

Richmond Hill Baptist Church  
July 28, 2011, Heroes of the Faith: Stephen & Jim Elliot

Prelude & Prayer Time

Call to Worship: *Praise to the Lord*

Welcome: Welcome to Richmond Hill. It is good to see. If you are a guest please fill out a Connect Card. Let's greet one another.

Sing: *Mighty to Save, Nothing but the Blood, Majesty*

Children's Corner:

Announcements:

1. Church Camp Out – Labour Day Weekend, Dinosaur Provincial Park, Sign Up
2. Fall Kick Off Sunday, September 11, Lunch
3. Connect Classes Resume on September 18
4. *Not a Fan* church wide series begins September 18

Offering & Offertory:

Sermon: **Heroes of the Faith: Stephen & Jim Elliot**

We have two more sermons in our series: Heroes of the Faith. Today we will talk about Stephen and Jim Elliot. Next Sunday we will consider You – and your potential to do great things in and through Christ.

The sad truth is that - sometimes the good guys die! Well the truth is we will all die at some point, however, for some their death will seem very premature.

In 1992 DC Comics presented "***The Death of Superman.***"

In the story, Superman engages in battle on the streets of Metropolis with the seemingly unstoppable killing machine named Doomsday. At the conclusion of the fight both combatants die from their wounds. The storyline was ultimately adapted into a 2007 animated film, ***Superman: Doomsday***. The good news about a comic hero is that you can resurrect them and bring back to life with the stroke of pen.

Superman's death set into motion a series of resurrections in the DC Comic Universe where other characters experienced pretend comic book deaths and resurrections.

Thankfully our greatest hero, Jesus Christ, is not made up. He did not die a pretend death and he did have experience a make believe resurrection. He is alive and

well. He is fully God and fully man. He is our all powerful Saviour and Lord. He is the one who calls us to follow Him in his steps.

Jesus said: *"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. <sup>25</sup> What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?"*

I hope you are making plans to be a part of our cinematic church-wide study entitled: **Not a Fan**. In the movie you will meet a family man who comes to the brink of death and then he radically changes how he lives out his commitment to Christ.

Would you please join me in reading our theme Scripture from Psalm 11:7:

*For the LORD is righteous, he loves justice; upright men (women) will see his face.*

Unfortunately, sometimes the good guys die. Our two heroes today were men who died at the hands of not the enemy but rather those whom they were trying to help.

## **Heroes of the Faith: Stephen & Jim Elliot**

Our hero today from the Scriptures is Stephen.

**Stephen** was one of the first seven deacons chosen to care for the widows in Jerusalem. His words and actions were bold and powerful. He is the first martyr of the Christian church and like Christ he is killed unjustly. His conduct, speech, and spirit of forgiveness prior to his death serve as a model for all Christians.

### **Profile on Stephen**

1. In Acts 6 there is a unity issue in the church related to the distribution of food between the Greek women and the Hebrew women.
2. The church leaders identify seven men, who are filled with the Spirit and wisdom, to bring solutions to the situation.
3. These seven men are considered the first deacons.
4. Based upon their names they all have a Greek background.
5. Stephen was one of the seven chosen.
6. He was filled with God's grace and power and did great things among the people.
7. He encountered opposition from the Jews and like Jesus was brought on trial before the Sanhedrin.
8. False testimony and witnesses were produced just like Jesus.
9. His accusers of charge him of blasphemy.
10. Acts 6:15: All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.
11. The High Priests asks Stephen: Are these charges true?

12. Stephen replies with his defense. His speech is found in Acts 7 and it is considered a model apologetic for Christians witnessing to Jews.
13. In this speech he retells the OT story reminding the Jews that were slow to embrace God's message and activity in their lives.
14. His speech culminates with their condemnation in verse 51: *You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!* <sup>52</sup> *Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him—* <sup>53</sup> *you who have received the law that was put into effect through angels but have not obeyed it.*
15. The Sanhedrin was furious at what he had to say.
16. Stephen has an epiphany: *full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.* <sup>56</sup> *"Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."*
17. They dragged him out of the city and stoned him.
18. While they stoned him Stephen prayed, *"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."* <sup>60</sup> *Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.*
19. Saul was there giving approval to the stoning guarding the clothes of those who stoned Stephen.
20. On that great a great persecution broke out against the church.
21. Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him.
22. Saul went house to house locking up the Christians destroying the church.

### Key Passages:

*Acts 6:3: Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom.*

*Acts 6:5: This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit;*

*Acts 6:8: Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people.*

*Acts 7:59: While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.*

**Philip James Elliot "Jim Elliot"** (October 8, 1927 – January 8, 1956) was a missionary to Ecuador. His team was working with a hostile people group called the Waodani. The Waodani, who were misinformed by one of their own, killed Elliot

and four others (Nathaniel Saint, Ed McCully, Peter Fleming, Roger Youderianat) on a beach along the river. Jim Elliot's wife, Elizabeth, went back to the Waodani after they killed her husband to share with them the love of Christ.

### **Profile on Jim Elliot**

1. Jim grew up in Portland Oregon in a Christian home.
2. He came to faith in Christ at the age of 6.
3. Influenced by missionaries that came to his church he dreamed someday of dreaming of being a missionary.
4. He studied Bible at Wheaton College in Illinois.
5. In 1947 he spent a summer in Mexico with a missionary family.
5. The following year he met a missionary from Brazil at an International Student Missions Convention. Here he senses God's call to minister in South America.
6. Jim struggled with his general classes but did well in his Greek and Theology classes.
7. He fell in love with one of his class mates was Elizabeth Howard. They both agreed that romance might interfere with God's calling on their lives.
8. Elliot went to Camp Wycliffe to learn about Bible translation and language.
9. Here was introduced to the Auca people group now called Waodoni. The Auca's were a violent tribe in Ecuador.
10. The Aucas has killed members of neighboring tribes and employees of an oil company that was drilling on their land.
11. Jim made plans and begin to assemble a team to reach the Auca tribe for Christ.
12. On February 2, 1952 he said good bye to his parents and sailed from California to Ecuador.
13. A year later he married Elizabeth in Quito Ecuador.
14. Jim's pilot, Nate Saint, devised a plan to lowers buckets from the plane with supplies for the Auca people. They also used loud speakers to communicate friendly phrases using the Auca Language.
15. On January 2, 1956 they established a beach head for ministry purposes.
16. They visited with several Auca villagers and even took one of them up for a plane ride.
17. Six days later, January 8, 1956, 2 Auca women came out of the trees and the group went to greet when the missionary team was ambushed by 10 warriors killing all 5 of them with spears.
18. Interestingly the missionaries had firearms for protection but chose not to use them.
19. The true heroes are Jim's wife, Elizabeth, her daughter Valerie, and Nate Saint's sister Rachel, went back to the Auca and were successful in reaching them for Christ including those who killed the team
20. It's an amazing story of forgiveness and love.
21. Nate Saint's son, Steve, continues working with the Auca now known as the Waodoni.

22. In 2006 a movie was released entitled End of the Spear retelling this amazing story.
23. Jim Elliot's story has inspired many to serve Christ self less and sacrificial way.
24. His journal entry from October 28, 1949 is often quoted:

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

#### Did you know?

An average of 171,000 Christians worldwide are martyred for their faith per year. Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (2006)

We take lots for granted in North America!

#### Four Take Away's

1. Keep in mind the sponge principle!  
Two questions to consider:
  - What are you filled with?
  - What comes out of your life when you are squeezed?
2. Never forget the power of forgiveness.
3. Never underestimate the testimony of your life and death.

How will you be remembered?

Will your life and death inspire others to serve Christ in a greater way?

4. Always remember the decision to follow Christ involves dying to our selves and living for Him.

*2 Corinthians 5:15: And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.*

#### Response: Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

1. Pray for the persecuted church!
2. Pray for yourself: filled with God Spirit.
3. Pray that you would be filled with the fruit of God's Spirit. One of which is forgiveness.
4. Pray that you daily die to yourself and choose to live for Christ.

#### Postlude:

## Heroes of the Faith: Stephen & Jim Elliot

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Jim Elliot journal entry on October 28, 1949

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