

Club Grubbery - Raw transcript of interview:

2025-03-09 – Conversations With Carl – Episode 2

Good to see you again. Been a while.

Mm,

it's been a while. I enjoyed, uh, our first chat and we need to continue because you don't have a 78 year life story. That you can talk about in 45 minutes. So welcome back to conversations with Carl, and I'm Graham Hood from Church Without Waltz, and this is my dear friend Carl Needham, who began to unpack his story in our first episode.

And there's so much more to this. Um, we talked in the first episode about obviously your, your journey into, into, um, wanting to become a pastor and then you felt like a square peg in a round hole, and then. You found yourself chipping ice in an ice cream factory, and within a year you were creating, um, you were creating wonderful things for BHP and other organizations, and you ended up having your own airplane and, and, uh, doing very well financially.

Have I missed anything? I've missed a whole lot, haven't I? How can you encompass that? But at, at the end of our last episode, we talked about, uh, the death of your first wife and. How you struggled to, um, to come to terms with a loving God who would allow that to happen, and you revealed that there was an incredible opening as a result of that.

So I want to go back there and pick up before you stood back from the door and allowed the door to gently open. Were you an arrogant man?

I'm told I was the personification of arrogance.

Mm-hmm.

Um, and I was certainly, I had a very, very sharp tongue, and if you came to me and wanted to discuss Christianity or Seventh Day Adventism, you would leave mince meat.

I was, uh, notorious apparently, um, people would come to my door and tell me they'd been praying for me, they'd limp home.

Uh, but one particular gentleman who I'll never forget, came and knocked on our door and my wife came into the studio where I was working, trying desperately to stave off bankruptcy.

You're talking about Rosalie, your second wife?

Yes. Yeah. And she said, pastor Percy Holmes is here to see you, Carl, I. And when he walked through the door, I didn't even look at him and I just said, would you like a glass of water before you leave, or, no?

I was very rude, bro. But he came back and I ignored him, treating him with studious, ignore. I didn't even offer him a glass of water the second time. And, uh, he came back and it was between those two visits, the third and the fourth visit that I had my epiphany.

And when he came back the third time, fourth time or whatever it was, I recognized. My brother and I welcomed him with open arms. The transformation in me was just when my wife tells people that it was just the difference between night and day, black and white. But Percy Holmes was so gentle and so kind, and so good and patient.

He certainly had an influence. On my choice to open that door.

Mm.

So I'm looking forward to seeing him again.

Where is he now?

He's resting. Mm-hmm. In the Dale Cemetery with an army of saints.

Mm-hmm.

Mm. Beautiful. Beautiful man.

So in between the third and fourth visits you talked about something triggered.

Can you identify that or can you think. Can you remember the exact moment when it all just shifted so dramatically?

Yes. That's when Jesus came in through the door that he'd been knocking on. Mm-hmm. All those years. And I had been resisting when he came in. He gave me a new mind, A mind that was capable of understanding and that's what made all the difference.

Before that I couldn't understand, even though I wanted to, but I wanted to understand on my terms.

Mm-hmm.

I wasn't willing to understand truth for truth sake, even though I said I was, I now know I wasn't. I wanted to understand God within my parameters. Like Richard Dawkins, he, he, you know, he tries to bring God into the American confines of his own mind.

Which makes God very, very, very small. Mm. And the mind, the combined minds of the four horsemen of atheism are nowhere near big enough to comprehend God. Mm-hmm. God is infinitely bigger than human comprehension. Mm-hmm.

I remember the moment for me was, uh, um, I remember living a life completely without any faith in anything, including myself.

And up until 2006, I found myself as a nonbeliever, degenerating as a human being. I was degenerating to the point where I didn't think I could degenerate any lower. And that's when I realized that I need to get out of this place and I wanted to die. And I, I was setting it up to do it, you know, my story, but.

What I've unpacked lately is the difference that happened when I discovered Jesus at that moment when he came through the door. And for me, that's when everything started to regenerate. So I went through a process of degeneration without him, and when I finally allowed him in, I started to regenerate and my life's exploded with relevance ever since.

Mm-hmm.

That's a new life. A totally new life. Totally new.

Mm-hmm. So you were, um, there you were, you, you, Percy, you'd come into your life and must have paved a certain pathway for you in one way or another. Were you going back to church then?

Well, the next, very next Sabbath. I didn't say anything to anybody.

I just got up and got dressed. Ordinarily I'd go out onto the farm and mow the lawn or fix a tractor or do something

on the Sabbath.

On the Sabbath, yeah. But I came downstairs where the family was all ready to go to church and I'm in my suit. 'cause the last time I went to church you wore a suit. So I thought I better put on a suit and a tie.

So my black suit and my red tie, and my kids looked at me and said, what are you doing? I said, I'm going to church as if,

uh, but I did. I went to church and it was the college church as it was known then at, uh, Avondale College Now Avondale University. It's actually, it's still college. Can never be university, has to be college.

And, uh, I said to Rosalie, if anyone invites us to lunch, I don't want to go. I just want to slide in and slide out. And so we took our place on the end of a, of a uh, row. College church has got about a dozen different aisles. And to take up the offering, you need about 24 people, I think, to take up the offering.

Now, before all of this, before I gave my heart unreservedly to the Lord, in order to get from where we lived in Martinsville onto the Free Bay to go to Sydney, we had to drive through 700 meters of Ong, which I hated because I didn't like anything about Ong.

And there was a guy and his wife, whom I noticed in particular, I gave them a terrible time in talking to my wife, said, look at him. Look at him. He is never left the place. He wouldn't know what's up and what's done. The

jam man.

The jam man, he was set up a table about as big as I twice the size of this with his wife, and they would sell homemade jams to anybody who was passing by to support.

Some charity or other, but he and his wife had fostered 157 children at Grief, salt of the Earth. But I despised them 'cause they were Adventists and they were living in Ong. He was a little man. He had none of the graces of sophistication and I, I referred him disparagingly as the Jam Man. Look at him.

What? We're in there. I cringe telling of this Graham, because the, the arrogance. Oh, it's terrible. Anyway, it was time for the offering. We're sitting on this church. I'm in my suit. My wife's next to me. The kids are lined up alongside us and who should come down the aisle, but the jam man. With the offering bag, noting to people and smiling as he'd pick up the the offering.

He got to our row and he handed me the bag. I put in my \$5 and then I started sobbing.

My wife said, what's wrong? I said, he's my brother.

What a shift.

What a shift

and what an honor for me.

To have a man who, um, to be able

to call him my brother. Mm-hmm. God does a wonderful things to us for us. Mm-hmm. When we accept him as the sovereign

that he is, he's he rights wrongs, he turns upside down, the right way up. He gives us an understanding of truth that we can never manufacture ourselves.

Mm-hmm.

Uh, only God can do it. A new life, a new person altogether. We see things in a totally different light.

So Mr. Jam, man,

you

are my brother.

So the road is long with many a winding turn. Yep. That leads us to where to who knows where.

Well, God knows where and he tells us where it is.

Mm-hmm.

And I tell you what, grandma, I don't wanna be anywhere else but there. Mm-hmm. Excuse me, while I just remove the evidence of my humanity

here.

Where is he now? The jam man.

Mm-hmm.

I have no idea. I haven't seen him for a very long time. I hope he's well. Did you have some kind of relationship with him after that? No, I haven't, except I admired him every time I saw him.

Mm.

He was a true hero and he was I who thought I was a hero being a complete nerd.

Complete fool. Mm. What a blessing though. Oh, absolutely. Mm-hmm.

So the only time we should ever really look down on anybody is when we're helping them up. Yes,

absolutely. Because we're all

brothers and sisters.

We are the least of these. My brothers is Jesus brother.

Mm,

Jesus sister. That gives you a totally different understanding of the value of humanity.

Is there anyone that Jesus didn't die for?

He died for Adolf Hitler. He died for Stalin. He, Donald died for poll pot. He even died for the politicians who are running our country. Mm-hmm. He died for Donald Trump. Joe Biden. He died for every human being and he took away their guilt. They no guilt remains for any human being on planet Earth.

Mm-hmm. Except those. They say, well, you can keep your little arrangement with the court if you like. I'll do things my way. God is such a gentleman. He will say, well, I'll respect your choice, but please don't.

So you, sorry. You came to this realization and, um, obviously spiritually, your whole life turned around. What happened to your life in every other sense? From, from then on. Because you've been on a real journey since then. You haven't had the trappings of wealth.

No, I learned humility. Um, we lost everything.

We owned, lost all the real estate, lost to all my possessions, and still don't have anything except this little one bedroom cottage, which we know we're only staying in for a very short time. Because there's a mansion waiting for us somewhere. There is real estate Graham, with our names on it, on the title deeds, and no one ever can take those title deeds away from us ever.

We will build houses unlike anything this world has ever seen, and we will inhabit them. We won't build them and then sell 'em. For somebody else to come and destroy.

We'll plant vineyards and eat the fruit thereof. We'll not plant and another person eat the fruit thereof. Our destiny is far greater, far higher than people have got any capacity to comprehend. And few people even think about it, but when you are born again, you have a new father. You have literally have a new father, not a metaphor, you literally have a new father because it is the spirit, the Holy Spirit, which is as invisible as the electricity, which is powering the equipment, which is here, but is far more powerful and far more real.

Mm-hmm.

So we have a new father and that father has given us everything he owns. And he wants us to share the throne of the universe with him forever. When they picked up stones to smash the life out of him, prized up cobble stones out of the streets, perfect size for braining. Somebody with Jesus turned to them and said.

For what good thing do you intend to stone me? And uh, they said, for no good thing you who just like us, a human being are making yourself out to be God. Who do you think you are? And he said something amazing. We tend not to notice this when it's, when we read it. He said something absolutely astonishing.

He said, haven't you ever read in your own law what he said? I and his, this is God speaking. I have said you are God's lowercase Q. Mm-hmm. He is speaking prophetically of our destiny. We are going to be, it sounds blasphemous, but it's not because these are the words of Jesus, God himself, God on his throne in the supreme command center of the universe.

Is there a higher destiny possible? Elon Musk, eat your heart out. Absolutely.

That, that piece of scripture gets, um, misconstrued in so many ways, doesn't it? Because there are a lot of people wandering around now in spiritualism that's saying, we're all Gods now. Yeah, yeah. We're all gods now.

Echoing the words of the serpent who said, if you do what God does, you'll be a God.

Hmm. Well, what's that? We'll, just do what you want to do. Decide for yourself what's good and what's not good. Don't let somebody else tell you that's what God does, right?

Mm-hmm. So

what's wrong with being godly? Oh, you say to me, God says, do what I say, not what I do, or I will kill you. Does that sound like love to you?

Would you wanna spend eternity in heaven with a God like that?

So the serpent's logic was actually foolproof. It was. It was watertight.

Mm-hmm.

You can't argue with that logic, which is why God has had to let the thing happen. He said, Lucifer. Okay.

We'll give you time to demonstrate how your law is better. From the law you were created under, we'll give you 7,000 years. You show the universe you do your best and show the universe why your law is better. And after 6,000 years of the experiment, I think we can draw the the conclusion quite safely that it is not better.

Have you looked at the news lately, Graham? I try not to. Nothing more depressing available is there? No, just whoa. In human misery and pointing to more and more and getting worse and worse every day.

I speak to so many people who, um, who tell me that they don't believe in God, but they want me to pray for them.

Uh, they don't believe in God, but they can't go to sleep until they hear the prayer. At the end of my podcast every night, there is a, a plethora. Of people who've been just meandering around in the shadows who are now starting to ask bigger and better questions. And one of the biggest struggles I find I have is to try and separate them from the image of God conducted, uh, constructed by religion and get them into a one-on-one relationship with Jesus.

Has religion done God any favors

the people who don't believe in God? I really saying I don't believe in the God that the religious bodies have told me God is lack. Yeah. I don't believe in that God either that God's Lucifer. Mm-hmm. The churches have given a pretty good depiction of Lucifer. Call him Jesus.

It's incredible, isn't it? It's the way he operates.

It has to be one of the greatest deceptions.

Yes. You don't look to a church, any church. If you wanna see God, you look to Jesus. And what he did, he gave up. He was the darling of heaven. He gave up the sovereignty of the universe and entered into our world as one of us.

He lived like one of us under the jurisdiction of his mortal enemy. What is a church? It's a group of people who may not even know each other or seen each other, who have Jesus as the center of their lives. So I probably live in a street, which is a church. Mm-hmm.

So define for us the difference in your mind between that church you just described and the one under the banner of a corporation or a, a firm. Because people, uh, often people think of a church as a building, and I think more and more people are starting to see a church as a gathering of believers. But there's a corporate identity to a church too.

There are denominations that are registered corporations. Yes. They haven't performed very well lately, have they?

Well, if you think your salvation is contingent upon the Australian Conference Association Limited, you have put your confidence in a very unstable place.

So if, if the government passed a law to ban, let's say, the Seventh Day Adventist Church as a, as a corporation, it now ceases to exist.

We're outlawing it. Would that church continue to exist?

The true church always has. Jesus said when the disciples came to him, oh, he used a, um, a parable, didn't he? He said a soul went forth and he sowed his field. And tears spr up and the disciples or his workers said, do you want us to pull the tears out?

And he said, no. Let 'em grow to the harvest. The Lord of the harvest, we'll do the separation. So there's, the field is clogged with tears right now, but there have always been good plants in the church, always have been good church, uh, plants in the church. And the Lord of the harvest will determine who is rich.

Only he can. And he will remove the tears. It's not our job, but the church is still the church, uh, and it is still the body of believers all around the world who are faithful to Jesus. They keep the commandments of God and have the faith that Jesus had while he was on the cross and maintain their faith in the face of certain death.

Adam was a seventh. Third Adventist. You knew that, didn't you? Tell me more. Well, he kept the seventh day and he looked forward to the advent of the redeemer. He thought Cain was him. Eve thought when she gave birth to the first male child, I've given birth to the Messiah. Turned out to be a murderer. Not the Messiah at all.

Um, Jesus was a seventh aist. He kept a seventh day as his custom was. He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, so they assumed he was one of them, but when he declared who he was really was in fulfillment of the scripture, they picked up stones to stone him.

You must detach your faith from the visible structure called the church and attach it to Jesus.

That's the church. And of course, if you do that, you can't say, well, thank you Jesus. You have died for all my sins. I'm not guilty, which means the penalty of the law is gone and wacko. The law itself must be gone, which means. I can send them my heart's content and everything will be cool.

Mm-hmm.

A lot of people do.

In fact, that idea is preach from a lot of pulpits every Sunday.

Mm-hmm.

And a lot of pulpits, every Sabbath these days. So

when I first met you, you were involved in church. Yes. You had a, you had a major involvement in church. I mean, you were, you were, I met you at the camp meeting and then we visited you in Port Macquarie.

Mm-hmm.

And you and Rosalie had a wonderful ministry there called Nourished, nourished lunches. And you have a real hospitality ministry between the two of you. And the whole notion around the things that you did was built on a, the concept of a nest, a home, a place where people could feel comfortable. So when I knew you in those days, you were heavily involved in the church.

I mean, your, your, uh, the tail end of your week preparation day on the Friday and the Sabbath was you and Rosalie and a group of volunteers, not just spreading out a couple of plastic tables with, you know, everybody's gathered food. You would gather all the food that people would bring. You had a beautiful circular array that you built, and you would rearrange all that food to make it look like.

The feasting table in heaven. So you were heavily involved in that corporate structure, is that right?

Yes. Um, I don't want people to get the idea that I have abandoned the Seventh Adventist church structure. I believe my name is still on some book somewhere as a member of the Seventh Adventist Church, and I don't intend to take my name off that.

But my faith is not in the structure. My faith is in Jesus. And I will be active every Sabbath as much as I possibly can to support the community of people who come along, whether it's, you know, large building or a tiny little rented room somewhere.

Or a tree.

Yes. Under a tree. Mm. Um, no. As his custom was, Jesus went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day.

My custom is to go to church on the Sabbath day and meet with fellow pilgrims who are homeward bound to see if we can encourage each other, help each other on the way home, not to criticize, not to send you not to be divisive. But to be supportive and honest,

what's the difference between doing God's work and doing God's job?

Well, he's the boss and he tells us what our job is, and by his power and his resources, we are enabled to do his work. Mm-hmm.

We're not there giving the orders. That's God's job.

That's God's job. Mm-hmm. Do you think that uh, a lot of people involved in church tend to do God's job rather than God's work?

I think there are plenty who would like to.

Mm-hmm.

But we take our eyes off them, keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the Peter principle when Jesus was on the water.

Keep your eye on Jesus. Turn around and look at the others. You'll go straight down.

Okay. So now you live in, uh, fiddle leaf cottage.

Mm-hmm.

A one bedroom minus cottage on the banks of the Maclay River. And it's beautiful. It's stunning. It wasn't when you bought it, but it is, it is. Um, it's breathtaking.

There's no doubt about it. And the hospitality and the love that lives in this place is clearly evident. Uh, you give up your one bedroom for people like us who come to visit and you go into your little caravan parked alongside the house, which is a gem in its in and of itself. And. You create special environments for people to feel special.

Is that how you see heaven being created for you?

Yes. Well, you think of, I mean, Jesus would have done what he has done just for the German,
just for pole pot.

We are special in God's eyes. The story of the Prodigal son is not the story of the prodigal son. It's the story of the broken hearted father who loved his son,

but wouldn't force his

will when you married Rosalie. I'm all over the place here. That's fine, that's fine. We've got a, we're spirit led in this, aren't we? Um. When you married Rosalie, uh, she had come out a great tragedy as well as you had. And, um, as I remember, you guys spent hours, countless hours on a telephone getting to know each other.

Hmm. How you've come, you've come into another family, you've blended a family together. I remember you once describing the responsibility you felt in that role as it relates to Rosalie's first husband who died, and you described to me that you had a particular purpose that was related to him. Do you remember what that was?

Well, I certainly

am planning. On taking his three children to him in the kingdom and handing them over all three. One of them is asleep, waiting to be awakened.

Two are still alive. One lives just around the corner from us, 500 meters from here.

I believe that I have been given the, the role of their spiritual father, and it is my deepest desire to lead them to their biological father in the New Kingdom. What would you say to him? Oh, how can I know that? Graham? I'm sure it'll be an emotional thing. Very emotional.

I would love to take my own two children to their mother and say, here are your two little lampkins.

Hmm. Go on, ask me when you.

Well, every day. Literally every day, Rosalie and I thank the Lord for saving our children. And that's all five, not just three plus two to all five. Mm-hmm. Two of them, let me just say my own biological two. Uh, in places where it would seem utterly impossible for me to ever be able to take them to their mother.

But there is a verse which says this, and this is the omnipotent. God speaking, I will contend with him who contends with you, and I will save your children. I remind him of that every day, and I say, I have no idea how you can save someone who's been addicted to every possible substance on the planet since the age of 16 and is still addicted.

How you can say that about somebody who has not just been a prostitute, but has been an evangelist for perversion in the lowest form. Run seminars on the subject.

I will contend with him, who contends with you, and I will save your children. So every day we just simply say, thank you. Thank you for saving our children. You will never force their wills. Hm. But he can't intervene in the affairs of their lives and bring them to an understanding, which is not possible otherwise.

Well,

you've unpacked a small portion of your life. There's so much more. We could go on for hours about that, and I'm sure we're gonna do a whole bunch of these, so I'm sure it'll come back in from time to time because. All the

revelations you will share as I do, are all linked to the tapestry of life, which has a lot of dark threads through it, doesn't it?

Mm-hmm. And as much as we would like to remove the dark threads, what they indicate to us and the beauty of what we see on the wall is that they're essential as we are a work in progress, like the tapestry was when it was being constructed.

Mm-hmm.

Are you a work in progress still at 78?

Absolutely. Absolutely. Every day I have to unlearn stuff and learn stuff. Mm-hmm. And the Lord makes it clear as he is teaching what's actually happening, and it's a lot less pain fall than it used to be. I let it go as quickly as he brings it to my attention.

Sometimes it sticks and keeps coming back like a magnet, but he brings you back to the same situation. And I know we'll always be, um, imperfect this side of the kingdom. It won't be until we've gotten rid of these old

skins things that we are mes Yeah, we made totally new. Mm-hmm. I love this. It says. They were asking, um, one of the disciples, I think it was Paul, and he said to them, look, we don't know what we're gonna be like when this is all over, but we do know this. When Jesus appears and we see him in his magnificence, that's what we're gonna be like.

We are gonna be changed to be like that. And what that is, is enough to terrify the life out of all the Trumps and, and Bidens and everybody else on the planet.

Mm-hmm. '

cause he will show two things. He will show his omnipotence, his power in ways which are unmistakable, cmic, absolutely quite smic way. The earth will be turned upside down and shake into pieces, but he will show his unutterable love.

For his children whom he has come to rescue.

You talked about your view of death before. I think you said you were terrified to die. I was. But you weren't really afraid of death, but you were terrified to die. I wanted to be

dead because I was not like in life.

How do you see it now?

Death. Uh, it's just like going in to have your gallbladder out, shut your eyes, and you're awake again instantly.

But you don't have your gallbladder as gone. No. Death has just a tiny little sleeve. It's a blink of the eye.

Mm-hmm.

But of course, all the stuff that leads up to that can be quite terrifying. And that is the stuff where the devil does his trick, does his maneuver. He likes to amplify all that terror and make you think that you are going to die a horrible death and it's permanent and you're gonna be in this state of horror for eternity.

No, you know nothing. Anybody who has had a modern anesthetic knows that you know nothing. The incident takes effect. You know, nothing. Time ceases to exist for you, and then the moment consciousness comes back

to you and you join those two ends together, it's seamless. You came into it, you come out of it, and nothing happened in between.

But in between those two points, an awful, lot's happened there. When I put a, a new. Heart inside you or transplant of your liver or anything?

Yeah.

We've spent, uh, the last two episodes, a couple of hours, I guess, unpacking your life as we bring this one to a close. Looking back on that life, what would you do differently?

Well, I'm told that when we see our lives from the perspective of eternity, we will see that we have been led. And exactly the way we would've chosen it to go, if we could have known the end from the beginning. So my answer to that has to be somewhat hypothetical. I do nothing differently, and yet I want to say I would do everything differently.

Mm.

I certainly would not be insulting to my God. He loved me more than his own life.

I'm enjoying conversations with Carl. It brings us to a close with the prayer brother.

Dear Lord, father in heaven, we know not the hour or the time of your coming. We know not what the purpose of our life was in the previous context, but we do know now. We know that we are a continuing work in progress. And we know that the things we regret, the things we wish had never happened, happened for a reason and created the people that we are now.

So Father, we just pray that we will continue that journey, that we will forgive ourselves knowing that you have forgiven us, and we pray, Lord, that even though we sin every single minute of every day, that through your son Jesus, you still hold us as righteous. We thank you for conversations with Carl. We thank you for conversations with you in Jesus' name, amen.

Amen. Thank you, Carl, and we'll see you next time on another episode of Conversations with Carl, and this may well go until Jesus comes. How good would that be?

Well,

it'll be here in a minute. It's half past time. God bless you all. Thanks for watching Conversations with Carl. Bye for now.