



Hello my dear partners in ministry,

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

I am very grateful for each of you who are reading this letter! Thank you for encouraging me, lifting me up, and supporting me with your prayers and with your financial gifts. May God fill you all with his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

I had the privilege of being introduced to you in my previous prayer letter as a new missionary with Grace Ministries International (GMI) serving in the country of Panama. As a new GMI team member, I had the opportunity to travel to the United States last July to share my plans for ministry with individuals and churches. I was planning to be in the US for approximately six months, but my plans had to be quickly adjusted when I was only granted a visa to stay in the United States for thirty days. While things did not happen as I planned, and for a moment I felt disappointed, I was able to thank the Lord for the time he allowed me to be in the States. During my brief time there I met some wonderful people and was able to visit three churches. **While things didn't go as I planned, I trust that God knows best!** He always supplies, always provides, and always takes care of me.

God's plan for me:

My plan was to go directly to Panama after my six-month visit to the United States, but with my visit shortened by five months, my plans also changed. **And once again, God's plans were better than mine!** While I was in the US, GMI missionaries Luis and Marcia Coto, who are planting a church in Mérida, Mexico, received an invitation to visit some of their supporting churches in the United States and were in need of someone to lead their ministry while they were away. So, rather than going directly to -

Panama, I had the privilege of filling in for them while they were in the US for six weeks.

I arrived in Merida several weeks prior to their departure and spent three weeks serving alongside them learning about this thriving new church plant and how they do things. **Seeing God at work in Merida was incredible.** The love and passion the Cotos have for ministry and the people in Merida is inspiring. I knew I had big shoes to fill and that the task ahead of me was going to be difficult, but God was faithful, and through Him, I was able to accomplish all He asked of me!

Ministry in Merida:

I spent the first few weeks settling in and getting to know the people. During that time I had the opportunity to participate in Bible studies with women ages fifteen to twenty-four years old. Marcia Coto had been investing in this small group of young women so that they in turn would be equipped to invest in others. Marcia had also been doing one-on-one discipleship with a twenty-four-year-old woman from the group named Carla. Due to Marcia's investment in her, Carla was able to lead almost all of the Bible studies during the Coto's absence and I was impressed by the skill with which she taught the Word of God. She is an extremely capable young woman, with a desire to continue learning God's Word and I am very proud of her and what God is doing through her.



Sharing with the Women's Group

I also had the opportunity to share with a group of around ten women who meet on Saturdays to learn about their Identity in Christ. I had the opportunity to witness the salvation of one of the women in the group prior to Luis and Marcia's departure to the US. Her name is Margarita and she is a single mother of three girls. Margarita knew very little about the Christian faith and almost nothing about God. As a newborn spiritual baby, she is so hungry to learn more about Jesus. As a new Christian, she needed someone to walk alongside her and help her become established in her faith and one of the sisters in the group is now discipling her. **Isn't it amazing to see how God works?**

I also had the privilege to assist with the youth group during my time in Merida. Every Saturday around twenty young people between the ages of fourteen and twenty-four gather to learn about Jesus and experience the love He has for them. Youth group has become a safe place where they can be themselves and talk about everything. It is a place where they not only get to hear from God but also a place where they can do life with other young people who understand what they are going through. It was very encouraging to see two new young people join the group who were invited by their cousins. It reminded me of the account in the gospels when Andrew, after his encounter with Jesus, said to his brother Peter "come and see." **The young people who attend are being encouraged to invite others to "come and see" what Jesus is all about.** Please join me in praying for Pablo, Jimena, Carla, and Cris who are being equipped to invest in the newer young people who join the group.



Saturday Youth Group

There are around 43 people who participate in the church that meets in the Cotos' home and I was a little nervous that people would stop attending church while Luis and Marcia were in the United States. I soon discovered that I had nothing to be concerned about. The people continued to faithfully participate in the church services and in the various Bible studies and activities throughout the week. **What a privilege it was for me to be a witness to what God is doing in the lives of the members of this local body of believers!**

Learning and Growing:

Being the only missionary there and leading the ministries by myself for almost two months wasn't easy and there were times when I felt inadequate for the task. **I am thankful for the wonderful people in the church who walked alongside me and I praise God for all of you who were faithfully praying for and supporting me.** I am so thankful to God for what He is doing, not only with the people at Comunidad Bíblica de la Gracia in Mérida, México but also for all that He taught me in my time here. I learned that I have to choose the "best part" every day of my life, just as Lazarus' sister Mary did when Jesus was teaching, rather than being troubled and anxious like her sister Martha. **Each day I am reminded that "Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing". John 15:5b**



One on One Time with an Attendee

I have learned so much in my brief couple of months in Merida and I am looking forward to traveling to Panama in early December to begin my ministry there alongside my GMI teammates. **Please continue to pray for me and the entire GMI team in Panama as I begin my ministry there.**

Once again, thank you so much for your love, support, prayers, encouragement, and faith in what God is doing not only through me but also through your partnership with me as we seek to glorify our awesome God!

In Christ,

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