

# The Life of Elisabeth Elliot

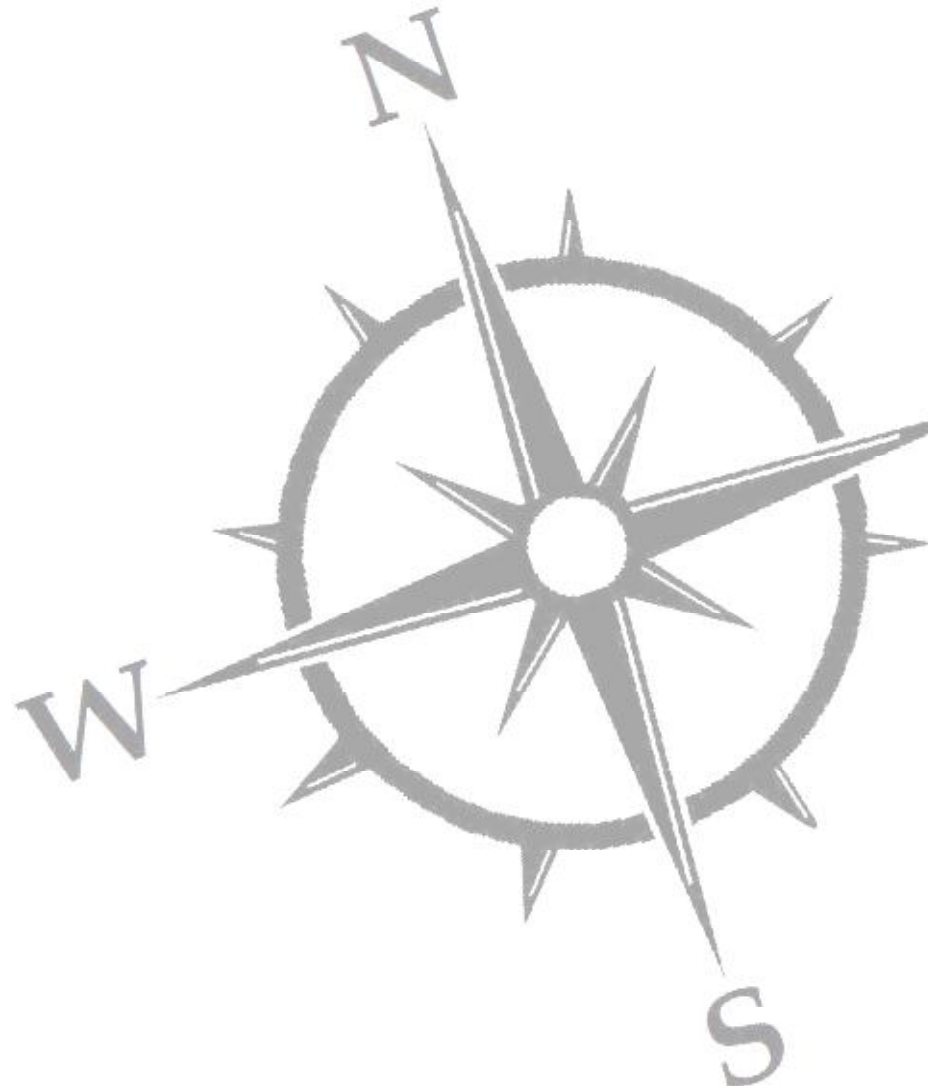
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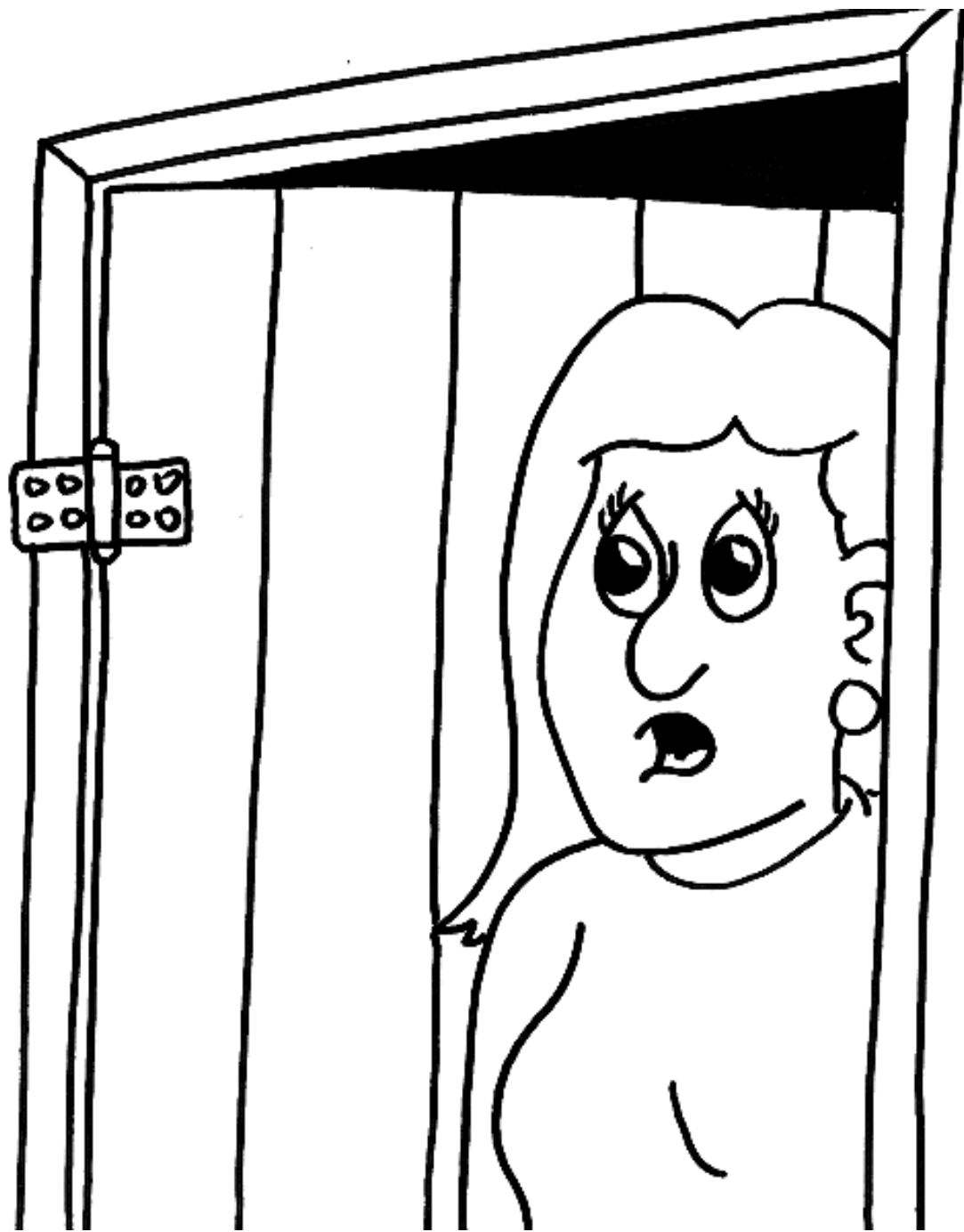
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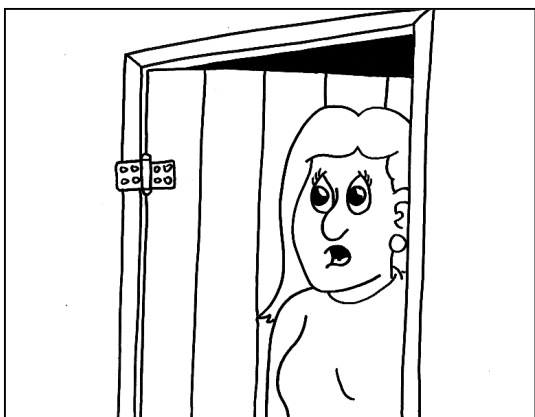
## Lesson: 3.28 – Forgiveness Missionary Snapshot Series

This story reminds us of how to respond when we have been wronged and spoken badly of. Jesus instructed us to forgive others just as we ourselves have been forgiven by Him. We have done many sins against God, but God has chosen to forgive us. Elisabeth Elliot could have been angry and held a grudge, but she decided to forgive those who had done something terrible to her and God used that to do something wonderful. What terrible thing happened?

*“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” – Ephesians 4:32*







***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:**

In some places, hunters use a wooden box filled with food to catch monkeys. They cut a little hole in the side just big enough for the monkey's hand to fit through, but not big enough to pull its hand out when it has a handful of goodies. The monkey stays trapped because it will not let go of the goodies. Anger and revenge are just like that trap. Unless we choose to forgive and let it go, we will be trapped in a terrible place. Our story today is about a missionary in Ecuador. She is about to go into a very dangerous place filled with mean and vicious warriors. Let's listen carefully and see what happens in this story about Elisabeth Elliot...

### **Missionary Story:**

"Aucas!" The cry rang through the night. I sat up straight in my bed and glanced around trying to let my eyes get used to the

darkness. "Had Auca warriors from the tribe come to kill us?" I wondered as I quietly snuck to the door and peered out. I saw several other Quichua Indian villagers also peering out of their doors and windows. "It was just a monkey," a villager who was keeping guard quietly assured us. Everyone was worried because of something strange that had happened earlier that morning.

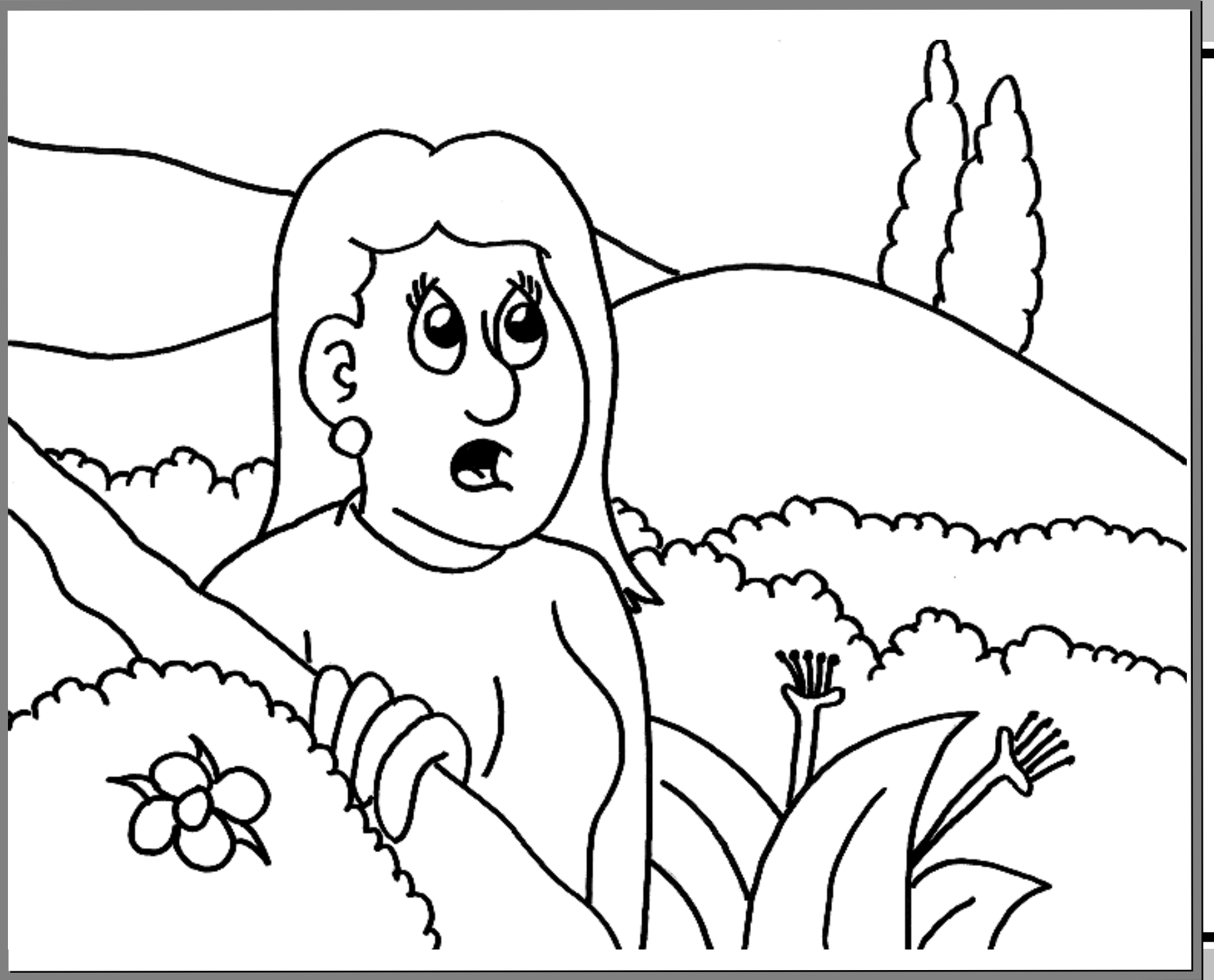
As I climbed back in bed, my mind went back to January 8, 1956. My husband, Jim and four other missionary men had formed a plan to reach a dangerous Indian tribe known as the Aucas. For weeks, they had flown in a plane and dropped gifts in a bucket and even a picture of themselves down to the Aucas. The Aucas had even started giving gifts back to them. Jim and the others decided it was time to try and reach the Aucas with the gospel. Jim had talked about reaching a lost tribe like the Aucas for as long as I could remember. He and the others were excited to meet these people and tell them about Jesus. They landed a plane on a beach near the tribe and shouted nice phrases they had learned to say like "We are your friends! Come and talk with us!" One man and two women eventually came out. Jim and the others showed them the plane and gave them gifts. Jim had called over the plane radio earlier and said they were hoping to meet more of the tribe and they would radio us at 4:30 p.m. But then something horrible happened... the Aucas attacked the missionaries with spears. We waited, but the call never came. It had been several months since that terrible day. I remembered how much Jim had loved the Aucas. I knew that

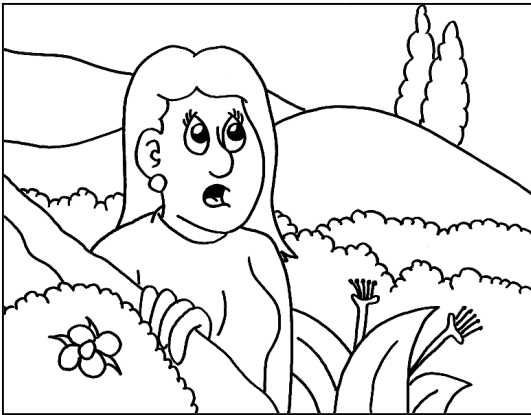
he would want me to love them too.

About a year and a half after that terrible day, I went along on a bucket drop to the Aucas. Yes, missionary pilots had continued to drop more gifts to the Aucas just like Jim and the others had done. As we flew away, I felt a strange excitement inside perhaps just like the one Jim had felt. I wondered if it was time to try and reach the Auca people again.

The sound of a dog barking brought my mind back to the Quichua village. Again, I went to the door to peer outside into the night. Earlier this morning, I had been visiting some missionary friends in Arajuno, when a messenger burst through the door and said that three Auca women had wandered into a nearby Quichua village. I wondered if maybe this was our chance to reach these people with the gospel. I left my one-year-old daughter, Valerie, with the missionaries and headed out. When we arrived at the village, we saw that only two of the Auca women were still there. I saw two older Quichua women trying to talk with the Auca women, but they both spoke different languages so they could understand each other. When the Auca women saw me they froze in terror. I was guessing that they had never seen a white woman before. After a while, they saw that I meant no harm and let me come closer.

When I got closer, I froze for a second. Jim and the others had brought a camera to the beach that day. It had later been found and brought back to me. In the camera were several pictures of the man and the two women that had come out just before





me and it meant woodpecker) and that she does not kill. She must come live with us and show to us God's carvings."

The next day, they all left. I heard nothing for quite some time, but then one day some Quichua women came to my house and told me that some Auca women had just come out of the jungle near their village. I grabbed my things and hurried to where they had been spotted. I came over the hill and heard the familiar voice of Dayuma singing "Jesus loves me" and saw Mintaka, Maengamo, and several other women. Dayuma told me that she had come back because the Aucas wanted Rachel, Valerie, and I to come and live in their village.

"Would they harm me or Valerie?" I wondered. Some people reminded me about how terrible the Aucas were. Although I was afraid and it seemed very dangerous, I felt a strange peace. I had prayed about this and Jim and the others had given their lives for these people to be reached. I could not turn back now.

At dawn, our group set out in canoes down the Curaray River. Finally, the river became so shallow that the canoes could go no farther and we set off on foot through the jungle. It took us two days of walking through the jungle, but late in the afternoon, we came around a bend and saw several small huts in a clearing. We paused for a second and I wondered if I had done the right thing. If we were killed, it could be months before anyone found out. We came closer to the village and passed a large Auca man holding a spear. He stared down at us without blinking. I took a deep breath as I

walked past the man. I was here. I was standing in an Auca village!

### **Application:**

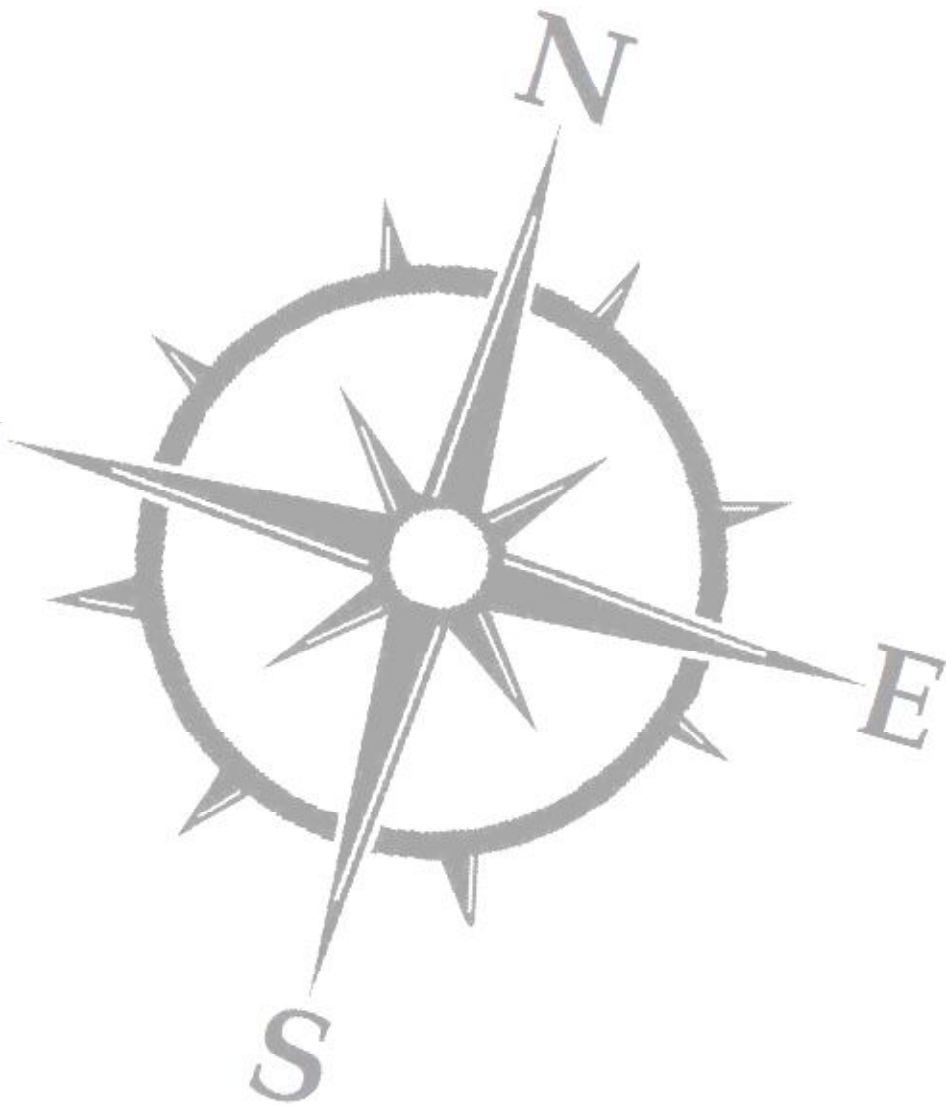
You know, boys and girls, Ephesians 4:31-32 tells us that we should forgive others just like God has forgiven us. Elisabeth Elliot had every reason to hate or be angry with the Aucas. They had taken someone very special from her. But Elisabeth knew that her husband, Jim, loved the Aucas and she knew that God loved the Aucas too. Elisabeth forgave those Auca warriors and didn't stop there, she gave part of her life to make sure they knew about Jesus. After spending nearly two years living with the Aucas, many of them had become Christians, including several who had killed her husband.

Elisabeth worked as a missionary for a little more than 10 years. She spent two of those years living and working with the Aucas, doing a lot of translating work so that the Bible and the gospel could be shared with the Aucas. She returned home and published several books about her time as a missionary and the terrible ordeal that she went through. She spoke all across the country and even had a radio show for several years encouraging people to use their lives for God. Elisabeth Elliot never forgot her husband's words 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 3.28 on page 86 in your Vanuatu Expedition - Leader's Guide.**)*

that terrible event. One of the women standing there was the same woman in the photos that Jim and the others had taken. The two women spent the day in the village and had even wanted to stay the night, but this made the villagers nervous. That was why every sound made someone jump and shout "Aucas!" out of fear the warriors would come looking for these women.

The women stayed in the village for several weeks. During that time, Dayuma returned to the village. Dayuma had run away from the Auca tribe several years before as a young girl. She had learned to speak Quichua and could translate what the two women (Mintaka and Maengamo) were saying. We spoke for several days with the women. Then one morning, Mintaka, Maengamo, and Dayuma came and spoke with me and my missionary friend Rachel. "I promised my people that I would come back when the kapok is ripe. It is ripe now," Maengamo said, "I will be leaving to go home tomorrow! But I will tell my brother to not be afraid. I will tell him that I have lived with Gikari (which was their nickname for



# 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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