



Stories of Faith

HOW GOD IS CHANGING LIVES, HEARTS AND MINDS
ACROSS THE SOUTH PACIFIC.

EDITED BY VANIA CHEW

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Publishing Information

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FOREWORD

BRAD KEMP

The stories in this book are stories of men and women who serve on the front line of mission. There are stories that show courage, stories that inspire, but above all stories of lives lived by faith.

When we hear someone's story we connect with the storyteller. We get a glimpse into their world, see their challenges and walk in their shoes, just for a moment. They don't tell us what to think, but they have the power to make us feel, and to appreciate life through their eye. And we might even experience empathy and take a step towards understanding.

I remember my time in literature work. I spent a number of summers as a student literature evangelist. It was not an easy experience but it taught me dependence on God. I learnt strongly on verses like "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One that goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you"

(Deuteronomy 31:6). It gave opportunity to meet people in different life circumstances. And I learnt appreciation for the work done by the men and women who go to the doors every day to share Jesus. I also got my own stories. Stories of people who were angry with God, stories of people who didn't care about God, and stories of people who were looking for God.

Too often we don't take the time to listen to other's stories. We just want to tell our own. And so we often miss the opportunity to appreciate how God works through the lives of others. We can miss the amazing, the sobering, and the truly miraculous. And we can fail to have our own relationship and commitment to service with God challenged.

We all have our stories. You have yours and I have mine. And in this book are the stories of our friends and colleagues in literature ministry. Some of the writers you may know. Some of the stories you may even know. But each is unique and asks you to listen and to see God at work. Because it is then that we begin to understand how indispensable is the work of the literature evangelist and that God is in this work.

I encourage you to read each story in this book and I hope that they speak to you, and inspire and encourage you in your own faith journey.

Brad Kemp is the publishing director of the South Pacific Division and Chief Executive Officer at Adventist Media.



BRENTON LOWE

Growing up homeschooled on an isolated farm in Western Australia, I didn't have many social connections. I like to say that I knew how to talk to sheep and cows—but not people.

That all changed when God called me to be a Literature Evangelist (LE) in 2001. Through God's grace, I was able to develop the skills I needed to connect with people and help reach their hearts.

After more than 20 years' experience in the field, I'm still amazed at how

God uses and works through this very special ministry.

I hope you'll be inspired by the stories in the book. Maybe you'll feel the call to serve as a Literature Evangelist. Or hold a pop-up book stall. Or share Jesus with your friends and neighbours through our great range of sharing books. If you are a young person, you may like to attend a Youth Rush outreach.

There are so many ways to be involved in Literature Ministry and God will always bless those who are willing to work with Him in sharing our Adventist hope-filled books and media.

I often tell people that if I can do it, anyone can.

In 2001, Brenton Lowe started work as a Literature Evangelist. For many years, he was one of the highest sales LEs in the South Pacific Division, distributing a pallet of \$10,000 value of books into the community each month. In 2009, he started working for the WA Conference in an LE leadership role. Today, with more than 20 years' experience, he serves at Adventist Media as the Literature Ministry coordinator for Australia and New Zealand.



THE DEVIL'S DONATION

“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them.” Romans 8:28

God can use all things to work together for good. This is a story of how God used the devil's money to pay for a copy of *The Great Controversy*.

Andrew Kochanski was approaching the front door of a home in Ryde (NSW) when he noticed a five-cent coin on a thin handrail near the front steps. Thinking it might have been stuck there with glue as a practical joke, he touched it to see if it would move. To his surprise, it did.

After knocking on the front door, a woman came out and exchanged greetings with him. Andrew began his canvass. The woman casually looked through some of his books but displayed little interest. Noticing this, Andrew proceeded to show her some smaller books, offering them for ‘a donation of any amount.’

“I don't have any money,” she replied. Andrew remembered the five cents on the handrail and instinctively suggested she use that coin as the ‘donation of any amount.’

For a minute, the woman went silent. Then she said, “My husband died three years ago. Since then, my daughter has been seeing a fortune teller. The fortune teller told my daughter that my husband will come and visit us from time to time, and that when he does, he will leave five-cent coins around our place to let us know he has visited.”

It was Andrew's turn to be silent for a minute. He knew that Satan was at work here, but how could he explain this to her in a simple manner?

Quietly praying for wisdom, he explained that she was experiencing a supernatural phenomenon and proceeded to show her the chapters in the book *The Great Controversy* entitled “Can the Dead Speak to Us?” and “Snares of Satan.” She listened intently.

“You really need to get this book and read these two chapters,” Andrew told her. “Then you can pass the book on to your daughter.”

He took the five-cent coin off the handrail and placed it into the woman's hand. “You could buy the book with this,” he suggested again. She thought about it again and agreed, handing him the five-cent coin.

As Andrew wrote up the receipt for her, he thanked God for convincing her of the importance of reading this book.

“I have kept the receipt as a reminder of how God can turn Satan’s plans upside down with something as small as a five-cent coin,” says Andrew.

“As literature evangelists, we would happily give away our truth-filled literature for free, but we know a person will always value it more if they pay something for it. I pray and believe that book will be read by that lady and her daughter. By God’s grace, I look forward to seeing the results in Heaven.”

Andrew Kochanski

WHAT WOULD PAUL DO?

“For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes.” Romans 1:16

“Tell him you’re a Christian!” said a little voice in Paul Bodor’s head.

“I’m not telling this guy I’m a Christian,” thought Paul. It was Paul’s first year as a literature evangelist, and he was showing a collection of health books to the man.

The man he was talking to had a shaved head and a mohawk and was covered in tattoos, including skulls on the backs of both his hands. He looked very intimidating.

“Tell him you’re a Christian!” The impression was stronger this time.

“No,” Paul argued with himself again. “I’m not going to do it.”

The man said that he was generally interested in health, but not interested that day. Paul thanked him for his time and turned to leave.

“TELL HIM YOU’RE A CHRISTIAN!”

Paul couldn’t ignore that still small voice any longer. He turned back to the man.

“Sorry, mate, I don’t know why I’m telling you this, but I need to tell you that I’m a Christian.”

The man stared at Paul for a moment and then opened his door. “Come inside. I want to talk.”

As it turns out, Joel wasn’t a scary bikie. He told Paul that he had attended a Catholic school when he was young. He considered himself Catholic, but didn’t go to mass or live a Christian life.

“I want to know more about the Bible,” he told Paul earnestly. “But I don’t want Bible studies just yet.”

Paul introduced Joel to *Today, Tomorrow and You* by Arthur Maxwell. Before he left, he asked Joel if he could pray with him. Joel agreed.

When the prayer was finished, Joel said he had never heard anyone pray like that before.

“This is a little embarrassing . . . but I felt all warm inside when you prayed,” he confessed.

Paul returned to visit Joel at least half a dozen times or more each year. Joel went on to purchase other books and DVDs from Paul.

After a visit, Paul said his goodbyes and was ready to leave, when Joel told

him seriously that he had forgotten something. Paul patted his pocket. He had his keys and his phone in his pocket and was carrying his prospectus. "What am I missing?" he wondered.

"You always pray for me. You haven't said your prayer!" Joel said. Paul felt guilty and thanked Joel for reminding him.

Over the years, Joel told Paul that he didn't have a Bible but that he wanted one. Paul gave him a Bible, but Joel couldn't understand it. Paul showed him the Bible storybooks by Arthur Maxwell, explaining that although they were written for children, it would be a good introduction to the Bible. Joel loved the idea and bought the set.

"When I visited, I noticed that the Bible storybooks weren't there anymore and I asked what had happened to them," reported Paul. "Joel said he had finished reading them and that he had stored them at his mum's house. He lived in a rough neighbourhood and people often broke into his house or stole his things. He kept the things that he cherished most at his mum's house."

In January 2021, Paul randomly saw Joel at the shops. "I have a story to tell you!" Joel exclaimed. One day, Joel had heard someone crying outside his home. He went outside to investigate and found his neighbour in tears. Joel normally wasn't comfortable with people crying, but found himself asking, "What would Paul do?"

This thought led Joel to approach his neighbour and ask her what was wrong. As she shared her story, he again found himself wondering, "What would Paul do?"

Joel then remembered Paul instructing him on prayer and saying that he just needed to talk to God as a friend. He prayed for his neighbour.

In the same conversation, Joel shared that someone had recently asked if he believed in God. "Yes, I believe in God!" Joel responded enthusiastically. "I believe in the God that Paul believes in."

"What faith are you?" the person enquired. Again, Joel told the person that he had the same faith as Paul.

"What faith are you again?" he asked, turning to Paul.

"Seventh-day Adventist," Paul replied.

"That's right! I am a Seventh-day Adventist!" Joel declared happily.

Eventually Paul and Joel began having Bible studies together. But one day, when Paul knocked on Joel's door, there was no answer. And when he rang

End of product sample

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