

Jim Elliot

Jim Elliot sought God's will, pleaded for it, waited for it, and obeyed it in life and death.

His martyrdom at 28 years of age has moved thousands to go to the foreign mission field. As though seeing what the future held for him, Jim wrote when a student at Wheaton College, "He makes His ministers a flame of fire," "Saturate me with the oil of the Spirit that I may be aflame. But flame is often short-lived. Canst thou bear this . . . short life? In me there lives the spirit of the Great Short-Lived, whose zeal for God's house consumed Him."

He was a gifted writer, speaker, and teacher. When he spoke of going to the mission field, many felt his gifts should be used to build up the church at home. He replied, "Why should some hear twice, when others haven't heard once.?"

Then he developed contact with a former missionary to Ecuador and learned of the Auca Indians who had never heard the gospel of salvation through Christ. In 1952 he and a friend left for the jungles of South America.

He and Betty Howard longed to be husband and wife, but Jim wouldn't until he was sure of God's plan for them.

Betty also went to Ecuador, but it was a year before they were engaged and subsequently married. Jim continued his work with Quichuas while making plans to reach the fierce Aucas who for centuries had killed all strangers.

After an Auca village was spotted from the air, the missionaries began dropping gifts, hoping to befriend them. In January 1956, Jim and four other missionaries landed on a beach of the Curaray River. Several friendly contacts were made.

Then, on January 8, 1956, all five men were speared and hacked to death. Life magazine said, "Other Indians fear them, but the missionaries were determined to reach them."

Jim had said it simply, "Our orders are: 'the Gospel to every creature.'" Elisabeth bravely returned to those who had killed her husband. Many accepted Christ.

Referring to God, His will and way, Jim had written. "God deliver me from other things."

It was after many long, lonely prayer sessions that he had felt God's call to South America. And it was only after 5 years of seeking God's will that he felt God's freedom to marry Elisabeth.

In all things he was ready to live or die for Christ and the salvation of the lost How about you?

