

## President, Peanut Farmer and Sunday School Teacher

James Earl Carter, Jr., the 39th President of the United States, was born on October 1, 1924 in the tiny town of Plains, Georgia. His father, James, Sr., was a farmer and businessman, and his mother, Lillian Gordy Carter, was a registered nurse.

Jimmy was educated in the public school of Plains, attended Georgia Southwestern College and the Georgia Institute of Technology, and received a Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Naval Academy in 1946. On July 7th of that year, he married his childhood sweetheart, Rosalynn Smith of Plains.

In the Navy, he became a submariner, serving in both the Atlantic and Pacific fleets and rising to the rank of lieutenant. Chosen by Admiral Hyman Rickover for the nuclear submarine program, he was assigned to Schenectady, New York, where he did graduate work at Union College in reactor technology and nuclear physics while serving as senior officer of the pre-commissioning crew of the Seawolf.

When his father died in 1953, he resigned his naval commission and returned with his family to Georgia. He took over the Carter farms, and he and Rosalynn operated Carter's Warehouse, a general-purpose seed and farm supply company located in Plains.

He soon became a leader of the community, serving on county boards supervising education, the hospital authority, and the library. In 1962 he entered politics, winning election to the Georgia Senate, before becoming Georgia's 76th governor on January 12, 1971.

Jimmy Carter was inaugurated President of the United States on January 20, 1977. Significant foreign policy accomplishments of his administration included the Panama Canal treaties, the Camp David Accords, the treaty of peace between Egypt and Israel, the SALT II treaty with the Soviet Union, and the establishment of U.S. diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China.

On the domestic side, the administration's achievements included a comprehensive energy program conducted by a new Department of Energy; deregulation in energy, transportation, communications, and finance; major educational programs under a new Department of Education; and major environmental protection legislation, including the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. While in office, he also championed human rights throughout the world.

In 1982, he became University Distinguished Professor at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, and founded The Carter Center to engage in conflict mediation all over the world. In addition, the Center has monitored 83 elections in the Americas, Africa, and Asia.

The permanent facilities of The Carter Presidential Center include the Jimmy Carter Library and Museum, administered by the National Archives. The Jimmy Carter National Historic Site in Plains, administered by the National Park Service, is open to visitors, too.

Jimmy and Rosalynn volunteer for Habitat for Humanity annually, helping needy people renovate and build homes. And on the Sabbath, they teach Sunday school at Maranatha Baptist Church of Plains.

For relaxation, President Carter enjoys fly-fishing, woodworking and swimming. The Carters have three sons, one daughter, nine grandsons, three granddaughters, two great-grandsons, and four great-granddaughters.

In 2002, President Carter was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize "for his decades of untiring effort to find peaceful solutions to inter-



### CELEBRITY INTERVIEW

by Kam Williams

national conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights, and to promote economic and social development." The author of 25 books, here, he talks about his latest, NIV Lessons from Life Bible.

**Kam Williams:** Hi President Carter, I'm really honored to have another opportunity to speak with you.

**President Carter:** It's a pleasure for me, too, Kam. Thank you!

**KW:** Editor/legist Patricia Turnier asks: What message do you think people will take away from the Lessons from Life Bible?

**JC:** I think that what people will get out of these comments in the Bible, and also out of my previous book [Through the Year with Jimmy Carter: 366 Daily Meditations from the 39th President] is how pertinent, how important and how applicable the ancient texts are to our modern-day life. That's what I try to emphasize in all my Sunday school lessons when I teach at Maranatha Baptist Church. So, I think the main message to remember is that we must accommodate changing times while clinging to unchanging moral values. That's why I say the aim is to apply the text to modern-day life.

**KW:** Patricia also asks: Are you interested in writing a memoir focusing on your more recent accomplishments?

**JC:** I've already written a book about my more recent accomplishments. It's called Beyond the White House.

### The "NIV Lessons from Life Bible" Interview

**KW:** Leon Marquis says: You have done more good after leaving office than any other United States President, from traveling the world, to certifying free and open elections, to working with Habitat for Humanity, to traveling to North Korea. You have become the "Soul of American Diplomacy." My question is: Why can't the other ex-presidents get it right?

**JC:** Well, I wouldn't say they're wrong, Leon, because each one of us is an individual, just like talk show hosts are different from one another, and newspaper columnists are different from each other. So, former presidents are different from each other, too. Some have gone into relative seclusion. Some have decided to teach. In fact, I'm finishing my 30th year as a professor at Emory University. I've found it very enjoyable and very beneficial to me to keep active. But I wouldn't criticize any president who has chosen to take a different route.

**KW:** Harriet Pakula Teweles asks: Is there a personal moral tension between being a good Christian and being a good Commander of a nuclear submarine?

How can an officer—especially one of great faith—reconcile being asked to lead troops into battle with the Fifth Commandment: Thou Shalt Not Kill?

**JC:** The most important Bible teaching that I remembered when I was in the Navy and when I was Commander-in-Chief, was that we worshipped The Prince of Peace. Jesus Christ is The Prince of Peace. So, I considered myself, as a submarine officer,

as helping to preserve the peace. And I felt the same way when I was president. As a matter of fact, although we had some terrible challenges and temptations when I was in office, we never dropped a bomb... we never launched a missile... and we never fired a bullet. I think that one of the main requirements for a strong military, like a strong submarine force, is to prevent war, not to cause war.



President Jimmy Carter

**KW:** Larry Greenberg says: It seems like we are at a point now where books are moving from bound paper to digital media. How will this impact the study and reverence for the Bible?

**JC:** You can already download any of the religious texts onto electronic mechanisms like a Kindle. But I think many people prefer to hold a book in their hands. We recently gave my daughter Amy a new electronic device, but since she used to work in a library, she still insists on reading exclusively from books. I take my Bible with me to church every Sunday to teach the Bible lesson. I do that whenever I'm in Plains, oh, about 35 to 40 times a year. So, I think that for many people, particularly when reading Holy Scriptures, a Bible you can hold in your hands is most appropriate.

**KW:** I still prefer the touch of paper. I still

haven't made the jump to reading books electronically.

**JC:** [Chuckles] I can understand that.

**KW:** Troy John asks: Do you see any parallels between the lead-up to the 1980 Presidential Election and the 2012 campaign?

**JC:** Not really. Back in those days, we didn't have massive sums of money pouring in. We never ran any negative advertisements. I always referred to President Ford during the 1976 campaign as "my distinguished opponent." That was all. And I behaved the same way as an incumbent, when Ronald Reagan ran against me in 1980. And the amount of money we raised against each other from special interest groups and from lobbyists for the general election was zero. Neither President Ford,

See CARTER on page 7

