

Windows of Witness (Acts 4:20)
(Jim and Elisabeth Elliot)
Shadow of the Almighty - by Elisabeth Elliot

It is again my tremendous privilege to share a glimpse from the lives of individuals, who were instrumentally used in service to God. The stories of those who have lived before us are great sources of encouragement for our present walk with God. May our Sovereign Lord be pleased to raise up men and women in this day, to serve for the glory of His name.

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain that which he cannot lose.” Jim Elliot penned these words in his October 28, 1949 journal entry. Less than 7 years later, he would become a martyr on foreign soil.

Phillip James (“Jim”) Elliot was born in Portland, Oregon, on October 8, 1927. He enrolled at Wheaton College in the fall of 1945 and graduated four years later as a Bible major with the highest honors bestowed from Wheaton.

On January 29, 1953, Jim Elliot proposed to Elisabeth Howard on her 21st birthday, and they were married on October 8 of the same year. Their daughter Valerie was born on February 27, 1955. With their daughter only 10 months old, Jim Elliot (along with 4 other men) traveled with the intention of reaching the Huaorani Indians in Ecuador. It was the desire of these men to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to families who had never heard of Christ and His love.

On January 8, 1956 Jim Elliot, along with Nate Saint, Ed McCully, Peter Flemming, and Roger Youderian, were thankful for what looked to finally be their opportunity to share the love of Christ with this people group. Their plane had landed in a small village of Ecuador. However, as the tribe warriors approached, they were savagely killed on a sandbar called “Palm Beach” in the Curaray River of Ecuador. Although this sounds like a tragic ending of Jim’s life, it is FAR from the end of his story. As John Piper so well stated, “In the darkest moments of our pain, God is hiding his weapons behind enemy lines.” Elisabeth Elliot, along with several family members of the other men martyred, spent the following 2 years preparing to go to the very people that had killed her husband and share the gospel with them. In October 1958, Elisabeth Elliot, her three-year-old daughter Valerie, and Rachel Saint went to go live with the tribe that killed their husband, father, and brother.

After moving to the village, Elisabeth, along with the others, began to teach the Indian tribe people, the Bible. Their example of loving forgiveness led these enemies of Christ to a place of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus. Through God’s Word, they were taught to forgive fearlessly and love sacrificially. The lives of the very men who had killed the missionaries were completely transformed, both now and eternally.

May God ignite such love in us for people, for our Lord, for His Word, and for His Glory!

~ Pastor Tim Hodge