

FRIENDS OF GIDEONS

“To the King of the ages, immortal,
invisible, the only God, be honor
and glory forever and ever. Amen”

1 Tim. 1:17 ESV



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The Gideons
International
IN SOUTH AFRICA
THE GOSPEL IS OUR MISSION

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Invitation

If you are a new Friend and would like to make a financial contribution, please contact us on friends@gideonssa.org or visit our website www.gideons.co.za or phone us on **012 460 7241**.

welcome

**Welcome to the Summer edition of the
Friends of Gideons Newsletter**

Looking back on 2025, we can only praise the Lord for His faithfulness and love. The first-ever International Scripture Blitz was held in KZN, and we thank the Lord for the opportunity to distribute more than 416 000 Testaments!

The Gideons and Gideons' Wives visited 802 schools, 111 clinics and hospitals, and eight police stations. Planning has already begun for the next International Scripture Blitz, taking place next May in the Limpopo Province. Please continue to pray with us as preparations unfold.

The Gospel is our mission – this is our new tagline. Read more **on page 6** about its meaning and significance. In this edition, we also share testimonies of the life-changing power of God's Word. Our National Spiritual Leader offers practical insights on living out Faith in Action during the festive season – **see page 8**.

Thank you for being an integral part of the ministry this year. May you continue to put your faith into action during this special season, and may it be filled with joy and peace.

Blessings until next time

The Editorial team



Some facts about **FRIENDS OF GIDEONS**

Who are the Friends of Gideons?

Men and women who have joined the ministry to support its activities and who prefer not to become a member or who do not qualify.

How many Friends are involved in the ministry?

As of 1 March 2025 there are more than **10 400** Friends of Gideons.

Which activities do Friends get involved in?

- Prayer,
- Financial contributions to purchase Scriptures.
- Individual placement of Testaments.

How do you become a Friend?

Go to our web site www.gideons.co.za and click on **GET INVOLVED** and then **BECOME A FRIEND**.

Can a business or a church become a Friend?

Yes. Go to our website www.gideons.co.za and click on **GET INVOLVED** and then on **ADOPT A SCHOOL**.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW TAGLINE “THE GOSPEL IS OUR MISSION”

For nearly a century, The Gideons International has been recognised for its steadfast dedication to placing God’s Word where it can make the greatest impact – in hotel rooms, schools, hospitals, and beyond. Throughout our history, the heart of our calling has remained the same: to win others for the Lord Jesus Christ by associating together for service, personal testimony, and the placement and distribution of God’s Holy Word.

At the 2025 International Convention, Association leaders unveiled a new tagline that clearly and compellingly captures this mission: The Gospel is our mission. While this fresh phrase may appear simple, it represents a strategic step forward – communicating more effectively who we are, what we do, and why our mission matters more today than ever.

What is a tagline and why does it matter?

A tagline is much more than a catchy phrase; it is a powerful branding tool that encapsulates the core identity and values of an organisation memorably. Think about some taglines you know well:

- “It’s finger- lickin’ good!” | Brand: KFC
- “How can we help you?” | Brand: FNB
- “It’s not a bakkie, it’s a Hilux” | Brand: Toyota

These simple lines immediately evoke the brand’s essence and create lasting impressions on audiences. Our new tagline aims to do the same for The Gideons.

A thoughtful and thorough process

About a year ago, the International Executive Committee tasked the Member Engagement Team at International Headquarters with exploring new tagline ideas that would better resonate with both members and the external audiences we serve, including pastors, potential members, facility owners, and others. Over six months, the team analysed dozens of

taglines from other organisations, profit and non-profit, generating more than 200 ideas.

Each option was evaluated for clarity and impact across the 15-plus languages used globally by The Association, with careful attention to avoid misunderstandings or awkward translations that have challenged some international brands. A legal review confirmed that the final phrase could be trademarked.

Three finalists were presented to the Executive Committee, and the unanimous choice was clear: The Gospel is our mission.

This new tagline is not a departure from who we are or what we do. It does not replace One Vision – rather, it serves as the outward expression of that vision, one we want to share with our church partners and future members. We want every person who encounters The Gideons to immediately grasp our mission, without confusion or the need for lengthy explanation. This tagline invites curiosity, communicates clarity, and inspires action. Introducing our refreshed website

To share this new message widely and effectively, we also refreshed our public website – www.gideons.co.za – which launched during the week of the National Convention. The new site reflects our renewed focus with bold design and clear messaging. Right on the homepage, visitors are greeted with our new tagline.

Staying true to our roots

Some may wonder, does this new tagline mean we are changing our ministry? The answer is a clear no. Our mission remains the same...grounded in Scripture, fueled by prayer, and expressed through our faithful distribution of God’s Word and personal witness. This tagline simply sharpens how we tell our story so that we can reach more people with clarity and boldness. Your role in sharing “The Gospel is our mission”

As leaders and members of The Gideons, you are on the front lines of this exciting chapter in our history. We encourage you to embrace the new tagline wholeheartedly and weave it into your conversations, presentations, and invitations. Over the coming year, you’ll see “The Gospel is our mission” featured prominently across our magazine, communications, and events. Together, let’s make it a rallying cry that unites and inspires us, until every person has the opportunity to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ.

FAITH IN ACTION OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON

Kuben Moodley
National Spiritual Leader

The festive season is a time of immense joy and celebration, but it also presents a profound opportunity to embody our faith – not just in word, but in concrete action. As followers of Christ, we are called to be beacons of hope, reflecting His love to a world in need, especially during this special time of year.

The Scripture reminds us:

“So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (James 2:17 ESV). This season, let us bring our faith to life by actively seeking ways to serve others – demonstrating the transformative power of God’s love.

Here are a few encouraging ways we can put our faith into action:

1. Practice intentional hospitality

The story of the Nativity is steeped in the theme of hospitality – or the lack thereof. While there was no room in the inn for Mary and Joseph, we can ensure there is always room in our hearts and homes.

- Open your table: Consider inviting someone who might otherwise spend the holidays alone – a new neighbour, a single service member, or a fellow church member.
- Share your bounty: Prepare an extra dish and share it with a local food bank or shelter. A warm meal can provide comfort and show God’s provision.

2. Prioritise generosity and giving

The ultimate gift of the festive season is the gift of Jesus Christ. We honour this by embracing a spirit of generosity that extends beyond our immediate circles.

- Support local charities: Donate your time, resources, or financial support to organisations serving the underprivileged in our community. Consider participating in initiatives like gift drives for children in need.

- Give with a cheerful heart: As it is written in 2 Corinthians 9:7 (ESV):

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

Your gift, no matter how small it may seem, makes a significant impact when given with genuine love.

3. Be a source of peace and reconciliation

The angels proclaimed:

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!” (Luke 2:14 ESV).

In a sometimes-chaotic world, we are called to be peacemakers.

- Reach out to the estranged: The holidays can be a painful time for those experiencing family conflict or loss. Take a humble step to mend a broken relationship with a phone call, a card, or a simple prayer for reconciliation.
- Pray for peace:

Commit to praying specifically for peace in conflict areas and for those who are struggling with anxiety, grief, or depression during the holidays.

May our lives be living testimonies of God’s grace this festive season. The joy we seek is often found not in receiving but in the giving of ourselves. Let us step out in courage and compassion, confident that as we act on our faith, we are reflecting the very heart of the Gospel. Go forth and be the hands and feet of Jesus this Christmas. Your actions of love and kindness will light up the darkness, bringing true hope to all those you encounter.

Merry Christmas and God bless you always.



WHY I BECAME A GIDEON

Dieter de Lange from the Langeberg Branch writes after the 2025 Mighty Men in Robertson...

Why did I want to join The Gideons? Not to belong to a club. It is challenging for me to share the Word with people on the street. I sought an opportunity that would enable me to distribute Bibles at schools, prisons, guesthouses, hospitals, and police cells – places where, as a private individual, I do not typically have access.

In my everyday life, I am surrounded by fellow believers and good people. But at the prison, police cells, and hospitals, this work brought me into contact with unbelievers – people who are “down and out” and searching for a solution; people who truly need Jesus. There is an unashamed hunger for the Bible (and for Jesus). I see people who are rejected, abandoned, angry, frightened, and discouraged, and I can tell them that Jesus loves them.

I have learned that it is not I who converts people, but that I can show love, sow the Word, pray for them, and trust God for their growth.

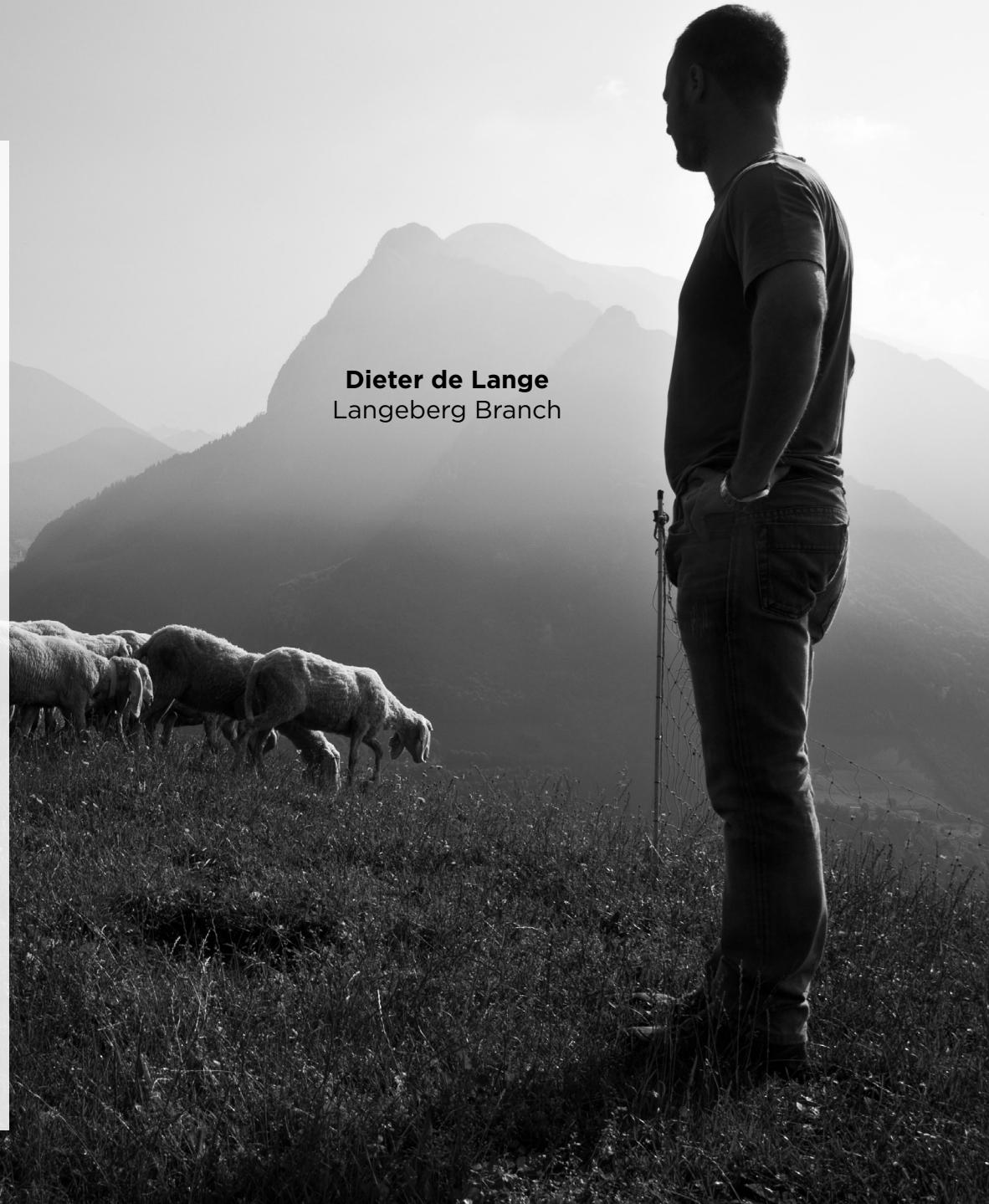
Likewise, I have met fellow Gideons who are passionate about spreading the Word. At the Mighty Men, we could set up a stall and speak with people. I, as a private individual, would never have had the boldness to share my testimony with anyone there or to pray with them. But there, as a Gideon, it was easier. Some of the people also came to testify to us. It strengthened them, and it strengthened us in our faith.

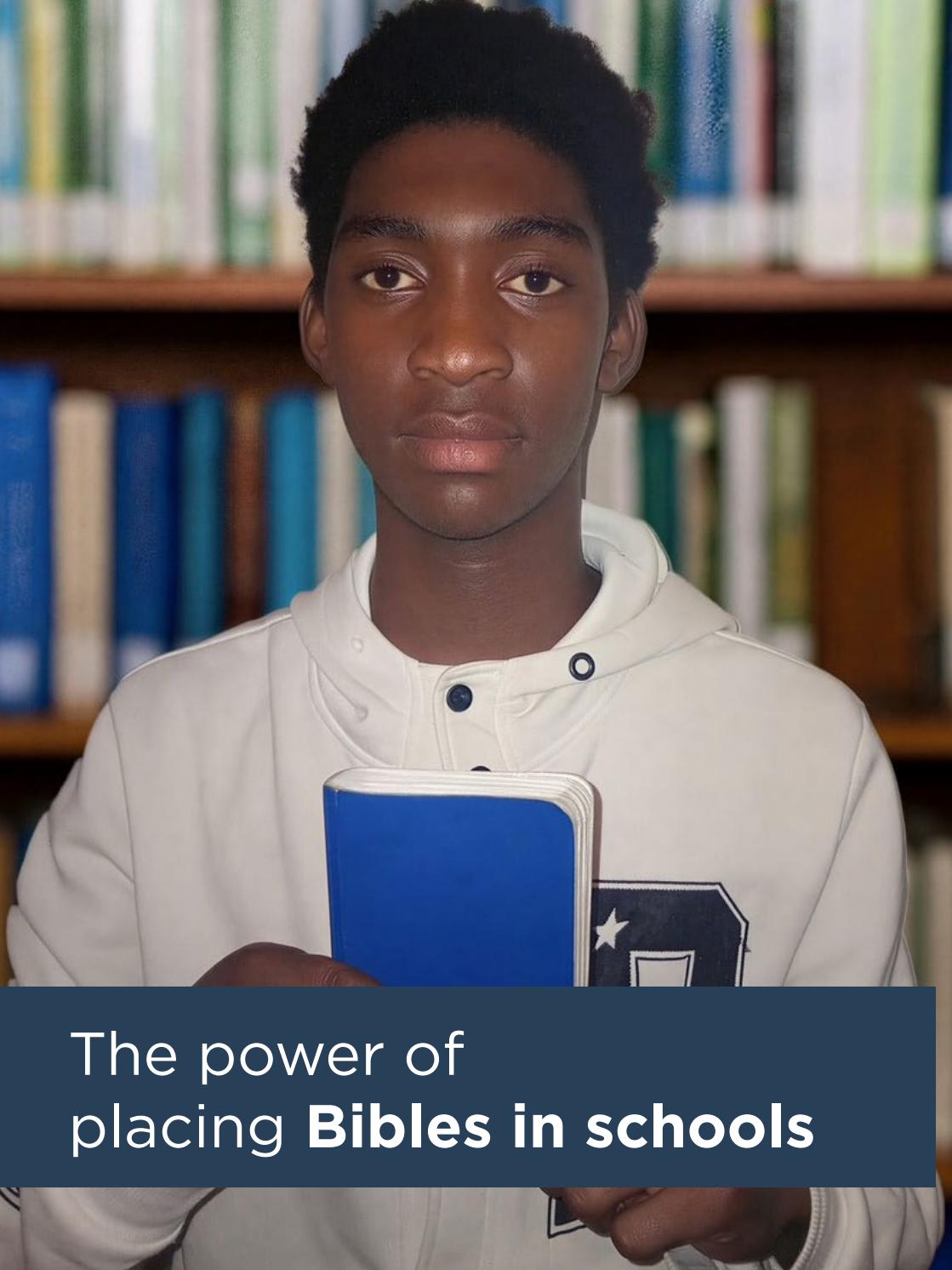
It was wonderful to see two young boys each put R60 into the box to sponsor Bibles. It was wonderful to pray together with fellow believers.

Thank you to everyone who helped. Above all, I thank God for the opportunities.

To Him be all the glory.

Dieter de Lange
Langeberg Branch





The power of placing **Bibles** in schools

In September this year, members of the Randburg Branch experienced a unique privilege: facilitating a school placement at Cosmo City Secondary. Typically, during these Bible distribution events, time is short, and there is rarely an opportunity to observe firsthand what God accomplishes in the immediate aftermath, or in the days that follow, after students receive their Bibles. The team usually steps out in faith, trusting and praying that the seeds sown will be nurtured by the Lord in the lives of the children who receive His Word.

However, on this occasion, God allowed the team to witness the impact of their efforts in a tangible and encouraging way. Immediately after the placement, a student named Omphemetse approached the team. His excitement was evident, not just for himself, but for the whole school community. Omphemetse shared his personal story: he had come to Christ through the evangelism of a friend, and ever since, he had felt a strong passion to see his classmates experience salvation as well.

Omphemetse described how he, along with a few friends, had started Bible study groups at the school. These groups welcomed all students—whether saved or seeking—and were dedicated to reaching out and sharing the message of Christ. Despite their enthusiasm, the students faced a significant challenge: many did not own Bibles and attempts to encourage them to use a Bible app often fell short, either because they did not yet recognise the need or lacked access to appropriate devices.

In response to these challenges, Omphemetse turned to prayer, asking God to provide physical Bibles for his peers so they could read the Scriptures at home and grow in their faith. The arrival of the Randburg Branch to distribute Bibles was a direct answer to his prayers. Omphemetse's joy was infectious as he explained how this provision would enable many of his friends to begin or deepen their own journey with God.

Following the placement, the team reconnected with Omphemetse to explore further ways to support and encourage him. Witnessing his passion for evangelism and seeing the distributed Bibles already having an effect among his friends was a profound blessing for all involved.

Modest Kabeya
Randburg Branch



the tale of three Testaments

I dropped my granddaughter off at Trinity Methodist Church on Saturday 18 October 2025. That's where her Girl Guide Company meets. As has become my habit, I then went to a nearby bakery for breakfast. At around 8:45, the Supercalifragilistic Bakery was almost deserted. There was one customer. A little old lady wearing an Austrian-style hat with a red feather. She sat at a table nearby the corner table to which I was heading. As I passed her, I saw she was reading and underlining a small blue book which at first glance could have been a Gideons New Testament.

Once I had ordered and my cappuccino had arrived, I got up and went over to her table. I asked her what she was reading. She showed it to me. It was, indeed, a Gideon Testament - much older and smaller than the current ones The Gideons distribute. Jenny Kirsch (see photo below) says she's had it a long time. Can't remember when she got it.

I was so excited about this meeting that the Lord had orchestrated that I wrote about it in my blog which I publish three times a week. (<https://jennyyoung27.wordpress.com/2025/10/19/what-is-concealed-will-be-revealed/>) On Monday morning I received a comment from somebody called Jon.

"In 1972, upon my entrance into the US Navy, The Gideons gifted me with a New Testament with Psalms and Proverbs that looked just like the one your new friend was reading (except mine wasn't blue). In boot camp, I had about five minutes to myself before lights out. I used it to read that copy of the Word. It turned my life around. I had accepted Jesus five years earlier but had no discipleship. Jesus decided to do that Himself, for which I will be eternally grateful. I am also grateful to the Gideons for their gift."

That same morning, I read the Daily Refresh on the You Version Bible app by Craig Groeschel. In it he also testifies how a little Gideons Testament changed his life. (<https://bible.com/bible/111/eph.2.8-9.NIV>)

Let's never underestimate the power of God's work through one little Gideon's New Testament!

Jenny Young
Randburg Branch



ONE HOTEL STAY CHANGED EVERYTHING

Loren Knutson
Cherokee North Camp, Georgia, USA
May 2025

In just two short years, I lost my younger brother and my dad. I was a father with two young boys and a wife who knew I was hurting, angry at the world, and distant from everything and everyone around me. Apart from my work, I had withdrawn completely. I didn't realise it at the time, but I was falling apart inside.

One morning, I was driving to Brooksville, Florida, for work when a car passed me on the interstate. Its licence plate read: ROMANS 8. I knew the New Testament contained a book called Romans, but that was about the extent of my familiarity.

After a long day, I returned to my hotel following dinner. For some reason, I didn't switch on the TV. I kept thinking about that licence plate. Out of curiosity, I opened the bedside drawer, pulled out a Gideon Bible, and turned to the book of Romans.

To this day, I don't know if I ever got past the first verse of chapter 8:

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1 ESV).

I remember vividly how bright the room seemed as I told God how sorry I was for my past sins and for rejecting Him. In that moment, I knew I was changed.

That following Sunday, I shared my salvation experience with my pastor and told him what had led up to it. Since he knew some members of law enforcement, he offered to find out who owned the car with the ROMANS 8 plate. I never followed through, but I know that car was there that day for a reason.

From Africa to Russia and back to Africa

FULL CIRCLE OF A GIDEONS' TESTAMENT



The year was 1992, and the location was St. Petersburg, Russia. I was a young man working in law enforcement. In the evenings, I studied English and had been taking classes for two and a half years. That summer, as I completed my English studies, there was a series of tests I had to pass. For one of them, each student was required to read a book in English and give a 20-minute report on it, explaining what the book was about, who the main characters were, and what its central idea was.

Most students chose classic English authors like Steinbeck, Agatha Christie, or Ray Bradbury, but I wanted to be different. I decided to find something truly unusual. My girlfriend had a Testament from The Gideons. Amazingly, a man all the way from Africa had given it to her one day on the beach. She kept the Testament on a shelf; she had no spiritual interest and never read it.

At the time, I was reading every spiritual book I could find, and one day I asked her if I could have it. She said, "Yeah, go ahead." So I took it and decided that for my presentation, I would choose one of the Gospels. I chose the Gospel of John.

I had read it before in Russian, and in Russian, especially at the beginning, it sounds very poetic, very beautiful, and intriguing. I had read it before, but never really paid much attention.

I asked my teacher if I could use the Gospel of John for my report. She said, "Yeah, it's just another book, just like any other book. You can do it."

So, I began reading the Gospel of John. I read it seven times from beginning to end, making a list of all the main characters, key ideas, and the miracles of Jesus, as well as the plot, His enemies, His disciples, and how He was resurrected – everything.

As I read, I began to notice something. You see, I was in law enforcement and a student of criminology – the study of criminal behaviour. One branch of criminology is called criminal textology. It focuses on the study of texts. Criminals often lie; they are masters at mixing truth with falsehood. Criminal textology helps identify clues within a text that reveal which parts are true and which are false.

Without even realising it, I began to apply that same analytical mindset while reading.

And what I discovered amazed me: the clues in the text pointed again and again – page after page – to the unmistakable conclusion that everything written there was true.

I was amazed. I had thought that maybe it was just a fictional morality book teaching people to be good. I discovered that everything told about Jesus in that little Gospel was actually the absolute truth. There was no flaw in the whole text. I thought: If this one Gospel is true, maybe the rest of the book is also true.

So I prepared my report, and when the day came, I had 20 minutes with the class and the teachers to share my discovery with them. For those 20 minutes, I spoke to them about Jesus Christ and told them the whole story. Have you ever heard the entire Gospel of John shared in one message? That day, I did just that. I poured my heart into it, trying to convey all the emotion and insight I had found in those pages. I received a good mark and graduated.

But I didn't stop there. I kept reading that little Testament and continued to make new discoveries.

I hadn't yet come to the Lord – that would happen about six months later.

But reading that little Testament was the beginning of a series of wonderful and even miraculous events in my life that eventually led me to Christ. Later, I became a pastor and served as a Missions Coordinator in my city.

One day, a man from Africa came to my church. He didn't have a Bible or a Testament and asked if he could get one in English. I always carried my small green Testament from The Gideons with me, so I took it out and handed it to him, encouraging him to read it. I told him, "At the end, there's my signature, but you can add your own name there too, if you want."

He accepted it and began to read. I don't know where he is now – perhaps he returned to Africa – but isn't it amazing how the Lord works through circumstances to reach different people? Praise the Lord! And thank you so much for your faithful service as members of The Gideons International.

PASTOR PAVEL SENNIKOV





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Danièle Olivier Testimony

I am 48 years old, and for 32 years, I was trapped in almost every addiction imaginable. I often say, “People who hurt, hurt people,” and my life was proof of that. I was born into addiction. My biological father was a violent alcoholic, and although my parents were good people, they were lost. Today I can say with certainty: the absence of God is the absence of love, life, and anything good.

If you look at the numbers, addiction is a global crisis: more than 400 million people struggle with alcohol dependence, over 300 million with drugs, and millions die each year because of it. Mental illness often follows because addiction damages the mind. Only about 11% of addicts ever recover long-term. Humanly speaking, the odds were not in my favour.

My own life reflected the damage. I suffered physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. My mother attempted suicide in front of me when I was young. I was diagnosed with manic depression and placed on psychiatric medication early in my young life. I was an introvert, terrified of rejection, and although I excelled at sports and academics, I drifted toward the wrong crowds and made disastrous choices.

Addiction eventually took everything. I spent time in psychiatric wards, rehabilitation centres, and prisons – more than once. At one point, I weighed 30kg less than I do today, had no teeth, and wore a prison overall – sometimes green, yellow, or orange, depending on which prison I was placed in. It wasn’t for lack of help; I was incapable of stopping.

In 2022, after losing my son, my brother, and my niece within six months, I attempted suicide. When I woke up, I was in a drug house. I was homeless, living off rubbish bins. But next to me was a red Gideon Testament. I still don’t know how it got there. I held it to my chest that night, and that was the last night I ever used drugs.

I then went to church and met a Gideon, Uncle Jurgen Fourie. He fed me, clothed me, mentored me, and helped nurse me back to health. At that time, I was suffering from drug-induced psychosis – I often didn’t know what day it was, or even where I was. If it weren’t for a Gideon, I would have died. I know it for a fact.

Through Uncle Jurgen’s love and the power of God’s Word, I learnt what Faith in Action really means. That is what you, as Gideons, do: you win souls by putting the Gospel into motion.

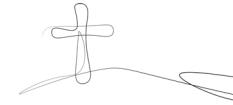
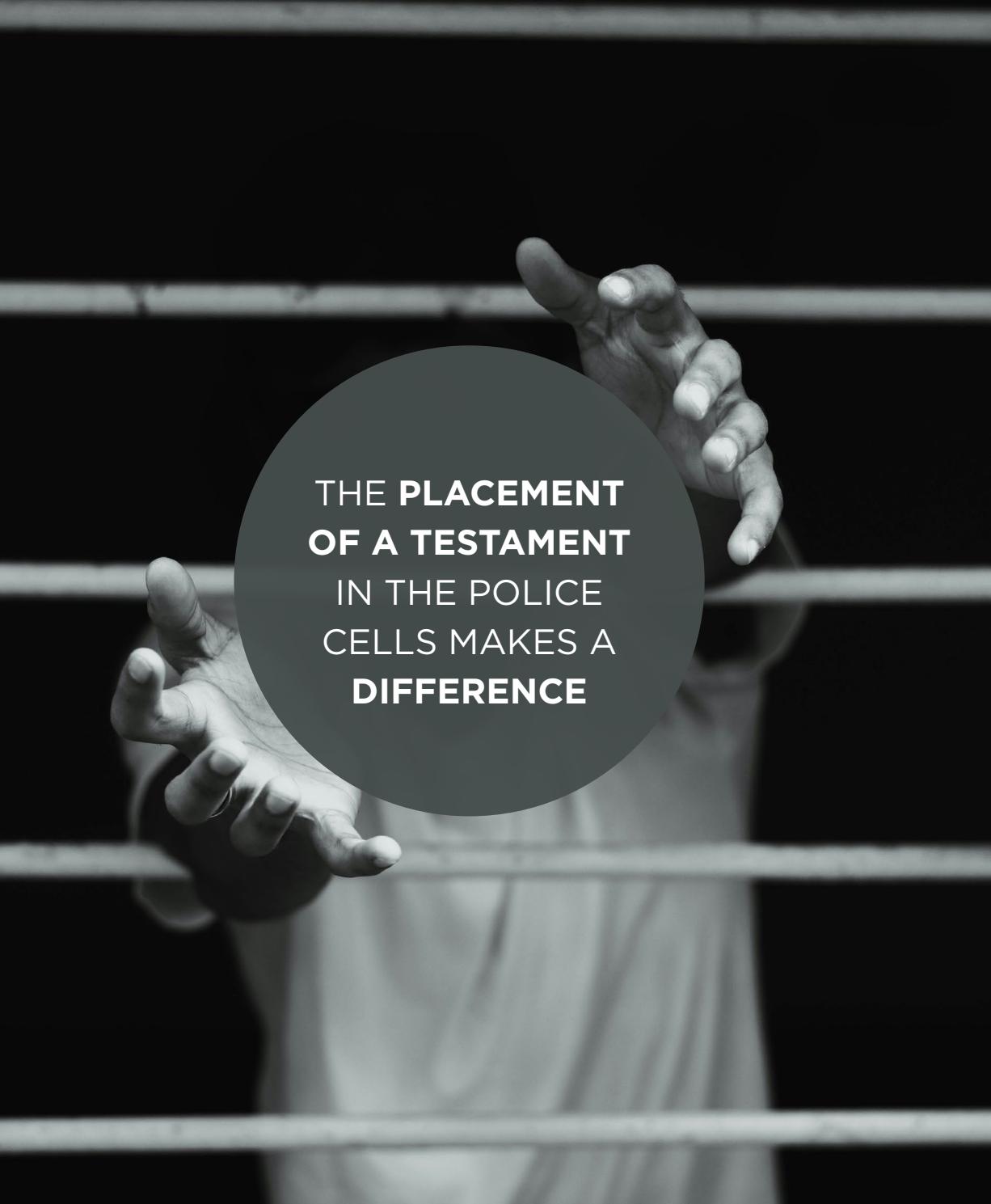
We might not all change the whole world, but each of us can change the world of one person. You changed mine. Because my life changed, my wife’s life changed, and now the lives of our friends are changing too. Two weeks ago, I married the love of my life, who also gave her heart to the Lord because of what God has done in me.

The small things you do – a Bible placed, a kind word, a moment of encouragement – save lives.

Because of what you do, I am standing here today. And from the bottom of my heart, I thank you.

*Danièle now serves full-time in homeless outreach. As he says: “I thank the Lord for being His hands and feet to the walking wounded – just as I once was.”

What the full testimony here:
https://youtu.be/RO_T-bS-YH8?si=MHgHR-2L31FwMVXK



After our Gideons' event at the local Boma restaurant in Alberton on Monday, 27 November 2006, two members of the Branch, Collin and his wife, Priscilla Moodley, were leaving the venue when a waiter named Simon greeted them.

"I know you," Simon said to Collin. "You gave me a New Testament a few weeks ago while I was in the holding cells at the Alberton Police Station. That Testament changed my life and the lives of other prisoners, as well. We were depressed and anxious about what would happen to us, but you encouraged us to trust God and to pray. It brought us peace and hope."

Simon continued, "At the time, I didn't believe that God could perform a miracle and set me free the very next day. But now I know that God is powerful and truly special. Since that day, my family and I have read the New Testament every day. I carry it with me always. I am a new person in Jesus Christ. I have a good job now, and my family is happy. I want to thank you and The Gideons for giving me a second chance."

Koos van der Merwe
Alberton Branch



The Gideons International

IN SOUTH AFRICA

THE GOSPEL IS OUR MISSION

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