

Foreword of *Dangerous Faith*
By Louie Giglio

A few things were crystal clear to me the very first time I met Joel Vestal. For one, I knew right away that he cared deeply about the people of the world and was burdened about the injustice, poverty and spiritual darkness that were a way of life for so many. I also knew in that first encounter that Joel wasn't waiting for permission from anybody to do something to help them, especially given the fact that Jesus had already entrusted to him the mission of communicating to them in tangible ways His love and kindness. Joel was only a college freshman. But he was a man with a purpose that encompassed the nations.

While a lot of other students were innocently immersed in conversations about their social lives (or lack thereof) or some other hot cultural topic, Joel was talking about unreached people groups and ways to connect them to God's redemption story. And he wasn't just reciting statistics and spouting off information, his heart was pulsing with compassion and an urgency to act—*now*. Before long, Joel had forged an alliance with a pastor in a remote region of India where few others dared to go and where the Gospel was seldom, if ever, heard.

To be completely honest, at first glance I thought Joel was a little over-zealous and had a lot to learn. But over time my reservation morphed into admiration and respect as the little seed he had planted in Bihar, India sprouted to become ServLife International, the fruit of one solitary student emboldened by the Spirit of God and determined to leverage his life so that people all over the world could hear the name of Jesus Christ.

It's staggering to think just how many people on the planet have never heard of Jesus—much less any of His life-giving words. Like us, they wonder about the meaning of life and are longing for their Maker. Yet they have never heard of Jesus Christ—the unique Son of God come to earth, the Divine in human flesh, the Father's gracious sacrifice for all our sins.

And we're not just talking about a handful of people in some remote village deep in the Amazon jungle, but countless millions—hundreds of millions—without Christ, dotting every continent on earth. Most are clustered in central Asia where China and

India alone are home to over 2.3 billion people. That's why it's no surprise that right smack in the middle of that region, in a town in northern India near the Nepalese border, Joel first raised the ServLife banner, announcing the Kingdom of God.

Yet, equally staggering is the number of us who have heard of Jesus Christ—and call him Savior—that have failed to take seriously His last words to us. Recorded at the close of Matthew and Mark's Gospel accounts and in the first chapter of the book of Acts, those words propel us outward with a clear mission mandate to take His story to every person on earth.

I don't think Jesus was implying that we all should be "missionaries" in the traditional western sense of that word; rather, that we should lead "mission lifestyles," being concerned about the well being of all people and creatively using our gifts and means to bring them hope now and the message of life that never ends.

While people in every generation have eagerly and sacrificially answered that call, I'm encouraged to see a new wave of young people emerge with a passion to amplify God's fame among the nations at all cost. I think you'll be inspired (and convicted) to join them after reading Joel's book. And not out of a sense of guilt, but as the natural overflow of what He has so generously lavished on us.

As you go, Joel and his wife Elise will be right there with you, blazing a trail with their words and actions, compelling countless others to follow; me included.

At the end of the day, this God-mission to preach good news and bring restoration to every man, woman and child alive will succeed, ushering in the end of life as we know it and the coming of Christ. I want to be standing (kneeling) in that moment knowing that my life's influence extended past the edge of the subdivision and beyond the halls of the office. I want to be able to eternally rejoice, knowing that God allowed me to play a role in gathering every tribe and tongue to proclaim His praise. I think in that moment, everything else in life will pale in comparison to that reward.

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