

Getting the Word Out: Strategically Distributing Bibles

Steve Burchett

1.7 billion. That's the staggering number of Bibles and New Testaments the Gideons have distributed throughout the world since 1908. In the past 10 years alone, they have given away over 700 million. Who hasn't seen a Gideons' Bible in a hotel drawer? For some, it has meant their salvation. Here's John's story (found at www.gideons.org):

One night, I sat in my hotel room, totally defeated by self and sin. Through my excesses, my health was deteriorated, my family was rupturing, and my business was ruined.

In my loneliness and desperation, I picked up a Gideon Bible and began to read. The Spirit of God used the Word of God to bring me to repentance and faith. I had entered that hotel room totally defeated. I left it the next morning wholly delivered. God's grace in Christ had conquered my life.



The Bible is the only “must read” that has ever been written. But you don't have to be a Gideon to distribute this Book which is able to “make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15). How can you and your church increasingly “get the Word out?”

“Random” opportunities

Have a few New Testaments (or even single Gospels) with you at all times. Ask God for opportunities to give them away to people who are genuinely interested. You may want to paste a personal testimony in the front cover about how the Bible has changed you, along with your contact information.

“Outreach” copies of the gospels, the New Testament, or the entire Bible are available at very cheap prices. Your church may want to purchase these in bulk, which will make the cost even less. Investigate the layout of the Scriptures before purchasing too many—not all are easy to read. Also, remember that the elderly often need large print Bibles.

Public events

Local gatherings like fairs and festivals typically have booths which local organizations can rent to display their goods and to give away items. Your church could rent a space not primarily to get people into your gatherings, but to get the Bible into their lives. You may try to have church members at

the table in shifts in order to meet people and to evangelize. If this isn't possible, someone will have to go each day to keep the table organized and the Scriptures readily available.

Hospitals

If you (or someone you love) are admitted to a hospital, you will develop relationships with nurses, doctors, and other workers. Perhaps there will be at least one person you would like to thank with a kind note and a New Testament. If the stay is lengthy, a card to a larger group (all of the nurses?) would be appropriate. Along with expressing your appreciation for their work, you could include your thoughts about the verses that were especially precious to you while in the hospital and an encouragement to read the Scriptures you are giving them.

Foster children

Foster parenting is increasingly common among believers. Some of the foster children stay in a home for several years before moving elsewhere. Be sure they leave your home with a well-made Bible.

What if the child is too young to read? Send the boy or girl off with a New Testament. Write inside the cover of your love for him or her, and express the worth of the Bible and the extreme value of reading it or hearing it read.

Bible translation work

Perhaps the following statistics will motivate you to become a Bible translator: According to www.wycliffe.org, there are over 6,800 languages spoken in the world today, but over 2,000 of these languages are without even a portion of the Bible. Approximately 350 million people speak the 2,000+ languages where the Bible is not found.

Audio Bibles

There are multiple opportunities for using audio Bibles in your own language, including with those experiencing disabilities such as blindness (see www.audiobiblesfortheblind.org). Consider also using recordings for those who speak a different language. For example, if you are taking a ministry trip to a different country, visit www.faithcomesbyhearing.com and contemplate giving away their audio Bible ministry tools—such as “The Proclaimer,” a “digital player dedicated to playing God's Word in the local heart language.”

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