

Lifeworlds celebrates distribution of over a million copies of replica WW1 John's Gospel

Lifeworlds, a leading publisher of Christian resources, has distributed over a million copies of their celebrated *Active Service John's Gospel* replica edition.

Lifeworlds released a replica of their *Active Service John's Gospel* to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the First World War in 2014. Since then, more than 1 million copies have been distributed across the UK, Australia and the world.

Originally known as the Scripture Gift Mission, Lifeworlds played a crucial role in resourcing soldiers with Bible resources during WW1. Between 1914 and 1918, 43 million items of scripture, including over 22 million Gospel booklets, were printed in a range of languages and distributed by partner organisations, nurses and chaplains among the armed forces, refugees, prisoners and civilians.

The 2014 replica, produced in collaboration with *Hope Together*, *Naval & Military Bible Society* and *Biblica* incorporated stories drawn from letters received during WW1 whilst preserving key characteristics of the original. The initial *Active Service John's Gospels* were designed to be carried in the pocket of a uniform, the edges rounded to prevent creasing. The replica also features a handwritten message from Lord Roberts, Commander in Chief of the British Forces in 1914, as well as hymns that were originally included to enable chaplains to hold services in the field.

Army Scripture Reader Gavin Dickson of the *Soldiers' and Aviators' Scripture Readers Association* shared: "As I minister to soldiers, Lifeworlds materials, be it the *Active Service John's Gospel* or another resource, are extremely useful and something that I can give out with confidence that they will be read."

"This message continues to speak to those in the armed forces today. Just as in 1914, many sailors, soldiers and airmen found peace when they were afraid, strength when they were under pressure, and comfort even in the face of death, so is the same hope shared through these little books today."

The profound impact that these resources had on soldiers during the First World War is reflected in the ongoing effect of this Lifeworlds' Centenary project. One present day soldier, reflecting on his experience of the replica edition, remarked, "I picked up one of these when I was at a church service as a young lad. Through cadets I always had one of these on me, and now I always carry one as a soldier. In times of great turmoil, this is always a source of comfort to me."

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Notes for Editors

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Video/online resources at <https://www.youtube.com/lifeworlds>.

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Lifeworlds exists to help people from all walks of life share and experience the Bible in person, in print, and online. Through our resources and a range of programmes and projects, Lifeworlds worldwide ministry is all about creating ways into the Bible for everyone, everywhere. We don't want cost to be a barrier to engaging with the Bible, so we continue to make our material freely to everyone who needs them, just as we have since 1888.

Lifeworlds is the operating name of Scripture Gift Mission (Incorporated). A registered charity in England and Wales (Charity No. 219055).