



When I picked up our van in New Orleans, I was amazed to find in each seat not just a little treat for each of our five children, but an obviously thoughtfully packed bag of gifts, toys, and goodies for each one, from baby Joseph to fourth-grader Peter and everyone in between.

We decided to save the bags as a surprise for the beginning of our first long trip just a few days later, and as expected, it was like Christmas morning—complete with gleeful greed, unauthorized candy consumption, and over-the-top joy. The bags were like Christmas stockings (ours, at least) in another way too: each one bears the name of the child receiving the gifts it held. There was, finally, something in America with each of our kids' names on it—almost everything else in the world that was marked that way, marked as theirs, had stayed in Germany.

That's a small thing, maybe, but like so many small things, it's a glimpse of the grace of a God who knows how desperately we want to be known by name, to be promised a white stone with a name unknown to any but the one given it (Rev 2:17), a name graven on the hands of the one who bestows it (Isa 49:16), a name written in the Book of Life, never to be forgotten. ~ Ben

It's humbling to receive emails giving great thanks for what seems to be a simple gesture. Our God is gracious to use the small things we do in big ways. A personalized goody bag is perfect; it not only shows care for the MK who receives it, but it blesses and encourages the hearts of their parents!

PERSONALIZED GOODY BAGS TOUCH MK HEARTS

By: Tina Byus, Hub Coordinator, New Orleans

Several weeks ago I received a note of thanks from a missionary who had just picked up a Righteous Rides van. I have to say, it brought me to tears!

I just wanted to write quickly and thank you...for your over-the-top kindness and thoughtfulness yesterday with the van release. I didn't look at the kids' gift bags until I got home, and then we were amazed at your generosity. We're saving them for departure on our first long trip on Friday, and we know that morning will be like Christmas for the kids. ~ Ben

Ten years ago a few of us from Righteous Rides attended a missionary care conference where we heard first-hand about an experience from a missionary kid (MK) who had spent her childhood in Malaysia and Singapore. We learned that many times it is easy to overlook how MK's feel and what's going on in their hearts when they travel to the U.S. for a home assignment or furlough. Many feel out of sorts, possibly even a sense of being uprooted. The U.S. feels kinda like home but is NOT their home. We were energized to offer comfort and encouragement to MK's. Out of this conference Righteous Rides MK goody bags were born. We envisioned goody bags with their names on them as a way to personalize a "hug" for each child when they arrive.

Here is more of Ben's perspective of goody bags...

For our younger kids, returning to the States was an incomprehensible adventure. The older ones knew better: it was goodbye to their school friends, goodbye to their soccer teams, goodbye to the house and toys and books that were theirs.



Sherri perfectly personalizes goody bags for the New Orleans Righteous Rides Hub.