

spiritual infant

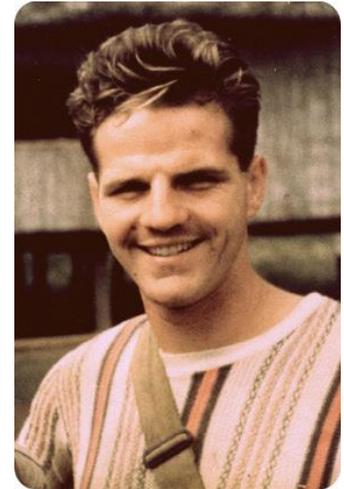
DISCIPLE ME

THE ONE ABOUT "LOSING YOUR LIFE"

READ: JIM ELLIOT

In the early 1950s, Jim Elliot was a young missionary pilot with big dreams and deep faith. He and four of his friends felt called to share the message of Jesus with a remote tribe in the jungles of Ecuador, a group of people who had never had contact with the outside world and were known to be violent toward outsiders.

Everyone thought they were crazy. Why risk your life for something like that? But Jim had a conviction: if Jesus gave His life for us, then the most logical thing we could do is give ours back to Him - whatever that meant.



After months of preparing, learning the tribe's language, and dropping gifts from the air, they finally landed their small plane near the tribe's village. At first, it looked promising - a few members even came out to meet them. But a few days later, tragedy struck. The entire team was attacked and killed.

From the outside, it looked like a total waste - five young men gone in an instant. But the story didn't end there. Jim's wife, Elisabeth, and several others later returned to that same tribe - the very people who killed their husbands - and over time, the entire community came to faith in Christ. Years later, people discovered a quote from Jim's journal that summed up his life. He wrote: **"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."**

READ: MATTHEW 16:24-25

"Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.'"

At first, this sounds completely upside down. Jesus tells us that the path to finding life actually begins by losing it - by letting go of control, comfort, and even our own agenda. That's the opposite of everything we've been taught. Our culture says life is about building your brand, protecting your image, chasing your dreams, and doing whatever makes you happy. But Jesus flips the script. He says the way to *really live* is to stop clutching so tightly to what you think you need and start trusting Him with everything you have. Real life isn't found in self-preservation - it's found in surrender.

DISCUSS:

- Why do you think Jesus used such strong language like “deny yourself” and “take up your cross”? What do you think He was trying to convey?
- When you hear Jesus say “lose your life,” what do you think that actually looks like today? What does dying to your own desires look like in your life?
- We all like feeling in control or comfortable. Why do you think it’s so hard to let go of that? Why do we care so much about what other people think?
- If “losing your life” really means giving Jesus control, what would that look like for you right now? What’s one area of your life that you’ve been holding out on? What might it look like to begin to trust Jesus with it?
- Jesus says if we lose our life for Him, we’ll actually *find it*. What do you think He means by that? What kind of life do you think He’s talking about?

ACTIVITY: PICK BEFORE YOU PEEK

Below you will find several verses - don’t read them yet. Before you read them together, each person needs to choose one at random – you could do this by circling or highlighting, or sharing with the group which one you’ve chosen. You’re picking it *blindly*, so don’t worry about which one you get. Once everyone has chosen, we’ll go around the group and read each of these verses out loud together.

John 12:24-25

Mark 8:34-36

Romans 12:1-2

Galatians 2:20

Philippians 3:7-8

2 Corinthians 4:10-11

John 3:30

Acts 20:24

Philippians 2:5-8

Psalms 37:4-5

Colossians 3:3-4

2 Corinthians 5:15

Romans 6:6-8

Philippians 1:21

Hebrews 12:1-2

1 John 2:6

CHALLENGE: LAY IT DOWN

- This week, take on a two-part challenge. First, **memorize the verse you picked** and let those words sink in and shape your thoughts each day. Then, find a few minutes this week and use the **QR code to the right** and watch a short video that explores what Jesus actually endured when He chose to lay down His life for us on the cross. After you’ve watched it, **text your Discipleship Partner(s)** and share one thing that stood out to you or challenged your perspective this week.

