

The City Church, New York

The Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession – Sunday November 27, 2005

On this day in 1950, five years before his martyrdom at the hands of the Aucas of Ecuador – to whom he'd gone to share the Gospel – Jim Elliot wrote these words in his journal: "What gets me into the Kingdom, from Christ's own statement, is not saying 'Lord, Lord,' but acting 'Lord, Lord.'" Let us pray.

Lord of Love in action:

We know that talk is cheap unless it's lived out in action. We wouldn't want our friends to say they're our "friends" while acting indifferently toward us. And we know that neither do You want Your friends – for whom You gave Your all – to say we love You while we're turning away from all that's important to You and acting as though You don't really much matter to us. Today, as Christians around the world are reminded of Your coming again to judge the world You once came to save, may we, here at City Church, renew our allegiance to You with grateful hearts, sober minds and a watchful diligence. May we not fool ourselves into assuming that we can get away with merely fooling around with Christian discipleship. Impress upon us that unless we live out our high calling in You, Lord, it means nothing that we call You "Lord."

In these first hours of Advent, help us to live as we should in the blessed hope of Your return. Shape our hearts and wills to serve You in our service to others. Guide us as we prepare to welcome "God with us," Emmanuel – remembering Your coming as a helpless baby and longing for Your coming again as the reigning Lord.

Every day we read and hear bad news in the newspapers and on television. Yet, Lord, what else do we expect to read and hear in this fallen world of ours? So we're glad that, every Sunday, here in our gathering around Your word, we hear the Good News of Your grace and peace, read and preached. What else would we expect in the household of faith? And so we praise You and pledge ourselves to You and to Your work in the world.

May every need in this congregation be met as You will it to be met, that we might all learn what it means to live out our lives by faith and by hope and by ever enduring love.

Thank You for hearing our prayer. And thank You for teaching us how to pray, saying:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.