

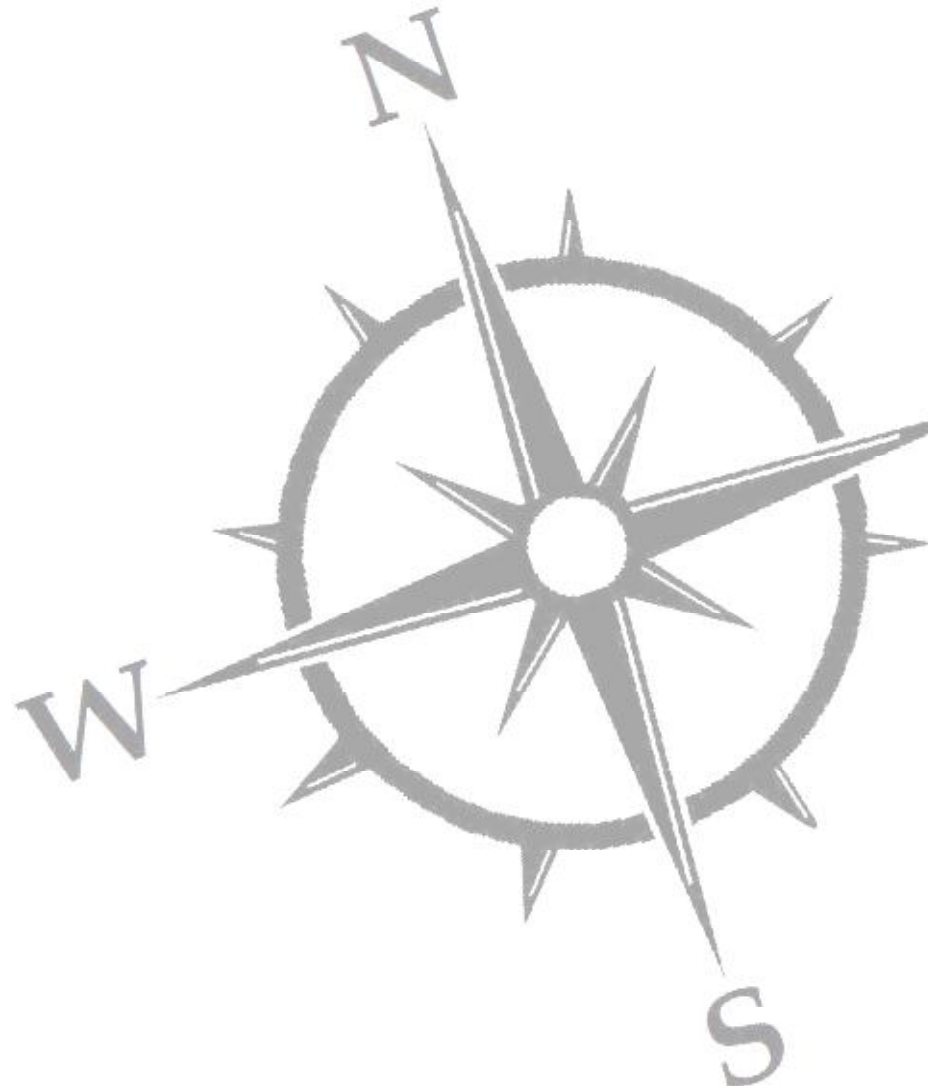
The Life of Jim Elliot

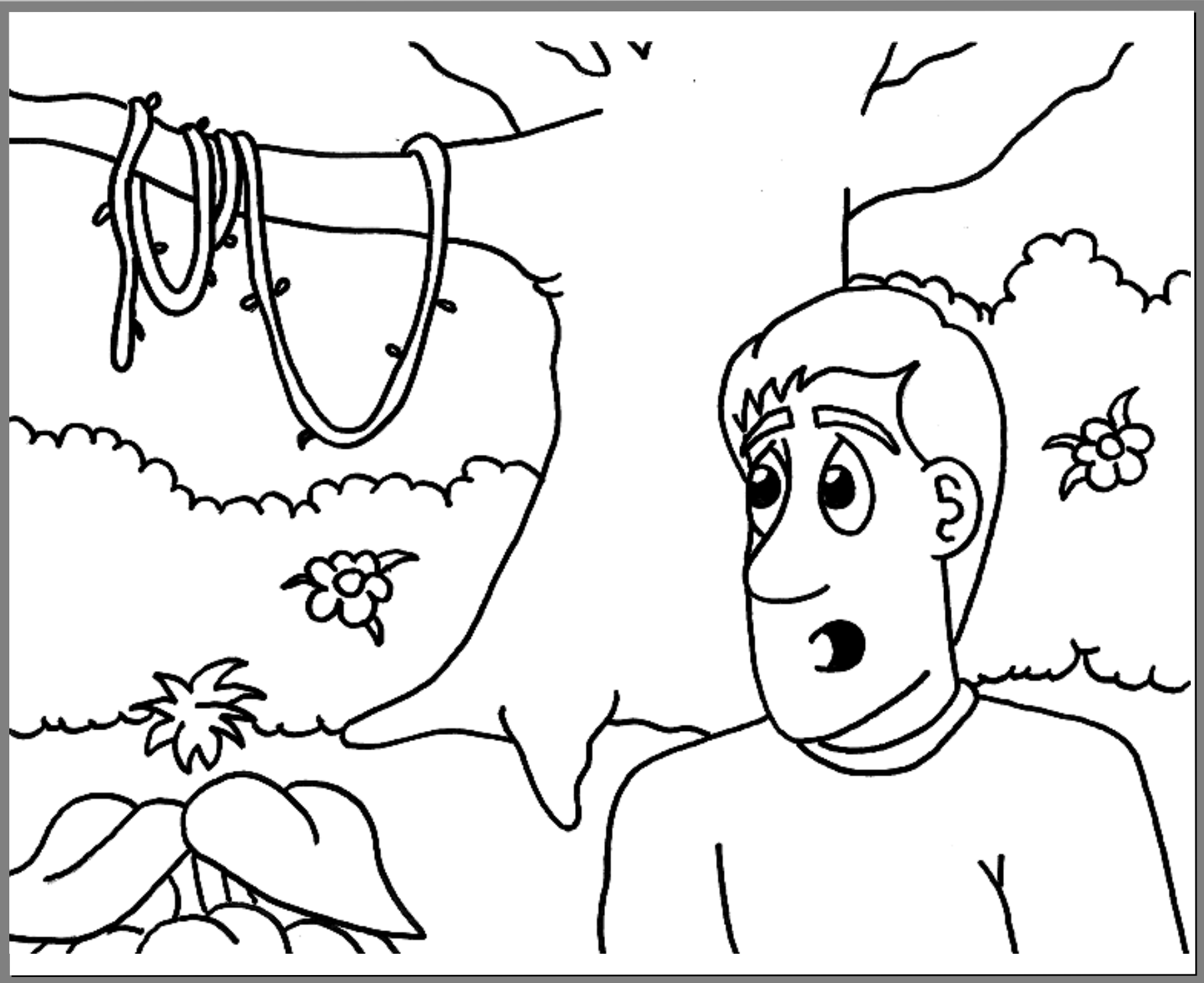
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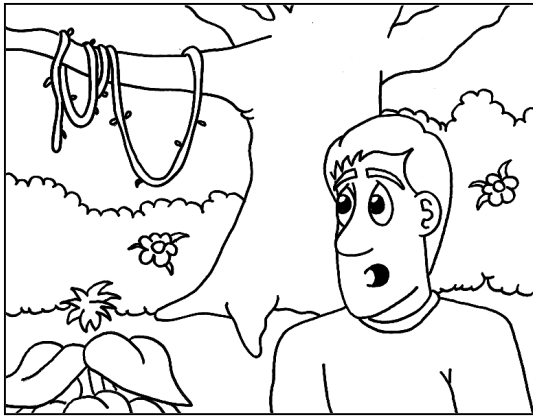
Lesson: 3.27 – Purpose Missionary Snapshot Series

This story reminds us that God has a special purpose for each Christian's life. It should be our goal to be more like Christ, and try to be all that Christ has in mind for us each and every day. Jim Elliot wanted to tell a terrible and dangerous tribe of people about Jesus. God had spared Jim's life several times in the past because God had something special for Jim to do. What will happen?

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." - Jeremiah 29:11







***Please Note:** This story contains subject matter that can be scary to younger children. It is recommended for 3rd graders and above (or based on leader discretion).*

Introduction:

What is supposed to happen when you flip on a light switch? The light comes on. You can stand there all day and every time you flip the light switch, the light comes on. A light switch does what it was made to do... to turn the light on. Just like the light switch, God has a purpose for each Christian as well. We must do what God has created us to do. Our story today is about a missionary in Ecuador. This missionary was about to meet up with some terrible and dangerous people to tell them something very important. Let's listen carefully and see what happens in this story about Jim Elliot...

Missionary Story:

“Wake up! Wake up! You must come quickly,” a Quichua Indian voice said in the darkness. I woke up in a daze with someone shaking my shoulders. I sat up in my bed, but

could not make out who had been shaking me in the darkness. Hey, Pete, wake up, there seems to be some kind of trouble outside,” I said as I stumbled over to my missionary friend’s bed. We pulled on some clothes, grabbed our medical bag, and followed this stranger out into the darkness.

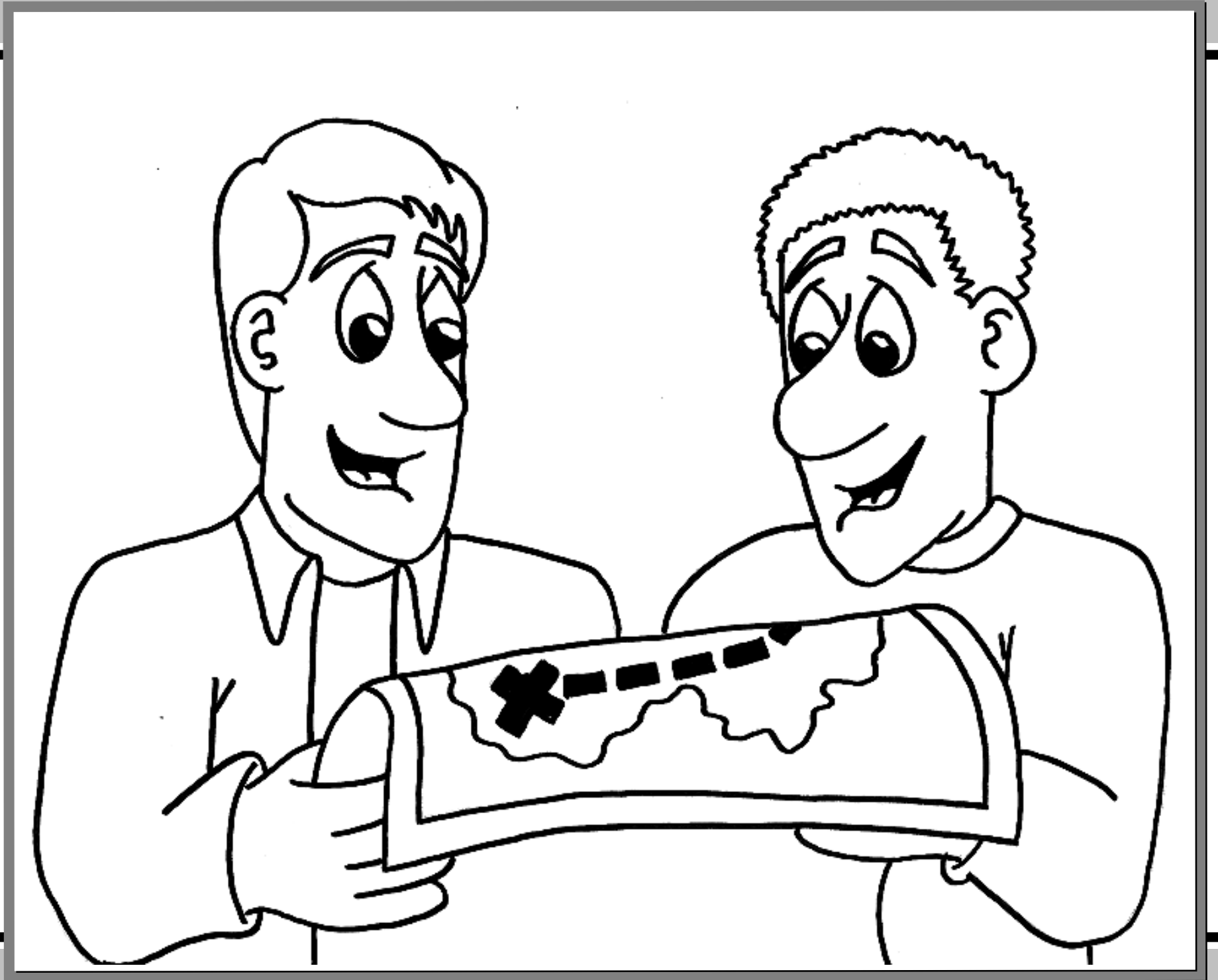
We followed the Quichua man down a small path that ran next to the river. I reached into my bag and pulled out a flashlight so that we would be able to see the path a little better. I knew better than to grab any of the low hanging tree branches as we walked. There was a good chance that any one of them could be a snake.

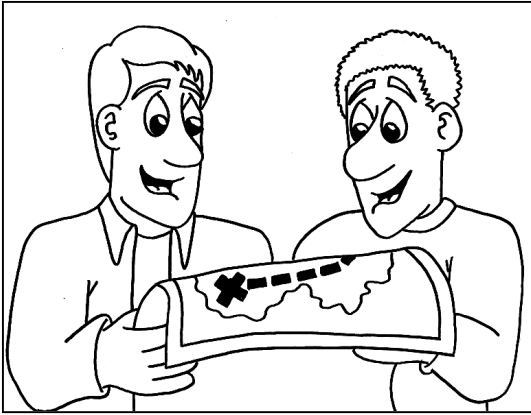
We followed closely behind the man for about ten minutes and then stopped in front of a small hut. Though I did not recognize the Quichua man, I did recognize this hut. We had visited this place only about a week ago. Once inside, the man led us to a small hammock. Laying inside was a tiny baby. I knelt down and touched the baby’s forehead. “She is burning up,” I told Pete. We took her temperature and found that she had a high fever. The Indian man pulled on my shirt sleeve and then pretended to give himself a shot in the arm. I nodded my head. I knew that the Quichua Indians thought that the needles and shots that the missionaries had were the cure for every illness. The Indians had watched these syringes help many of their people and had come to trust what they could do. We decided that the baby probably had pneumonia and gave her a shot of antibiotics. The Quichua man then pointed to some small bamboo planks in the corner of the room. “Sleep,” was all he said in the

Quichua language. Pete and I walked over and laid down and soon were back to sleep.

I truly enjoyed working with Quichua people, but God had put someone else on my mind. One day, I was speaking with a farmer and I asked him about a group of Indians called the Aucas. “What are they like?” he said with a surprised voice. “They are terrible, vicious killers. They kill anyone who even comes near their village. I would stay far away from them if I were you!” I knew that the farmer would think that I was crazy, but long ago, God had put in on my heart to reach a group of people like the Aucas who had never even heard of Jesus with the gospel. The farmer told me about a girl named Dayuma in a nearby village, who had run away from the Auca tribe when she was just a girl. A couple of days later, I met with Dayuma. I asked her if she would be willing to teach me some of the Auca language. She agreed but told me that it was very dangerous to ever go near the Aucas.

“God must have a purpose for my life,” I thought later that evening. I remembered back when I was younger. I had gone on a hunting trip when suddenly a bullet grazed my head and barely missed killing me. There was a second time when I was in college. Pete and I had been out witnessing. On our way back home, our car stopped working right when we pulled across some railroad tracks. We had tried to get it started, but it wouldn’t budge. Suddenly, a light showed on the side of our car and the loud screech of a train whistle blasted through the air. My friends and I dove out of the car just before the train smashed through





the car leaving it in a pile of flames. There was a third time as well just a few years before. I had grown up in Oregon and was used to rain, but not the rains in South America. One night, a horrible rainstorm came in. Sheets of water fell from the sky. I threw on my raincoat and went out into the night and realized something terrible was happening. Even though our mission compound sat high up on a cliff ledge, the river below was rising and was washing away large sections of the base of the cliff. I wasn't out there long when I heard a loud crack. I turned around just in time to see my house tip over on its side and disappear over the edge of the cliff. I called all the other missionaries and several Quichua men and together we tried to move as many things from the edge as we could. "Pete, give me that rope," I shouted. I planned to tie the rope around the small hut that we used as our clinic and pull it away from the edge. As I walked the rope behind the back of the hut, the ground gave away. "He's dead!" a Quichua man shouted. "No, I'm alive!" I shouted back. I had managed to grab the on

to the back wall of the hut just in time and was still hanging from it. My friends pulled me to safety, but we lost many things in the storms that night. Yes, three times God had protected me. He must have something special planned for my life and I had a strange feeling that it had something to do with the Auca Indians.

One afternoon, we got some exciting news. Nate Saint had been flying in his plane and had spotted an Auca village from the air. That night, Nate Saint, Roger Youderian, Ed McCully, Pete Fleming and I came up with a plan to try to reach the Aucas for Christ. For weeks, we flew by, lowered a bucket and left gifts like a shiny kettle, twenty brightly colored buttons, plastic cups, pictures of each of us, and a flashlight for the Aucas.

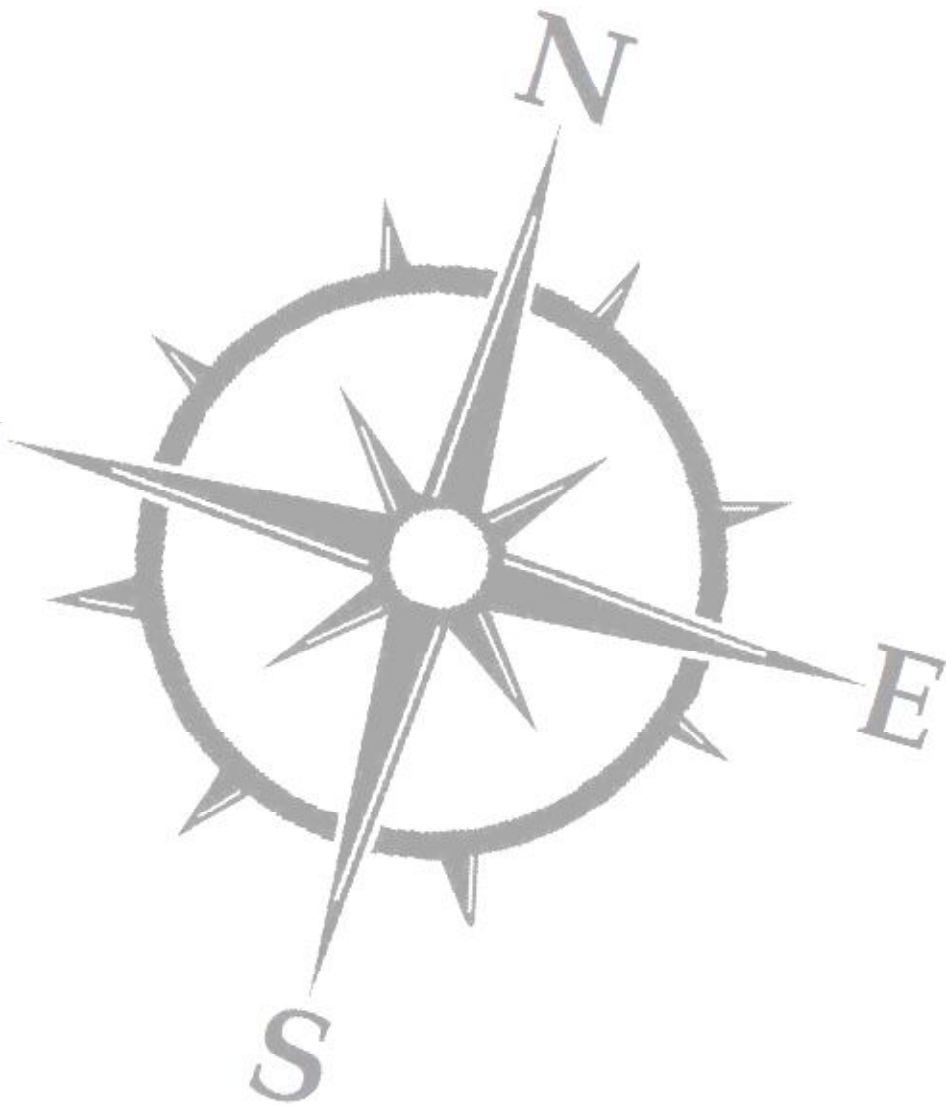
After two months of flying and dropping gifts, we decided it was time to try to land on a beach near the Aucas and build a small tree house to try to make contact with them. For three days, we stood at the river's edge across from their village and shouted Auca phrases like "Come down to the river," "We want to meet you," and "We are your friends." Finally, on the third day, a man and two women came to the river's edge. We welcomed them, gave them gifts and showed them the plane. The man, who we nicknamed George, pointed to the plane and then pointed to himself. "He wants to fly," said Pete. Nate took George up in the plane. He was so excited that he shouted and waved to his people from the plane. That evening we radioed our families. "We made contact today," we told them, "We are thrilled... maybe God is opening their hearts at last!

Application:

You know, boys and girls, Proverbs 20:24 tells us that God directs our steps and has a plan for each Christian's life. We never know what God has for us or how we fit into His plan, which is why obeying God immediately is so important. Jim Elliot wanted his life to count. God did use Jim Elliot to do something amazing even though it did not seem that way at first.

Sadly, three days after that first visit, Auca warriors made a terrible mistake and attacked and murdered those five missionaries on the beach. However, Jim Elliot's wife, Elisabeth, and Nate Saint's sister, Rachel, courageously returned with Dayuma and lived with the Auca tribe. The tribe cried when they realized what they had done. Did those missionaries waste their lives? The five missionaries wouldn't say that at all. They understood that Christians are sometimes called by God to fall to the ground and die like seeds, so that good fruit can grow. Their deaths led to many of those same Aucas accepting Jesus as their Saviour. The news of the five missionaries shocked the world and sparked thousands of Christians to commit to serving the Lord as missionaries. Even to this day, the deaths of the Auca five remind the world that "he is no fool who gives up that which he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."

(For additional information, discussion questions and materials on this lesson please refer to lesson 3.27 on page 90 in your Vanuatu Expedition - Leader's Guide.)



References

For further reading or to obtain more information on this portion of the life of this missionary, please consult the following sources from which we obtained information from:

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