

The

Berean Searchlight

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

June 2003



Feature Articles

The New Home of Berean Bible Institute
 Dr. W. Edward Bedore 5

The Believer's Inner Conflict
 Pastor Paul M. Sadler 9

Betty and John Stam: Young Missionaries Martyred
 Christian History Institute 15

Tragedy or Triumph?
 Pastor Cornelius R. Stam 19

Departments

The Influential Writings of C. R. Stam 4

Question Box 8

From Our Mailbag 22

News and Announcements 29

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From the Editor to You:



Dearly Beloved,

In the mid-eighties I had the privilege of serving on two national Boards. At the time it was becoming increasingly apparent that we were facing a major crisis in the Grace Movement. With a growing number of our Grace Pastors in the autumn of their ministries, it beckoned the question: who would fill these pulpits when these faithful servants of the Lord had to step down? By the early nineties the problem had become so acute that we were receiving regular calls from our Grace Churches in search of pastoral candidates.

While “shuttle diplomacy” between assemblies provided a temporary solution, it only prolonged the inevitable. We needed pastors, teachers, missionaries, and evangelists—and regrettably none were being trained. Furthermore, there was another looming concern even more ominous: some of our Grace assemblies might be forced to close their doors before these pastors could be readied. It was evident we must immediately establish a school that would be solely dedicated to train men and women to defend the faith that was first delivered to us by the Apostle Paul. Failure to do so could leave us on the brink of extinction.

Thankfully our Board of Directors was willing to accept the challenge to establish the *Berean Bible Institute*. Having returned from the mission field, Dr. Bedore accepted the call to serve as the Executive Director of the school under the auspices of our Board. Once the administrative matters were attended to and the curriculum set in place, we appointed a School Board to oversee the work. Until the Institute was on a firm footing financially, we extended an invitation to the school to use our facility for their office space, classrooms, and library.

It has been our goal from the beginning to eventually push the school out of the nest, so it could one day have its own identity. That day has come! There are thirty-three students and ten faculty members this semester; consequently, we’re bulging at the seams here at BBS. So it was welcome news to all when we learned the Institute would soon have its own building. Of course, we will continue to provide literature for the school, as needed, and fulfill our teaching obligations.

This is a bright day for the Grace Movement, and it is our prayer that in the near future there will be additional training centers established around the country. With God’s help, may we soon have our pulpits filled with men who effectively proclaim Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery.

Yours in His service,
Paul M. Sadler, President

The Influential Writings of C. R. Stam

By Pastor Joe Watkins

Executive Director of *Things to Come Mission*

Cornelius R. Stam went to be with the Lord on March 9, 2003. Perhaps the greatest contribution Pastor Stam made to the church and missions was through his prolific writing ministry. During his 70 year ministry, he authored more than 30 books on numerous biblical subjects.



Philippines Bible Institute

The ministry of *Things to Come Mission*, in several countries of the world, was started when nationals were sent Pastor Stam's books. The ministry in the Philippines was started when Brother J. H. Palmer sent Pastor Stam's books and pamphlets to Brother

Juan Undag. Juan and others in the Philippines became convinced that what they read in Pastor Stam's books was the truth for today. That truth was the key to understanding the Bible. The truth of II Timothy 2:15—rightly dividing the Word of Truth. This group of Filipino believers and pastors wrote to Brother Palmer asking him to send a missionary to the Philippines to start *Things to Come Mission* and teach this truth.

In January 1958, Brother Vernon Anderson and family arrived in the Philippines to begin *Things to Come Mission*. My wife and I joined them in October 1958. Over the years many other missionaries followed.

Today there are over 500 national churches, 5 Bible Institutes (Pastor Stam's books are used as textbooks), hundreds of trained pastors and Bible women, plus Filipino missionaries serving in Kenya, Brazil, Indonesia, the Philippines and South Africa.



2002 Filipino Graduates

Things to Come Mission has given thousands of Pastor Stam's books to national pastors and leaders in Kenya, the Philippines, Brazil (translated booklets), Indonesia, Australia and other countries of the world. And we will continue to send these works out as the Lord provides. TCM has greatly benefited by the writings of Pastor Stam.

This article was taken from the *International Harvest*, the official newsletter of *Things to Come Mission*. If you would like more information about *Things to Come Mission*, please write: Pastor Joe Watkins, 2200 English Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46201, or e-mail: tcmusa@tcmusa.org. You may also learn more about TCM at their website: www.tcmusa.org.

THE BBI BYLINE

The New Home of Berean Bible Institute

By W. Edward Bedore, Th.D.
Executive Director, *Berean Bible Institute*



During the seven years of its existence, **Berean Bible Institute** has been operating out of the headquarters building of the *Berean Bible Society*. Up until the last year this has been a very satisfactory arrangement. But, with the increase in the number of students enrolling at **BBI** during the 2002-2003 year, the limited space available at *BBS* has become too small. The fact that we were growing was a real blessing from the Lord. But it also presented us with a problem. This was a good kind of problem to have, but it was a problem that needed a solution.

Of course, it was planned from the start that the *Berean Bible Society* would only be a temporary abode for the school. Only the length of time that we would be there was in question. Well, that question has now been answered. The solution to our overcrowding problem was the purchase by **Berean Bible Institute** of its own building in Slinger, Wisconsin. We will be moving into our new quarters during the summer break. When the 2003-2004 school year begins on August 25th, **BBI** will be holding classes in its new home.

In anticipation of the need of a new location, the **Berean Bible Institute's** Board of Directors established a building fund a little over two years ago as we began praying and looking for our own facility. It had to be large enough to house the school's library and classrooms

and have adequate office space. It also had to be priced within **BBI's** range of affordability, yet be in good enough condition that it wouldn't be more of a liability than an asset. With the estimated cost of purchasing land and erecting a new building being one half million dollars, or more, this was not an option. The existing buildings that we looked at were either priced beyond our means or needed such extensive renovating work that they would have ended up costing almost as much as a new building.



Future Classroom



Chapel Auditorium



Auditorium Ceiling

In February Pastor Sadler's wife, Vicki, noticed a church for sale in the Village of Slinger that was priced at just under \$200,000. Knowing that we were looking for a building, she passed this information on to me. Because of its low asking price, I was dubious of its potential for meeting **BBI's** needs. Nevertheless, I made an appointment to see the building. As the Lord would have it, it was much more than I expected. It was large enough, and needed only relatively minor remodeling to adapt it to our use. It also had a 43- car parking lot. And, although it is an older building, it had been very well maintained over the years. Being well suited for **BBI's** program, we made an offer of \$177,500, which was accepted and **BBI** took possession at the end of April. We are now in the process of readying the building for the start of the fall semester in August. We are extremely grateful for this answer to prayer as it not only eases our overcrowded condition; it also makes it possible for **BBI** to continue to grow. It affords us the opportunity to be more effective in the ministry of teaching "*faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also*" (see II Tim. 2:1-2).

If the Grace Movement is going to grow, it is imperative that men be trained for the work of ministry. Grace churches, in our country or on the mission field, don't just happen by chance. They come about, are maintained, and grow through hard work and diligent leadership. **BBI** is doing its part by providing a solid college level Bible and ministry-training program designed to equip believers with the Bible knowledge and leadership skills necessary for a fruitful ministry in the local church setting or the mission field. The type of ministry that **Berean Bible Institute** is engaged in is important to the life and health of the Grace Movement. For this reason we are determined to press on in the work of helping individuals prepare themselves to effectively serve the Lord.

The purchase of its own building is a step of faith for **BBI**. During the time we were using the *Berean Bible Society's* building, we were

paying a very low rental fee. The amount probably barely covered the extra cost of utilities, supplies, and cleaning that our being there generated. This arrangement has allowed us to operate on a very low budget. But now **BBI** has taken on the responsibility of a monthly mortgage payment. As an independent faith ministry, **BBI** has no denominational or organizational backing to depend on for its monetary support. Trusting the Lord to supply our needs through His people, we depend on the gifts of fellow Grace believers who stand with us for the truth of God's Word "rightly divided" and want to help preserve the Grace Message for the next generation.

We are thankful for all of you who have joined us in the work we are doing through your prayer and financial support. You are the real backbone of this ministry. We are also thankful for all of you who have contributed to the building fund over the last few years. Because of your foresight, when we found this building, we had enough in the building fund to put down a substantial down payment. This has made it possible to purchase it with a mortgage of less than \$100,000, which is remarkable. In our thinking, this is a rather large sum. However, in the reality of today's economy, it is smaller than the mortgage on most new homes.

By making the necessary move into its own building, **Berean Bible Institute** is now faced with higher monthly operating costs as well as a mortgage payment. We are trusting that the Lord will supply for this need through his faithful stewards. Please pray earnestly with us that the Lord will raise up new regular supporters to help us meet these new challenges. And, especially pray that we will be able to retire this mortgage as soon as possible in order for **BBI** to use its resources to carry out its ministry in as effective a manner as possible.

Berean Bible Institute is committed to the principle of "*rightly dividing the Word of Truth*" (II Tim. 2:15) and stands strong for "*the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery*" (Rom. 16:25). By God's grace we will continue to uphold these wonderful truths of God's Word and endeavor to make them known to a lost and dying world by helping individuals to prepare themselves for the work of ministry. **BBI** is making a difference. If you have not already done so, I hope that you will consider joining us in this important ministry through faithful prayer and financial support. It would be greatly appreciated.

Don't Forget! Fall Semester begins August 25, 2003!

For more information about **BBI**, please contact Dr. W. Edward Bedore at our **new address: Berean Bible Institute**, 116 S. Kettle Moraine Drive, P.O. Box 587, Slinger, WI 53086-0587.

*"Only one life; 'twill soon be past.
Only what's done for Christ will last."*

The Power of Words



A careless word may kindle strife;
A cruel word may wreck a life.
A bitter word may hate instill;
A brutal word may smite and kill.
A gracious word may smooth the way;
A joyous word may light the day.
A timely word may lessen stress;
A loving word may heal and bless.

—George Knight

Question Box

“I read the letters to the Editor in the Searchlight and many people say that they do not have a Grace Church near them to attend. Neither do I. I would like to know what they do. Go to the best fundamental church, like an Independent Baptist or Bible Church in their area, or don’t go anywhere? My husband isn’t saved so that makes things a little different for me in doing things that others might be able to do. I love going to church to worship the Lord.”

The Scriptures admonish us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is (Heb. 10:25). In the absence of a Grace Church, Pastor Stam used to recommend attending an *Independent Bible Church*. He felt they at least would be dispensational and hold to the fundamentals of the faith. However, while this will provide an atmosphere for worship, it will fail to fully meet your spiritual needs.

We would suggest that you augment this with taped Bible Study messages by one of our Grace Pastors during the week. This will insure that you continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, you may want to invite a few friends to join you, including your husband. Oftentimes an informal setting will go a long way to bring a lost loved one under the sound of the gospel. And since many of our Grace assemblies sprang from home Bible Study groups, this could be a seed plot for a new Grace work (See Eph. 3:20,21).

—Pastor Sadler

The Believer's Inner Conflict

By Paul M. Sadler



The Lord has given me a number of opportunities to preach the gospel at the *Pacific Garden Mission* in Chicago. As you look out over that sea of faces, one cannot help but see the depths of sin. But, thankfully, “where sin abounded grace did much more abound.”

Consider for a moment a river that is overflowing its banks due to a torrential downpour. Its destructive force sweeps away everything in its path. This is a picture of sin in the world; it destroys lives. However, when a dam is scheduled to release enough water to flood a valley and form a man-made lake, these waters consume the river and the valley leaving a peaceful, serene setting. This is a picture of the grace of God super-abounding over sin!

The foregoing passage prompted Paul to pose the following question to the saints at Rome, some of whom were apparently living in sin: “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (Rom. 6:1,2). The apostle adds in verse 6,

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

Although *Reformed Theology* and *Dispensationalism* have been ardent defenders of the “dual natures” within the believer, there are a growing number in both of these camps that teach the old man is *eradicated* upon our conversion to Christ. Therefore, they believe the child of God only possesses the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness. This position has come to be known as *one-naturism*. The following statement of John MacArthur, the voice of the *Grace to You* radio ministry, is representative of those who hold this viewpoint: “I believe it is a serious misunderstanding to think of the believer as having both an old and new nature. Believers do not have dual personalities...there is no such thing as an old nature in the believer.”¹

On this premise, the *Holiness Movement* teaches sinless perfection, but advocates of *one-naturism* concede that the believer can and still does sin, although in a diminishing capacity as he yields to the Spirit. Even though the old man is eradicated, they claim the *remnants* of original sin are still present in the believer. We might liken it to a man who fires a shotgun at a rotten apple—all that's left are pieces embedded in

the wall. They call this embedded behavior, the flesh.

While it is not our desire to enter into a dialogue over *one-naturism*, we do want our readers to understand that this position stands in opposition to one of the fundamentals of the faith. Our declaration of faith in the *Grace Movement* states: "By reason of Christ's victory over sin and His indwelling Spirit, all of the saved may and should experience deliverance from the power of sin by obedience to Romans 6:11; but we deny that man's nature of sin is ever eradicated during this life" (Rom. 6:6-14; Gal. 5:16-25; Rom. 8:37; II Cor. 2:14; 10:2-5).

The Scriptures clearly teach that the believer has *two natures*. Our primary concern with the teaching of *one-naturism* is that some will be led to believe they could come to the place in their Christian life where they no longer sin. This, of course, is beyond the realm of possibility in this corruptible body.

SANCTIFICATION

In our study of the Scriptures, it is very important to distinguish between *positional* and *practical* truth, which sometimes is referred to as *standing* and *state*. A failure to do so will lead to erroneous conclusions. Positional truth is a truth that's viewed from God's vantage point. On the other hand, practical truth has to do with the believer's conduct in relation to that truth.

For example, we learn in Ephesians that God has "raised us up together, and made us sit together

in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). Positionally, as far as God is concerned, you are presently seated with Christ in heavenly places. Practically speaking, you are probably sitting at home in your easy chair reading these lines. You see, you are to appropriate this truth by faith, which will facilitate setting your affections on things above and not on things on the earth.

"Experientially,
triumph over sin is
only possible as we
reckon the old man to
be dead by *faith*...."

With this in mind, there are three tenses to our salvation in Christ:

Justification: Past tense—saved from the penalty of sin.

Sanctification: Present tense—saved from the power of sin.

Glorification: Future tense—saved from the presence of sin.

The present tense of salvation, sanctification, has the idea *to be set apart unto God*. The family of words associated with this Greek word is: saints, holy, holiness, sanctify, sanctuary, etc. Here we must be careful to distinguish between positional and practical sanctification. These are two distinct lines of teaching in Paul's epistles.

"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30).

Notice it is “in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us...sanctification.” This is a once-for-all act of God that takes place at the moment of our conversion. Therefore, we are the saints of God, holy, perfect, and complete in Christ (Eph. 1:4; I Thes. 5:23; Col. 2:10). Nothing in this life or the next can ever change our *standing* before God. The moment death sweeps us into the eternal presence of God we will appear before Him *perfect* because we are in Christ.

The present *state* of things, however, is a much different story. Our behavior as the saints of God is not always becoming of Christ. We are imperfect and incomplete on this side of glory. This is why the apostle admonishes the Corinthians and those at Thessalonica accordingly:

“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor” (I Thes. 4:3,4).

In the Old Testament, God never made a provision for presumptuous sins in the daily sacrificial system. There was only a provision made for sins of ignorance (Num. 15:27-31). The reason for this was clear: as far as God was concerned His chosen people, a holy nation, would never willfully sin against Him. But the fact of the matter is, they sinned again and again presumptuously against the Holy One of Israel, which thankfully was covered by the annual Day of Atonement.

We might say it this way today: surely a saint of God, who is set apart unto Him, would never willfully sin against the Lord. Sadly, he can and often does as the above passage demonstrates. You see, the believer is to appropriate by faith what he already possesses in Christ that he might not sin against God. This is how we have power over sin in our lives.

THE INNER CONFLICT

The mechanics of our identification with Christ are more fully developed for us in Romans Chapter 6:

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Rom. 6:6).

The “old man” is that which we have inherited from Adam at conception. Although some object to the usage of “old nature,” since it is not specifically used in Paul’s revelation, these two designations are one in the same. For example, a dog has a nature, which is the inherent character of the animal. The two are inseparable. Thus, we often hear it said that it’s the nature of a dog to bark. In similar fashion, the old nature is *corrupt* according to deceitful lust (Eph. 4:22). It *naturally* rebels against God and the things of God. The old nature is like the dog that returns to its vomit, it cannot be altered, and any attempt to reform it will always be futile.

Other names for the old nature are: the natural man, the (old) heart, the carnal mind, and the flesh. These designations merely

describe additional characteristics of the old man, with which we are all too familiar. But Paul says, “Our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.” We are dead to sin. Do you believe this wonderful truth? We do—lock, stock, and barrel, as they say!

In the eyes of God, our old man was crucified with Christ; it’s dead and buried forevermore, *positionally*. Practically speaking, however, he’s alive and well within our members. This is why the apostle instructs us that since Christ died unto sin once, “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin” (Rom. 6:1). Beloved, we would not have to *reckon* the old man dead if he has been eradicated, as some teach. We must *count* him dead because he is still present within us.

But some will say that this is merely the old patterns that we fall back into that cause us to sin when we fail to yield to the Spirit—the leftover fruits of the old man, if you please. But this is where we believe the teaching of *one-naturism* collapses. Those who defend this position not only fail to differentiate between positional and practical truth, but also between the *root* and the *fruit*. If the root of a tree is dead, the tree will not bear fruit. The old man is the root, oftentimes called *sin* in the Scriptures, and *sins* are the fruit (Rom. 5:12 cf. Eph. 2:1; Gal. 5:19-21). So, for there to be fruits, the root of sin must be alive to produce them.

In order to have power over sin in our lives we must *reckon* the

old man dead by faith. But now for “the rest of the story,” as Paul Harvey would say. Upon our conversion we are given a *new man*, which is identified with Christ’s resurrection. This is what enables us to walk in newness of life to the glory of God (Rom. 6:4,5). The new nature is said to be *created* in righteousness and true holiness; therefore, we are a new creation.

“And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph. 4:24).

Other designations assigned to the new man are: the inner man, the (new) heart, the mind, and the spirit. The believer then has both an old and a new nature. We take exception with the argument that if the believer has two natures, he then has dual personalities. But there is evidence to the contrary; did not our Lord Himself have a human nature and a divine nature, and who will dispute, in *one person*. Why then is it so hard to believe the same could be true of us, and indeed it is, albeit our human nature has been tainted with sin. Soon after we are saved we realize that there is an inner conflict within our members, as the flesh (old man) lusts against the spirit (new man), “and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Gal. 5:17).

Advocates of *one-naturism* deny that this warfare is present within us, stating that those who believe there is a conflict between the old and new natures are

admitting defeat. This, they say, is why these believers struggle in the Christian life and tend to be carnally minded. We disagree, of course, on two fronts: first, this is contrary to the Scriptures, and second, it denies experience.

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God” (Rom. 6:12,13).

In essence, the apostle is instructing us not to allow the sin nature to have dominion over us. You are dead to sin, positionally, therefore you should not obey the lust of the flesh. Neither yield your members as instruments (Greek *hoplon*, weapons) of sin against God. Rather, yield yourself to God, put yourself at His disposal, bearing in mind that you are alive from the dead by the resurrection of Christ. Yield your members as *weapons* of righteousness to the praise of His glory. Surely this portion demonstrates that there is a warfare within our members (See also Romans 7:14-25). This inner struggle may be illustrated accordingly:

The conflict between the two natures may be compared to a ship, on which a new Captain has been put on board by the owners. The old Captain has so long held command, and his enmity to the owners is so great, that he has practically treated the vessel as his own; and kept the crew in perfect

bondage. The crew has submitted to it, never having known any other authority, or understood what real liberty of service was. From time to time they have heard of it; they have passed other vessels which they saw at once were very different from their own.



But, now that the new Captain is in authority they begin to find out what the difference is. The new Captain henceforth always has control of the helm and the charge of the ship. The ship is the same, the crew is the same. Even the old Captain remains on board. The book of instructions which the new Captain has brought on board tells that the old Captain has been judged and condemned: but the sentence cannot be executed except by the proper judicial authorities, when they reach port.

They cannot put him ashore, or throw him overboard. But, he no longer “holds the helm or guides the ship.” He tries from time to time to get hold of the wheel, but in vain. He succeeds sometimes in putting forth his old influence by creating disaffection in some of the members of the crew; for he knows them and their weaknesses well from his former complete control of them. He occasionally bribes or

deceives some of them into acts of insubordination which they afterwards deeply regret. But the old Captain cannot get at the “ship’s papers.” They are now put quite out of his reach, where he cannot touch them. He cannot succeed in altering the ship’s course, or change the port for which she is now bound. He does not read the book of instructions; and if he looks at it, he does not understand it (I Cor. 2:14).




The ship’s crew was once his executive, and carried out only his will; but there is now no obligation for any of them to obey his orders, or to recognize his authority. They are released from it; and henceforth they are under the orders of the new Commander. They are to “reckon” the old Captain as already condemned; and the sentence as only waiting to be carried out. As to his power over them, they are to reckon themselves “as good as dead” so far as he is concerned.²

“Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him” (Col. 3:9,10).

It is essential to note that the verbs in this passage “put off” and “put on” are *past tense* in the

original language, as well as in the English. The Colossians were to understand that God has addressed the matter once-for-all in the life of the believer. Now the apostle says, you need to put into practice what you already know to be true. Believe it and apply it!

Hence Paul *commands* them, “*Mortify* [i.e. put to death at once, immediately] therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection...” (Col. 3:5). In regard to the new man he *commands*, “Put on [a *command* to be obeyed at once] therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another...” (Col. 3:12,13).

Experientially, triumph over sin is only possible as we *reckon* the old man to be dead by *faith*, for we walk by faith and not by sight. Having reckoned him dead, our new nature is renewed day by day in the knowledge of Christ, as we study the Word of God. Oh, that we might know Him, that is, more fully, and the power of His resurrection (Phil. 3:10 cf. Col. 3:11). This alone will bring joy and fulfillment in the life of the believer in Christ. 

Endnotes

1. John MacArthur, *Freedom from Sin—Romans 6-7*, Moody Press, Chicago, Illinois, Pages 31,32.
2. *The Two Natures in the Child of God*, E.W. Bullinger, D.D., published by *Bible Doctrines to Live By*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Pages 26,27.

The Christian History Institute's *Glimpses* of people, events, life and faith from the Church Across the Ages has graciously given us permission to reprint the following account of John and Betty Stam's martyrdom. —Ed.

Betty and John Stam: Young Missionaries Martyred



The year, 1934. Americans John and Betty Stam were serving as missionaries in China. One morning Betty was bathing her three-month-old daughter Helen Priscilla Stam when Tsingteh's City Magistrate appeared. Communist forces were near, he warned, and urged the Stams to flee.

So John Stam went out to investigate the situation for himself. He received conflicting reports. Taking no chances, he arranged for Betty and the baby to be escorted away to safety if need be. But before the Stams could make their break, the Communists were inside the city. By little-known paths, they had streamed over the mountains behind government troops. Now gun shots sounded in the streets as looting began. The enemy beat on the Stams' own gate.

A faithful cook and maid at the mission station had stayed behind. The Stams knelt with them in prayer. But the invaders were pounding at the 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 meant nothing. They demanded all the money the Stams had, and John handed it over. As the men bound him, he pleaded for the safety of his wife and child. The Communists left Betty and Helen behind as they led John off to their headquarters.

Before long, they reappeared, demanding mother and child. The maid and cook pleaded to be allowed to accompany Betty. "No," barked the captors, and threatened to shoot.

"It is better for you to stay here," Betty whispered. "If anything happens to us, look after the baby."

Betty was led to her husband's side. Little Helen needed some things and John was allowed to return home under guard to fetch them. But everything had been stolen. 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.... We were too late. The Lord bless and guide you. As for us, may God be glorified, whether by life or by death."

Prisoners in the local jail were released to make room for the Stams. Frightened by rifle fire, the baby cried out. One of the Reds 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; 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 her eyes.

TERROR IN THE STREETS

The next morning their captors led the Stams toward Miaosheo, twelve miles distant. John carried little Helen, but Betty, who was not physically strong, owing to a youthful bout with inflammatory rheumatitis, was allowed to ride a horse part of the way. Terror reigned in the streets of Miaosheo. Under guard, the foreign family was hustled into the 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. He left a letter with the postmaster. "I tried to persuade them to let my wife and baby go back from Tsingteh with a letter to you, but they would not let her..."



Helen Priscilla as a young girl with Peter and Amelia Stam

That night the three were held in the house of a wealthy man who had fled. They were guarded by soldiers. John was tied to a post all that cold night, but Betty was allowed enough freedom to tend the baby. As it turned out, she did more than that.

EXECUTION

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 Reds angrily ordered him back. The man would not be stilled. His house was searched, a Bible and hymnbook found, and he, too was dragged away to die as a hated Christian.

John pleaded for the man's life. The Red leader sharply ordered him to kneel. As John was speaking softly, the Red 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.

BETTY

Betty Scott was born in the United States but reared in China as the daughter of missionaries. She came to the United States and attended Wilson College in Pennsylvania. Betty prepared to follow in her parents' footsteps and work in China or wherever else the Lord directed her.

But China it proved to be. At a prayer meeting for China, she met John Stam and a friendship developed that ripened into love. Painfully they recognized that marriage was

not yet possible. "The China Inland Mission has appealed for men, single men, to work in sections where it would be impossible to take a woman until more settled work has commenced," wrote John. He committed the matter to the Lord, whose work, he felt, must come before any human affection. At any rate, Betty would be leaving for China before him, to work in an entirely different region, and so they must be separated anyhow. As a matter of fact, John had not yet even been accepted by the China Inland Mission whereas Betty had. They parted after a long tender day, sharing their faith, picnicking, talking, and praying.

Betty sailed while John continued his studies. On July 1, 1932, John, too, was accepted for service in China. Now at least he could head toward the same continent as Betty. He sailed for Shanghai.

Meanwhile, Betty found her plans thwarted. A senior missionary had been captured by the Communists in the region where she was to have worked. The mission directors decided to keep her in a temporary station, and later ill-health brought her to Shanghai. Thus without any choice on her part, she was in Shanghai when John landed in China. Immediately they became engaged and a year later were married, long before they expected it. In October, 1934 Helen Priscilla was born to them. What would become of her now that her parents John and Betty were dead?

"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 treasures."

—Betty Stam

IN THE HILLS

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 these were John and Betty Stam, with whom he had worked, but as he received more details, he put two and two together. As soon as government troops entered the valley and it was safe to venture forth, Mr. Lo hurried to town. His questions met with silence. Everyone was fearful that spies might report anyone who said too much.

An old woman whispered to Pastor Lo that there was a baby left behind. She nodded 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 Christ. Leaving others to bury the dead, he hurried home. Somehow Helen had to be gotten to safety.



Pastor Lo (far left)

Pastor Lo's own son, a boy of four, was desperately ill—semi-conscious after days of exposure. Pastor Lo had to find a way to carry the children a hundred miles through mountains infested by bandits and Communists. Brave men were found 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.


FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE

But from beyond the grave, Betty 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. On foot, they came safely through their perils. Lo's own boy recovered consciousness suddenly and sat up, singing a hymn.

Eight days after the Stams fell into Communist hands, another missionary in a nearby city heard a rap 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.



The missionary took the bundle and turned back the blanket to uncover the sleeping face of Helen Priscilla Stam. Many kind hands had labored to preserve the infant girl, but none kinder than Betty, who had spared no effort for her baby even as she herself faced degradation and death. 

What Happened to Helen?

Kathleen White has written an excellent and very readable biography *John and Betty Stam*, available from Bethany House Publishers (1988). She reports that Betty's alma mater, Wilson College in Pennsylvania, took over baby Helen's support and covered the costs of her college education. She added: "Helen is living in this country (USA) with her husband and family but does not wish her identity and whereabouts to be made known."

The following excerpt from Pastor Stam's *Memoirs* is a touching example of how the peace of God passes all understanding in times of adversity. —Ed.

Tragedy or Triumph?

By Cornelius R. Stam

John and I, only a year and a half apart in age, were naturally close in youth. John was more withdrawn than I, however, and specially dreaded the prospect of witnessing at our street corner meetings as he grew up. Dad had a way of challenging us in the Lord's work, though, and soon John was positively thrilled with our open air meetings. Mrs. Howard Taylor later wrote:

"So fearless did he become in this work that, with his younger brother, Neill, he was out almost every summer evening, witnessing for Christ on some street corner" (*The Triumph of John and Betty Stam*, p. 8).

But the Lord had greater, much greater, things in store for John. While at *Moody Bible Institute*, later, he felt called of God to go to China as a missionary. Also, he fell in love with a young lady, another student named Betty Scott, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Charles Ernest Scott. Betty preceded John to China to be with her parents, where she and John were to be married. Their precious little baby, Helen Priscilla, was later born at the *Methodist Hospital* at Wuhu.

Only three months after Helen Priscilla's birth, all three were captured by Communists at their home in *Tsingteh*, in Southern

“Dad’s feelings were well expressed in the words of one telegram: ‘You gave John to God, not to China....’”

Anhwei, and taken to *Miaosheo*, some miles away, Betty on horseback with the baby and John walking. It was at *Miaosheo* that both John and Betty were brutally beheaded. Little Helen Priscilla had been left, wrapped in a warm cuddle-bunny, in the deserted house they had occupied the night before. Betty had pinned some money, along with instructions about the baby, inside the cuddle-bunny, hoping some sympathetic woman or women might take her in or take her back to her parents’ friends.

John’s last letters (recorded in *The Triumph of John and Betty Stam*) showed not a trace of fear or doubt. Rather both Betty and John went to meet death with dignity and Christian courage. The young lad who had feared to witness for Christ at open air meetings, was surely witnessing for Him now! While all stopped at a Post Office on the way to *Miaosheo*, John took the time to write a letter to the brethren at *China Inland Mission* in Shanghai. He said in part:

“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.”

When asked by the Postmaster, “Where are you going?” John answered, “I don’t know where they’re going, but we’re going to heaven.”

We cannot here go into the amazing story of the rescue of little Helen Priscilla, but that dear little child did capture the imagination and sympathy of the news media around the world. Over radio and newspapers world-wide (no television yet), the story was told over and over again and continued for more than a week to be front page news in newspapers and magazines in China, Africa, South America and almost everywhere. Thus, the story of two young people who gave their lives for Christ was spread far and wide.

When the news of the martyrdom broke, Dad was away for the day. A reporter found me alone at the *Star of Hope Mission* and broke the news as gently as he could. I immediately called my brother, Jacob, and together we went to tell Mother.

One very significant detail of our visit with Mother has always stood out in my mind. We had read Psalm 46 to her to comfort her, and while the Psalm as a whole did indeed comfort her, one part of one verse seemed to calm her most. It was the first clause of Verse 10, not even the rest of the verse, but simply the words:

“Be still, and know that I am God.”

Mother had turned grey in a matter of days as, with her ear

“glued” to the radio she listened for any bit of further information about the captured couple. She knew what pagans and especially atheistic pagans might do to a young girl. But now she was refreshed by God’s injunction: *“Be still, and know that I am God.”* She had lived and walked with God for many years and was well assured that He knew what He was doing—and permitting—and that His will was best for all His children.

During the next few days literally hundreds of friends came to visit us, with words of comfort and sympathy. There were Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists, Presbyterians and people from other denominations including, of course, the Christian Reformed. Perhaps the Plymouth Brethren accounted for most of our visitors at that time. But strangely people who also loved us and whom we loved, people who lived right next door or across the street did *not* come to comfort us. I refer to those who were not saved. Poor things! They evidently didn’t know what to say. It was a great shock to them, and they did not know Christ. Their absence, however, compared with the appearance of so many who did know Christ, but were involved in many different denominational organizations, impressed upon our minds the glorious fact that *“ye are the Body of Christ, and every one members in particular;”* and *“if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it”* (I Cor. 12:26,27).

Tragedy? Indeed not. Within one week more than two hundred


young people volunteered to go as missionaries to the very spot where John and Betty had given their lives for Christ. Letters, telegrams and cablegrams came from everywhere it seemed. Within a short time we had received more than two thousand of them, telling what God had wrought in Bible institutes, seminaries, churches, and individual hearts, as a result of this seemingly so-sad calamity.

Dad’s feelings were well expressed in the words of one telegram: *“You gave John to God, not to China,”* and the Scotts, through all their tears, felt the same.



*Star of Hope Mission
Saturday night audience*

The ministry of the *Star of Hope Mission* was significantly enhanced through what had happened. Yet, it ultimately involved me in a problem that was hard to solve.

For some years I was still being asked to speak on the martyrdom of John and Betty Stam, and it bothered me. Finally, I simply had to explain that I had been called of God to preach *Christ*, to declare the riches of the grace of Him who first died for John and Betty Stam and that I was sure they would have it so. With rare exceptions they understood and I did just that. 

From Tennessee:

"I pray the Lord will comfort Pastor Stam's family, and I rejoice that he is present with the Lord which is far better! I learned about Pastor Stam from my great aunt, Marion Van Harken, who was with him during the early days in the little schoolhouse in Preakness, NJ. The story goes that a Bible Study in Preakness needed a leader, so they went down to the *Star of Hope Mission*, knowing they would surely find someone who could lead them. They got a young C. R. Stam, and the rest is history. His faithful service touched my great aunt, and her faithful service touched me. Our Lord has greatly used these servants, and we continue to be blessed by our dear Brother, Pastor Sadler. Keep up those little Bible studies in your town—you never know where our wonderful Lord will take it."

From Texas:

"Even though I've never met him personally, I'm truly saddened by the news of Pastor Stam's passing, but I'm sure that he is not sad. He has left us with a wealth of riches through the publications that he wrote." (While Brother Stam's service has ended here on earth, he is presently serving the Lord in glory according to II Corinthians 5:8,9. Ed.)

From New Zealand:

"I have been greatly blessed by the information in the book, *Things That Differ* by C. R. Stam. In a few short hours it has opened the Word of God to me more than 12 months of Bible College, or 14 years of preaching. A thousand thanks."

From South Carolina:

"I will be forever grateful to the writings of Brothers Stam/Sadler for introducing me to, and explaining in detail, right division."

From Florida:

"Pastor Stam will be greatly missed by all those whom he ministered to for so many years. It was Pastor Stam's writings that brought me (like so many others) to an understanding of the grace message. His absence will be felt by all and yet we rejoice that he has been united with the Lord whom he loved so dearly and served so very well for so many years."

From Ohio:

"This is the first time I have read your magazine. I really needed the article on *Worry*, thank you so much." (God's timing in meeting our spiritual needs is always perfect! Ed.)

From Virginia:

"Just a quick note to let you know that the gospel of the grace of God is growing here as, one by one, believers are being taken out of the Charismatic-Pentecostal group, and praise God our Father they are being illuminated by God's Holy Word to His grace and the distinctive message through the Apostle Paul. It is time consuming and it takes much patience to deal with some of these issues, since many are blinded to these precious truths."

From Colorado:

"I have been out, seemingly on an island, preaching, teaching and exploring Christians to understand the distinctions between God's kingdom program and his revelation of the Mystery...My seminary did rightly divide the Word of truth, properly distinguishing between the apostle to the circumcision [Peter] and the great minister to the Gentiles, our Apostle Paul. Your literature ties the matter together with extreme eloquence, clarity and conviction and I thank you for your ministry."

From Michigan:

"Enclosed is an offering to cover the cost of sending me the *Berean Searchlight*. I have been benefited many times by the articles and sundry items in the booklet. I especially am enjoying the writings of Ricky Kurth. Please relay my appreciation to him. I would like to order C. R. Stam's book on Colossians. Colossians is one of my favorite books in the Bible. I know Pastor Stam will find many truths that I have not even considered."

From Minnesota:

"I have been receiving the *Searchlight* from a friend and really enjoy it. Could I please get on your mailing list? Thank you!"

From Wyoming:

"Grace and peace to all at *Berean Bible Society*. I would first like to thank you for your *Two Minutes with the Bible* daily e-mail messages. I have learned so much about the gospel of the grace of God revealed to and proclaimed by the Apostle Paul....I really do appreciate all the wonderful work you are doing in proclaiming the wonderful mysteries of God. Keep on being Bereans!"

From Virginia:

"I have just completed reading *Acts* Volume I. I am a recent graduate of *Liberty Bible Institute*. The unanswered and confusing perspectives I walked away with have begun to offer the hope of understanding through the commentary provided by the late Pastor Stam. What a relief and great blessing. Can you recommend which book (or books) to study next? I anxiously await your reply." (Paul's gospel sets us free from the confusion of denominationalism. Ed.)

From California:

"Hi! I am just getting started. I am asking for prayer that I may grow stronger in the Lord, putting Him first in all things."

From the Internet:

"I am very sorry to hear the news about Pastor Stam going home. He was truly a great man of God. The Lord used him in a great way. He taught us so much about God's Grace. He will be missed I am sure. Keep up the good work, and God bless you all."

From Texas:

"I received the back issues and booklets (I just signed up for the *Searchlight*). It is so thrilling to read articles and lessons from ones who have rightly divided the Word! Paraphrasing Amos, there is a famine in the land....Thank you so much for your service to the Lord." (As the days grow darker, may God grant a great spiritual awakening to the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery. Ed.)

From Georgia:

"I enjoy the *Berean Searchlight* so much, and I thank you for sending it to me. I just read the *Judgment Seat of Christ* by Paul Sadler and was very impressed. He is really on the mark."

From Wisconsin:

"I must tell you how thankful I am to have received your letter the evening I did. I had been just a little down that evening because of the fact that most of my Christian friends here think I've gone over the deep end; they don't understand the unique apostleship of Paul. So thank you for your letter, the material you sent, and for answering some of my questions."

"These [Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." —Acts 17:11

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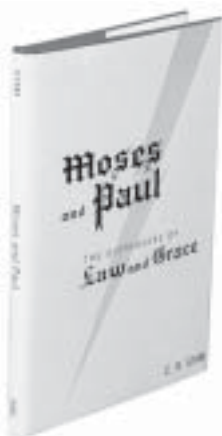
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1427 W. Main Street
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Date: Sunday Evening, August 10, 2003

Guest Speaker: Pastor Paul M. Sadler

For directions and additional information, please contact:
Pastor Jeff Seekins at (937) 667-2710

***May God richly bless these meetings
to the praise of His glory in Christ Jesus!***

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

BROTHER ROBERT NIX recently accepted the call as the Pastor of *Hilltop Bible Church*. If you live in Chicagoland, Pastor & Mrs. Nix (Linda) would like to extend a warm welcome to visit the assembly. The church is located at: 14036 Long Ave., Crestwood, IL. For directions and times of services, please call: (708) 371-2882 or e-mail: rnix65@hotmail.com. God's very best to these dear saints as they labor together to share the gospel of the grace of God with a lost and dying world.

SUMMER BIBLE CONFERENCES: With so many Bible Conferences planned this summer, and so little space, we want to at least supply you with the pertinent information:

Grace Community Church—Mini Bible Conference

Bedford, Indiana

Dates: June 20,21, 2003

Guest Speaker: Dr. W. Edward Bedore

Contact: Pastor Dave Wilson (812) 277-0520

Grace Believers' Conference—Bitely Community Church

Bitely, Michigan

Dates: July 25-27, 2003

Guest Speakers: Dr. W. Edward Bedore, Pastor Dick Ware,
Mr. Don Sommer, Mr. Casey Groeneveld

Contact: Pastor Ken Lyon (231) 745-9595

13th Mid-Atlantic Fall Bible Conference

White Sulphur Springs
Manns Choice, Pennsylvania

Dates: September 4-6, 2003

Guest Speaker: Pastor Dan Sheridan

Contact: Mrs. Suzanne Potter (304) 263-2411

*The picture of the lighthouse that appears on the front cover was taken by Patricia Fisher of Gillett, Wisconsin. The *Portland Head Lighthouse* is located in Cape Elizabeth, Maine. The 80-foot-high *Portland Head Light* is the oldest of Maine's 66 lighthouses. It was built during the presidency of George Washington and is the oldest operating and most photographed lighthouse in America.

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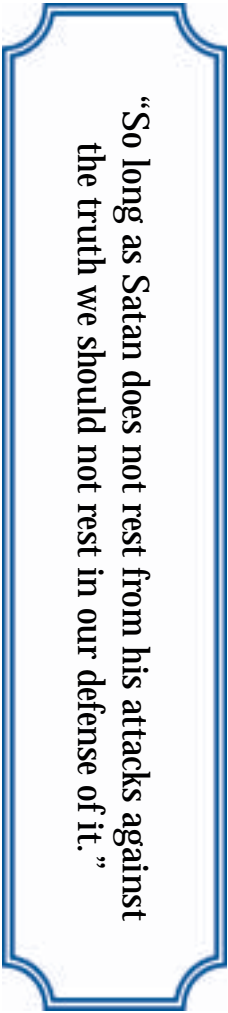
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**“So long as Satan does not rest from his attacks against
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