

## Find a Bible in your hotel room? 'Thank the Gideons'

On Faith, Brent Emery

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It's time to say thanks to a special group of men who have been doing a great thing for a long time. I speak, of course, of the Gideons. The Gideon ministry has been placing Bibles in hotel rooms, hospitals and anywhere they are allowed for many years. As one who has occasion to travel, it's always nice to know that I can open the nightstand in my hotel room and find a Bible placed there by the Gideons.

When I entered the military, the Gideons were there giving me a pocket Bible that I used and cherished during my time of basic training. When I entered college, the Gideons were there once again, providing a Bible for every student who wanted one. I have personally benefited from the Gideon ministry, so it's long overdue for me to say "thanks."

I have several friends in the Pacific Northwest who are Gideons, so this article is a tribute and my way of saying "thanks" for the work and devotion of the Gideons to spread the word of God to all the world. The Gideons have a simple philosophy that has worked for them over the years: Put the Word of God into every place possible and let the spirit of God do His work.

One hardly ever hears about the Gideons as they go about their work quietly and without fanfare. You won't find Gideons in the malls or in the paper, but when you need a Bible, the evidence of their work is obvious. It's important to mention that the Gideons do not charge one dime to place a Bible, so this ministry is completely supported by donations from its members and friends.

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Several months back, I had an opportunity to attend a luncheon sponsored by the Gideons to show appreciation to local pastors. Since much of the Gideons' support comes from local churches, the luncheon was designed as a way of saying thanks for all the support that the churches had provided. At this luncheon, a local pastor gave his testimony about a time in his life when he contemplated suicide only to open the nightstand drawer and find a Gideon Bible.

This pastor went on to tell how the reading of the Bible quieted his soul and sent the thoughts of suicide fleeing his mind. This kind of story could be repeated over and over, with just a change of the names and places. Only God in eternity will reveal all the good work that has been done by the tireless work of those men who place Bibles in every place they can find.

I believe in the power of God's word to reach into the lives of men and women, and speak to them where they are whether sinner or saint. The Gideons' ministry also believes that God's word has the power to reach into the lives of anyone who will read and bring them into a closer relationship with the living God. To those faithful men who hand out Bibles at schools, prisons and anywhere they are asked, I salute you and say thanks for making the world a better place. To those men who deliver Bibles to hospitals, hotels and motels, I say thanks for your work to advance the kingdom of God.

One final note: I encourage everyone who can to support the work of the Gideons as they are doing a great work, but, alas, this work does cost.

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