

# MARIA VÉLEZ

## DECEMBER PRAYERLETTER

We are in the final stretch of the year and it is certainly a time of thanksgiving, but also of meditation and evaluation about what has been done during the year, what God has done in us, with us, through us and around us for His Glory and our well-being. It is also a time to plan what we hope to do in the coming year under God's will and sovereignty.



Recently I was remembering my time reading the Bible during the year and the Old Testament was particularly teaching for me. When God instructed Moses about the consecration of the firstborn of Israel and other ceremonies, there was one verse in Exodus that particularly caught my attention. That was **Exodus 13:14**: *“And when in time to come your son asks you, ‘What does this mean?’ you shall say to him, ‘By a strong hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slave”*.

In other words: **Why do we do what we do?** What a question to finish or start a year!

Why do you pursue to work with excellence? Why do we go to church on Sundays? Why do we celebrate the Lord's Supper? Why should we love our enemy? Why do you love your spouse? Why do we forgive? Why do we read the Bible or pray? Why do we share with others about Jesus or give to missions? Why do people prefer to die rather than deny or abandon their faith? And finally, I wonder why as a missionary I do what I do? And I believe that even thousands of years later **the answer is still the same: We do what we do because the mighty hand of the Lord brought us out from a house of slave.**

We do what we do because we were slaves of sin, because we were enemies of God and incapable of obeying the just demands of God's law. But one day 2000 years ago in history, God came in the flesh and He perfectly submitted to the law of God. In the form of man, He experienced temptations like ours but He did not sin, rather, He perfectly fulfilled the law of God. At 33 years old, He willingly presented Himself to die on a tree in our place. Because He could perfectly fulfill the law of God, He presented Himself there as a fitting sacrifice, perfect, without blemish so that the just and holy wrath of God would fall on Him and not on us, the guilty. He achieved in His death and resurrection our freedom, our justice, our adoption, our salvation, our reconciliation. THAT IS WHY. We are now children of God, because by His grace alone and in Christ alone we have been set free from the law of sin and became members of God's family. That is why we are committed in the power of His Spirit, to live a life worthy of the sacrifice that cost that freedom. Not as those who seek God's favor, but as those who have been won to God. That is why we are who we are and do what we do. ONLY AND ONLY because of who HE IS AND what HE DID.

Therefore, we as World Reach and I as a missionary did what we did not because of us, but because of what **He did**.

On this occasion, rather than reporting on the activities carried out in the final period, I would like to invite you **to come and praise** God with me as this year comes to an end:

- That more than 50 young people heard the gospel at a camp and were confronted about the vanity of life and the value of Christ.

- For 5 inductive Bible studies that were translated into Spanish for the availability of the Latin church.
- For a year's work in which the IB materials were completed for implementation in rural areas of Colombia, Honduras and Peru.
- For each person who was saved, consoled, and comforted through the ministerial work of this year.
- That God continues to remind us of the gospel every day of the year and faithfully transforms us from glory to glory in the image of Jesus.
- For the different groups of women that I had the opportunity to teach who were challenged by the Scriptures to live in freedom from the lies of the enemy and the fear of man.
- For the bonds that I was able to create with some young women, and for their spiritual growth manifested throughout the year.
- For being able to be trained in biblical counseling (2 levels already approved) for the service of missions and the local church, and for the opportunity that I now have to apply what I have learned by helping two young women.
- For the awakening to missions that my local church has had (3 missions trips, a bazaar for missions, missions services and activities around the persecuted church).
- For each of you who prayerfully supported us and who by working wisely on your vocations and callings have given generously to the Lord's work so that not only I, but each of my fellows in ministry can do what we do today.
- Because God has helped each one of the missionaries of World Reach in Colombia and the world to persevere in the ministry for another year.

*And the list could go on...*

For now, there is no other answer to this list and a better way to end this year but to sing this famous doxology:

*Praise God from Whom all blessings flow  
Praise Him, all creatures here below  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost*

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2023

By Grace alone and in Christ alone,

María Vélez

*if you have any questions about the ministry or would like me to join you in prayer and praise, please feel free to write me. I will be more than happy to respond.*

If you would like to partner with a one-time gift or recurring monthly gifts to provide the support we must raise for the mission of World Reach to serve in Colombia, here is more information on how to do so:

To donate online, go to **[world-reach.org/donate](https://world-reach.org/donate)** to give once or set up a monthly gift via credit card. We also offer the option to give monthly via an Electronic Funds Transfer from your bank account. This is our preferred method because you will incur no third-party processing fee, and the transfer can be set up by going to [world-reach.org/donate](https://world-reach.org/donate) and clicking on **"EFT Giving"** at the top of the page.

To give by check made payable to World Reach, mail to the address below with a note indicating your preference for supporting **"María Velez ministry"**: World Reach P.O. Box 26155 Birmingham, AL 35260-0155