

Jim Elliot's Secret to True Wealth

When was the last time you sacrificed something for the kingdom of God?

When was the last time you truly died to self or gave up a measure of comfort in order to tell others the miraculous story of Jesus Christ?

For most of us, the sad answer is "Never."

We have never given up something meaningful or sacrificial in order to further the cause of Christ. Few of us have donated something of value in exchange for a lifestyle of faith.

The resounding truth is that we, as believers in Jesus Christ, belong to a kingdom whose citizens in every generation have never shied away from sacrificing something temporary in order to gain something eternal. For thousands of years of vibrant Christianity, men and women have given up their homes, their finances, their ease of living and even their very lives in order to make hell smaller and heaven bigger.

I think of the uncommon words of a man by the name of Jim Elliot who wrote in his journal at only 22 years old, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."

Jim Elliot was murdered at the age of 29 while participating in Operation Auca, which was an attempt to evangelize the Huarani tribe in Ecuador. Jim gave his life for a people group who had never heard the good news of Jesus Christ.

Jim Elliott was speared in the riverbed by sinful men who were in desperate need of a Savior. Jim, agreed with the Apostle John, who wrote, "They overcame him [the enemy] by the blood

of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Rev. 12:11).

We, in the Western world of Christianity, have the audacity to internally argue with pastors who teach truthfully about tithing and who offer the invitation to give to the kingdom of God even above one's tithe. We are often guilty of loving our money more than honoring the Savior.

We, having been spoiled by credit cards and annual vacations, feel no compulsion to spend time on mission trips or in sending others to mission fields. We would rather be comfortable than compassionate.

We, knowing the cultural delight of cable TV, uninterrupted internet and a smorgasbord of accessible restaurants, have never experienced the true joy of sacrificing something for the unshakable kingdom. Our desires have led us to self-fulfillment rather than to kingdom engagement.

Perhaps today, as we stand on the threshold of a new year, would offer a significant opportunity for each one of us to examine our motives and then to respond to the call to sacrifice for the message of the gospel.

This year, what can you offer that will leave ripples in the sea of eternity? Could you give up your vacation and support a missionary instead?

Could you sell something of only temporary value and then send a student to a Christian university?

Could you teach Sunday school? Could you fast a day a month for a cause greater than your appetite? Could you pray for your pastor?

My friend, never underestimate the unseen wealth of offering to the Father a sacrifice of time, money or comfort. You will be the richer for it! Believe me, I know.