True,⁹ and He abideth faithful,⁸ and His faithfulness is to all generations.¹⁰ Not only to Abel, who offered the more excellent sacrifice; not only to Enoch, who pleased God; not only to Noah, who prepared an ark for the salvation of his house; not only to Abraham, the friend of God, who went out, not knowing whither he went; not only to Isaac and Jacob and Joseph, and to Moses, who esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; to them *all* God was faithful, but His faithfulness is to all genera-

⁸ II Timothy 2:13

⁹ Revelation 19:11; Jeremiah 42:5

¹⁰ Psalm 119:90

tions. Again He was faithful to Gideon and Samson and David and Samuel; to others “who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword.” Still others “were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword”;¹¹ to all of these God was faithful, and He *abideth* faithful, in this hour. Not only to Peter and to James and to John; not only to Stephen and to Paul and to Timothy; but to Origen and to Tertullian and to Augustine;¹² to Boniface, and to Raymond Lull and Francis Xavier;¹³ yes, and to Luther and Knox and Calvin and Zwingli;¹⁴ to David Brainerd and William Carey and Adoniram Judson and David Livingstone;¹⁵ to Finney and Spurgeon and Moody¹⁶—to these likewise God was faithful, Who “keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations.”¹⁷ The Lord is the same yesterday, today, and forever.¹⁸ He that was faithful to the saints of old, was faithful to John and Betty Stam at Miaosheo, and He is faithful to you today, and will be forever more.

How wonderfully broad the faithfulness of God is, so that it reaches every human need. So often we associate God’s faithfulness with the supplying of our

¹¹ Hebrews 11:4-37

¹² Teachers and Writers of early Church

¹³ Early Missionary Pioneers, 8th to 16th Century

¹⁴ Reformation Leaders of the 16th Century

¹⁵ Missionary Pioneers, 18th and 19th Centuries

¹⁶ 19th Century Preachers and Evangelists

¹⁷ Deuteronomy 7:9

¹⁸ Hebrews 13:8

physical or financial requirements, and no more. But it is far more comprehensive than that. In a world of wickedness, it is His faithfulness that confirms us through the Word, and keeps us from evil.¹⁹ In the moment of testing, He is faithful in not allowing us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, and in making a way of escape.²⁰ During a period of pride or disobedience, it is in faithfulness that He allows us to be afflicted,²¹ that we might be drawn back to Himself. Though we were born in sin, and though we come short of the glory of God, He is merciful and faithful to make reconciliation as our High Priest.²² In the hour of broken fellowship, due to our having sinned against His righteousness, through our confession He is faithful and just to forgive us, and to cleanse us from all our unrighteousness.²³ "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness."²⁴

Early in his life John Stam caught the vision of the mercy and faithfulness of God, and as a result that life was transformed into one of radiant joy and peace, wholly yielded to the Lord and dependent upon Him alone, obedient unto death and fruitful unto life. Have you caught the vision? Are you ready to say: "Lord, in Thee alone do I put my trust, for life and for eternity; my dependence is upon Thee"? Is your peace of heart beset with fear and anxiety? Are you concerned about the future? Would you like to trust Him day by day,

¹⁹ II Thessalonians 3:3 ²⁰ I Corinthians 10:13 ²¹ Psalm 119:75

²² Hebrews 2:17

²³ I John 1:9

²⁴ Lamentations 3:23



Helen Priscilla Stam, as carried to Wuhu in a rice basket by Evangelist Lo. She was dressed in this outfit by her mother on the day that Mr. and Mrs. Stam were captured by Communists.



Helen Priscilla, on her first birthday, September 11, 1935, with her Chinese nurse, Chon Ta Sao.



Helen Priscilla Stam on her second birthday, September 11, 1936, with two of her Chinese friends.



Helen Priscilla in Tsingtao, China, on her third birthday

but you cannot? Perhaps there is a reason for your lack of faith! Perhaps you are not obedient to the pleading of the Holy Spirit. One can hardly pray in faith believing when there is unconfessed sin in the life, a wilful disobedience to God, bitterness or wrath or pride or selfishness in the heart. When you brought your needs or your hopes to the Lord, on your knees last night, shall we say, did His Voice speak to you, unmistakably, about some unjudged act or habit? Ah, yes! And have you grieved the Spirit by refusing to hear? Then perhaps your need is *chastening*, and *not* what you asked the Lord to grant you. For His chastening, the fruit of His love, is “for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness.”²⁶ But you say: “The Lord has spoken to me about something in my life which is not honoring Him. But it is just a *little, harmless* thing, and I cannot obey, I cannot yield in this.” You *cannot*? Remember, “*I can do all things through Christ Who strengtheneth me.*”²⁶ And you *dare* not trust *Him* to meet that particular need of yours? He has promised to supply all your need,²⁷ and “He is faithful that promised.”²⁸ Therefore, stand fast in the Lord, rejoice in Him, and “be anxious for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”²⁹

²⁶ Hebrews 12:5-11²⁶ Philippians 4:13²⁷ Philippians 4:19²⁸ Hebrews 10:23²⁹ Philippians 4:6, 7

OF NO REPUTATION

An Excerpt from the Diary of John C. Stam

December 2, 1930 (While a student at the Moody Bible Institute) — *"Last night Roy¹ came in and said he was very much troubled about my bill. I know I am in debt, and that is not the Lord's will. But nothing has come, and I do not feel that I dare move lest I do what Saul did, who did not wait quite long enough for Samuel to come. But Roy says that he feels he ought to pay that bill of mine, since he has the money. It is hard to take money from somebody like him, when you know he'll need it himself. . . . This afternoon Roy threatened to put the money in the mail box if I wouldn't take it, so I capitulated. The results in lessons learned seem to be these:*

FIRST, I expected and prayed for funds, rather dictating to the Lord the way in which they should come, or should not come, my last thought being Roy. The Lord, however, used the very ordinary, rather than the miraculous. The Lord deliver me further from always looking for the miraculous, and hoping to have my faith strengthened in that way.

SECONDLY, I promised the Lord that I would testify as to His faithfulness in supplying my needs in answer to prayer, and in keeping me out of debt. But I now see that if the Lord had answered so, it would have engendered spiritual pride, and such a testimony might seem to be a rebuke to those who are working their way through School, for not having more faith, and to those who are in debt, for not having faith.

THIRDLY, it has taught me what it means to be under obligations to others for my needs. Some more self-sufficiency shattered!

FOURTHLY, what it means to be 'of no reputation.' All in all this day has been very fruitful."

¹ LeRoy King, a fellow student, who later went to China as a missionary under the China Inland Mission.

AS A CEDAR IN LEBANON

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Excerpts from the Diary of John C. Stam

June 25, 1931 (While a student at the Moody Bible Institute)—*"I got that stenographic work, and with the money I received from Dad, \$50.00, paid my bill. . . . Praise the Lord for the work. I got a bit behind in my studies, but it taught me some more lessons as to the value of money. When you work good and hard for 50c an hour, you do learn something like that. I shall need some more money to get through the term. Praise the Lord for His marvelous provision so far. What is it that makes us so scary always as to the future? Why can we not learn to trust Him wholly without a shadow of concern for the future?"*

October 21, 1931 (While a student at the Moody Bible Institute)—*"Had a blessed time last night when I was out with a group in Michigan. Ten souls were saved—Hallelujah! What a refreshing time for body, soul, and spirit! Made the trip up and back (90 miles each way) on 2c. When I need more the Lord will provide. . . . Oh, Lord, undertake for me. If I am pursuing the wrong course in just waiting for Thee to send the money I need, please let me see it, O Father."*

June 30, 1932 (At the C.I.M. Home in Germantown, Philadelphia)—*"Had a blessed time with _____¹ tonight trying to teach him with an English New Testament and his Japanese Bible. As to Betty . . . it seems to me that I have been looking too much for some SUPER-natural guidance. It is hard to describe one's feelings, and yet I do have a sense that I am in the way. I have prayed much about this, perhaps more than about anything else, any one single thing. I have studied my Bible for guidance, and can see no HINDRANCE there at all, if not positive guidance, and circumstances more than point in that direction. May God frustrate everything, if it is not of Him. I do want His will first."*

August 13, 1932 (In Paterson, N. J.)—*"Am at Jake's² for the day. Came out of the hospital after operation³ on August 1st. I do praise God for lessons learned there, lessons of the hopelessness and uselessness of the life outside of Christ, and of the blessedness of His help and comfort in suffering, lessons of my own weakness, and of His great strength."*

¹ A young Japanese boy whom Mr. Stam met in Philadelphia.

² Jacob Stam of Paterson, N. J., John's brother.

³ Deemed necessary before his sailing for China.

CHAPTER FOUR

AS A CEDAR IN LEBANON

April 18, 1932 (While a student at Moody Bible Institute)—*“This morning I got down to the bottom again. On my way to the tailor I stopped in the Post Office to see if there was any money in several letters. There was none. So I had to go to the tailor and ask him to wait for the sixty cents I owe him. However I had neglected to open a package that came also, and when I did, I discovered \$1.00. Just enough to pay for the repairing of the suit, and to get a haircut. I won’t have a new suit for graduation, but I’LL HAVE THE LORD’S GRACE INSTEAD, AND THAT’S ENOUGH! Hallelujah! The Lord certainly has helped me in this very, very busy time”* (John C. Stam).

IT is a great thing when one becomes sensible of the fact that the sufficiency of God’s grace, which is one of His promises,¹ can be a happy reality in the daily experience. John Stam learned this truth early in his Christian life, and this was one of the secrets of his radiant testimony to his Lord. The consciousness of the all-sufficiency of God is not the consequence of a spineless passivity or a form of asceticism; it is the fruition of a life of yieldedness to the will of God and a determined separation from anything wherein the Lord Jesus Christ is not held preëminent.

¹ I Corinthians 12:9

There is a time, early in the Christian life, when the knowledge of sins forgiven and resultant salvation is so immense that other wonderful truths do not assume their proper proportion. We are saved! The burden of sin is gone! Eternal life is ours! How glorious—and we are occupied at the moment with the transaction that has taken place, and with ourselves. We are “babes in Christ,”² and that is normal, *for a time*. But it is also the normal thing that babies should grow, and it is to be feared that there is far too little growth among spiritual babes. Eternal life is the portion of every believer, and there should never be a time when we cease to marvel at our salvation and praise God for the life that is ours; but there is more to eternal life than its quantity. It is quality, as well. The Lord Jesus gave us a definition of this life: “This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent.”³ Eternal life, that which we possess because we believe in the only begotten Son of God,⁴ consists in *knowing Him*. But how can we know God? How can we know the Father? Only through Christ, for no one knows the Father except the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.⁵ All our knowledge of the God-head is through the Lord Jesus Christ; eternal life then is the knowledge of Him. It is Christ Himself dwelling within the believer. Even in a lifetime we cannot begin to know fully an earthly companion. If we are so limited in our relationship to the finite, how much less can we learn the greatness of the

² I Corinthians 3:1³ John 17:3⁴ John 3:16⁵ Matthew 11:27

character of the infinite God and our Lord Jesus Christ! That is why the Apostle Paul, thirty years after he came to know Christ as his Lord and Savior, said: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord . . . That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death."⁶ But if knowing Him is life eternal, and that is our possession, is it not time that we should begin to know Him now?

The "babes in Christ" should grow into the stature of manhood. We were saved by the shed blood, but we need food for growth, and that food is the Word of God.⁷ When Israel was saved out of Egypt, their salvation was the result of the shed blood of the lamb, which, when God saw it sprinkled upon the doorposts, was the means of His passing over them.⁸ But there were other instructions for Israel on that Passover night: the blood of the lamb saved them, but they were to go on a pilgrimage that night, and they were commanded to eat of the flesh of the lamb.⁹ They were to take food that they might have strength for the journey that was ahead of them. All of this was a divine illustration for our learning and instruction in righteousness:¹⁰ we were saved by the blood of the true Lamb of God, but we need to feed on Him in order to be strengthened for our earthly pilgrimage. How can we feed on Him, and be strengthened? As new born babes we are to desire the sincere milk of the Word, that we may

⁶ Philippians 3:8, 10

⁷ Jeremiah 15:16

⁸ Exodus 12:1-7, 21-23

⁹ Exodus 12:8

¹⁰ II Timothy 3:16

grow thereby, if so be we have tasted that the Lord is gracious.¹¹ We are to be occupied with Christ, "looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; Who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."¹² The living Word, the Lord Jesus,¹³ is revealed in the written Word.

It is in the Bible, which is the eternal Word of God,¹⁴ that we learn all that we know about God: His Eternity,¹⁵ His Tri-Unity,¹⁶ His Personality,¹⁷ His Holiness,¹⁸ His Righteousness,¹⁹ His Justice,²⁰ His Omniscience,²¹ His Omnipotence,²² His Omnipresence,²³ His Love,²⁴ His Mercy,²⁵ His Provision,²⁶ His Faithfulness,²⁷ and His Plan for the ages. It is in the Word of God that the Person of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, is revealed, for from Genesis to Revelation this Book of books testifies of Him:²⁸ to His Eternity,²⁹ to His Holiness,³⁰ to His Power,³¹ to His Wisdom,³² to His Deity,³³ to His Humanity,³⁴ to His Love,³⁵ to His Death on the Cross for the sins of the world,³⁶ to His Resurrection from among the dead,³⁷ to His Grace,³⁸ to His Mercy,³⁹ to His Prom-

¹¹ I Peter 2:2

¹⁴ I Peter 1:23

¹⁷ Jeremiah 10:10

¹⁸ Isaiah 5:16

²⁰ I John 1:9

²³ Jeremiah 23:23, 24

²⁴ I John 4:8, 16

²⁷ Deuteronomy 7:9

Lamentations 3:23

³¹ Matthew 28:18

³³ John 10:30

Matthew 9:5, 6

John 8:58

John 11:43

¹² Hebrews 12:2

¹⁵ Psalm 90:2-4

Habakkuk 1:12

¹⁹ Jeremiah 12:1

²¹ Psalm 147:5

I John 3:20

²⁵ Deuteronomy 4:31

Psalm 103:8

²⁹ John 1:1

Colossians 1:16, 17

³⁴ Luke 8:23

³⁵ Ephesians 5:25

I John 4:19

³⁸ II Corinthians 8:9

¹³ John 1:1

¹⁶ Genesis 1:26

Deuteronomy 6:4

Matthew 3:16, 17

²² Genesis 18:14

Job 42:2

²⁶ Philippians 4:19

²⁸ John 5:39

³⁰ Acts 3:14

³² Colossians 2:3

John 16:30

³⁶ John 3:14-16

³⁷ John 20:1-10

³⁹ Jude 21

ises, to His Faithfulness,⁴⁰ to His Immutability,⁴¹ to His Coming again,⁴² and to His Plan for His own.⁴³ It is in the Scriptures that we learn about the Holy Spirit: that He is one with and equal to God the Father and God the Son,⁴⁴ that He convicts men of sin and of righteousness and of judgment,⁴⁵ that He indwells every child of God,⁴⁶ that He guides believers into all Truth,⁴⁷ and that He seals them until the Day of Redemption.⁴⁸ All that we know about Satan, about angels, about Heaven, about hell, about life, about man, about sin, about death, about judgment, about redemption, about eternal life, about self, about sanctification, about assurance, about hope, we learn from God's Word; the history and the future of mankind are revealed in this Book. Is it any wonder that the child of God needs to feed upon its words in order to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

No other knowledge is comparable to the knowledge of God and of His Word. It reveals the way of life⁴⁹ and lights the pathway,⁵⁰ it denounces sin⁵¹ and empowers us against it,⁵² it breathes holiness⁵³ and guides us toward it,⁵⁴ it comforts us in the hour of sorrow,⁵⁵ encourages in time of discouragement,⁵⁶ exhorts when we are fearful,⁵⁷ enables when we are unable,⁵⁸ and it promises present joy unspeakable⁵⁹ and peace that passes understanding.⁶⁰ The Word of God reaches limitless

⁴⁰ Revelation 19:11

⁴³ John 14:2, 3

⁴⁶ I Corinthians 6:19

⁴⁹ John 14:6

⁵² Psalm 119:11

⁵⁵ Psalm 119:50

⁵⁸ Philippians 4:13

⁴¹ Hebrews 13:8

⁴⁴ Matthew 3:16, 17; 28:19

⁴⁷ John 16:13

⁵⁰ Psalm 119:105

⁵³ Psalm 119:140, 144

⁵⁶ Joshua 1:8

⁵⁹ I Peter 1:8

⁴² John 14:3

⁴⁵ John 16:7, 8

⁴⁸ Ephesians 4:30

⁵¹ Romans 6:23

⁵⁴ Psalm 119:9

⁵⁷ Joshua 1:9

⁶⁰ Philippians 4:7

depths and infinite heights, and yet can be understood by the most simple and humble mind, through the Holy Spirit. Though it is read from cover to cover year after year, it is always fresh and ever new. To the world it may be foolishness, but to the Christian, by whom it is spiritually discerned,⁶¹ it unveils Christ, the power and the wisdom of God,⁶² the revelation of Himself.⁶³ We cannot read the Book without spiritual profit; to neglect it is loss to our souls.

The question is often asked: "How can I be sure of the Lord's will?" God speaks through His Word, and it is there that He reveals His will for our lives. How can we expect to know His mind when we neglect the medium through which He speaks? It was because John Stam was fairly saturated with the Scriptures that he was so sure of God's will for him; so positive that he was called to China, so certain that his daily need would be met by God's unfailing provision. When sin touched him, the searchlight of God's Word discovered it, sin was confessed, and fellowship restored. When he was disobedient, the Word rebuked him, and in confession he was drawn back to God. If he began to grow cold, or fearful, he was exhorted by the Spirit through the Word, and he went forward with God. He grew in the knowledge of God and of His Word because he did not neglect it. He followed in the steps of Joshua, and meditated in God's Word day and night.⁶⁴ This does not mean that John Stam was an ascetic who spent a passive life repeating Scripture verses. God

⁶¹ I Corinthians 2:14 ⁶² I Corinthians 1:24 ⁶³ Matthew 11:27
⁶⁴ Joshua 1:8, 9

intends us to be normal human beings, interested and active in our daily lives, but living to His glory. We are to have cordial fellowship with others, but the others are to be Christians; we should keep our minds alert by study and reading, but the literature should be clean and instructive; we are to keep our bodies, His temples, fit, but our exercise should be moderate; we may have certain diversions, but nothing which dishonors His Name. In all this, however, let us remember that our calling on this earth is to increase in righteousness and holiness, and to make Christ known, and that all the activities in which we engage should be helpful to that end. No friendship or recreation which opposes or hinders our meditation upon the Lord and upon His Word is honoring to Him or right for us.

What of your attention to the Word of God? Are you faithful, or do you neglect your Bible? How conscious I am of my failure, so many times, in my own daily meditation and reading. The question is not whether you read a chapter a day out of some feeling of duty towards God. Perhaps you *are* faithful in the *ceremony*—but do you read it prayerfully and in the Spirit, asking God to reveal Himself and His will to you, and contemplating the majesty and holiness and grace of the Lord Jesus as you read verse after verse? If you have failed heretofore, or if perhaps you have been concerned at your spiritual sluggishness, will you do something for the Lord and for yourself? Begin today, and morning and evening *make* time for devotional reading of the Word of God, and for prayer.

Adopt as your daily practice the slogan of a Chinese Christian, Leland Wang, of Hong Kong: "No Bible, no breakfast!" You will find that usually you will have your breakfast after all, but that at any rate, you will be amply fortified for the day.

Growth in holiness is dependent upon the closeness of our fellowship with the Lord. When one walks with Him, moment by moment, as did John Stam, his very countenance bespeaks his Saviour, and his heart's desire must be to know Him, to make Him known. If we walk in the light,⁶⁵ every sin confessed,⁶⁶ and the flesh crucified daily,⁶⁷ God is bound to bless us, for He has promised: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."⁶⁸ "Order my steps in Thy Word: and let not iniquity have dominion over me."⁶⁹

⁶⁵ I John 1:7
⁶⁸ Psalm 92:12

⁶⁶ I John 1:9
⁶⁹ Psalm 119:133

⁶⁷ I Corinthians 15:31

AND BRING FORTH FRUIT

WITNESSING—AND FRUITFULNESS

Excerpts from the Diary of John C. Stam

May 24, 1931 (At Moody Bible Institute)—*"First, I do thank the Lord for some evidence of spiritual life in some of the folks in —. Then for the four souls, three grown-ups and one boy, who professed to accept the Lord Jesus when we held a cottage Gospel meeting at — on the South Side. Then for — — whom the Lord saved from a life of awful sin and slavery to habits. And here too I have in some measure learned a lesson, for when I saw him fall back into sin, I could account for it by my own lack of prayer. May the Lord keep me faithful."*

September 28, 1932 (At sea, enroute to Shanghai¹)—*"Another good day. Quite free from sea-sickness, and able here and there to speak a word for Christ."*

October 15, 1933 (Enroute from Suancheng² to Tsinan³)—*"In Wuhu, and had a great time. Met two British Naval officers with whom I had a good talk and to whom I gave my English New Testament."*

November 9, 1933 (During Wedding Trip⁴)—*"Beautiful day, sunshine and calm; only fly in the ointment was that I didn't speak to anyone aboard about his soul. Arrived in Shanghai at about 3:30 . . . , and drove to the Mission Home⁵ just before Mr. and Mrs. Hoste⁶ arrived, whom we met."*

May 4, 1934 (On an itineration to Tsingteh⁷)—*"Had a great time today, for while Lo⁸ rested, I went into the street in the morning. Had some great conversations, and sold 40 Gospels. In the afternoon I went off to Kiang Ts'uen all by myself, and sold some 50 Gospels. Praise the Lord, I am thoroughly enjoying myself at it."*

¹ John Stam sailed from Vancouver, on September 24, 1932.

² John Stam's first Mission Station, and where John and Betty lived for a year after their marriage.

³ The home of Dr. and Mrs. Charles Ernest Scott, parents of Betty. Mr. Stam was en route to his wedding.

⁴ A two week's trip to Tsingtao, Shantung Province, on the coast of the Yellow Sea. This was Betty's childhood home.

⁵ China Inland Mission Headquarters in Shanghai.

⁶ Mr. D. E. Hoste succeeded Hudson Taylor as General Director of The China Inland Mission in 1900. He retired in favor of Mr. G. W. Gibb in 1935.

⁷ Mr. and Mrs. Stam's Mission Station from November 23, 1934 to December 6, the day of their capture.

⁸ Evangelist Lo, the brave friend of John Stam, who later found little Helen Priscilla in an otherwise empty house near Miaosheo, the place of the Stam's execution.

CHAPTER FIVE

AND BRING FORTH FRUIT

August 8, 1933 (While stationed at Suancheng)—*"More parades today, carrying idols, praying for rain. Oh, for a city-wide testimony to the true God. Oh, that I could be used to point people to Him. Thank God, I can."*

August 9, 1933—*"Procession still passing, larger every day as the drought continues. Had a blessed time to-day speaking to four lads in a Confucianist temple, and later to crowd of about ten on the City Wall in front of the Middle School. Praise the Lord indeed, the opportunity and its blessings were priceless"* (John C. Stam).

HAD JOHN STAM not had a longing for the souls of men, in all probability his diary would never have been read, and certainly this little book would never have been written. For it was because he yearned for the salvation of a world lost in sin that he took himself to China, in obedience to the command of the Lord Jesus Christ: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."¹ John Stam's heart's desire was as broad as the command of his Lord: to preach the message of Christ and His salvation to a lost world, to a sin-darkened land, to a deceived and superstitious city. His ministry, limited in life to a few individuals here and there—a ship's officer, four boys in a heathen temple, a

¹ Mark 16:15

group of ten on a City Wall, was in death multiplied. John Stam was found faithful in the few things, faithful unto death. What wonderful rewards are his!²

It is to be feared that there are a great many of us who are familiar with the fact that God so loved the *world* that He gave His only begotten Son to die on the Cross that all who believe in Him should have everlasting life,³ who speak in terms of Home Missions and Foreign Missions, and who even long for world-wide evangelism and plan for city-wide evangelistic meetings, who are not faithful in witnessing to the few who cross our paths every day: the schoolmate, the office companion, the bread man, the servant, the neighbor. "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."⁴ Are *you* faithful and obedient to His command: "*Ye shall be witnesses unto Me*"?⁵

It is far beyond our comprehension, but it is true nevertheless, that we did not choose Christ as our Saviour, but that even before the foundation of the world God chose us in Christ.⁶ Why? We cannot understand it all, but we *do* know that there was a purpose. For one thing, He chose us "that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,"⁶ for another, "that we should be to the praise of His glory."⁷ These are deep and wonderful truths with which our minds should often be occupied, but it is our intent to examine here another of His purposes in choosing us. The Lord Jesus Christ was speaking to His disciples shortly before His betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane, His last inti-

² Matthew 25:21; Revelation 2:10 ³ John 3:16 ⁴ I Corinthians 4:2

⁵ Acts 1:8

⁶ Ephesians 1:4

⁷ Ephesians 1:12

mate speech with them before He hung on the Cross, and He told them this: "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."⁸ Someone may say: "It is natural for Dr. So-and-so to preach the Gospel; he is an *ordained minister*." Or another may think: "Yes, John Stam spoke to others about their souls, but after all, that was his job. He was a *missionary*." But what is a *minister*? He is one who *serves*, a *servant*. Paul was a *servant*;⁹ Peter called himself a *servant*;¹⁰ James and Jude were *servants*;¹¹ and so is every one of us who has been bought with the shed blood of Christ, His *servant*.¹² And while we may never have had a theological training or have been *ordained* of men, nevertheless we *are* ordained by the Lord Jesus to "go and to *bring forth fruit*." We are to *go*: that is, we are *sent*. And after all, that is what a *missionary* is: *one who is sent*; for *missionary* is an English word which comes from the Latin verb *mitto*, which means *to send*. So when the Lord said to His disciples, "Go," He was appointing them as *missionaries*, and that is what every believer is *ordained* to be, whether he knows it or not. "But," someone may observe, "these words were spoken by Christ to His *disciples*, and not to us." It is true that the Lord was speaking to His disciples, but He also speaks thus to us, for what is a *disciple*? He is "*one who accepts and follows a teacher or a doctrine; a pupil or a learner*."¹³ Every

⁸ John 15:16⁹ Romans 1:1¹⁰ II Peter 1:1¹¹ James 1:1; Jude 1¹² I Corinthians 7:22, 23¹³ Funk & Wagnalls *Desk Standard Dictionary*

Christian is embraced in the first clause of this definition, for he has received a person, Christ, and he believes God's Word. Every Christian *should* be included in the latter part of this definition also, as a pupil or a learner, for we have God's Word, and "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for *instruction in righteousness*: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,"¹⁴ and it behooves us to study God's Word and to divide His Word aright that we may be approved of Him.¹⁵

We are ordained to GO! Now there are a great many Christians who are *going* all the time. They go here and they go there, and they do this and they do that. But what of all this activity? Is it to the glory of God? Is it according to His purpose for us? "I have . . . ordained you, that ye should go and *bring forth fruit*."¹⁶ Activity which is fruitful in the winning of men who are dead in trespasses and sins unto reconciliation to God and to life in Christ, is the fulfilment of the purpose of our ambassadorship¹⁷ for Christ.

Do you believe the Bible? Do you believe that because you have received the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour you have eternal life?¹⁸ Do you believe that through Him you are going to go to Heaven when you die?¹⁹ I am sure that you believe all these things, and you should, for they are true. But let me ask you something else. Do you believe that all those who do not

¹⁴ II Timothy 3:16, 17 ¹⁵ II Timothy 2:15 ¹⁶ John 15:16

¹⁷ II Corinthians 5:19-21

¹⁸ John 5:24

¹⁹ John 14:1-4

know Christ as their Saviour are lost?²⁰ The same Bible, the very Word of God which speaks of Life and Heaven, tells of death and hell. Do you *really* believe that men and women all over the world—in China and in Africa and in South America, yes; but in your city, your office, your school, and your neighborhood as well—that all of them, who are without Christ, are without hope, bound for hell and the lake of fire forever?²¹ You believe this? Then what are you doing about it? Are you telling the Gospel story, in season and out of season?²² Are you redeeming the time in these evil days?²³ How can we fail to seek to persuade men who are condemned already because they do not believe in the Name of the only begotten Son of God?²⁴ Human feeling and decency demand this of us. But how much more is it our bounden duty when we realize that it is the command of our Lord that we should GO!²⁵ Above all, we are not our own, we are bought with a price,²⁶ the shedding of His blood for us, and the love of Christ constrains²⁷ us to be witnesses to Him to the uttermost part of the earth.²⁸

China has her mandarins and her coolies, India her maharajahs and her outcastes; in every land, be it Asia or Europe, North America or the islands of the sea, there are men of high estate and men of low abode, those that dwell in cities and those that live in tents. All of them, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, cultured and uncultured, moral and immoral, are living

²⁰ II Peter 2:9²¹ Revelation 20:11-15²² II Timothy 4:2²³ Ephesians 5:16²⁴ John 3:18²⁵ Mark 16:15²⁶ I Corinthians 6:19, 20²⁷ II Corinthians 5:14²⁸ Acts 1:8

in darkness and sin and death,²⁹ with their journeys' end the wrath of God, unless they hear the glorious message of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. But "whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"³⁰ There is only one way, and that is that you and I, who have been ordained by God to go and to preach and to teach, shall hear His voice and heed His call and answer, saying: "Here am I; send me."³¹

John Stam, in the prime of life, with every opportunity that America offers a young man, heard the call. He did not count the cost, but those things that were gain to him, those he counted loss for Christ.³² He was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for he knew that it "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;"³³ so great a burden for the souls of lost men weighed upon his heart that he fairly cried, with Paul, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel."³⁴ Rejoicing in the knowledge of his salvation in Christ, wholly yielded to Him, obedient to the heavenly vision, strengthened by the Word of God and empowered by His Spirit, he went forth sowing the seed, and reaped an hundred-fold. The land that called John Stam continues to call today. Other lands are calling, too. Has the Spirit of God been pleading with you: "Whom shall I send, and

²⁹ John 3:19, 20; Romans 1:19-32

³¹ Isaiah 6:8

³⁴ I Corinthians 9:16

³² Philippians 3:7

³⁰ Romans 10:13, 14

³³ Romans 1:16

who will go for us?"³¹ What is your answer to His plea? HERE AM I, SEND—???

Perhaps the regal role of foreign service is not yours. That cannot mean that your part is fruitless inactivity! He has still said: "Go, and bring forth fruit." There are lost souls at home. There are laborers in the vineyard worthy of their hire. There is the hardest ministry of all, perhaps: prayer and intercession for those who carry the banner of the Cross. "Lord, what wilt Thou have *me* to do?"³⁵

³⁵ Acts 9:6

NO MAN, LOOKING BACK, IS FIT

An Excerpt From the Diary of John C. Stam

December 15, 1930 (While a student at the Moody Bible Institute)—“*Last night I took ——— home. She told me that her one regret was that she had to work so hard working her way through School that it had been a drain on her health. She said that if she were to do it over again, she would ‘live by faith as you are doing.’ I was filled with dismay that my secret was out, and asked her: ‘Living by faith?’ Suddenly there flashed to my mind that I had told Mr. Page,¹ in the presence of another person, some of my experiences last summer. It almost frightens me even now to think of the whole ‘China bunch’ probably knowing it by now. . . . I certainly don’t like being held up as a model. But it seems as if the die is cast, and perhaps it is of the Lord, that I have now gone too far to retrace my steps. At least, that is my fear; suppose I weaken, and turn back—the Lord will surely not be glorified. . . . ‘No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God’ (Luke 9:62). The die is cast—I believe that the Lord is leading.*”

¹ Dr. Isaac Page, the Chicago District Secretary of the China Inland Mission for the Middle West, who is now located in Toronto, Ont.

WHETHER BY LIFE, OR BY DEATH

A POEM TO JOHN STAM
SONNET IV¹

by
BETTY SCOTT STAM

*These are the thoughts I have conceived of you—
They burst upon my heart, as when the sun,
Full in the eyes, blinds and bedazzles one,
And rings of glory whirl the senses through!—
When God was making you, (with me in view)
He smiled and said, "When they have fought and won,—
Their lives, according to My planning, done,—
Can she endure My face in bliss so new?"
(He spoke of me.) "Lest Heaven prove too bright,
And she too much o'ercome at sight of Me,
I will make him, in strength of purity,
And she shall love him, as an angel white,
Yet very man. And she shall, by My grace,
See in his smile a shadow of My face."*

¹ From *The Faith of Betty Scott Stam*, In Poem and Verse, published 1938 by Fleming H. Revell Company, N. Y. Printed by permission.

CONCLUSION

WHETHER BY LIFE, OR BY DEATH

December 6, 1934
Tsingteh, An.

China Inland Mission
Shanghai
Dear Brethren:

My wife, baby and myself are today in the hands of the Communists, in the city of Tsingteh. Their demand is twenty thousand dollars for our release.

All our possessions and stores are in their hands, but we praise God for peace in our hearts and a meal tonight. God grant you wisdom in what you do, and us fortitude, courage and peace of heart. He is able—and a wonderful friend in such a time.

Things happened so quickly this A.M. They were in the city just a few hours after the ever-persistent rumours really became alarming, so that we could not prepare to leave in time. We were just too late.

The Lord bless you and guide you, as for us—may God be glorified, whether by life or by death.

In Him,
John C. Stam

By life AND by death, God has been glorified through John and Betty Stam. This “ransom letter,”¹ written

¹ The first of two letters sent to the China Inland Mission by John Stam. The second one was dated the next day, December 7, 1934, at Miaosheo.

on the day of their capture, reveals more than any words we could write the selflessness of its author, his yieldedness to and dependence upon God, and his whole-souled desire that the Lord should be glorified through him, whatever the cost.

I am not so sure that physical death is the hardest sacrifice, though God grant that I should have courage to face it for His sake, should the need ever arise. But although possibly few of us shall wear martyrs' crowns there is another death, death to self, which challenges us every day of our Christian lives. The extent to which God is glorified in us is dependent upon how we meet this test.

It is absolutely true that at Calvary our old man, the flesh, was crucified with Christ, when He died there for us;² but in order that this purpose of God should be a practical reality in our lives, we must appropriate that which He has done. The Lord Jesus Christ died to set us free, but we must receive Him as our Saviour before our redemption is personally effectual.³ So we were crucified with Him there, but we must accept the fact in faith, and reckon ourselves to be dead unto sin and alive unto God through Christ,⁴ before the act is operative in our daily experience. In the power of the Holy Spirit we must mortify the deeds of the body;⁵ then that which is true in God's purpose for us will be actual in our experience, as it was with the Apostle Paul, and we shall be able to say with him *in truth*: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless

² Romans 6:6

³ John 3:16-18

⁴ Romans 6:11

⁵ Romans 8:13

I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I *now* live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”⁶ How hard it is, how impossible in fact, to say “No” to the flesh! But through the living Christ we have died unto sin and are alive unto God; His is the victory, and as we abandon ourselves to Him and allow Him to reign in our hearts, the flesh will be dethroned, and He the rightful King, will empower us, to deny sin and the flesh, and will enable us to live unto God. “Not I, but Christ.”⁶ “He must increase, but I must decrease.”⁷

To *live*? From the day that he gave his heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, through the period of training at the Moody Bible Institute, during the brief span of service in his beloved China, by word and deed, in private as well as in public, in every relationship of his life, John Stam demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt that the pre-eminent place in his life belonged to Christ. His love for Betty, his friendships, his ambitions, his comforts, and his daily needs were all taken to his heavenly Father, and only as they came within the circumference of the revealed will of God were they allowed to remain as a part of his life. To John Stam, *to live was Christ*.⁸

And to *die*? Picture two lovely Christian characters, a young man and a young woman still in their twenties, clad in undergarments only, the man barefooted and the woman wearing his socks, their hands bound roughly behind their backs, but with heads erect

⁶ Galatians 2:20⁷ John 3:30⁸ Philippians 1:21

339th day—26 days to come

Wednesday, December 5

8.30 Rumours are around about Reds
9.00 East of Chiki - They say Chiki
9.30 people have been losing sleep on
10.00 account of the fear -
10.30
11.00
11.30
12.00
12.30
1.00
1.30
2.00
2.30

Reproduction of the last entry in John Stam's Diary made on the night before his capture by the Communist soldiers, December 5, 1934. As far as we know, these are the last words written by Mr. Stam, except the two "ransom letters," the first of which is quoted on page 57.

and the peace of the living Christ apparent on their countenances; picture them, led away by a coarse and brutal mob from the little Chinese city of Miaosheo, to a hill outside of the city wall. A confusion of a moment's duration, then the man kneels on one knee, and turns his head toward the woman, his beloved. He begins to speak, words understood by none but her, and in a flash the executioner's sword strikes and the man collapses in a heap upon the ground. The woman trembles, and sways toward the fallen body of her husband—again the bright sweep of the sword, and the two who had been parted for an instant, were united in the presence of their Lord. Together in life, together in death, together they were found worthy to wear victors' crowns. To live was Christ, *and to die gain*⁸—that much sooner to cast their crowns before the Throne of the only One Who is worthy to receive glory and honor and power, the Lord Jesus Christ.⁹

Through the centuries the utterance of one of the early Christians has been found increasingly true: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."¹⁰ The influence of John and Betty Stam was deep and wide-spread in life, but in death it has touched countless thousands. The blossoming of the fruit has been manifested in China in the strengthening of Chinese Christians, and in a manifold evidence of broken prejudice and conviction of sin in the hearts of many there who, before the sacrifice at Miaosheo, would not believe. While at home, who can ever know the power of the testimony of the two who so bravely laid down

⁹ Revelation 4:10, 11

¹⁰ Tertullian (160-240 A.D.) *Apologeticus*

their lives for Christ's sake? Eternity alone will tell. Christ has already been glorified, both by life and by death, and the witness of John and Betty will continue to be a fragrant flower to those of us who wait down here. And while we wait, we look to another life now in bud, Helen Priscilla Stam, the child of their love. It is our prayer that it will also be true of her that Christ shall be magnified in her body, whether by life, or by death.¹¹

¹¹ Philippians 1:20

By Life AND By Death

EXCERPTS AND LESSONS FROM THE DIARY.
OF JOHN C. STAM OF CHINA

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