

In December of 2002, being caught up in the Christmas spirit, Harlan Rector, the author of “A.D.[™] The Musical”, we’ll refer to him simply as, ‘Author’, was thinking about the miracle of Christ’s birth in Bethlehem, 2000 years ago. He wondered who the stranger was that took the last room at the inn, forcing Mary and Joseph to stay in the stable to deliver the blessed child. Hearing Christmas Carols being played everywhere, he was inspired to write the lyrics about that stranger, in the form of a Christmas song. ‘Author’ did many things, but writing wasn’t one of them. In his professional career he was an advertising art director, producer, portrait artist, and, as a top voice-over announcer, he read the words but never wrote them. Nevertheless, the words came to a song he titled, “The Stranger”. He sent the lyrics to Angelo, a composer friend in Connecticut, to put the words to music. Angelo said he would and ‘Author’ sat back and dreamt about becoming a gazillionaire with the next big Christmas hit.

God had other plans.

‘Author’ started thinking about other biblical characters, who in some way, crossed Jesus’ path during His ministry. He next wrote the lyrics to a song about Barabbas, titled, “Three Words”. The words were now coming like automatic writing as God continued to work through him. ‘Author’ wrote another song and then another and another until he had 8 to 10 song lyrics finished. At that time, the thought occurred to him that these songs could be part of a biblical stage musical. Since these lyrics were largely to be sung by people close to Jesus, he decided to title the production, “A.D.[™]”

‘Author’ started praying more.

Now, he was not only writing more songs, he was being inspired to write a Christian musical. ‘Author’ learned from his years in advertising that creative ideas don’t always come when you want them to. Inspiration sometimes woke him up at three in the morning to start writing. Still, the words would come as fast as he could write them. He was writing everything in longhand on a big yellow pad. When he finished a song or a scene, he’d two-finger type it into his computer. Fourteen months later, twenty songs and the story, or ‘book’, for “A.D.[™] The Musical”, was finished, but not one note of music was written.

Timing is everything.

‘Author’ sent the 20 lyrics and the book for “A.D.[™]” to composers Andrew Lloyd Webber and Rupert Holmes, plus a couple of lesser known composers, to interest them in writing the music. Only Andrew Lloyd Webber replied. It was a cordial decline. Thinking God was closing the door on finding a composer and opening a window of opportunity for ‘Author’ to compose the music himself, ‘Author’ rushed out and bought an electronic keyboard. Up to that point in time, he only played the piano for his own amusement. ‘Author’ figured the notes would come easily like the words did. They didn’t. Discerning God’s will isn’t everybody’s gift, so occasionally, God steps in with His impeccable timing to rescue us. About the time ‘Author’ had given up on trying to write music, a friend called to invite him to a benefit dinner to raise money for hospital costs incurred by a mutual friend’s daughter. “Oh, and by the way”, she said, “we need items for the Charity auction” One barely used \$1,800 keyboard coming up. Then, in a phone conversation with his friend, Frank, a producer in New York, ‘Author’ casually mentioned his “A.D.[™]” project. His friend said, “You need to talk to my friend, Rick, who’s in Nashville and has written show music for me before”. ‘Author’, thinking, what’s one more rejection, sent the “A.D.[™]” lyrics and book to his friend in New York. Two weeks later, Rick called and said, “I got this “A.D.[™]” package from Frank in New York, I really like these lyrics and I’d like to write all your music. I’ll send you a demo CD with some of my music and we’ll talk”. Remember Angelo? He now called to say he started writing the music for the first song, “The Stranger”. After fourteen months of writing, the words would be getting the music.

Then the fun began.

‘Author’ went to Nashville to meet Rick.

They decided to make a CD of fourteen songs, including some narration, and use the CD to generate interest in the stage show and generate income as well. Rick rounded up some of the best Christian vocalists and musicians and ‘Author’ went back to Nashville to produce the CD. To help pay for the CD, ‘Author’ sold his car. Now he had to raise money for a pre-production budget to get “A.D.[™] The Musical” ready for a stage venue. ‘Author’ then mortgaged his home to raise one half of what was needed and thirteen investors made up the other half. The Musical premiered for 18 performances in the summer of 2010 at the Stained Glass Theatre near Branson, MO.

To God Be The Glory.

The ‘Author’