

This Dangerous, Century-Old Prayer Will Change Your Life

“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, work out Thy whole will in my life at any cost, now and forever.” –Betty Stam

Only the unabashedly brave and undeniably humble have the strength to pray a prayer such as the one that Betty Stam prayed nearly 100 years ago. She was a young woman who felt the strong call of God on her life and wasn't willing to settle for less than His perfect and consuming will. Betty Stam, at 27 years old, and her husband, John, were murdered on the mission field in China in 1934.

I have known this prayer since I was a young woman and have prayed it often. There are days when I am not sure that I mean it—but I pray it anyway. Frankly, I am not sure that I could begin to possess the courage or match the humility of Betty Stam—but I do know that I want to be used by her God.

I want what God wants for me more than I want my own way or my own will. I deeply long to decrease, in every way possible, so He is able to increase in my life. I yearn to lay my hopes and dreams on His holy altar so that I am able to partner with Him in His mission. I am aware, as was Betty Stam, that I am unable to do any of this without the power of the Holy Spirit.

I often use this century-old prayer as a litmus test in my life. When I feel the weight of self and preference arising in me, I kneel down beside my bed and pray this prayer that one of my heroines of the faith prayed decades ago. I have found that this prayer has not lost its power nor its vibrancy since

it was first uttered by an unknown girl ten years before her martyrdom.

One of the challenges in praying such a prayer to a listening God, is that we simply don't know what lies ahead on our journey of life. Betty Stam had no way of knowing that her life or her service to the kingdom of God would be cut short by Chinese militants. All she knew is that she trusted her Father and that He was worthy of her submission.

God's plan for your life and for my life may look nothing like the plan He had for Betty Stam. But, as followers of Christ and as citizens of the unshakable kingdom, we are all asked to give up our own plans and to embrace His will, whatever it might be. We may be surprised by the mountains He asks us to climb or by the difficult people He desires for us to love. We may be thrilled by the adventures in which He asks us to join, or we may be startled by the brevity of our lives.

I know I can pray Betty Stam's prayer in full assurance of His love, His provision and His divine protection. My hope is that you will pray her prayer with courage and conviction, knowing the God of Betty Stam cares for you.

"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 {eo}

Carol McLeod is an author and popular speaker at women's conferences and retreats, where she teaches the Word of God with great joy and enthusiasm. Carol encourages and empowers women with passionate and practical biblical messages mixed with her own special brand of hope and humor. She has written 10 books, including *The Rooms of a Woman's Heart*; *Defiant Joy!*; *Holy Estrogen!*; *No More Ordinary*; *Refined*; *Joy For All Seasons*; *Let There Be Joy!*; *Pass the Joy, Please!*; *Guide Your*

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