How old must you be to be called by God for a particular work? Vitoria was ten years old when she accepted God’s call to do something that most young girls her age have not. Vitoria lives on a tributary of the Amazon River, and planted a small group that meets weekly to study the Bible.

One day a week, she climbs into a small canoe and paddles up the river. With skill and determination, she makes her way to a friend’s house and picks him up to go to Bible study. Sometimes her brother goes along to help. When the canoe is full, they make their way to another island and tie their canoe to a tree. They step into the jungle and walk on fallen logs, trying not to fall into the thick mud covering the forest floor. They reach a small house built on stilts that overlooks the river. This is the home of another friend who welcomes the children to study the Bible, so he can attend too.

The group begins with a prayer. They open their small group’s study guide and read the lesson. After discussing the lesson’s topic, the group sings songs before they close with a prayer. The children say goodbye and return to the canoe to go home. When asked why Vitoria decided to study with her friends, her answer was straightforward: “Because one day I want to be in heaven with them.” Three of Vitoria’s friends have been baptized because of her witness, and they have invited more friends to their weekly Bible lessons.
You see, Vitoria is an excellent example of what it means to be called by God. If a young child is willing to brave a big river to share her faith with her friends, imagine what we can do to help spread the gospel to others. What do we need to introduce others to Jesus? We may do it through our prayers, actions (like Vitoria), tithes and offerings, or all the above.

As we return our Tithe and Promise, regular and systematic offerings, we are making it possible for leaders to prepare resources and to train believers young and old alike to lead Bible study groups like Vitoria’s and to start other missionary initiatives. May with put our desires last, and God first.