

The Missionary Psalm: Beautifully Obeyed In The Life and Martyrdom Of John And Betty Stam

Psalm 67

Introduction: 1) “The faithfulness of God is the only certain thing in the world today. We need not fear the result of trusting Him” (*To Die Is Gain*, 55). Those words were penned by John Stam, a young missionary to China, who along with his gifted wife Betty would trust King Jesus all the way to their beheading. They would accept the sovereign results of God in their lives which came to an untimely end at the tender ages of 28 (Betty) and 27 (John). Missionary Daniel Smith would note, “They were roughly handled, stripped of their outward clothing, painfully bound, and publically beheaded. They died – but not without the comfort and support of the Lord, and not without the light of life shining through the darkest circumstances life could bring” (*To Die Is Gain*, back cover).

2) God indeed made his face to shine upon John and Betty Stam as He promises to those who seek His praise among the nations. Psalm 67 was beautifully fulfilled in their lives and in their deaths. This psalm is part of a collection (Psalms 65-68) that emphasize God’s providence and His concern for Israel, the nations and all creation (cf. Psalm 66:1, 4, 8). Out of gratitude for God’s blessings to His people (vs. 6-7), we are moved to go to “all” (v. 2, 3, 5, 7) nations and peoples and tell them of His “saving power” (v. 2).

3) The psalm is rooted in the great Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12:1-3 and the beautiful Aaronic blessing in Numbers 6:24-26. It’s missionary impulse is made clear by the fact that 1) Hebrews and Gentiles come together to praise and fear God, 2) the “nations” are mentioned three times (vs. 2, 4), 3) the “earth” is noted four times (vs. 2, 4, 6, 7), 4) the “peoples” are referenced five times (vs. 3, 4, 5) and 5) the word “all” appears four times. This anonymous psalmist had an unwavering confidence and conviction that God would be praised by all the peoples of all the

nations. John and Betty Stam had it in their heart to be used by God to bring all of this to fruition. No wonder at the tender age of 18 Betty could write,

Lord, I give up all my own plans and purposes
all my own desires and hopes and accept Thy
will for my life. I give myself, my life, my all
utterly to Thee to be Thine forever. Fill me and
seal me with Thy Holy Spirit.

Use me as Thou wilt, send me where Thou wilt
and work out Thy whole will in my life at any
cost now and forever.

<http://www.carlstam.org/familyheritage/jbstam.html>

I. God's Salvation Must Be Known Among The Nations. 67:1-3

- There is nearly 6,900 Unreached People Groups with a population of 2.8 billion people (Joshua Project). This means they have little or no access at all to the gospel of Jesus Christ. However, the psalmist prays that the Lord's "way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations (v. 2)."
- God's saving power was made known in the sending of His missionary Son, Jesus, who declared His mission in Luke 19:10, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which was lost." Dying a bloody death on a Roman cross, He made satisfaction for sins as our penal substitute. God then raised Him from the dead and declared that repentance of sin and faith in His Son should be proclaimed to all the nations, fulfilling Psalm 67.
- So engulfed in this salvation that He could scarce think of living without it, John Stam would write to one of his brothers, "Take away anything I have, but do not take away the sweetness of walking and talking with the King of Glory! It is good to let our thoughts run away with us, sometimes, concerning the greatness of our God and His marvelous kindness toward us. Looking back, what encouragement we find for

the future, what wonderful leadings and providence! Oh, bless the Lord, my soul!” (p. 47). Now, note three beautiful components or aspects of that salvation we are to proclaim among the nations.

1) The nations must know of His mercy. **67:1**

We serve a God who is gracious, loving, kind and wonderful. The psalmist begins by praying that God would do three things for His children. The verses echoes Aaron’s blessing found in Numbers 6:24-26.

First, “be gracious to us.” God’s grace is the source of all His blessings to us in Christ and is completely undeserved and without merit.

Second, “bless us” he asks. Remove the ravaging effects of the curse and fall of Adam (Gen 3). Rather than pour out on us the wrath and judgment we deserve, abundantly flood us with your favor and goodness. Note the idea of blessing appears three times in our text (vs. 1, 6, 7).

Third, “make your face to shine upon us.” The idea is “Lord, look upon us with your pleasure and acceptance.” See us clothed in the righteousness of Christ and smile at us with your love and acceptance. I love Proverbs 16:15 in this context, “In the light of a King’s face there is life and his favor is like the clouds that bring the spring rain.”

John and Betty both knew of God’s great mercy. Each was born into a strong and vibrant Christian home. John’s father and mother ran the “Star of Hope Mission” in Paterson, New Jersey, where it was said, “Scores of young people, converted and trained in the Mission, have gone to other fields, at home and abroad, and still the Word of God is being sent out from the old center in no fewer than 40 languages” (p. 5). John would trust Christ at the age of 15 under the preaching of a blind evangelist

who was holding special services and the Mission (p. 7). Of his passion for Christ he would write, “I would sooner be the most humble Christian, than have all a man could want of earthly things and yet be without Christ.... Oh, He is a wonderful Savior and Lord, and a wonderful Master to work for.” (p. 17).

Betty was born into a Presbyterian missionary family and raised in China, the place where she and John would be martyred. The godly influence and passion for the nations of her parents was so great that each of their five children served King Jesus as missionaries. Of this remarkable heritage Betty would write, “All five of us children expected at that time to return to China as missionaries. Our parents never urged it, but it seemed the natural and right thing to do.” (p. 26).

God’s grace would bring John and Betty together at Moody Bible Institute where they fell in love. Both felt God’s leading to China. Betty would sail for China in 1931 at the age of 25. John would leave the next year. He was also 25. Yes, he married an older woman! By God’s providence they would marry on October 25, 1933. They had been separated for a year while on the mission field and would marry the very next day after being reunited!

It is worth noting that Betty had prayed and thought long on the man she would marry. In fact at the tender age of 18 this gifted poet would describe the man she believed God had for her. In a poem entitled “My Ideal,” the last stanza reads,

He will not be a rich man,
 He has no earthly hoard;
 His money, time, heart, mind and soul
 Are given to the Lord.
 He’ll be a modern Daniel,
 A Joshua, a Paul;
 He will not hesitate to give
 To God his earthly all.

He'll be, he'll be, my hero—
 A strong-armed fighting man,
 Defender of the Gospel,
 And Christian gentleman.
 Oh, if he asks a Question,
 My answer "Yes" will be!
 For I would trust and cherish
 Him to eternity.

John and Betty could gladly tell the nations of God's mercy in their own lives.

2) **The nations must learn of His salvation.**

67:2

As the communist threat was growing in China in the 1930's, many counseled the missionaries to retreat and even return home. John's response was quick and clear, "If we wait til all is peaceful, how shall the present suffering generation hear the Gospel? We have our unalterable commission from Him who gave His life for us— Matthew 28:18-20. The words of a great military leader in this connection give us the true perspective: "Look to your marching orders! How do these read?" (p. 93).

Verse two is a beautiful example of Hebrew parallelism where different words affirm the same truth. God's blessings, poured out on his people (v. 1), is for the purpose:

"that your way may be known on earth your saving power among all nations."

God blesses us in order that the nations will know personally, intimately and experientially His ways and experience the power of His salvation. Do not miss what the psalmist is saying. We can and should pray for God's blessings in our lives and do it for the sake of the salvation of the nations! "God, bless me, but not for me, but for the use of me for the salvation of all peoples!"

Betty Stam knew something of this truth and as a young college student, shared her heart in a letter to one of her brothers:

No one can force a single soul, Christian (so-called) or

heathern, to turn to Christ. All His followers have to do, all they can do, is to lift up Christ before the world, bring Him into dingy corners and dark places of the earth where He is unknown, introduce Him to strangers, talk about Him to everybody, and live so closely with and in Him that others may see that there really is such a person as Jesus, because some human being proves it by being like Him. That is positively all the Lord asks us to do for Him, because He Himself does the rest. Jesus isn't dead, you see. He is still on earth and in heaven all the time. He's perfectly able to talk with people, and He is more powerful and more perfect even than He was on earth long ago. He is still watching and working for the salvation of the whole world. Only He can't get in touch with any human being until that person asks Him in to talk with him. And no one can ask Him in, if he has never heard of Him. That is where our work comes in—to introduce strangers to Christ; only, on His side, no one is a stranger, for Jesus knows and loves everyone. (p. 99).

On a piece of trampled paper found in their home in Tsingteth following their execution, Betty had penned these words:

Open my eyes, that I may see
 This one and that one needing Thee,
 Hearts that are dumb, unsatisfied,
 Lives that are dead, for whom Christ died.

Open my eyes in sympathy,
 Clear into man's deep soul to see;
 Wise with Thy wisdom to discern,
 And with Thy heart of love to yearn.

Open my eyes in faith, I pray;
 Give me the strength to speak today,
 Someone to bring, dear Lord, to Thee:
 Use me, O Lord, use even me. (pgs. 98-99).

3) **The nations must enjoy His praise.**

67:3

The blessings of God in salvation always give way to worship, and here all the nations (v. 2), all the peoples (v. 3), praise the great God of our salvation. Verse three

will be repeated in verse five. The “peoples” are mentioned five times in verses 3-5. All the peoples: north, south, east and west. All the peoples, black, brown, red, white and yellow. All the peoples, all 16,689 people groups constituting almost 7 billion people will praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for such a great and incomparable salvation.

John Stam was a much admired and respected student at Moody Bible Institute. He was chosen by his classmates to give the class address at his graduation. “The Field Is The World” was the title of his historic address. This now famous speech would have a powerful and lasting impression. Listen to just a portion of it.

In politics, today, men are thinking in terms of international affairs. In business, all the continents are being combed for markets; and even in daily life, every newspaper reader is becoming world conscious. And yet, we, the people of God, have not fully realized that we are to be a testimony to the world....Heathen populations are growing in numbers daily, but we are not reaching them, much less matching their increasing numbers with increased efforts to bring them the Gospel....

Our own civilization also challenges us as Christian workers. This country, once so strong in its Christian testimony, is becoming increasingly godless....

We have been guilty of acting more like the beleaguered garrison of a doomed fortress than like soldiers of our ever-conquering Christ.....

Shall we beat a retreat, and turn back from our high calling in Christ Jesus; or dare we advance at God’s command, in face of the impossible?....Let us remind ourselves that the Great Commission was never qualified by clauses calling for advance only if funds were plentiful and no hardship or self-denial involved. On the contrary, we are told to expect tribulation and even persecution, but with it victory in Christ....

Friends, the task with all its attendant difficulties is enough to fill our hearts with dismay, if we look only to ourselves and our weakness. But the authority in our Master’s command to go forward should fill us with joy and the expectation of victory. He knows our weakness and our

lack of supplies. He knows the roughness of the way. And His command carries with it the assurance of all we need....The faithfulness of God is the only certain thing in the world today. We need not fear the result of trusting him....

Our way is plain. We must not retrench in any work which we are sure is in His will and for His glory. We dare not turn back because the way looks dark....We must go forward in the face of the impossible, even if we only know the next step....

This bewildering age needs to know that only “the foundation of God standeth sure.” Many a man is being torn loose, these days, from the things to which his heart has clung. It is ours to show the incorruptible riches which bank failures and economic conditions cannot reach. It is ours to show, in the salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in personal communion with Him, a joy unspeakable and full of glory that cannot be affected by outside circumstances....

Does it not thrill our hearts to realize that we do not go forward in our own strength. Think of it, God Himself is with us for our Captain! The Lord of Hosts is present in person on every field of conflict, to encourage us and fight with us. With such a Leader, who never lost a battle, or deserted a soldier in distress, or failed to get through the needed supplies, who would not accept the challenge to go forward, “bearing precious seed”? (pgs. 54-56).

II. God’s Righteousness Must Be Known Among The Nations. 67:4-5

Our God is an awesome God who will be known among all the nations. He is also a personal God who takes notice of individual people and is concerned about what goes on in their lives. By invading our world through His people and supremely through His Son, King Jesus, He reveals His character and puts on display His glory for our enjoyment. In verse 4-5 the psalmist notes 2 particular aspects of His character we should know and share. Indeed these are things we should “gossip about” our God among the nations!

1) **Tell them He is a God of justice.**

67:4

The nations are encouraged 1) to be glad and 2) sing for joy. Gladness of heart and joyfulness in song should captivate those who have been redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb, the Lord Jesus.

However, the psalmist would also have us “sing for joy” for two additional reasons:

1) God judges the peoples with equity (*NIV*, “justly”; *NKJV*, “righteously”) and 2)

God guides the nations upon earth. “Selah!” Think about that and meditate on that.

The imagery is that of the Shepherd King of Psalm 23 who guides us in the paths of

righteousness for His names sake (v. 3). And, our God judges all peoples without

partiality or prejudice (cf. Acts 10:34). When we all stand before the judgment bar of

God John Piper well says, “No bribes will be considered, no sophisticated plea-

bargaining. All will proceed on the basis of God’s unimpeachable righteousness”

(“Let All The Nations Praise Thee”, sermon delivered on 11-9-86). There is never a

“let’s make a deal with this God.”

Betty Stam, in particular, knew and trusted the guiding hand of this righteous God.

Writing to her parents she said, “I don’t know what God has in store for me. I really

am willing to be an old-maid missionary, or an old-maid anything else, all my life, if

God wants me to. It is as clear as daylight to me that the only worth-while life is one

of unconditional surrender to God’s will, and of living in His way, trusting His love

and guidance” (p. 35).

A year later, after entering college she would add, “When we consecrate ourselves to

God, we think we are making a great sacrifice, and doing lots for Him, when really

we are only letting go of some little bitsie trinkets we have been grabbing, and when our hands are empty, He fills them full of His treasure” (p. 35).

2) Tell them He is a God worthy of praise. 67:5

For the 2nd time (v. 3) all the peoples are called to shout out in praise of the one true God. The word “all”, occurring four times in our psalm, anticipates the glorious vision in heaven described in Revelation 7:9-10:

“After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

The shining face of God (v. 1) moves “all the peoples” to exult in Him. Betty Stam loved to exult in this God and penned the following as an expression of her heart for the Savior she loved, died for and sought to make know among the nations.

O Jesus Christ, Thou Son of God and Son of Man,
Thy love no angel understands, nor mortal can!

Thy strength of soul, Thy radiant purity,
Thine understanding heart of sympathy,
The vigor of Thy mind, Thy poetry
Thy heavenly wisdom, Thy simplicity,
Such sweetness and such power in harmony!

Thy perfect oneness with Thy God above;
The agony endured to show Thy love!
Thou who didst rise triumphantly to prove
Thou are the Living God, before whom death
And hell itself must shake and move!

Thou Son of God—
Grant me Thy face to see,
Thy voice to hear, Thy glory share;
Never apart from Thee,
Ever Thine own to be,
Throughout eternity. (p. 36; underlining mine)

Did you note, “thy glory share? Did she have in mind His passion and her sharing in it in some sense? Those who knew her believed so.

Words like these no doubt are what moved her father to say of his darling daughter following her death, “It almost seemed as though, out of her peaceful, sheltered life, she has prescience of terrible things she would someday encounter for the Lord, and be called to suffer for His dear sake” (p. 39).

III. God’s Goodness Must Be Known Among The Nations. 67:6-7

Initially John Stam’s family was not enthusiastic about international missions for their children. After all, we should not overlook the needs at home. Yet, John’s father, in particular, would be won over by the heart of his son who said, “The Lord knows where he wants me, whether in Holland, in Paterson, or some place in the States, in China, or in India. However, it does look frightfully disproportionate to see so many here in comparison with the few over yonder” (p. 18).

John understood that the goodness of God and His salvation is not limited in scope. God loves to bless His people to “the ends of the earth” (v. 7), and He desires to do it spiritually and physically, personally and cosmically.

The final stanza of Psalm 67 promises a bountiful and fruitful harvest. In lands where people live from day to day and starvation is an ever present danger, an abundant harvest would cause great rejoicing and enthusiastic celebration. It would be the evidence of the gracious blessing of God on His people and a sign to the nations that this God can be trusted, and therefore we should worship Him, trust Him and fear Him, no matter what.

1) God desires to bless us.**67:6**

Verse 6 is stated in the past tense, but it has a forward perspective as does the rest of the psalm. It is a Hebrew way of affirming the certainty of something that will come to pass. With confidence we can believe a harvest will occur and with confidence we can trust that our God will bless us. The phrase “God, our God,” is virtually equivalent in meaning to the covenant name of God, “*Yahweh*” (translated LORD in all caps in most English translations). Those who seek, trust, proclaim, praise, and fear this covenant-keeping God will find Him faithful and they will be blessed by Him.

Following His murder, those who sat under John Stam’s preaching in the states would say, “Among his special Bible verses were: “Thou wilt keep in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee,” and, “The Lord is my helper, I will not fear, what shall man do to me.” Faithfulness was a theme he loved to dwell upon: both in the Christian life and God’s own faithfulness to us. How he could sing, ““Great is His Faithfulness’...His life was full of the promises of God” (p. 44).

2) God expects that we honor Him.**67:7**

The great missionary Hudson Taylor said, “a little thing is a little thing, but faithfulness in a little thing is a great thing” (p. 74). Verse 7 begins like verse 6 ends: on the theme of God blessing His people, blessings intended to result in the salvation of the nations. God is good to us in sovereign, providential care in order to be savingly gracious to the nations, to “all the ends of the earth.” He wants all the ends of the earth to know Him (v. 2), He wants them to fear Him (“revere Him;” v. 7). Derek Kidner says, “Let God who brings much out of little and distributes it in love,

bring such blessing on us, as to make us, in our turn, the blessing of the world (*Psalms*, TOTC, p. 237). God indeed performed such a work in John and Betty Stam, but not in the way we most likely would have expected.

It is hard to understand why God would see fit to cut short the lives and ministry of such faithful servants as John and Betty Stam. The secret things truly do belong to the Lord (Deut 29:29).

Having married in October 25, 1933 in China, God would grace them with a daughter, Helen Priscilla, born in September 1934. However, the Chinese Communist Civil War was now spreading rapidly into their region and their attempt to evade marauding bandits was unsuccessful. What follows is a brief account of the final days of their lives (summarized from *Christian History Institute*, Glimpses #160).

Betty was bathing three-month-old Helen when Tsingteh's city magistrate appeared. Communist forces were near, he warned, and urged the Stams to flee. But before the Stams could make their break, the Communists were inside the city. Communist bandits quickly came pounding at their door. John opened it and spoke courteously to the four leaders who entered, asking them if they were hungry. Betty brought them tea and cakes. The courtesy, however, meant nothing. They demanded all the money the Stams had, and John willingly handed it over. John was then bound and led away.

Before long, the bandits reappeared, taking Betty and Helen. That night John was allowed to write a letter to mission authorities, "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. The Lord bless and guide you. As for us, may God

be glorified, whether by life or by death." The letter was not received until after their murder.

Prisoners in the local jail were released to make room for the Stams. At one point frightened by rifle fire, little Helen began to cry. One of the Communist rebels said, "Let's kill the baby. It is in our way." A bystander asked, "Why kill her? What harm has she done?" "Are you a Christian?" shouted one of the guards. The man said he was not but that he was one of the prisoners just released. "Will you die for this foreign baby?" they asked. As Betty hugged Helen to her chest, the man was hacked to pieces before all of their eyes.

The next morning their captors led the Stams toward Miaosheo on a twelve mile march. Under guard, the entire Stam's family was taken into a postmaster's shop. "Where are you going?" asked the postmaster, who recognized them from their previous visits to his town. "We do not know where they are going, but we are going to heaven," answered John.

That night the three were held in the house of a wealthy man who had fled. They were carefully guarded by soldiers. John was tied to a post all that cold night, but Betty was allowed enough freedom to tend to the baby. As it turned out, she did more than that. The next morning the young couple were led through town without the baby. Their hands were tightly bound, and they were stripped of their outer garments as if they were common criminals. John walked barefoot. He had given his socks to Betty. The soldiers jeered and called the town's folk to come see the execution. The terrified people obeyed.

On the way to the execution, a medicine-seller, considered a lukewarm Christian at best, stepped from the crowd and pleaded for the lives of the two foreigners. The Communist bandits angrily ordered him back. The man, however, would not be quite. His house was searched, a Bible and hymnbook found, and he also was dragged away to be executed as a hated and despised Christian.

John pleaded for the man's life. The bandit's leader sharply ordered him to kneel. As John was speaking softly, the Communist leader swung his sword through the missionary's throat so that his head was severed from his body. Betty did not scream. She quivered and fell bound beside her husband's body. As she knelt there, the same sword ended her life with a single blow.

For two days, local Christians huddled in hiding in the hills around Miaosheo. Among them was a Chinese evangelist named Mr. Lo. Through informants, he learned that the Communists had captured two foreigners. At first he did not realize that it was John and Betty Stam. As soon as government troops entered the valley and it was safe to venture forth, Mr. Lo hurried to town.

An old woman told Pastor Lo that a small baby had been left behind. She pointed in the direction of the house where John and Betty had been chained their last night on earth. Pastor Lo hurried to the site and found room after room trashed by the bandits. Then he heard a muffled cry. Tucked by her mother in a little sleeping bag, Helen was warm and alive, although hungry after her two day fast.

The kindly pastor took the child in his arms and carried her to his wife. With the help of a local Christian family, he wrapped the bodies that still lay upon the hillside and placed them into coffins. To the crowd that gathered he explained that the

missionaries had only come to tell them how they might find forgiveness of sin in Jesus Christ. Leaving others to bury the dead, he hurried home. Somehow Helen had to be carried to safety.

Pastor Lo had to find a way to move the children a hundred miles through mountains infested by bandits and Communists. Brave men were found who were willing to help bear the children to safety, but there was no money to pay them for their efforts. Lo had been robbed of everything he had.

But from beyond the grave, Betty had provided. Tucked in Helen's sleeping bag were a change of clothes and some diapers. Pinned between these articles of clothing were two five dollar bills. It made the difference. Placing the children in rice baskets slung from the two ends of a bamboo pole, the group departed quietly, taking turns carrying the precious cargo over their shoulders. Mrs. Lo was able to find Chinese mothers along the way to nurse Helen.

Eight days after the Stams died in Communist hands, another missionary in a nearby city heard a knock at his door. He opened it and a Chinese woman, stained with travel, entered the house, bearing a bundle in her arms. "This is all we have left," she said brokenly.

Helen Pricilla Stam was three months old when her parents were killed in China, but by God's grace she had survived. She was brought to the United States and was cared for by her maternal grandparents, who had also been missionaries in China, until she was five years old. She then was adopted by her mother's sister and her husband who were missionaries in the Philippines. She grew up in the Philippines and returned to

the United States for college, after which she was involved in student work for her denomination.

A small group of Christians took the bodies of John and Betty Stam and buried them on a hillside. Their gravestones read:

John Cornelius Stam, January 18, 1907, “That Christ may be glorified whether by life or death.” Philippians 1:20.

Elizabeth Scott Stam, February 22, 1906, “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.” Philippians 1:21.

Daniel Bays would later note, “The courage of the Stams inspired many others to become missionaries.” (*Christianity Today International/Christian History and Biography Magazine*, #98).

Conclusion:

The brutal murder of John and Betty Stam was met with shock, tears and grief all around the world. And yet, the miraculous preservation of little Helen was an occasion for thanksgiving to God. Our Lord’s ways were certainly mysterious in all of this, and yet Betty’s parents, with great trust in the providence of God would say, “Everything about [Helen’s] deliverance tells of God’s love and power. And we know that if He could bring a tiny, helpless infant, not three months old, through such dangers in perfect safety, He could no less surely have saved the lives of her precious parents, had that been His divine plan for them” (p. 116).

Kenneth, Betty’s younger brother would say, “I am a Christian and I can see God’s hand behind it all. Instead of throwing us into despondency, it fills us with a greater trust in God, and a greater determination to serve Him with our lives. We do not see the meaning of it all, now, but some day we shall understand...in God’s work, the value of a life lived for Him, is measure not by the

length, but the quality of service, and by the fulfillment of His purpose for that life. Surely His purposes were fulfilled in Betty and John, and are being fulfilled: so their service was complete.” And Francis, the older brother of Betty and a student at Princeton would powerfully pray, “May God release to the whole Church new power through this tragedy, and a deeper consecration and more faithful witness to the wonderful cause of Christ, for which true follower all down the ages have been ready and willingly to die” (p. 123).

Finally, from the Congo, John’s missionary brother Harry Stam would say, “How sad and yet how glorious! How sad to think of the sin and hatred in the heart of man! And death is still an enemy. But how glorious the welcome that was theirs in heaven, as they met their Lord and Savior face to face! It almost makes one envy them, just a little, to think of the infinite tenderness which He must have said, “Well done...thou has been faithful...” (p.123-24).

A short time before their deaths John wrote his father informing him of the growing dangers they faced. In the letter, he copied some verses that, though written by another, well expressed his and Betty’s heart. Would to God they would also express our hearts.

Afraid?
 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 Savior’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 pierced heart;
 Darkness-Light-O Heaven’s art?
 A wound of His a counterpart!
 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?

Oh precious Lord Jesus, be gracious to us and bless us and make your face shine upon us, that your way may be known on the earth, your saving power among all nations! Help us to love you more than we fear man and what he might do to us. Bless us as you blessed John and Betty Stam, if it be your will.