

**Text: Matthew 28:19-20**

**Title: HEROES: Ordinary People Living Extraordinary Lives**

**Part Four: Jim Elliot**

### **Introduction:**

Matthew 28:19-20,

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

***"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."***

These words were spoken by one of modern day's martyrs – Jim Elliot. His life was one fully consecrated to that which his Lord would lead and guide. He was submissive to the calling of Christ which he took on with full force – and that was to reach the world. He was no perfect man, he was no holy Joe, just a vessel wanting to be used by God in whatever capacity it was. Even if it meant going to reach the Auca Indians? These were savages – they were known as one of the most violent social groups in modern history. Family members routinely killed one another over simple disagreements; babies who cried too much were abandoned; and vengeance, in all its homicidal fury, was considered an acceptable motive for spearing – not just outside of the tribe, but even within.

Ultimately, Jim Elliot and his four missionary partners would die a violent, seemingly nonsensical death at the hands of the Auca Indians.

What led Jim Elliot to this point? Why would he move his family to Ecuador in the early 1950s to befriend this remote tribe? Because he loved His Lord and God, and he obeyed the call of his life to make disciples of all nations.

Tonight we take a look into the life of a great missionary and martyr, our hero: Jim Elliot

## **1. His Childhood**

### **a. Salvation as a Child**

- Jim Elliot was born in Portland, Oregon. Jim's parents firmly subscribed to Christian beliefs, and they raised their children accordingly, taking them to church and reading the [Bible](#) regularly. Jim professed faith in [Jesus](#) at the age of six and grew up in a home where obedience and honesty were strictly enforced. The Elliot parents encouraged their children to be adventurous.

**A – Accept** that fact that you are a sinner – Rom 3:10, Rom 3:23

**B – Believe** that Jesus paid for your sins on the cross – John 3:16, John 15:13, Rom 10:9

**C – Confess** and Claim Christ as your Savior – Rom 10:9-10, 13

- **Illustrate** – today could be your day of Salvation

- This decision as a child was life changing – it changed the course for Jim and his future.

### **b. Studied to be approved – I Timothy 2:15**

- You may be wondering what in the world does this mean and what does it have to do with his success.

***In high school Jim participated in numerous activities, including the school newspaper, the football team, school plays, and the public-speaking club. His acting ability led some of the teachers in the school to suggest that he pursue acting as a career, and his oratorical skills were similarly lauded—after preparing and delivering a speech in honor of President Franklin D. Roosevelt hours after his death, a faculty member called it one of the best speeches he had ever heard.***

- Jim had a lot going for him – he was talented, a hard worker, and successful in what he put his hand at doing. But he never let those things side track him from what God wanted to do in his life.

- APPLICATION – sometimes we let the distractions of success lead us on a path steered away from God's will

Jim Elliot said this about God's will – ***"Wherever you are, be all there. Live to the hilt every situation that you believe to be the will of God."***

- He was dedicated to God – not himself

## 2. His Convictions

- Jim used his speaking ability regularly, always ready at a moment's notice to discuss Christianity or defend his moral beliefs. He refused to compromise his convictions and was not afraid to launch into a mini-sermon explaining them. A classmate recounts how Jim quoted the Bible to the president of the student body as explanation for his refusal to attend a school dance.

### a. Serving Others – Phil. 2:3-4

- **ILLUSTRATE:** In 1953, Lt.Col. Walt Williams, Commander of the Colorado Air Guard's 120th Fighter Squadron, and three squadron pilots, put together an informal acrobatic team, flying the F-80C that had recently replaced the unit's F-51's. The team was called The Minute Men. They began putting on shows locally and later, as their fame spread, began performing outside of Colorado. It was on June 7, 1958, the team suffered its only accident while performing at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, before a group of West Point cadets. The team had just completed the rollout from the bomb-burst maneuver when the Slot man's aircraft, flown by Capt. John Ferrier, began a rolling high angle descent toward the small town of Fairborn, Ohio, on the edge of Patterson Field. The aircraft impacted in a small clearing in the midst of 4 houses. A woman and several children were knocked to the ground but no one was injured, with the exception of Capt. Ferrier. He was killed upon impact. It was determined that a flight control malfunction caused the crash. Based on eye witness accounts, although he had ample altitude to eject, Capt. Ferrier stayed with the aircraft and used his limited control to guide it into the open area. He was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for that courageous act.

Capt. Ferrier's wife recalls finding a piece of paper in his wallet with his mission in life – it simply stated – "I'm Third." He had put Christ first, others

second and himself third – that is why the story didn't end with more casualties.

- Jim Elliot was ready to put other's needs before his own. His comfort didn't matter, his pay, nor his well being – what mattered to him was serving others.

## b. Saving Himself

### 1. Realize the power of GOD'S LOVE

*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (Ephesians 1:4).*

### 2. Celebrate the uniqueness of YOUR DESIGN

*For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.*

*I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.*

*How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!*

*If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.*

*(Psalm 139:13-14, 17-18).*

### 3. Make a commitment to CARE AND TO THINK

*Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. (1 Corinthians 6:13).*

- **Jim Elliot's words were captured in the book, *Shadow of the Almighty* – “No one warns young people to follow Adam's example. He waited till God saw his need. Then God made Adam sleep, prepared for his mate, and brought her to him. We need more of this 'being asleep' in the will of God. Then we can receive what He brings us in His own time, if at all. Instead we are set as bloodhounds after a partner, considering everyone we see until our minds are so concerned with the sex problem that we can talk of nothing else when bull-session time comes around. It is true that a fellow cannot ignore women—but he can think of them as he ought—as sisters, not as sparring partners!”**

## 3. His Compassion

### a. Single-Minded

- "Father, make of me a crisis man. Bring those I contact to decision. Let me not be a milepost on a single road; make me a fork, that men must turn one way or another on facing Christ in me. "-
- It was during college that Jim clearly knew God wanted him to go and preach the gospel around the world. He began to do research and this is what he found:

- 1700 languages did not have a word of Bible translated.
- 90 percent of the people who volunteer for the mission field never got there.
- 64 percent of the world had never heard of Christ
- 5000 people die every hour
- There was one Christian worker for every 50,000 people in foreign lands, while there was one to every 500 in the United States.
- Jim Elliot said, ***"Those whimpering Stateside young people will wake up on the Day of Judgment condemned to worse fates than these demon-fearing Indians, because, having a Bible, they were bored with it - while these never heard of such a thing as writing."***

#### **b. Sold out to Missions – Matthew 28:19-20**

***• While at Camp Wycliffe, Jim practiced the skills necessary for writing down a language for the first time by working with a former missionary to the Quechua people. The missionary told him of the Auca people, an indigenous people group in Ecuador that had never had friendly contact with the outside world. Jim remained unsure about whether to go to Ecuador or India until July, when he became convinced that God was leading him to Ecuador. His parents and friends wondered if he might instead be more effective in youth ministry in the United States, but considering the home church "well-fed", he felt that international missions should take precedence.***

***• Elliot and friend Fleming arrived in Ecuador on February 21, 1952, with the purpose of evangelizing Ecuador's Quechua Indians. They first stayed in Quito studying Spanish, and then moved to the jungle. They took up permanent residence at the Shandia mission station. On October 8, 1953, he married fellow Wheaton alumna and missionary Elisabeth Howard. The wedding was a simple civil ceremony held in Quito. Ed and Marilou McCully were the witnesses. Jim and Elisabeth then took a brief honeymoon to Panama and Costa Rica, then returned to Ecuador.***

***• It was here that Jim and Elisabeth gave all they had to reach the lost for Jesus.***

***• While working with the Quechua Indians, Elliot began preparing to reach the violent Huaorani Indian tribe which were known at the time as the Aucas.***

***He and four other missionaries, Ed McCully, Roger Youderian, Pete Fleming, and their pilot, Nate Saint, made contact from their airplane with the Auca Indians using a loudspeaker and a basket to pass down gifts. After several months, the men decided to build a base a short distance from the Indian village, along the Curaray River. There they were approached one time by a small group of Auca Indians and even gave an airplane ride to one curious Auca whom they called "George". Encouraged by these friendly encounters, they began plans to visit the***

***Aucas, but their plans were preempted by the arrival of a larger group of 10 Auca men, who killed Elliot and his four companions on January 8, 1956. Elliot's mutilated body was found downstream, along with those of the other men.***

- Jim Elliot truly lived his statement - ***“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.”***

→ His life was precious just like yours – he had family, a mom and dad, a wife, and even a little girl. Yet God used this encounter to reach the Auca Indians.

→ You see the story doesn't end there – it is where it all begins because two years after the deaths, Elisabeth Elliot and Rachel Saint went back to Ecuador. They lived in the same village, where they were much loved for their work with the children. They eventually befriended a number of the native people nearby, and they were even invited to live with the Auca people – the very people that had killed Elisabeth's husband and Rachel's brother. Many lives were changed because of the sacrifice of Jim Elliot.

## **Conclusion:**

Jim Elliot once prayed these words:

***“God, I pray Thee, light these idle sticks of my life and may I burn for Thee. Consume my life, my God, for it is Thine. I seek not a long life, but a full one, like you, LORD Jesus.”***

God did just that – he took the dedication of a sold out man and led him in a direction that allowed him the opportunity to touch the lives of many.