

Biography seminar: Jim and Elisabeth Elliott

'He is no fool that gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.'

Who were Jim and Elisabeth Elliott?

'All is vanity below the sun and a "striving after wind". Life is not here, but hid with Christ in God, and therein I rejoice and sing as I think on such exaltation.'

(Jim Elliott)



Elisabeth Elliott: Dec 21, 1926 – June 15, 2015.

Jim Elliott: Oct 8, 1927 – Jan 8, 1956.

1. A heart for unreached peoples

'I only hope he will let me preach to those who have never heard the name Jesus. What else is worthwhile in this life? I have heard of nothing better, "Lord, send me!"'

(Jim Elliott)

What temptations or pressures do you think Jim and Elisabeth would have faced in making the decision to go?

What pressures can we feel, or what temptations are there for us when we are faced with an opportunity to serve God?

2. Ecuador and Operation Auca

'God gave us peace of heart, and confidence that whatever might happen, his word would hold.'

(Elisabeth Elliott)

- 1948: Separate arrivals in Ecuador, where they work with different people groups.
- 1953: Jim and Elisabeth marry and begin working together with Quichua people in Shandia.
- March, 1955: Daughter Valerie is born.
- September, 1955: Preparations for 'Operation Auca' get underway.

What is motivating Jim and Elisabeth at this point? How is that played out in practice?

Read Philippians 3:8-14. How have the Elliotts lived this out in their lives so far?

- January 6, 1956: First contact with three Auca tribespeople are made on the beach near their territory.
- January 7, 1956: No contact made, men begin to worry that something has happened to the Aucas.
- January 8, 1956: Ten Auca tribesmen come to the beach and spear the five missionaries.

'Oh, the fullness, pleasure, sheer excitement of knowing God on earth! I care not if I never raise my voice again for him, if only I may love him, please him... If only I may see him, touch his garments, and smile into his eyes – ah then, not stars nor children shall matter, only himself.'

(Jim Elliott, the day before he was martyred)

3. Unfailing trust in God

'No tears could rise from the depth of trust which supported the wives.' *(Elisabeth Elliott)*

- 1957: Two Auca women come to find Elisabeth at Shandia and ask her to come and live with them.
- October, 1958: Elisabeth moves to Auca territory, where she remains for two years.
- 1963: Elisabeth returns to US.

What two different perspectives could we have on the Elliotts' story?

How does the way that God blessed the Elliotts' ministry encourage us in the ministry that he has given to each of us? How does this help us, like Jim and Elisabeth, live out Philippians 3:8-14?

Read more

Elisabeth Elliott, *Through the Gates of Splendour*, Authentic Media, 2005.

Elisabeth Elliott, *The Savage my Kinsman*, Regal Books, 1996.