

THE STORY BEGINS

My mother taught me as a little boy to pray. Her prayers have followed me all my life. After I graduated from Avondale College, she told me how she had dedicated me as a baby to God for the work of the Ministry. She was not at that time a member of the Church, but deep in her heart she had a strong faith in God. My dad became a true Christian later on in life. I will see them soon in Glory.



Back row (left to right): Jean Carter, Grandpa and Grandma Carter
Front row: Margaret, Patricia, Cousin Elspeth, and John



John's parents

I was just 16 when I arrived at Avondale College, but I knew I was where I was meant to be. Although I knew about God, it was not until Tom Ludowici patiently explained to me the story of Jesus that my life was touched powerfully by God's grace. For days after my come-to-Jesus moment, I felt I was living in a new world. Everything had changed. I felt a conviction that I was called to preach the Good News. This conviction has remained with me for more than 70 years.



John at Avondale College



Tom Ludowici



John, Beverley and baby David

ESCAPE FROM DEATH

I was 16 years old in North Queensland driving a bulldozer. I was working to pay my fees for Avondale College which I hoped to attend the following year. I was working 60 hours a week, and my day often started at 4:00 a.m. My job was to help excavate and construct a large irrigation channel that was more like a small river fifty feet deep. I had pushed a large load of soil to the top of the channel and I was literally up in the treetops. Without warning, the soil began to give way and the tractor began a perilous slide. It started to tip. I quickly lowered the blade to decrease the center of gravity, and for a moment it rocked back and forth as it moved sideways down the slope. Then it stabilized and I cautiously climbed down over the caterpillar tracks. The whole machine weighed many tons and had no rollover bars. I believed God had saved me for a purpose.

Every four hours it was necessary to service the bulldozer by pumping lubricant into the caterpillar tracks. I kept a container of rags and after the service was completed I would reach into the container to grab a handful to clean up. One day I grabbed the rags and with them a large black snake that had been sleeping undisturbed. My heart still misses a beat when I think of it. It was a miracle I was not bitten. A bite from a red-belly black, unless treated quickly, can be a death sentence and I was miles from nowhere.

Recently I was working in my garden in Australia. My sister Margaret was with me. I was standing at the top of a rocky cliff when suddenly I lost balance. I fell headfirst down to an area of sharp volcanic rocks. I hit the ground hard. All I could remember was the air gushing out of my lungs and then blackness. When I recovered consciousness, I slowly became aware that I was supported by a very small patch of thick green grass. My head was an inch from a formidable rock, but I was cradled on a carpet. I slowly tried to use my limbs. I was surprised they worked. I heard Margaret calling me. By the time I reached the top of the cliff, I was a sorry spectacle covered in scratches and blood. I felt certain that God had delivered me from death or something possibly worse. I have carried with me throughout my long life a conviction that God had a work for me to do. An old teacher at Avondale told us, "You are immortal until your work on earth is done."



John at bottom of cliff

EVEN A WORM CAN BEAT A MOUNTAIN

God says, "Fear not, you worm Jacob,
You men of Israel!

*I will help you," says the Lord
And your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.
Behold, I will make you into a new
threshing sledge with sharp teeth;
You shall thresh the mountains and beat
them small,
And make the hills like chaff."*

Isa.41:14,15 NKJV

**God uses weak people and weak things to
put to shame the things which are mighty.**

INTO ALL THE WORLD

Why is public evangelism so unpopular in today's church? Mainly because it is difficult, and it costs money. C.S. Lewis remarked that Christianity was unacceptable to many, not because it had been tried and found wanting, but because it had been tried and found difficult. In a similar way public evangelism has been tried and not found wanting, but difficult. It will return when the Spirit of God comes in power upon His Church.

I have dedicated my life to the preaching of the true Gospel because I am amazed by God's great grace. The story of Christ on the cross broke my heart when I was 17 years old at Avondale. It moved me then, it moves me now. I think of the words of old Pastor Scragg in the country town of Young, Australia. People wondered why he kept on preaching and teaching the Gospel when he was an old man. He said, **"When I think of the Man on the cross, I can't quit."** The preaching of the cross of Christ is the power of God, because there He displays His mercy and justice.

I have been a pastor for more than 65 years. But I was also called by God to do the work of an evangelist. The Carter Report team has run large evangelistic campaigns as God opened the doors. I have not always fitted easily into the system, which often seems to encourage conformity and mediocrity.

Record-breaking crowds came to the Sydney Opera House every weekend for five months in 1982. Skeptics were confounded. The meetings were supported and sponsored by the Greater Sydney Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. During those days there was a sense that God had visited His people. Jesus said, **"With God nothing shall be impossible."**



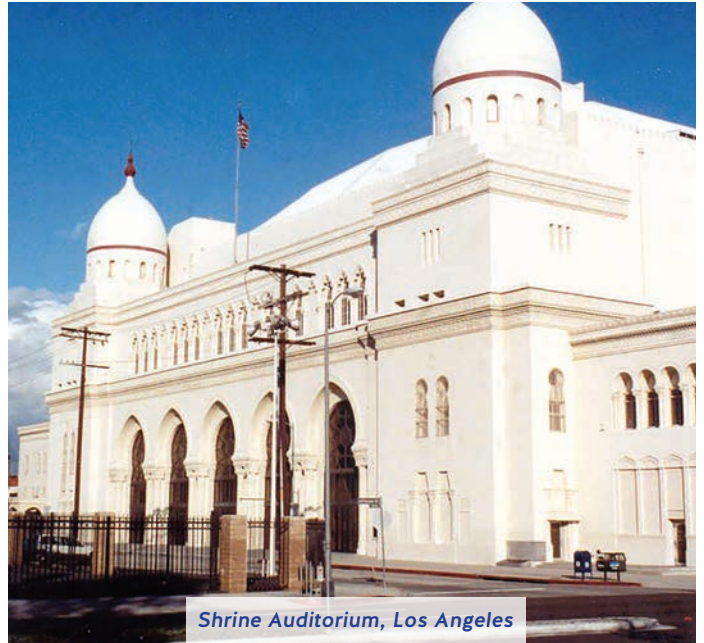
Sydney Opera House, Australia 1982

TV ADS ATTRACT LARGE CROWDS

During 1976 three people got together to dream the impossible dream. They were Phil Ward, Warren Judd, and John Carter. For several days they focused on reaching lost secular people. They came up with TV ads that were quite “non-religious” while being Biblical in content. One thirty-second ad asked the questions, *“The Bearded Queen, why did Pharaoh disfigure her face? Why is her mummy the only one missing?”*



Sydney Opera House, Australia



Shrine Auditorium, Los Angeles

By the end of that week, twenty 30-second TV scripts were ready to go into action. These TV ads were unlike anything that had been seen before. We felt God was guiding us in this great experiment, but never imagined what He had planned for the millions in Russia. That was still 16 years in the future. In 1976 we had no idea that the TV ads designed by three young Australians for Australians would one day powerfully impact millions of Russian unbelievers.

Australian church administrators were remarkably tolerant and supportive of this “outside-the-box” thinking. In those days many administrators and pastors still believed in public evangelism. Those were different times, and many ministers had fire in their bellies and regularly conducted successful evangelistic campaigns.

During 1979 we worked in Melbourne, Australia’s second-biggest city. The TV ads that had just been filmed in the Middle East went into battle on prime time on Channel 7 in Melbourne. 9,500 souls responded and packed the Dallas Brooks Theatre. Up to that time, that response was the largest number of people to attend an Adventist evangelistic campaign in the Land Down Under. The same ads but tailor-made for Sydney drew 19,000 souls to the famous Sydney Opera House. That was only for the first program in repeat sessions, and we stayed in that venue for five months. In 1990, that same approach attracted 24,000 souls to the Shrine Auditorium in Downtown Los Angeles. These Los Angelenos braved LA’s notorious traffic to see and hear the same opening program in multiple sessions. Great crowds continued to attend until the meetings were closed by reactionary anti-Christian elements of LA society.

GOD AND GUNS ON A JUNGLE TRACK

As the pastor of Fort Worth First Adventist Church in Texas, I was invited to hold evangelistic meetings in Harare Zimbabwe, Africa. Paula Owens from Texas arranged for me to be interviewed on Zimbabwe television. She accompanied me to the TV station several miles outside the city of Harare. When I refused to participate in a sensational program that was both racist and sectarian, the Director of the station became belligerent.

He forced Mrs. Owens and me to walk down a deserted jungle track, all the while leaning outside the window of his white Peugeot car, threatening and cursing. Soldiers appeared, and we were marched down the track with guns in our backs. The Director of the TV station shouted orders to the soldiers. We silently prayed. The Peugeot turned away and left us to our fate.

When the Director was out of sight events dramatically changed. It was truly amazing. Instead of bullets, we received words of love and gratitude. The soldiers hugged us and we were assured we were safe. They told us they had been attending our meetings every night in the great Harare International Convention Center.

We were safe because God was on that jungle track in Africa. Within a short time we were rushed to our meeting place where a great crowd was waiting patiently. What a welcome we received! What a great meeting we had! God is truly our Refuge and Strength. **We are immortal until our work on Earth is finished.** Therefore, "Be not afraid."

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST



Harare, Zimbabwe, Africa 1988

OUR AMERICAN EXPERIENCE



America was good to us, and we will always be thankful. The work that we were able to do around the world could only have happened from an American base. Americans are big-hearted, generous people. In many places people ask, “Why?” *In America they ask, “Why not?”* In America you can do things that you cannot do elsewhere, so said John Kennedy as he promoted the first landing on the moon.

Americans are also strong believers in personal liberty. In America you have the freedom to be the person God wants you to be and do what God wants you to do. I was brought up in Australia, a country of many blessings and opportunities. I will always be thankful for Australia and the blessings of living in the great Land Down Under. But it was the will of God that took us to America, where **Providence plus Opportunity plus Freedom plus Resources**, not afforded elsewhere in equal measure, placed us where God had prepared the Harvest. Looking back we are filled with awe, thankfulness, and praise to God who works all things for good for those who love Him. We became naturalized American citizens more than 20 years ago while retaining our Australian citizenship.

We are now back in Australia after more than 36 years in America, and our hearts are filled with gratitude. Not a day goes by when we do not miss America, land that we love. Australia has changed greatly, and so have we. But we thank God for blessings past and present. We carry with us a continual conviction that God took us to America, where we were able to establish a worldwide ministry that had the support of the world Church.

In America the potential and the possible are always greater, and that includes falling on your face with no safety net. In America you can dream and dare greatly, but you can also fail in a spectacular way. But for us, even with all the risks, America allowed us to do what we believed we were called to do. We have no regrets.

OUT OF DEFEAT, VICTORY!

The year was 1990. 24,000 souls attended the opening program of The Carter Report at the famous Shrine Auditorium in downtown Los Angeles. After two weeks of record-breaking crowds the meetings were canceled, but that is a story for another day. There is a Judgment Day when all will be revealed.

The new converts from the Shrine meetings were cast upon a sea of uncertainty. A refuge was found in an auditorium in Glendale. The survivors of the Shrine determined by God's grace to help complete the work that had been cut short. Pastor Robert Spangler called from Washington with a surprising invitation.

Beverley and I were sleeping when the phone rang in our home in Thousand Oaks. It was 5:45 a.m. It was cold and dark. He was calling with a surprise invitation... *"We want you to go to Moscow and test the waters. We want you to go and preach the Gospel and share the Good News with the Russian people. The Soviet Union is collapsing. This is a crisis moment in history. Go as soon as you can. We cannot help you financially. Just go."* This news electrified the new members of what was now called, "The Community Adventist Fellowship Church." Together we accepted the challenge. Together we reached out to Russia, Ukraine, and Siberia. Eventually millions of unbelievers attended our meetings. **Praise God!**

Later, Africa, India, Central America and the Isles of the Sea became focal points of our outreach. The Church that should have died beside a freeway in Los Angeles became a lifeline to the Lost. The Carter Report and the Community Adventist Church witnessed 30,000 souls baptized. Millions of unbelievers attended the meetings. Churches were built. The poor heard the Gospel. The lost and lonely found redemption. God's people in America, Australia, and beyond sent the fuel to keep the fire burning.

SOME WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR TIME AND ETERNITY

- Pastor Norman Matiko went ahead and prepared the way
- Susan Piraino oiled the wheels to move the chariot
- David Carter lead a team of TV professionals
- Beverley Carter visited orphanages across Russia and Ukraine
- Javier Piraino of Delta Airlines transported tons of Gospel materials
- Danny Shelton threw the weight of 3ABN behind the proclamation
- Pastor Robert Folkenburg, the GC president, defeated plans to close us down
- Pastor Harold Harker worked tirelessly to organize and implement the mission
- Bob Ludwig provided the audio for millions
- Our supporters sacrificed to light a candle in the darkness



David Carter filming TV ads with John in Egypt

TO GOD BE THE GLORY; GREAT THINGS HE HAS DONE

THE RATIONALE BEHIND THE CARTER REPORT

Our method of evangelism is very different. We start our campaigns with almost secular subjects. This methodology was tremendously successful in Russia and Ukraine. Dr. Rex Edwards of the General Conference declared that the crowds attending our meetings in Russia and Ukraine were the largest crowds of unbelievers attending Christian meetings anywhere. He was referring to audiences composed mainly of atheists. Dr. Edwards was an eyewitness of those events; he was there with us.

The Russian government in Moscow during 1992 sent a TV crew to videotape our Nizhny Novgorod meetings. They were broadcast in prime time across seven or eight time zones. This was possibly the greatest Christian outreach in Russian history; and it was done by the Russian government! Glory be to God!

The method we used did not originate with us. It originated Down Under in the fertile brain of Pastor John Coltheart from New Zealand. He recognized that most Australians carried in their sun-burnt souls a healthy suspicion of religion. It is in this regard that many Australians are different to Americans. Coltheart set about to create a series of presentations that would capture the attention and imagination of the great unchurched. **We built on what he did.**

WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!



John preaching in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia 1992

WE WILL NEVER FORSAKE YOU

Pastor Carter was the first foreigner to conduct a full-scale evangelistic campaign in the Communist Soviet Union. That was in Moscow in 1991. During 1995 a mighty movement of the Holy Spirit swept the city of Kiev in Ukraine when The Carter Report preached the Gospel to vast crowds. 3,530 precious souls were baptized in the Dneiper River. We have given them our pledge: **WE WILL NEVER FORSAKE YOU.**

Please send your gift for Russian and Ukrainian evangelism today.

In America and globally, please write to: **THE CARTER REPORT, PO BOX 1900, THOUSAND OAKS, CA 91358**

In Australia and New Zealand, please send your gift to: **THE CARTER REPORT, PO BOX 861, TERRIGAL, NSW 2260**

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