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CREATING HEAVEN ON EARTH: JIM BAKKER AND THE BIRTH OF A SUNBELT PENTECOSTALISM

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CREATING HEAVEN ON EARTH: JIM BAKKER AND THE BIRTH OF A SUNBELT
PENTECOSTALISM

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Arts and Sciences
at the University of Kentucky

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

CREATING HEAVEN ON EARTH: JIM BAKKER AND THE BIRTH OF A SUNBELT PENTECOSTALISM

This dissertation traces the rise of Jim and Tammy Bakker and analyzes the birth and growth of prosperity theology in the United States of America. It highlights how Jim and Tammy created a form of Pentecostalism that grew alongside and because of the growth of the Sunbelt. It blossomed in the new suburban enclaves of this region. Jim Bakker's religious ideas had their roots in an increasingly powerful anti-New Deal coalition that was led by the conservative business community. Positive thinking and the prosperity gospel reinforced their beliefs in unfettered markets and their opposition to activist government. Bakker combined these ideas with an emphasis on the family, creating a power new kind of religion. It became a form of cultural conservatism that increasingly shaped American society in the 1970s and 1980s, helping transform political issues into moral and religious questions.

KEYWORDS: Jim Bakker, Sunbelt, Religious Right, Conservatism, Tammy Bakker.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

On August 14, 1986, the husband-and-wife televangelist team of Jim and Tammy Bakker launched their *Enough is Enough* telethon to raise funds for their sprawling ministry. The telethon opened with a joyous chorus singing "Enough is Enough" while images of the Bakkers' ostentatious Christian resort, teeming with visitors, flashed across the screen. Viewers saw images of the park's miniature train ride, shopping mall, and four-hundred-room hotel. Meanwhile, the chorus sang, "I will have what's rightfully mine, my health, my joy, my peace of mind. Watch out Satan, I'm calling your bluff. Enough is enough is enough!" When the video ended, a stage appeared in front of tiered rows of volunteers who were sitting at pastel blue-and-white decorated tables, ready to receive pledges of donations. Draped behind them was a bright pastel pink curtain that, when combined with the tables, brought a Disney-like quality to the stage. The camera panned to Tammy Faye who promptly told her viewers that they "have the authority to take over the problems in their life." If they felt sick, they "could say I'm not going to be sick." Or as Jim Bakker later declared, "God Promises that when you trust and delight in Him, He'll give you the desires of your heart." Jim then declared that with a positive mental attitude, those with faith would be able to acquire wealth. He gave examples of people whose faith, in combination with giving to the Lord, had allowed them to prosper. Holding up a bumper sticker that read "Enough is Enough," he proclaimed that positive thinking would tell the devil that Christians would not let him bring doubt into their lives. Almost immediately, the more than one hundred phones on the stage began to ring.¹

The Bakkers were Pentecostal preachers affiliated with the Assemblies of God. Pentecostalism² was a dynamic and fervent religious movement that arose in the early twentieth century in hopes of restoring American Christianity. They lamented the backsliding of mainline Protestants, and hoped to create a pure—and highly

emotional—form of Christianity.³ The Bakkers, of course, were no ordinary preachers. They were televangelists whose show *The PTL Club*—PTL stood for Praise the Lord — was carried by over 1,300 cable stations. They had built Heritage USA, a massive Christian theme park that had become the nation’s third largest theme park in the country behind Disneyland and Disneyworld. But they were more than just Pentecostal ministers or televangelists or Christian entrepreneurs. They had become by the 1980s a cultural sensation. Along with Pat Robertson, Oral Roberts, Jerry Falwell, and Jimmy Swaggert, they were among America’s most-watched and revered evangelical ministers. In the tradition of Aimee Semple McPherson, they mixed religion with entertainment and personality. This success helped make Pentecostalism a dynamic and rapidly growing evangelical religious movement.⁴

Jim and Tammy's meteoric rise began when Pat Robertson hired them to produce a children's show for his Christian Broadcast Network (CBN) in 1966. Within a year, the Bakkers were creating new shows, building an audience, and dramatically improving CBN’s finances. They moved to southern California in 1973, where they created another religious television network. In a partnership with their friends and fellow Pentecostal ministers, Jan and Paul Crouch, they converted an old airplane hangar into a studio and created the world's largest religious broadcast network. The Bakkers were the star attraction. Their *Praise the Lord* show mixed pleas for money with celebrity interviews and inspirational religious messages. Following the dissolving of their partnership with the Crouches, Jim and Tammy moved to Charlotte in 1974 where they reconstituted the *Praise the Lord* show into a new TV ministry. Within a year, PTL was being broadcast to over sixty affiliates and was one of television’s most popular shows. An intensely loyal audience answered the Bakkers’ daily requests for contributions and purchased memorabilia. This community of Pentecostals became the fastest growing religious movement in the United States, and provided Bakker with a weekly viewership of 13 million households. Often watching PTL hour after hour, day after day, they provided the foundation for this religious movement and Bakker's rise to stardom.⁵

The Bakkers began building Heritage USA in 1978. In addition to its shopping mall and hotel, it included a campground, auditoriums, an auction barn, a waterpark, and a model Victorian town. In time, three suburban communities grew up alongside it. Advertised as a "sin-free" zone, it was a "Disneyland for the devout," and it became a pilgrimage for the Bakkers' followers, who often blocked interstate traffic as they waited to enter its gates. Once inside the 2,300-acre park, visitors found a world infused with optimism and a shelter from the troubles of their daily lives.

In order to build this empire, the Bakkers became tremendous fundraisers. Jim Bakker, from his earliest years on television, had mixed his vision of Christianity with appeals for cash. Over time, these appeals became more sophisticated with promises of earthly and spiritual rewards. In the 1980s, Heritage USA became the Bakkers' most effective tool for generating cash. Bakker's most committed supporters, who numbered over 500,000, gave \$1,000 in exchange for a free two-day stay at the park every year. Bakker also employed a staff of 3,000 in the theme park and television ministry. Many of them had left their careers and moved to one of the park-affiliated suburbs in order to live in what they often described as "heaven on earth."⁶

The resort became nationally famous for its size, spectacle, and upbeat atmosphere. Bakker became a prominent figure in Charlotte; mayors and local politicians carried his favor, and they even appeared on floats at Heritage USA parades. Soon he was gaining national attention and was featured in *Time* and *Newsweek*, and also became a frequent guest on *Larry King Live*. Other celebrities such as Mickey Rooney, Roy Rogers, and Mr. T. appeared on PTL; so did Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan.⁷

Bakker's success was rooted in his religious message. He preached a folk theology⁸ best described as prosperity theology. His ideas were a combination of therapeutic ethos and positive thinking. He embraced a new cultural outlook that understood human character as pliable and linked to mental attitude. Allowing oneself to think positively, he insisted, was the key to a successful, happy life. These ideas were

built into his ministry's often repeated slogan "You Can Make it," which was designed to remind followers that with positive thoughts, happiness and fulfillment were easily obtainable. Complementing these ideas were promises that faith and positive thinking would lead to boundless wealth and happiness. As Jim Bakker recalled, "I had presented a Disneyland gospel, in which the good guys always get rich, the bad guys are defeated, and everyone lived happily ever after."⁹ Utilizing these ideas, Bakker showcased guests whose lives confirmed the veracity of these beliefs, and demonstrated how their faith led to happiness and wealth. Bakker also used these ideas to enhance his fundraising, arguing that giving to his ministry would encourage God to bless them materially. For example, in a 1986 promotional book, he declared: "As people began to send in their gifts to become Lifetime Partners, we started hearing about dramatic victories in their lives. As they gave to the Lord's work, God began to pour out amazing and unexpected blessings."¹⁰ Bakker combined these ideas into a new folk theology that interpreted happiness, success, and well-being as the product of faith and mental attitude.¹¹

Bakker's folk theology was a family-centered version of prosperity theology. Prosperity theology is the idea that through faith and proper thinking affluence—and happiness—is easily obtainable. Over the past thirty years, it has achieved explosive growth, expanding across America and the World. In his broadcasts, he used these ideas to promise suburban families shelter from the world and happiness at home. On the air and with his family-centered resort, he highlighted how his successful family life was the outcome of these beliefs. Together, these ideas became a new type of popular religion that honored affluence and promised a life free of struggle, worry, demands, or social disruptions. This gospel of self-fulfillment sanctified the pursuit of wealth and the consumer culture of post-World War II America. Bakker combined these ideas with a socially conservative message. Abortions, drugs, and the banning of school prayer, were signs that America had turned against the "traditional family."¹²

Millions watched *PTL*; hundreds of thousands toured Heritage; money flowed in. But to much of secular America and to mainline Protestants, Jim Bakker was a fraud.

They viewed Bakker's folk theology as an elaborate scam designed to enrich the Bakkers. Richard Opel, the editor of the *Charlotte Observer*, wrote: "If a con man claims to talk to Jesus, it doesn't make him less of a con man."¹³ Frances FitzGerald, writing in the *New Yorker*, said the Bakkers "epitomized the excesses of the 1980s; the greed, the love of glitz, and the shamelessness which, in their case, was so pure as to almost amount to a kind of innocence."¹⁴ Other detractors contended that PTL was an outgrowth of Jim Bakker's narcissistic personality. They contended that PTL's followers were "gullible" dupes.¹⁵

Jim Bakker's downfall and the collapse of PTL ministries after 1987 confirmed his critics' suspicions. Following the *Charlotte Observer's* discovery that he was paying hush money to hide an extramarital affair, the ministry began to unravel, and a "Holy War" erupted over its assets. Shortly thereafter, it was discovered that PTL had oversold memberships and had a severe budget shortfall. Then came revelations of Bakker's excessive bonuses and ostentatious spending. Bakker was indicted and convicted on fraud charges in 1989, and PTL ministries filed for bankruptcy.

The lurid scandals made it easy to dismiss Bakker as a charlatan, and PTL as a phony religious movement of no consequence. But this was not the case. Bakker's form of Pentecostalism was part of a profound cultural and political reorientation of the 1970s and 1980s. First, Jim Bakker's religious ideas had their roots in an increasingly powerful anti-New Deal coalition that was led by the conservative business community. Religious, but frustrated with traditional Christianity's sanctification of poverty, they sought to create a new type of faith. Positive thinking and the prosperity gospel were their answers. It reinforced their beliefs in unfettered markets and their opposition to activist government. Poverty and wealth, they believed, were the outcome of faith, not social circumstance. Entrepreneurialism was a holy enterprise. Bakker fused his message with this movement, highlighting the increasing influence of business conservatives on Bakker and the Pentecostal movement. In the 1970s, as liberalism began to emphasize the limits of American economic growth and the need for increased economic and social

regulation, Bakker's message became an alternative worldview. Jim Bakker reflected and helped spread this form of cultural conservatism that increasingly shaped American society in the 1970s and 1980s, helping transform political issues into moral and religious debates.

This message was supported by the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International (FGBMI) and other evangelical businesses that backed Bakker and the prosperity theology ministers. This group, which included Demos Shakarian, Richard DeVos and George Otis underwrote the growth of televangelism and Bakker's business-friendly form of Pentecostalism. They sought to nurture a form of Pentecostalism that would serve as a bulwark against liberalism's emphasis on limiting consumption and controlling growth. In turn, they transformed American Pentecostalism by infusing it with positive thinking and prosperity theology.

As a youth and as a minister, Jim Bakker had been affiliated with the Assemblies of God denomination, but his new form of Pentecostalism was not bound exclusively to this denomination. Most of his followers belonged to the non-denominational movement known as the Charismatic movement or neo-Pentecostalism. Originating in the prosperous suburbs of Southern California in the 1960s, this movement began when middle class suburbanites started declaring that they were experiencing gifts of the Holy Spirit. By the 1970s, so many mainline Protestants were joining the Charismatics that it was the fastest growing religious movement in the United States.¹⁶ While Charismatics embraced some traditional Pentecostal practices such as speaking in tongues, these adherents were usually more attracted to the Charismatic promise of a God who promised prosperity and happiness. Over time, most of the Charismatics also saw themselves as Pentecostals. In turn, many Pentecostals began to use these terms interchangeably.¹⁷

Bakker's religious message was ideally suited to suburban Sunbelt communities such as Charlotte. His vision—originally conceived in southern California and successfully exported to Charlotte —met the needs of the new suburban migrants who

flowed into these communities. Living in isolated suburbs, often feeling alienated and rootless, his followers were drawn to his promises of mental tranquility, family happiness, and material success. With promises of personal fulfillment and prosperity, Bakker provided a religion that matched the larger corporate vision of the Sunbelt cities. This prosperity message also sanctified their lives and prepared them for competitive careers in which mental transformation and positive thinking were integral to success. For his followers, Bakker's message became a prism for seeing the world, and shaped their understanding of America's political economy, their daily lives, and societal change. Like the conservative businessmen who helped form this movement, these followers rejected appeals for limits and sacrifice, and instead endorsed a vision of unregulated capitalism and individual affluence.

Bakker, PTL, and the rise of the Charismatics raise questions about the early work on the growth of the Christian Right. Most of these works were a response to earlier characterizations of Christian conservatives as backward un-modern reactionaries. One of the most important was William C. Martin's *With God on Our Side*. Martin argued that the Christian Right was the outgrowth of social issues which mobilized a socially conservative base. Following *Roe V. Wade*, they defended their socially conservative view of family and religion. Martin argued that the Christian Right was more than simply a cultural backlash against a modernizing world. Other scholars of American Evangelicalism such as Joel A. Carpenter and Mark A. Noll have also supported this general narrative, focusing on how evangelical's view of the family grew out of a longstanding engagement with political and social debates.¹⁸

New scholarship has complicated this narrative. Recent scholars have demonstrated that the Christian Right did not emerge simply in response to *Roe V. Wade* or the various 1970s challenges to evangelical mores. They also rejected early understandings of the Christian Right as backward, reactionary, or antimodern. Instead, they emphasized how America's Sunbelt created a group of Christians who viewed free market ideals as a natural extension of their religious faith, gradually aligning them with

conservative politics. For example, Daniel K. Williams's *God's Own Party*, a top-down history of the Christian Right, highlights how free market ideas played a central role in mobilizing the Christian Right in the 1970s. Darren Dochuk's *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt* takes a similar line. From a grassroots perspective, it narrates how the Southern California social and cultural environment created a world where free enterprise and religion became intertwined. Bethany Morton's *To Serve God and Wal-Mart* discovered how—with the help of religious, educational, and political networks—Sunbelt Christians increasingly embraced a form of Christianity that meshed family values and free market principles.¹⁹

Pentecostal scholarship had taken a similar direction. Early scholarship tended to portray Pentecostalism as a religion of the dispossessed, filled with society's outcasts who could not adapt to the modern world. Their loud, ecstatic services were a sign of this dysfunction. So was their refusal to follow mainline religious norms. Most of this scholarship focused on the early and mid-twentieth century movement. Scholars discovered that many middle class people with middle-class backgrounds became Pentecostals. The movement was a viable cultural alternative to mainstream cultural values. In the South, the Pentecostals challenged the social and economic values of segregation. The conservative social and cultural values, these historians agree, were rooted in the early development of the movement.²⁰

Few scholars have analyzed Jim Bakker. The fullest account of his career and PTL is Charles Sheppard's *Forgiven*. Sheppard led the *Charlotte Observer's* investigation of PTL, and helped uncover many of Bakker's wrongdoings. His book, therefore, focused on Jim Bakker's moral and financial missteps, and how Bakker rose to become a superstar. Using contacts and sources, he traced how Bakker created coalitions with ministers like Robertson and Crouch. He also detailed the financial, managerial, and economic development of Heritage USA. Sheppard's account is essential for understanding Bakker's demise, but it slights Bakker's ties to business Pentecostals and the reasons for his broad base of support. Instead, *Forgiven* tends to see Bakker as a sly

manipulator, and it portrays PTL followers as dupes. This dissertation will illustrate that PTL's popularity was more complex. Like recent scholarship on the Christian Right, it will illustrate that Bakker's success grew out his ability to merge social and economic issues with a religious ideology. Bakker created a Sunbelt faith that met the emotional and economic needs of mobile suburbanites and conservative businessmen. Building off a movement that was rooted in the 1950s, he created a religious faith that merged free market principles with promises of familial and economic prosperity.²¹

This dissertation is based on multiple sources. Unfortunately, neither PTL nor Jim Bakker has a manuscript collection. Moreover, most of PTL's documents were lost after the bankruptcy. (A rumor persists that Jerry Falwell buried them under a parking lot.) Therefore, this dissertation relies on newspaper accounts and journalistic narratives. Oral interviews have been another important source. Using court documents, I obtained lists of names of former PTL members, which I used to contact former members for interviews. I also interviewed employees of PTL and associates of Jim Bakker. Third, this dissertation uses court documents from Jim Bakker's trial. It also uses PTL documents that former employees "rescued" from PTL's grounds during the bankruptcy proceedings. Bakker also left a scattering of speeches, pamphlets, books, audio recordings and presentations in archives and personal collections. Also available are a set of videocassettes of the *The PTL Club* once held by the *Charlotte Observer*.

This dissertation will also focus largely on Jim Bakker. Although Tammy's energy and personality were integral to PTL's success, as their son acknowledged, Jim Bakker crafted PTL's message and planned its growth. It was his vision of prosperity theology that propelled PTL to national fame. He also fostered the business connections to finance his ministry.²²

This dissertation is composed of nine chapters. The first two chapters outline how American Pentecostalism was transformed from a religion of austerity to a movement that glorified prosperity. Taken over by evangelical businessmen, Pentecostalism became a faith that supported free market principles and

entrepreneurialism. The dissertation will then turn to Jim Bakker's life. Like many upwardly mobile evangelicals, he rejected traditional Pentecostalism in favor of a more worldly form of Pentecostalism. Chapter IV will highlight how, over a period of ten years, Jim and Tammy Bakker developed America's three largest religious television networks, and became stars of American televangelism.

Chapter V will then follow Jim Bakker's career in Charlotte, North Carolina. In this Sunbelt city, Bakker created a religious network that met the needs of his prosperous, but rootless, Charismatics. Chapter six will highlight how Bakker's religious message became a new form of cultural conservatism that carved out an alternative vision to 1970s liberalism. Unlike liberals who emphasized the virtue of limiting desires and wants, Bakker promised a world without limits. Free-market ideas became a cultural movement that expanded across the American Sunbelt like wildfire. Chapter seven will trace the growth of Heritage USA—Bakker's Christian theme park outside of Charlotte, which embodied his religious message. Chapter eight will discuss, using oral histories, what attracted people to Bakker's ministry. Following this discussion, the dissertation will trace the downfall and legacy of PTL ministries. Although Bakker was jailed, his new form of Pentecostalism became a powerful and growing religious movement.

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Chapter 2

Worlds Apart: The Growth of Pentecostalism and Positive Thinking Prior to World War II

In early July of 1989, Jim Bakker addressed his studio audience by declaring, “It’s amazing how many people have tried to kill that dream. That’s right, Satan will use people to try to steal your dream. Even good Christian people will try to kill your dream and tell you it’s not . . . But if you want to succeed, you must let God tell you his will . . . Our minds are so powerful. We were created in the image of God and, if we ever discover how much power we have in our heads and do not give it to God, we’ll be dangerous.” Typical of Bakker, this speech was a mixture of therapeutic ideas, positive thinking, and prosperity theology. It highlighted how belief in God and positive thoughts would lead people to wealth and happiness. In the 1970s, these ideas became important to increasing numbers of Pentecostals. Prior to World War II, however, therapeutic ideas and American Pentecostalism were two distinct movements with contrasting views of the world.²³

Although therapeutic ideas and positive thinking became linked to the business community after 1920, its early history was much more complex. These ideas grew out of groups of predominantly middle class people who had become frustrated with nineteenth century values based on scarcity and self-control. They helped form a new movement that tied success to the ability of individuals to find personal happiness. In a world in which appearance and presentation became important to success, increasing numbers of people began to imagine the self as more pliable. The self was no longer the inner-directed moral center, but a more flexible concept that could be changed in order to create a happier and more prosperous individual. This was the new “therapeutic ethos,” which was the foundation of the positive thinking movement. It was a new

ideology that melded the developing consumer culture with the promises of self-fulfillment and transformation through purchasing.

These ideas took hold during the twentieth century, but they had roots in the erosion of Victorian ideals that emphasized commitment to a work ethic and obedience to God. A good person was self-controlled, self-reliant, hardworking, and avoided immediate gratifications. These values were the bedrock of contented families ideas and a successful life. The only true way to heaven was through the practice of self-restraint and an industrious life. Unlike those who embraced therapeutic ideas, Victorians celebrated the journey to success more than the final outcome. This was an ideology that fit well a world dominated by small shop owners and farmers who had yet to be tempted by the abundance of twentieth century consumer culture. In this culture, self-denial, not self-realization, was the path to salvation and success in life.²⁴

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the therapeutic ethos began to influence the middle class through religious movements such as New Thought and Christian Science. It also became fused with early psychology and the advertising industry. These beliefs began to replace the ethic of self-control with the idea that an individual needed a multitude of self-satisfactions. During the early twentieth century, these ideas became powerful beliefs. Historians usually discuss four interconnected reasons for this development: the growth of consumer culture and materialism, urbanization, the growing stratification of American society, and a weakening religious superstructure. Such developments generated concern among the broad middle class about emotional security. The new movement began to discover new ways to address the emotional needs of middle-class individuals. They began to argue that exploring the self was not demonic but necessary for a fulfilled life. They began to search for new ways to make lives real and authentic. While the path to a more authentic life varied, early promoters all promoted inner exploration, changing life experiences, and emotional awareness. They also emphasized how correct thinking was crucial to a fulfilled life. Soon a wide

variety of groups began to express and develop these ideas throughout American society.²⁵

The therapeutic ethos and positive thinking gained much support within the American business community. The first person to merge therapeutic ideas with success narratives was Dale Carnegie. Born in 1888, as a young man Carnegie found work selling goods such as bacon and soap, but, unable to make a living, quit his job in 1911 and became a lecturer for an adult education course. His tenure was brief, but he developed his own course on public speaking at a local YMCA in 1912. Shortly thereafter, he turned this course into confidence-boosting sessions for businessmen. As Carnegie described his popularity, “Most of these young men were criticized daily by their bosses and put down by their customers. Most had gone through a school system that punished them when they stepped out of line.”²⁶ He began to argue, as did New Thought promoters, that positive thinking was the key to businessmen becoming more successful and happier. Positive thinking's emphasis on mental transformation was especially popular in a business world increasingly dominated by the competitive and stressful demands of sales and marketing.²⁷

In his immensely popular *How to Win Friends and Influence People*(1936), Carnegie argued that striving for success and happiness was a reward of its own, and social manipulation was necessary to achieve this goal. As he wrote, “There is only one way to get anybody to do anything, and that is by making the other person want to do it.” This goal was a complete reversal of nineteenth century success literature, which argued that manipulation and tricksterism would lead to failure. Carnegie's ideas appealed to businesspeople who believed ascetic self-discipline was less important than the ability to convince and manipulate others. This notion was aided by the shift from a production-based to a consumption-based economy. After the 1920s, it was more important to market goods than it was to produce them. As sales divisions grew, more jobs were service-based, and depended on personal interactions. Carnegie created a roadmap for business success. As he wrote, “If you want to win friends, make it a point

to remember them. If you remember my name, you pay me a subtle compliment; you indicate that I have made an impression on you. Remember my name and you add to my feeling of importance.”²⁸ Acting or thinking in a specific manner allowed his followers to transform clients and colleagues into happy, fulfilled people. His ideas also helped his readers cope with the corporate workplace’s demand for constant emotional control. As Carnegie wrote, after following his own ideas, “I had the satisfactions of controlling my temper, the satisfaction of returning kindness for an insult.” The importance of personality was also reflected in a 1930 corporate job survey that illustrated job promotion and hiring were based 80 percent on presentation and appearance, and only 20 on qualifications. It was a shift that Carnegie understood well when he declared, “[E]ven in such technical lines as engineering, about 15 percent of one’s financial success is due to one’s technical knowledge and about 85 is due to skill in human engineering.” In this environment, new personality tests began to emerge in the sales and marketing industries.²⁹

Carnegie also promised individual fulfillment. As he wrote, “Happiness doesn't depend on any external conditions; it is governed by our mental attitude.”³⁰ Presentation and manipulation, he argued, could create a happy marriage. As he argued, it was not necessary to be courteous to your spouse but to present yourself as courteous. He also said that exposing children to these ideas would render them better prepared for middle class life. He helped his primarily middle class followers adapt to a world shaped by personality and social skills. Carnegie, while not explicitly political, reinforced a conservative worldview. His message told his followers that they did not need to worry about constructing a better world. Instead, they should focus on personal happiness and doing what “feels right.”³¹

Carnegie’s message was especially popular with Direct Sales Organizations. DSOs were companies such as Avon and Amway that sold products without having a fixed business location through independent contractors who earned commissions for selling the company products. But DSOs first appeared in the nineteenth century among rather

unorganized groups of peddlers.³² By the 1920s, direct selling had become more organized, and it was during these years that Avon and other large-scale DSO's were formed. The DSOs were well suited to the newly emerging consumption-based economy, but faced a serious challenge with the Great Depression. Many companies failed, but those that survived found it easier to recruit independent contractors.³³

Unlike traditional businesses which depended on bureaucracy, wages, and rules to motivate employees, DSOs relied on ideological motivation. Thus, the industry used the therapeutic self-help literature to motivate employees to work hard and sell effectively, and it also served as a valuable recruitment tool. They undergirded their salesforce with the belief that membership in a DSO would lead to easy wealth. As one historian has explained, these ideas "help them explain 'success' and 'failure' in all spheres of life, both within and outside the industry. As one distributor put it, 'I don't think of people who leave [Amway] as bad people. I think of them as people who, for whatever reason, chose not to be successful.'"³⁴ Members of these organizations were bombarded with these ideas and told to separate themselves from anyone who did not share this worldview. Consequently, some critics of these organizations labeled these companies as cults. Positive thinking also became the foundation of these groups' conservative vision of American society, which celebrated individual merit and decried government and social regulation of private industry. Over time, these industries used these ideas to promote their belief in laissez-faire economics and to oppose economic regulation. As these organizations expanded, the popularity of positive thinking grew.³⁵ After World War II, these ideas became the intellectual foundation of prosperity theology, and DSOs helped fund the prosperity theology movement.³⁶

American Pentecostalism emerged at the turn of the twentieth century when groups of Protestants separated from mainline denominations in hopes of reviving and restoring American Christianity. Participants looked back to the nineteenth century as an idyllic time and emphasized the importance of personal salvation and the imminent

return of Christ. Like Fundamentalists, they also emphasized biblical literalism and promoted Christian morality as central to the restoration of American morality. Seeking a deeper relationship with God, they also practiced gifts of the Holy Spirit. They believed that the imminent return of Christ endowed them—through the power of the Holy Spirit — to speak in dead or unknown languages, heal sick people, and predict the future.³⁷ They also were suspicious of the values of the modern consumer society. They, for example, abstained from drinking coffee or cola, going to movies, wearing jewelry, chewing gum, and even reading novels. In general, Pentecostals believed that any participation in societal rituals that were not focused on God was sinful. Leisure was unproductive and unholy. It was symbolic of a self-centered culture that had sacrificed a sanctified life for a self-centered existence.³⁸

In this process, they constructed a religious sub-culture that called for the restoration of a more egalitarian religious-based society that abided by strict moral standards and promoted separation from worldly pleasures. As historians have noted, these beliefs were partially the outgrowth of Pentecostals' commitment to nineteenth-century Victorian mores. These values permeated the early Pentecostal revivals that culminated in the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles that began 1906 and ended in 1915. It was a massive spiritual awakening that has led many Pentecostals to describe it as the origins of the movement. Soon after, the movement formed several denominations. The largest denomination was the Assemblies of God, which was formed in Hot Springs, Arkansas in hopes of controlling the extreme individualism of the early movement. Soon after, a series of other denominations formed, creating a loose and volatile group of Pentecostal denominations.³⁹

Pentecostalism quickly became a burgeoning religious subculture. Early on, it was most popular among people who came from rural towns who had migrated to cities in the northeast. Over time this emphasis faded and the movement spread south and west with the help of traveling ministers. New converts were attracted to the movement's emphasis on worldly separation, emotional expression, and the power of

the supernatural. This led to large revivals in Kansas, California, and throughout the American South. The movement was racially diverse. At the Azusa Street revival in 1912, for example, Southern whites were baptised by black preachers. Strongest in South, where economic and social dislocations were most prevalent, it eventually gathered followers from a wide spectrum of American society and throughout the country.⁴⁰ During the early years, Pentecostalism maintained its racial diversity and contempt for mainstream culture. Randal J. Stephens even argues that Pentecostalism's growth was a reaction against the optimism of the New South creed, challenging both the economic, and racial order of the South.⁴¹

Pentecostalism was scorned by much of mainstream Protestantism. Most bothersome to outsiders was the Pentecostal worship style. Pentecostals believed in experiential worship and associated zeal with commitment.⁴² This led Pentecostals to vocalize their personal religious experiences in the halls of Pentecostal worship centers. Neighbors complained about the loud noises coming from these churches at all hours of the night, but for the Pentecostals loud spontaneous meetings signified closeness with God. A few members even set themselves on fire or placed their hands on hot stoves to demonstrate their devotion. Religious modernists often used these extreme actions to paint a broad picture of the Fundamentalist movement. When cities like Nashville passed ordinances to restrict the noise and fervor coming from Pentecostal worship halls, Pentecostals refused to acknowledge the authority of the courts when they were arrested for disobeying the ordinances. Many national newspapers derisively referred to them as Holy Rollers or Elmer Gantry types.⁴³ They were John Steinbeck's helpless victims; or as one author argued, Pentecostalism was a safety valve for the "narcotic" or "socially retarded." Early scholarship on the movement accepted such views and described it as an irrational reaction to modern society. However, believing the world was spiraling toward destruction, Pentecostals reveled in their outsider status. They

lambasted the “weak” social codes of mainline churches, and embraced the Pentecostal faith in hopes of restoring a corrupt and immoral society.⁴⁴

Pentecostals rejected the growing emphasis on individual happiness. As one historian noted, “they yearned for a solid sense of self by recapturing the ‘real life’ of the pre-modern craftsman, soldier, saint.” In turn, they battled against signs of moral decay and decadence that they associated with urban life. They rejected therapeutic ideas outright. They believed the emphasis on personal happiness challenged religious authority, glorified narcissism, and turned the individual’s attention away from God. Pentecostals, as David Harrington Watt argued, “continued to judge human behavior in terms of vice and virtue and good and evil rather than health and illness.”⁴⁵ Moreover, they continued to believe that exploring the self or embracing personal transformation was sinful. A holy life, they believed, was one of “contented discontent.” To Pentecostals, the therapeutic ethos destroyed notions of right and wrong and set in motion a world with no God and no barometer for good and evil.⁴⁶

As scholars have noted, Pentecostal’s critique of society was similar to the Populist movement’s critique of modernity. Like the Populists, they emphasized the natural goodness of society’s plain-folk, which meant emphasizing simplicity and rejecting the trappings of consumption. Unlike the Populists, however, they believed the solution to economic and social problems was religious revival. As a publication of the Assemblies of God indicated in the 1920s, “the high price of God has not made ample provision for the needs of the human family, but because ungodly men are robbing the people of what properly belongs to them.” This was a common response to most problems.⁴⁷

Pentecostals were populists in another sense. They were fiercely independent and were highly suspicious of large organizations. This distrust, Laurence Moore has noted, led them to “inconsistent prejudices” against the wealthy, unions, and the state. This temperament made Pentecostals at ease with their social ostracism. It also made

the movement difficult to organize as most local leaders viewed themselves as mavericks.⁴⁸

Despite this independence, Pentecostals formed a common social ethic. This was evidenced in the rhetoric of one the movement's most important early leaders, Alexander Dowie. Dowie was an immigrant from Australia who settled in Springfield, Illinois, but later set up a church in Chicago, where he spread his ideas on divine healing and Christian restoration. In the 1890s, he began to attract large numbers of people and became a central leader of a religious group that became known as Pentecostals. Soon after, he developed a communal theocracy fifty miles north of Chicago.⁴⁹

Dowie, like most Pentecostals, did not like politics. He did not shy away, however, from discussing political issues. At the center of his concerns was "[t]he infernal traffic in liquid fire." While he admittedly admired the Populists and the Democratic party, he declared in a room filled with laughter and applause that they had become stinkpots because they ignored "the greatest financial question in this country." As he illustrated many times, "[a]lcohol was the greatest cause of illness and the chief debaser of children in the country." But distrustful of all organizations, Dowie opposed the Prohibition Party which he claimed was run by undercover rumrunners. Other issues also surrounded Dowie's rhetoric. As did many Pentecostals, he distrusted unions because they "controlled men." He also believed secret societies, Romanism, and urban machines had corrupted both major parties, and were on the verge of destroying American democracy.⁵⁰

Like the Populists, he had a "producerist ideology" and a desire to redress social inequalities, and talked about restoring the country to a purer and egalitarian time.⁵¹ He was a critic of the growing disparity of wealth in American society. He lambasted the rich for being evil and desired to create "a loving union of all classes of people." While he did not believe politics could achieve his ideal society, he believed it was criminal for someone to earn more than ten thousand dollars a year. Like the "producerist" rhetoric of other American Populist movements, he believed that money should be based on labor, and that money earned without labor was taken from the workers. Moreover, he

believed that workers should receive a share of the profits from the owners of industry. In one sermon, he applied this critique of wealth to George Pullman, proclaiming, “that George Pullman is a thief in the sight of God and man, because he has got so many millions. He never earned them honestly. I tell you there is no man on God's earth that earned ten million dollars honestly; he got it by stealing and juggling, but he never earned it honestly.” Similarly, he declared to an enthusiastic crowd, “I sometimes wonder why the farmers and the working classes who have to bear the burdens do not rise up and sweep the scoundrels off the face of the earth or at any rate out of their public positions.”⁵²

Some historians have noted close ties between the Populists and the Pentecostals. They often emerged in the same region among struggling rural communities. The major difference between these two movements was that while Populists sought a political transformation, Pentecostals looked to a moral regeneration through the Holy Spirit.⁵³ Clearly, Dowie and many Pentecostals viewed their movement as an alternative to politics, one that would bring forth a more egalitarian world.⁵⁴

In the 1920s, Pentecostalism maintained its commitment to religious revivalism and to worldly separation. This can be seen in the Pentecostals’ reaction to the Fundamentalist-modernist debates. Although they embraced the biblical literalism of the Fundamentalist movement, the Pentecostals avoided public controversies, which they viewed as a distraction from preparing for the return of Christ. In a world that was spiraling out of control, these debates were futile. They, however, adopted other traits of Fundamentalists. Increasingly, women gradually left their leadership positions, and the movement venerated the cult of domesticity. Racial lines also hardened significantly—although the movement continued to be more racially diverse than other protestant denominations.⁵⁵

During the 1930s, Pentecostals preserved many of their early commitments. For example, Pentecostals maintained their distrust of politics, called for worldly separation,

and condemned excessive wealth. From the 1930s to the 1950s, many of these beliefs were even accentuated. As historians have noted, few Pentecostals held political office and few voted. Some leaders even instructed members not to vote because they believed politics had become too immoral and corrupt. One Pentecostal leader declared: "You can call it Democratic or Republican, it doesn't much matter. Politicians in this country are like a pack of playing cards, and the more you shuffle them the dirtier they get."⁵⁶ The Great Depression reinforced the Pentecostal belief that the world could not be transformed. During the 1930s, there was very little discussion among Pentecostals about fixing or alleviating the economic crisis. Others saw the economic collapse as a blessing. One pastor in California believed that the economic crisis was responsible for spurring a revival in California and the increasing presence of the Holy Spirit at his meetings. Another Pentecostal leader, Alice Luce, echoed this sentiment in 1935 when she exclaimed, "Shall we try to improve matters by entering into politics, and by raising our voices against the graft and corruption we see on every hand? This does not seem to be the Bible way. God's plan . . . in all ages involved separation from the world."⁵⁷ Still, others declared that this crisis would teach the rest of the world to draw a line between "things temporal and things eternal." Reports of millionaires losing their money was a sign that God was shining his "heavenly light" upon earth. God, they thought, was punishing the world for its "rush for money."⁵⁸

The 1930s were also a time of institution building and growth. Most mainline religious colleges were controlled by non-Fundamentalists. The Assemblies of God responded by building a series of Bible institutes that were designed as alternatives to the materialistic and secular higher education systems. They also set up a series of missionary societies outside of the Fundamentalist network, which were often dominated by women.⁵⁹

Radio also became an important means for spreading the Pentecostal message. While Pentecostals and Fundamentalists often viewed movies as sinful, they both used radio. The first evangelist to begin this process was Paul Rader, who in 1922, was offered a spot on a local radio station owned by the mayor of Chicago. Shortly

thereafter, he was offered additional slots from other radio stations. Other radio preachers throughout the country followed his success. By 1932, there were over 400 Fundamentalist and Pentecostal broadcasters using eighty different stations to preach their message.⁶⁰

Some of the radio preachers became nationally famous and used the air waves to spread their critique of cultural values, and to link a popular form of religion to a charismatic style. Radio preachers became adept at transforming their shows to attract larger audiences. Some became masters at producing popular shows and drawing in donations. Unlike mainline preachers, who concentrated on obscure theological debates, they produced entertaining programs interlaced with Pentecostal ideas. By the mid-1930s, these preachers' popularity was far greater than the mainline preachers who were given airtime on the national networks.

One of the most popular ministers was Aimee Semple McPherson. Early on, American Pentecostalism had been dominated by female ministers. Their power, these women claimed, was not based on biblical reading, but rather on their personal relationship with God and the Holy Spirit. Like their male counterparts, they healed the sick, foresaw future events, and preached God's word. After the 1920s, although this trend waned, there were exceptions. McPherson was the most prominent. She quickly became the movement's most important public figure.⁶¹

McPherson had been born on a small farm in Ontario, Canada in 1890 and became the most widely known Pentecostal minister and spokesperson during the 1920s and 1930s. She came from a religious family that was heavily involved in the Methodist church. After her father's death when she was twelve years old, her mother joined the newly formed radical sect, the Salvation Army. As a member of the Army, Aimee endured teasing at school, worked in soup kitchens, and spread the gospel. She encountered both the social gospel and radical otherworldliness. This commitment, however, was short-lived because in high school she encountered a teacher who believed in evolution and challenged her belief in the inerrancy of the Bible. His explanations had an earth-shattering effect on McPherson and she began to rebel

against the Salvation Army. As she recalled, she realized “If the Scriptures tell one lie, they must leak like a sieve!”⁶²

This alienation ended in her senior year of high school when she married a Pentecostal missionary. Her husband died two years after their marriage, which prompted McPherson to begin her own ministerial career. By the 1920s she was one of the most popular evangelists in the country. In 1923, she settled in Los Angeles, where she built a church with 5,300 seats. It was filled to capacity three times every day. One year later, she was the first woman granted a license to minister on the radio. Soon after, she became the country’s most popular Pentecostal minister, and formed her own denomination.⁶³

While other radio ministers faltered in the 1930s, McPherson’s ministry continued to grow. Unlike many of the early broadcasters, McPherson did not use the radio to preach sermons. Foreshadowing Jim Bakker’s ministry, she developed radio into a story-telling tool in which she told tales of religious transcendence. Using a staff of actors, she built a large media studio where she became the leading actress and personality. Charlie Chaplin told her: “Half of your success is due to your magnetic appeal, and half due to the props and lights.”⁶⁴ Preaching primarily to migrants from the countryside, she filled her stories with images of rural life in which class conflict was absent, and liberal ministers never challenged the veracity of the Bible. She added stories of miraculous healings and prophecies through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. McPherson continued the Pentecostal tradition of attacking some of the evils of modernity. Dance halls, drinking, and urban politicians were often her targets. She continued to promote worldly separation as the true path to holiness, highlighting the continued separation of therapeutic ideas from American Pentecostalism⁶⁵

Although Pentecostals did not like politics, as the Great Depression worsened, some began to search for political solutions and many gravitated to the Democratic Party. In many ways, prior to the 1950s, their religious worldview was compatible with

American liberalism. This was evident in the case of Aimee Semple McPherson. In the 1920s, she viewed religious revival as a way to restore religious faith and Protestant norms. She was also a supporter of Herbert Hoover, whom she hoped would defeat the Catholic Alfred E. Smith. By the 1930s, however, her politics began to change. With her followers pouring into her soup kitchens and churches, she began to view FDR and the New Deal in a positive light.⁶⁶

This was a partial break with the Pentecostal beliefs that focusing on earthly reforms was futile. She mixed her supportive statements about the New Deal and FDR with reminders that only after America returned to God would God "return in His glory to America." She also opposed socialism, communism, and fascism, all of which she saw as alien ideologies that threatened a Christian America. She also reached out to the struggling Mexican American population at a time when many local leaders were calling for their deportation. Her support for this community also led her into a fight against the Los Angeles city council, which was attempting to restrict relief to residents of Los Angeles who had lived there for less than three years. As Matthew Sutton has illustrated, her political outlook was a reflection of her constituency's social positions. It also demonstrated that "Pentecostalism, liberalism, and an activist state could work together to save the nation and, ultimately, the world."⁶⁷

As Wayne Flynt discovered in his survey of Pentecostals in the South, these same connections were commonplace. As in the previous examples, he found that hostility toward the New Deal was linked more to economics than to Fundamentalist or Pentecostal teachings. By surveying the memoirs of ministers and letters to FDR, he found that most hostility toward the New Deal came from preachers in mill towns. Heavily subsidized by mill owners, they complained about rising class conflict and decried strikes. For example, lamenting against labor agitation, one mill town preacher in North Carolina told FDR that "anyone who wanted a job could get one." Their economic and congregant support drove their political behavior. In the poorer (often Pentecostal) churches, Flynt found contrary behavior.⁶⁸ These ministers often talked about Franklin Roosevelt with religious reverence and most followed other working

class Americans during the 1930s into the Democratic Party. It was a move that was completely compatible with the Pentecostal commitment to transforming America into an economically and socially just world and was consonant with their vision of a "Christian America. Jarrod Roll's study of Missouri Pentecostals goes further. He argues that the Pentecostal emphasis on Holiness was the backbone of Missouri's labor radicalism in the 1930s.⁶⁹

Before World War II, the therapeutic movement and American Pentecostalism were two distinct movements. Pentecostals rejected many of the values of a consumer society which they viewed as ungodly. They eschewed therapeutic ideas and the movement's emphasis on personal happiness. During the 1930s, Pentecostals were reasonably comfortable with some aspects of the New Deal. In contrast, promoters of therapeutic ideas created a movement that embraced the values of consumer society and positive thinking. These ideas fit the needs of people whose livelihoods were dependent on personality, selling and marketing. While they did not organize against the New Deal, they constructed an ideology that embraced a conservative way of seeing the world. Rather than focusing on building a better society, as did most Pentecostals, they emphasized personal individual happiness, wealth, and the power of the mind. Following World War II, the merger of these movements helped transform American Pentecostalism, creating the foundation for Jim Bakker's cultural conservatism.

Chapter 3

From Tents to Hotel Lobbies: Pentecostalism, the American Business Community, and the Emergence of Prosperity Theology

In 1978, Jim Bakker stood before an auditorium as the featured speaker at the Full Gospel Businessmen's International (FGBMFI) Big Three World Convention in Chicago, Illinois. The FGBMFI was an important group of evangelical businessmen. From the podium, he told the assembled businessmen that they were building a more powerful form of Christianity that would demonstrate to the world that Christians "would no longer be the tail of the snake." To validate his claim, he said he, Oral Roberts, and Pat Robertson were bringing in more revenue than GM Chrysler combined. He then told a story about a family who failed in life because they were "negative." As he declared, "We don't have to sit down and die. If we confess negative we will receive negative." As Bakker argued, problems in life all arose from a lack of faith and negative thinking. Arguing this point, he described the prototypical "negative family." They were "always sick; their kids always have runny noses. He lost his job again, can't hold down a job. The kids are on drugs." In contrast, he—and his family succeeded because he thought positively and had faith in God. When combined, these twin concepts, he argued, would lead anyone to a life of happiness and untold wealth. This message was at the heart of an evangelical movement that gained momentum in the 1970s, propelled Jim Bakker to stardom, and transformed American Pentecostalism. No less important, this movement embraced and legitimized a grassroots cultural conservatism.⁷⁰

Integral to this success was a coalition of evangelical businessmen who popularized and funded the growth of these ideas after World War II. The FGBMFI was at the heart of this coalition, and was instrumental in reshaping American Pentecostalism after World War II. Feeling that American religion glorified poverty, these businessmen sought to create a new type of evangelicalism compatible with their conservative economic views. This new religion celebrated entrepreneurialism and the

pursuit of wealth as a holy enterprise and viewed poverty as the result of personal failings. By 1972, the FGBMFI had over 700 chapters filled with businessmen who helped spread and fund this new message. Other groups and business ventures such as Amway also promoted these ideas. In the 1970s, they provided the primary seed-funding and spiritual mentoring for Jim Bakker and his ministry. These groups viewed free market ideas as a theological principle, not just an economic principle. They also tied American Pentecostalism to a broader conservative evangelical movement that merged free market principles and Christianity to develop what became prosperity theology. Increasingly, these conservative businessmen, imbued with a belief in unfettered markets, began creating publications, funding organizations, and creating a network of businessmen and ministers. Out of this emerged what became known as prosperity theology.

An important but little noted event in Pentecostal history was a meeting of a small group of businessmen at Clifton's cafeteria in Los Angeles, California on October 13, 1951. It was a business meeting but an unusual one. The meeting had been organized by Demos Shakarian, a prominent figure in the dairy industry. Shakarian was intensely conservative and a rabid opponent of New Deal liberalism. So were the other men. They also believed in the power of positive thinking. And they were Pentecostals. They were there at Shakarian's invitation in an effort to fill a void in their lives. These men were successful, prosperous, and deeply religious. How could they be both good Pentecostals and good businessmen? To help bridge this gulf, they asked a thirty-three-year-old Pentecostal minister named Oral Roberts to meet with them. Roberts had a popular following because of his radio ministry and he was a major figure in the Pentecostal healing movement. He was beginning to develop a new form of Pentecostalism that stressed the idea of the "abundant life." God, he insisted, wanted him to be prosperous, even rich.⁷¹

Shakarian and his fellow California businessmen could not have found a minister better suited to bridge their religious faith and their worldly endeavors. Working with Roberts, they decided to form a new organization that would reach out to spiritually-minded businessmen who felt this same void in their lives and wanted to believe in evangelical Pentecostalism and a world of abundance. The new organization took the name of Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI). It started in 1952 and in just a few years it had chapters in major cities across the United States.⁷²

Pre-World War II Pentecostals had been suspicious of consumer capitalism. They questioned whether one could receive the Holy Spirit and also pursue worldly goods and worldly temptations. Many of them, most famously Aimee Semple McPherson, lived lives marked by hypocrisy and contradiction. Nevertheless, many Pentecostals had been outwardly uncomfortable with consumption and acquisition. FGBMFI and ministers such as Oral Roberts changed this. They moved Pentecostalism toward positive thinking, a gospel of abundance, and a conservative brand of politics.

Long before Jim Bakker began assuring the millions who watched him that prosperity was godly and sacrifice was unholy, American Pentecostals were trying to make their way in a rapidly changing cultural terrain. The quest would ultimately make possible Bakker's PTL Club and Bakker's rapid rise, but to understand Jim Bakker, it is first necessary to understand how evangelical Pentecostals made their way through 1950s America.

This business-friendly form of Pentecostalism was inspired by the organization's founder, Demos Shakarian. Businessmen, Shakarian believed, wrongly viewed religion as incompatible with the competitiveness of the business world. Many businessmen began to join the movement, believing they had finally found a religion that was consistent with their values. This initiated a transformation of American Pentecostalism away from the movement's identification with the poor, bringing it closer to the conservative business community's emphasis on entrepreneurialism and success. It was a vision that arose out of the life experiences of Shakarian. Shakarian's vision, however, in no way,

dominated the Pentecostal and evangelical world in the 1950s. There were other important Pentecostal movements that embraced very different values.⁷³

Pentecostalism, after 1945, was a growing but divided movement. Some Pentecostals began to shed their outsider status and embrace middle class life. More Pentecostals were doctors, lawyers, and to businessmen, and by the 1960s, they were also often Sunbelt suburbanites. Increasingly, they worshiped in newly-built churches rather than modest meeting halls. Pentecostalism also merged with the National Association of Evangelicals to form an umbrella group in 1943 aimed at broadening the appeal of evangelicalism. At about the same time, the Assemblies of God began disavowing some of its controversial teachings and emphasized its commonality with the broader evangelical community. Other Pentecostal denominations took similar steps.⁷⁴

Many Pentecostals, however, continued to view themselves as outsiders who embraced the idea of simple living and strict morality. The healing revival movement of the 1950s was one such example. Healing was not new to Pentecostalism, but it grew in popularity in the 1950s. The revivals were organized by independent Pentecostal ministers who set up gospel tents near major cities primarily in the South and West. During a revival, thousands of followers gathered to witness the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit. Inside the tents, ministers would lay their hands on the sick, removing their illness and pain. The audiences would raise their hands to acknowledge the continued power of God and Christ. Ministers usually followed these demonstrations by declaring that Pentecostalism had strayed from its original beliefs. One sociologist commented: "These believers were neither wealthy nor well-educated, but they always appeared to be relaxed and happy there . . . No wealthy or even moderately well-to-do individuals ever became regular patrons of this little gospel center."⁷⁵

One of the most popular healing ministers was Jack Coe who, along with Oral Roberts, became the movement's best known figure. Born in poverty and abandoned by his parents at age nine, he grew up in an orphanage in Oklahoma City. As a young man,

his heavy drinking caused heart problems. He converted to Christianity and joined a Pentecostal Nazarene church, and then joined the army, where he contracted malaria that doctors could not treat. He turned instead to religious healing, and the experience convinced him of God's miraculous healing power.⁷⁶

Coe's sensational revivals were controversial but popular—especially with working class followers who, according to Edith Blumhoffer, “loved his blunt, forthright language; his defiance of ministerial dignity; his bold faith.”⁷⁷ He scorned modern medicine and claimed visiting a doctor was equivalent to consorting with the devil. This opposition to medicine troubled the increasingly respectable Assemblies of God, but made Coe a popular figure.⁷⁸

His populist, anti-intellectual stands were evident in his sermon “The Unjust Judge,” which told the story of unbelievers. One character in the story was an arrogant judge who failed to listen to others in his courtroom. The second was a doctor who thought the world was best understood through science, but could not cure his own daughter. Ordinary men and women who understood humility and the healing power of Christ taught these elites about Christ's healing power. After sharing this story, Coe brought sick people to the stage where he would lay his hands on them one-by-one and presumably cure them. The audience assumed the role of the humble, uneducated believers, possessing something that these arrogant modernists did not have: faith in Christ's ability to cure the weak and the humble.⁷⁹

The Assemblies of God expelled Coe and began to attack the healing revivalists as extreme and manipulative.⁸⁰ Its leaders worried about the image the healers projected and about charges against Coe's lavish spending. Coe was not deterred, and his followers identified with this man who called the apostles “uneducated dirty fisherman” and who lambasted his elitist enemies.⁸¹

The healing revivals attracted much critical press. *Readers Digest*, the *New York Times*, and newspapers across the country ran articles warning people against the “spiritual quacks [who] bilk the gullible of millions of dollars each year.” Groups of self-described “respectable” church leaders aligned with the American Medical Association

(AMA) to denounce the movement. Faith played a role in healing, they argued, but the unscientific nature of miraculous healings was exploitation. The AMA condemned faith healing, declaring it the work of hucksters.⁸²

Reader's Digest wrote:

How can people be so gullible? Well, it is evident that a great many who believe in faith healing are emotionally and psychologically ill. Their broadcasts and the crusades, with their singing, clapping, and shouting, give them a therapy they don't find in established churches, a spiritual uplift for which they hunger.⁸³

Much research on Pentecostalism during the 1950s shared a similar view. Often, the healing movement was linked to the anti-evolution crusade of the 1920s.⁸⁴

The practice of speaking in tongues reinforced the perception that Pentecostalism was a pathological movement. Social scientists portrayed Pentecostals as lower class, social outsiders unable to adapt to the modern world. One study even compared "normal Pentecostals" to mental patients. The majority of Pentecostals, it found, were emotionally stable but their raucous form of worship symbolized broader emotional issues and an inferiority complex. Such claims, however, distorted the actual nature of 1950s Pentecostalism.⁸⁵

One of the most sensational attacks on the movement occurred in 1956, when Jack Coe was charged with practicing medicine without a license. When Coe attempted to heal a three-year-old polio victim his mother alleged that her son had experienced physical and mental harm when he attempted to walk on his own, without braces.⁸⁶ Coe's opponents viewed him as a huckster who manipulated and swindled the gullible. His followers viewed his critics as snobbish elites who were often atheists and communists. The trial was great theater but even though the charges were dismissed, the attacks on the healers continued. Within months of the trial, Oral Roberts was practically driven from Melbourne, Australia by an angry press that portrayed him as a fraud. His opponents, Roberts insisted, were atheists.⁸⁷

The attacks on the healing movement actually solidified its base of support. The

movement took pride in its fringe status, and its followers felt dignified by the attacks. As one healer declared, “You’re not going to be accepted by the Church World. Why don’t you just go ahead and recognize that you’re an outcast? Go ahead and shout the victory and praise God in the spirit . . . Because God said I’ll heal the wounds of the outcast.”⁸⁸ These ideas reflected a traditional Pentecostal message that embraced social ostracism and a populist anti-elitism. It was an experiential faith that promised individual transformation and communal identification. As long as Pentecostalism was tied to healing revivals, however, it was isolated from other popular religious movements.

The Pentecostal healers were just one part of an evangelical revival in the 1950s. A new generation of evangelical ministers increasingly rejected anti-worldly views and de-emphasized self-denial and struggle as the hallmarks of a religious life. Instead, they began to position themselves as defenders of the American way of life and American prosperity.⁸⁹ As they did, church attendance and membership grew. Some ministers began to integrate therapeutic ideas into their theology.⁹⁰

The religious leader who embodied these changes was Billy Graham, who quickly emerged as America’s best known religious figure. His success was buttressed by the Hearst press, which promoted his fervent anti-Communism. This created a strong link between Graham and conservative politicians, and Graham became the first preacher to bring prayer to the Capitol steps and the Pentagon. He also began to curry favor with American presidents.⁹¹ Part of Graham’s appeal was his mix of showmanship, patriotism, and religion. Graham used celebrities and musical performances to bring thousands of people from diverse religious backgrounds to his revivals where he often played *Taps* and the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*.⁹²

He also led evangelicals toward a more positive and world-affirming theology, but he did not fully adopt therapeutic ideas and positive thinking. His *Peace With God*

(1953) presented God as gentle and reassuring. Stress, he argued, was part of everyday life and God was the solution to a fulfilled life. He was also more accepting of the emerging high-consumption economy. "Contrary to worldly belief," he wrote in 1954, "being a true Christian does not mean the forfeiting of all real pleasure. It is only sinful pleasure that springs from a love of self, rather than the love of God, or the kind of pleasure that entails a great outlay of money."⁹³

It was Norman Vincent Peale who most clearly embraced therapeutic ideas and positive thinking as part of a religious message during the 1950s. Born in Bowersville, Ohio in 1898, Peale entered the seminary at Ohio Wesleyan in 1921 and there he developed a distaste for theological debates and the social gospel. In 1924, he moved to a suburb of New York City where he encountered wealthy businessmen; and then, in 1932, he moved to Manhattan where he began ministering from the Marble Collegiate Church. In the 1930s, he developed a strong hatred of the New Deal and an affinity for the Republican Party, but his sermons in the 1930s were not overtly political.⁹⁴

In 1934 Peale sought out a psychiatrist with whom he began to explore his childhood insecurities, and this led him to examine therapeutic ideas and fashion what he called a "practical Christianity." His sermons were a mixture of Methodism, Calvinism, and therapeutic ideas that focused on how to overcome fear and insecurity through mental transformation, and how positive thinking could make one wealthy and successful. As his biographer Carl V. George explained, the many businessmen in his congregation were receptive to his message. His mission, he decided, was to bring religion to businessmen and civic leaders who were lacking in faith.⁹⁵

Peale's popularity skyrocketed when he published *The Power of Positive Thinking* in 1952. The book was a bestseller for the next four years, and Peale quickly adapted the message to television. Believe in yourself and through positive thinking, he said, you can have a successful life free of stress. Sin was no longer central to a Christian life. The challenge instead was to rid oneself of anxiety, fear, and guilt. Peale advised, "Empty your mind of fears, hates, insecurities, regrets, and guilt feelings . . . Immediately start

filling your mind with creative, healthy thoughts.” Peale’s Christianity sought to improve the individual. He offered a roadmap to success and happiness for millions of suburban Americans. He also told his followers that failure—and poverty—were the outgrowth to improper thoughts. He also was a chairman of the ultraconservative Committee for Constitutional Government, which lobbied vigorously against New Deal measures.⁹⁶

Peale understood the inherently conservative implication of his vision of positive thinking, and so did the businessmen who warmed to his increasingly anti-New Deal messages. Positive thinking, they hoped, would be a tool to mold public opinion; it would demonstrate that success and failure were the outcomes of individual initiative. As he famously said, “Any fact facing us is not as important as our attitude toward it, for that determines our success or failure.” Peale’s therapeutic ideas were soon an important part of the conservative movement. Peale had developed a religious message that embraced free market ideas while addressing the anxieties of middle class suburbanites.⁹⁷

As Graham and Peale began to attract mass followings, the healing ministers by 1958 were having difficulty filling up tents. Hence, some healing evangelists began to look for new sources of income, and one of these was the FGBMFI. Ministers such as A.A. Allen and Oral Roberts turned to FGBMFI for support, and the FGBMFI became the primary coordinating and funding agency for healing revivals. The healing evangelists, meanwhile, promoted FGBMFI at their revivals. Soon, nearly all successful traveling Pentecostal evangelists were linked to FGBMFI. As they developed these ties, healing ministers began to preach an early version of prosperity theology. Oral Roberts became the leading promoter of this new form of Pentecostalism that minimized the otherworldly aspects of Pentecostalism. In place of worldly exclusion, Roberts and other healers preached prosperity theology and positive thinking, and, in the process, forged a powerful coalition.⁹⁸

In the 1950s, the FGBMFI consisted largely of Sunbelt state businessmen. After

the 1951 meeting with Roberts, FGBMFI began to create chapters by recruiting businessmen who supported their message of positive thinking, prosperity theology, and spiritual healing. The businessmen found that FGBMFI provided a respectable setting for Pentecostals to search for emotional support and express their vision of Christian entrepreneurialism. The organization's magazine, *Voice*, would become the most important publication of the 1970s revival of American Pentecostalism.⁹⁹

This vision was inspired by Demos Shakarian. His family had left Armenia to settle in Los Angeles in 1905, and they became involved in the vibrant world of Pentecostalism, which reminded them of their Armenian style of worship.¹⁰⁰ The church became a refuge for the shy Shakarian, who enjoyed watching the church members bobbing up and down during services in the Armenian Pentecostal style. Before his teenage years, he experienced many Pentecostal gifts of the Holy Spirit. He spoke in tongues for four hours, talked directly with God, and was healed, so he claimed, of partial hearing loss. He also became increasingly interested in healing after his sister had been injured in a car accident.¹⁰¹

Although Shakarian embraced Pentecostalism's emotionalism and emphasis on the supernatural, he rejected the Pentecostal sanctification of poverty and simple living. His own family had prospered by turning a milk farm of three cows into the largest dairy herd in the United States. In 1936, Demos added a successful fertilizer plant. The family's success, Shakarian believed, was due to hard work and God, who promised prosperity to the family in "this abundant land."¹⁰²

The Shakarians minimized the socio-economic and governmental contributions to their success. California farms, for instance, benefited from New Deal subsidies. In addition, California's political leaders refused to allow farm workers to organize. The Shakarians were masters of this environment. They curried favor with politicians who controlled water rights while brutally suppressing strikes.¹⁰³ For example, in 1934, when over 200 strikers picketed Shakarian's dairy to protest his participation in the Los Angeles Milk Industry Board, Shakarian enlisted the local sheriff and his deputies to crush the strike and replace the striking workers with scabs from distant counties. By

1945, the Shakarians owned the world's largest privately-owned dairy herd.¹⁰⁴

The Shakarians may have benefited from the New Deal, but they wanted no part of it. Prosperity, they claimed, was the outcome of God's blessing and their own individual initiative. Convinced of this, they were easily attracted to Dale Carnegie and to a new conception of the Pentecostal movement. They merged Pentecostal practices with their belief that God had made them prosperous. Jim Bakker would also later admit that his message, like his friend Demos Shakarian's, was a filtered interpretation of Carnegie.¹⁰⁵

In the years after World War II, Shakarian's frustration with the lack of religion in his Kiwanis Club led him to join the non-denominational Christian Business Man's Committee, but these meetings lacked the emotionalism and fervor he had enjoyed within his Pentecostal church. He began to appeal to Pentecostal ministers to reach out to businessmen. One skeptical minister declared, "We don't get a great many businessmen at our services . . . Not the successful ones, anyway."¹⁰⁶ In an effort to change this, Shakarian sponsored a revival at the Los Angeles auditorium with the help of Walter Knott of Knott's Berry farm.¹⁰⁷ Like Shakarian, Knott saw America as the land of opportunity and government as an obstacle to individual fulfillment. Knott's Berry Farm, a theme park modeled after America's western frontier, became a home for many business groups and religious leaders who shared Knott's view of the world. Shakarian set up a dinner to support the revival, but he also realized the need for a permanent association to bring together evangelical businessmen.¹⁰⁸

This led to the breakfast meeting with Oral Roberts who suggested that Shakarian reach out to his friend Lee Braxton. Braxton was a North Carolina businessman who had risen from poverty to wealth and prominence. He was devoted to Dale Carnegie and positive thinking, and he sponsored ministers who preached Carnegie's message. He had started out in a small farming town with an auto shop, but added an appliance store and then a supermarket. He was also chairman of the bank and the city's mayor. As one commenter stated, "He literally built his own city and

became president of thirty corporations.” Like Shakarian, he viewed his success as a combination of hard work and God's desire to grant him success. He also became involved with the healing revivals in hopes of alleviating his wife’s anemia. After reading a book written by Oral Roberts, he attended a Roberts’ revival and was soon one of his benefactors.¹⁰⁹

Braxton had an important impact on Roberts as well. Like most of the healing evangelists, Braxton had placed little emphasis on financial prosperity as a gift of the Holy Spirit. Braxton, inspired by *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, believed that religion should accept the legitimacy of prosperity, and he convinced Roberts of this. When describing his impoverished past, Braxton insisted: “Being born in poverty is not a sin, although it is a terrible inconvenience.” He believed in success (accumulating a library of over one thousand biographies of successful men), but he also believed religion should be used as a tool for personal fulfillment. This had a profound influence on Roberts. It was Braxton’s obsession with success literature and positive thinking that inspired him to develop a similar philosophy after 1949.¹¹⁰

Oral Roberts was the son of a Pentecostal preacher, and he grew up believing that a holy life meant embracing anti-worldliness and self-denial. As a child, classmates teased him because he was banned from going to movies. This frustrated Roberts, who viewed this type of Christianity as repressive and confining. It stifled his youthful ambition and pushed him away from the Church during his teenage years.¹¹¹ His early preaching, however, accepted traditional Pentecostal doctrines. He understood that expressing his heresy would not be popular among traditional Pentecostals. Instead, he focused on spiritual healing, becoming one of the most prominent healing revivalists of the 1950s.¹¹²

This changed when Roberts met Braxton. Roberts was soon reading and distributing many of the success books and embracing a more worldly form of Pentecostalism that emphasized success and personal fulfillment. At their first meeting in 1949, Braxton gave Roberts a copy of *How I Raised Myself from Failure to Success in Selling*. This book told the story of how Frank Bettger, a struggling insurance salesman,

became one of the highest paid salesmen in America. According to Bettger, the key to his success was his enthusiasm and his willingness to conquer his internal fears. Roberts would re-read this book every year of his life. Roberts, meanwhile, moved from the raucous environment of the healing revivals to more orderly prayer meetings. Gradually, he began to present himself in a more business-like manner and his revivals became more structured. He also began discouraging speaking in tongues and “would not tolerate hysteria.” He also began to describe wealth as a gift from God. He himself embraced an extravagant lifestyle that included traveling in private jets and living in mansions. Prosperity, he insisted, was the product of a positive outlook and God’s blessing. By the 1950s, he had begun to cultivate what would become prosperity theology.¹¹³

In the late 1950s, with help from the FGBMFI, Braxton and Roberts took this theology to radio. Braxton added his business acumen to the ministry. Braxton, now Roberts’s financier and business manager, helped Roberts obtain and manage over 25 stations. Soon after, Roberts devised a scheme to send out prayer cloths with reminders of the great expense of the ministry. In 1955, Roberts moved to television, and when he did, he began to merge his fundraising efforts with prosperity theology. Needing \$42,000 for a film, he told the audience that God promised that his followers would be rewarded “seven times” if they donated to his ministry. Over time, the reward grew into what became known as the hundred-fold blessing. These partnerships with the FGBMFI and other conservative businessmen, aggressive fundraising tactics, and promotion of prosperity theology, allowed Roberts to expand his ministry, becoming the most important early minister and early evangelical proponent of these ideas in the 1950s and 1960s.

FGBMFI was instrumental in fashioning a new Pentecostalism compatible with an intensely conservative business community. From its start, it preached prosperity. Its inaugural publication proclaimed:

I say that poverty is an enemy. It is not a blessing, as many of us have been taught to believe. Poverty keeps us from obeying God as we want to obey Him. It keeps us from going forward with missionary programs, from building churches, launching revival campaigns, and keeping the men of God in the field where they should be. Poverty is of the devil. I think I can prove that to you, because the devil is spoken of as the god of this world and this world is the only place where poverty is known. There is no devil in Heaven, and there is no poverty there. Heaven has streets that are gold, walls that are jasper, gates that are pearl. Heaven speaks of bounty and wealth on every hand. There is no devil in Heaven. Therefore, there is no poverty in Heaven. Poverty belongs to this world alone, and since the devil rules the world, the devil is bound to be the author of poverty. Paul exhorts us to remember the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though He was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich. When we take full advantage of the provisions of God's grace as manifested through our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall have everything that we need in this world.¹¹⁴

Unlike earlier Pentecostals who admired Jesus' poverty, these business leaders saw poverty only as a stepping-stone to wealth. They saw religion as a means of self-fulfillment.

This message was popular in southern California where defense-related industries were fueling an economic boom and where modern conservatism was taking root. In California, FGBMFI grew rapidly, expanding from fifteen members to over four hundred in one year. Members began recruiting friends and colleagues, who often attended an FGBMFI function hoping to make sales but left believing in FGBMFI's cause. One member recalled his first meeting: "The men testified of the things the Holy Spirit was leading them to do in their business, realization flowed that what they were really saying was they struck more oil, or their cows gave more milk, or they sold more land or cars, they would help turn the world to Jesus. It wasn't money for money's sake. Money was simply a means to an end."¹¹⁵

As it expanded in southern California, FGBMFI became intimately tied to yet another powerful grassroots religious revival movement with close ties to Pentecostalism. This was the Charismatic movement or Neo-Pentecostalism. It began in Van Nuys, California at St. Marks Episcopal church when the church's middle class members were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. Not only did they began to speak in tongues, but they embraced healing and prophecy. The movement then spread to Los Angeles to two wealthy Presbyterian churches in Hollywood and Bel Air where other

mainline church members began to embrace this form of worship. Then it spread to colleges, seminaries, and suburban living rooms where impromptu prayer meetings were set up. FGBMFI embraced the movement, which produced a coalition of wealthy conservative businessmen, Sunbelt suburbanites, and Pentecostal preachers centered on a world-affirming form of Pentecostal message that sanctified success, prosperity theology, and personal fulfillment.¹¹⁶

By the 1970s, in fact, FGBMFI was made up almost entirely of Charismatics. Both were deeply conservative. One early analyst found in a survey of 178 Charismatics, the Republican Party was favored seven to one. A later study by a sociologist found that only three percent of the heavily Charismatic Virginia chapter of the FGBMFI identified themselves as liberal.¹¹⁷

FGBMFI's *Voice* became an organ for prosperity theology and Charismatics in the business world. The magazine was filled with success stories of businessmen and military personnel who turned to Christ and found financial success and personal contentment. It demonstrated another way California's Cold war economy had become integrated with the Charismatic movement.¹¹⁸ Many of the stories centered on military personnel and on businessmen closely associated with the military. One of the individuals was Sanford McDonnell, the chairman of McDonnell Douglas. Another was George Otis, who was the vice president of Lear Jet and who became a close associate of Ronald Reagan and friend to Jim Bakker. Many other members became integrated into Jim Bakker's staff.¹¹⁹

The magazine was filled with testimonies from a wide range of military personnel who told heroic stories and emphasized how Christ had guided them through their darkest hours while on the front lines. They also embraced the conventional critique of the welfare state. Air Force Captain Kris Mineau, for example, criticized American society for offering too many "free rides" and proclaimed, "We look upon self-reliance as a sign of maturity and associate it with the American spirit of independence. However, human independence is very tenuous and utterly fails when we separate ourselves from contact with Divine Grace."¹²⁰

FGBMFI and Demos Shakarian were vital supporters of Jim Bakker's rise in the world of religious broadcasting. They were by no means Bakker's only business allies. Another set of supporters were tied to the direct sales organization that became Amway. Amway had been created in 1959 by Richard DeVos and Jay Van Andel, who had previously worked for a decade with a DSO named Nutralite. Amway was short for the American way. This new company created "knock-off products" similar to existing products but with the Amway label, which they sold door-to-door. Amway presented itself as a symbol of the "American dream," but it also promoted the idea that joining the company would lead to economic success and familial bliss. They promised wealth to anyone who was willing to believe. This philosophy was integral to the organization's growth in the 1960s. Through the first four years of the decade their sales revenue doubled annually until they were worth \$10 million in 1964.¹²¹

Richard DeVos and Jay Van Andel joined Nutralite in 1949 at the height of the Pyramid Club craze. They walked door-to-door handing-out a wellness book that supported their vitamins in hopes of convincing the consumers to buy their supplements on a monthly basis. With some early success, others, including a local Dale Carnegie instructor, joined them as distributors. Eventually, DeVos and Van Andel created and marketed their own line of products, leading to their eventual break with Nutralite in 1959 when they formed Amway.¹²²

Like all DSOs, Amway was steeped in thereputic ideas and positive thinking. DeVos and Van Andel lived and breathed the ideas of Dale Carnegie. They promised their recruits that if they surrounded themselves with "positivity" and worked hard they would become fabulously wealthy. As some critics have suggested, they instilled these ideas into Amway to such an extent that Amway was as much a cult as a sales organization. But Amway was also steeped in evangelical Christianity. Two leading sociologists described Amway as "the 'quintessential quasi-religious' corporation. Its many rallies and seminars are heavily laced with flag-waving, unabashed patriotism, prayers and references to the Almighty."¹²³ Amway also put pressure on distributors to

become part of the Christian Right. One former distributor explained: “The directors I met, when they reached a certain level in the business, withdrew their children from public schools and sent them into ‘Christian’ schools, where they could be taught a Fundamentalist version of history and science.”¹²⁴

These ideas also imbued them with a profoundly conservative vision of American society that celebrated individual meritocracy and decried government and regulation of private industry.¹²⁵ Along with other DSO leaders, they forged connections with prosperity theology ministers and conservative politics. They celebrated their system of incentives as symbol of the persistence of opportunity in American society. By becoming a member of Amway, anyone could become wealthy.¹²⁶

This conservatism was reinforced by fears of government intrusion. Nutralite, and later Amway, operated by rewarding high-level sales associates with a percentage of the profits of each new recruit to the sales force. Critics labeled this a pyramid scheme, since the incentives created a group of elite brokers whose income was fed by those below them, many of whom were struggling to make a living. At various times, the Government threatened to legislate against this top-down incentive system. First Nutralite and then Amway defended this structure. As they saw it, this was a system of incentives that fit well the optimism of the 1950s. DeVos, Van Andel, and other important Amway figures increasingly saw wealth as the product of luck, timing, personality, and faith. Government regulation threatened not just the Amway system but the entire American way. It was a view of wealth that both Bakker and Amway would celebrate.¹²⁷

As Amway grew, its founders developed even closer ties to a larger business community and to American conservatism. DeVos became the director of the Washington, D.C. chapter of the Chamber of Commerce in the late 1960s. He saw Amway as a symbol for conservative businessmen who were frustrated with the liberal consensus and business acceptance of consensus politics.¹²⁸ James W. Robinson, who also served as senior vice-president of the Chamber of Commerce, illustrated this point

in his apologetic book on Amway, in which he described the company as a beacon of light because their employees “can’t really depend on government to take care of them when they are old and sick. More important, they don’t *want* to depend on government assistance. They want to do for themselves.”¹²⁹ Amway’s top figures became leading supporters of the Republican Party.¹³⁰

DeVos’ conservative militancy was evident in a popular speech which criticized American society for rewarding failure. American liberals, he proclaimed, would bring about the destruction of prosperity by making everyone equally poor. He also mocked welfare recipients, portraying their poverty as the result of low motivation and their inability to understand the opportunities available in the free market system. He shared similar stories about unions, in which he decried the laziness of unionized workers. He then used his own success story to illustrate how success was possible for anyone with a dream, who was not dependent on government handouts. Bakker later adopted this message and transformed it into his version of prosperity theology.¹³¹

Amway viewed these ideas as core American values that were beyond political ideology and which were fundamental to the success of American society. Within this framework, Amway’s message of success through belief and effort became integral for Jim Bakker’s prosperity theology. This became the intellectual foundation of the movement whose message coupled its followers to the American conservative movement and was supported by Sunbelt businessmen who shared DeVos’ vision of success and failure in American society. It was an ideological vision that inspired the Charismatic movement and the New Right.

Amway cultivated political influence to thwart environmental and consumer legislation that might hurt its business. In one instance, Gerald Ford's office intervened on behalf of Amway when it was charged that their products contained hazardous chemicals. Amway also fought legislation that would limit the number of visits a door-to-door salesperson could make in a week. And it fought the creation of a consumer protection agency, new labor legislation, and tax legislation.¹³²

DeVos and VanAndel also spread their message to the general public. They built, for instance, the Amway's Center of Free Enterprise in Ada, Michigan, which was a 55,000 square foot headquarters designed as a shrine to the free enterprise system and to their own lives. Amway sent new recruits and youth groups through this museum to highlight how the American business community contributed to the American economy. With help from the Chamber of Commerce, they also presented movies that emphasized "the need to keep our economy free of unnecessary tax burdens" and the openness of American society to those who desire to become successful.¹³³

DeVos and Amway often cultivated and sponsored conservative evangelical spiritual leaders and business enterprises. One example was Billy Zeoli, the president of Gospel Films Communications. DeVos was the chairman of the Gospel Films' board, and Zeoli was a frequent guest at Amway's "Free Enterprise Day" rallies and became a favorite guest of pro-prosperity ministers throughout the country. He also became Gerald Ford's personal spiritual advisor. Like Ford, Zeoli was a former football player and he had begun his ministry career by preaching inspirational messages to professional athletes before competitions. His message was easily integrated into Amway's glorification of free market competition because it stressed how Christianity helped one become a better competitor. Moreover, it reinforced Amway's philosophy that the pursuit of wealth was a holy enterprise. Zeoli also celebrated excess and luxury as a benefit for American society and used his considerable economic power and influence within gospel films to spread these ideas and helped underwrite the growth of the prosperity gospel. Later, DeVos even created and funded a separate institute whose mission was to study the relationship between free market ideas and Christianity. DeVos also began using his money to fund a wide variety of conservative political and religious organizations that represented their connected interests.¹³⁴

Another minister and evangelical entrepreneur who was part of the world of Amway was Jim Bakker. Amway's message of success through belief and effort became integral for Jim Bakker's prosperity theology. This became the intellectual foundation of

the movement whose message coupled its followers to the American conservative movement and was supported by Sunbelt businessmen who shared DeVos' vision of success and failure in American society. Bakker also had explicit connections. When developing his version of prosperity theology he explicitly referenced DeVos's book as his inspiration. He also became an Amway member and relied on its local leadership for seed funding and mentoring in Charlotte. By the time his theme park was built, both organizations became deeply intertwined. As one former member recalled, many employees belonged to both organizations, and both organizations preached a similar message.¹³⁵

So pervasive were these ideas that two leading sociologists described Amway as "the 'quintessential quasi-religious' corporation. Its many rallies and seminars are heavily laced with flag-waving, unabashed patriotism, prayers and references to the Almighty."¹³⁶ Amway also put pressure on distributors to become part of the Christian Right. One former distributor explained: "The directors I met, when they reached a certain level in the business, withdrew their children from public schools and sent them into 'Christian' schools, where they could be taught a Fundamentalist version of history and science."¹³⁷ This led to speeches at conventions like the one given by Birdie Yager, the wife of Dexter Yager, who became one of Jim Bakker's closest friends. In Birdie's speech before more than 10,000 cheering people, she proclaimed "Don't you know this business was put together by him [God]? You know it has never really bothered Dexter and me when people would put this business down. Then people ask us why you don't stop and rest? People ask why don't you just retire? You are rich enough. They don't understand that I did not build this business to get rich. We are building this business because God told us to, and he is making us rich because he does that with everyone who obeys him." Like members of the FGBMFI, they envisioned God as a business motivator who rewarded success and punished non-believers.¹³⁸

Early in his career, Bakker would enjoy the support of another important member of the evangelical business coalition. This was Pat Robertson, who, with the help of FGBMFI, brought this vision to television. The son of a conservative U.S. senator, Robertson had been raised in a world of privilege conservative politics.¹³⁹ As a young man, he had joined the Army and then graduated from law school. He obtained a high-paying job at a New York shipping company and began to enjoy the New York social scene. He soon acquired a reputation for his indulgence in women and alcohol. But when he encountered business difficulties, he became disenchanted with a partying lifestyle that offered him no emotional support. He underwent a religious conversion and entered the ministry in 1957.¹⁴⁰

Robertson and his biographers have argued that this conversion stemmed in part from a desire to reject his privileged background. As a Bible student, he sold much of his furniture and moved with his wife into a small apartment in New York City. At one point, he left his wife—then seven months pregnant—for a religious retreat in Canada. It was a decision that challenged their marriage but which he felt was spiritually necessary. During this time, he also began to speak in tongues and became involved with members of the FGBMFI.¹⁴¹ As was the case with many FGBMFI members, however, Robertson did not give up the affluent life entirely. A missionary-evangelist named Cornelius Vanderreggen had led Robertson to commit his life to Christ, but Robertson was impressed with Vanderreggen's high-class lifestyle and wrote in his autobiography, "I was used to the expensive bistros around New York, but that a faith missionary should say the Lord had led him to dine at this restaurant where waiters wore white tie and tails was more than I could comprehend. I thought God's people wore shabby clothes, baggy trousers, and suit coats that didn't match."¹⁴² Robertson sought a new form of Christianity that accepted affluence. Vanderreggen led him to prosperity teachings and to middle class Pentecostals who increasingly described themselves as Charismatic Christians. He encouraged Robertson to recognize that Jesus Christ provided prosperity to those who believed. For Robertson, this was a hopeful, inspiring message. Robertson later recalled sitting down for dinner with Vanderreggen, who told him, "You are the

Lord's guest. God is generous, not stingy. He wants you to have the best. Order anything you want." Pat Robertson did just that.¹⁴³

A second spiritual mentor who guided Robertson to the Charismatic movement and to prosperity theology was Harald Bredesen. The son of a Lutheran minister, Bredesen had faced disappointment and business failure. He converted and would enjoy great success, but when he met Robertson, he was struggling.¹⁴⁴ Bredesen had first tried the ministry and had then entered the world of business. He worked as a promoter for Christian organizations, which led him into the offices of New York's elite. Through these connections, he worked his way into organizations such as the Harvard Club and the Chamber of Commerce. He began to launch other commercial ventures, and began to merge his conservative vision of success with his own Christianity. As he recalled, "I knew from reading Christian success stories that they were like real-life Horatio Alger tales, stories that usually went 'I was going bankrupt, when I handed my company over to God,' or, 'I decided to tithe, and God has now made me a multi-millionaire.'"¹⁴⁵ Such examples deeply influenced him and convinced him that faith would lead to a life of wealth and influence. He soon allied with the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship, which sponsored Bredesen throughout his career.

Robertson and Bredesen fit well together. They merged entrepreneurialism with their religious beliefs, and spoke about how God undergirded their success and fame. They represented the growing merger of free market principles and prosperity theology. The two men began pursuing religious endeavors and propagating a conservative vision of success. They joined FGBMFI and were often featured speakers at their meetings and conventions. They also became leaders of the Charismatic movement, helping promote their business-friendly form of Pentecostalism.¹⁴⁶

Their most important initiative was to launch a Christian television network. Robertson began this venture when he learned that Lexington, Virginia had a UHF television station for sale. Although his father repeatedly reminded him of its limited economic potential, this was the start of a worldwide Christian network. The first board

of directors consisted of Bredesen and three other men associated with a Full Gospel Business Men's Convention. In fact, the actual signing of the station's "constitution" took place in a hotel room at an FGBMFI convention with Demos Shakarian overseeing the meeting. This was a typical example of Shakarian's and FGBMFI's involvement in funding and encouraging conservative religious ventures. Shakarian would act as an unofficial advisor of the network and FGBMFI businessmen would fund its early growth and become integrated into the staff.¹⁴⁷

These two partners also promoted positive thinking within Pentecostalism. They related the experience of speaking in tongues to Mrs. Norman Vincent Peale in an early attempt to build a bridge between the Pentecostalism and the positive thinking movements.¹⁴⁸ Mrs. Peale left the meeting somewhat skeptical, but she advised John Sherrill, the editor of *Guideposts* magazine, to write a story about speaking in tongues. Sherrill soon became the pioneering publicist of the Charismatic movement. He wrote *They Speak with other Tongues*, which was designed to introduce middle class America to the movement. In contrast to early Pentecostalism, the book used pseudo-scientific methods to explain Pentecostal practice. It also promoted positive thinking as part of American Pentecostalism. Soon thereafter, Charismatics increasingly used the language of positive thinking in their preaching and discourse. For example, another Charismatic periodical editor responded, "I have made up my mind to think positively, based on who I am and what I have in Christ." Pat Robertson would later combine these beliefs into a version of prosperity theology.¹⁴⁹

Robertson and the FGBMFI merged this theology and Peale's emphasis on positive thinking into the prosperity gospel. Although Pat Robertson never explicitly described himself as a prosperity gospel minister, these ideas pervaded his preaching and his books and tapes about financial matters. In *Secret Kingdom*, he declared, "Spirit controls matter . . . The mind is the ultimate conduit of the spirit. In other words, when you confess blessing, favor, victory, and success, those things will come to you."¹⁵⁰ He also proclaimed that those who remain ill or poverty-stricken demonstrate they have

"failed to grasp the points we have been making" or are "not living according to the major principles." The "secret" of success, according to Robertson, was available to those who were in God's Kingdom. Their faith in God would be rewarded with prosperity.¹⁵¹ These beliefs became the foundation of a series of tapes that espoused similar ideas, with such titles as the "Secret of Success," and the "Secret of Wealth." Robertson later developed these ideas into a multi-level marketing sales venture which sold vitamins in a fashion similar to Amway. Both used prosperity ideas to recruit salespersons to market and sell products by promoting the belief that God would grant them prosperity. Robertson even used his CBN mailing lists in order to find clients for this venture. In one promotion, he sent out sample \$5000 checks to CBN followers with the message that such rewards were easy to acquire if they joined the company. He also featured individuals on his shows who claimed that Robertson's health products, in combination with the help of God, would cure their diseases and ailments. It signaled the merging of these worlds in ways that made this religious movement and these conservative business ventures increasingly difficult to differentiate.¹⁵²

Throughout his career, while describing these ideas, Robertson often used the phrase "the law of reciprocity," which is one of his eight Kingdom laws. He summarized this idea as the belief that providing the Lord with material gifts will result in even greater material blessings. While Robertson warned Christians about the pitfalls of becoming too involved with material rewards, at the same time he promoted the belief that giving to his ministry would lead to personal financial benefit. This was a clear extension of the prosperity ideas endorsed by the leadership of the Charismatic movement. Moreover, it was a variant of Oral Roberts' belief in "seed faith," which argued that by giving to his ministry, God would multiply that giving a hundred-fold. These beliefs were explicitly endorsed by the FGBMFI and many preachers like Robertson who was an important member of this organization. He combined his economic conservatism with his religious faith and promoted what eventually became prosperity theology.¹⁵³

* * *

By the end of the 1960s, these ministers and businessmen had created a network that promoted a new type of evangelical religion that embraced free markets, affluence, and positive thinking. In doing so, they transformed American Pentecostalism. It had entered the 1950s as a religious movement that decried worldliness, glorified poverty, and ministered to the plain-folk of traditional Pentecostalism. By the end of the decade, new groups of businessmen had taken over the movement, bringing in new prosperity ideas. They created an infrastructure and network to broadcast and propagate their intensely conservative views, and they supported and funded Jim Bakker's ascension. Over the next twenty years, these ideas became the foundation of prosperity theology and a conservative evangelical movement. With this change, prosperous Sunbelt suburbanites flocked to this movement. As all of this was occurring, Jim Bakker was growing up in Muskegon, Michigan in a family that was steeped in plain-folk Pentecostalism.

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Chapter 4

‘Should I be Good or Should I be a Hood’: Becoming Jim Bakker

Jim Bakker announced on a 1986 PTL Club show that his favorite high school teacher, Bill Harrison, was sitting in the audience. He then walked up to Bill and thanked him for nourishing his confidence as a teenager. Standing next to Harrison, Bakker described his childhood as dominated by fear and insecurity, and a lack of material comforts. He then told the audience an often-repeated story about his embarrassment over having to wear a tattered jacket as a child. Describing the same event in his autobiography, he wrote, “I was the lonely, shy boy with a tattered blue baseball jacket. I was also still afraid. Every night when I’d walk up the stairs to go to bed, I was afraid to sleep . . . afraid the old wooden house would burn to the ground.” While Bakker did not write extensively about his youth, he used a constructed version of his childhood to recount how God transformed him from an insecure, poor boy into a confident wealthy Christian.¹⁵⁴

Throughout his autobiography, Bakker described his embarrassments stemming from the lack of consumer comforts. For example, recalling the family Christmases, he wrote “At Christmas, instead of getting an abundance of toys like most kids, the Bakkers — two older brothers, Bob and Norman, besides my only sister Donna — got clothes and maybe one or two toys.” According to Bakker, this lack of material bounty and constant fear made him a shy youth. As he recalled, “Fear had constantly pervaded my life — from the time I saw the big ‘eye’ in church . . . not only was I afraid of God, even my shadow alarmed me on occasions.” Much of what Bakker said about his youth was contrived to support his version of prosperity theology. It highlighted how his developing faith provided him — and would provide others — with wealth and happiness.¹⁵⁵

In reality Bakker's early years were hardly marked by deprivation. As friends, family and observers have noted, he was an amiable, outgoing young boy who embraced 1950s youth culture and the spoils of the burgeoning consumer culture. His youth reflected many of the tensions within Pentecostalism created by the affluence of the 1950s. Some Pentecostals were tied to the healing revival that promoted spiritual retreat from the world and a critical view of 1950s consumer culture. Others accepted material culture and sought to infuse positive thinking into Pentecostalism.

Bakker wanted to be both a Pentecostal and an affluent American youth. This often put him at odds with his family, and over time, he rebelled against traditional Pentecostalism, and embraced 1950s mass culture and adapted his Pentecostalism to consumer society. But instead of abandoning Pentecostalism, he adapted it to a consumer society. His desire to reconcile conflicting values would, in later years, lead him to embrace prosperity theology and the new gospel of wealth. The roots of PTL may be found in his youth, which was centered in Muskegon, Michigan.

Jim Bakker was born on January 2, 1940 in Muskegon, Michigan, a port town on Lake Michigan. It was a town that he often described as free of social problems and class boundaries. One reporter believed that this idyllic childhood led Jim Bakker to recreate this image at PTL.¹⁵⁶ His family history can easily be traced to the early days of this town in the late nineteenth century. This was a different world from that of Bakker's youth, one that nurtured a very different form of Pentecostalism than the one that Bakker would preach.¹⁵⁷

Muskegon boomed with the lumber industry of the late nineteenth century. It was surrounded by virgin pine, and its proximity to rivers and to Lake Michigan made for easy transportation to markets in Chicago and further East. With forty sawmills cutting 650 million board feet of lumber a year, Muskegon went from a small trading post to a sizeable town in just a few years. While many prospered in the town, the city's unstable economy also created a large working class whose houses were segregated from the

wealthier sections of town. They worked long hours for low pay, did menial tasks, and faced seasonal unemployment. It was a world that contrasted with the city's elite that was busy constructing ornate churches, opera houses, and boardwalks throughout that gentrified downtown.¹⁵⁸

Joe Bakker, Jim's grandfather, was part of Muskegon's working class. He was a struggling celery farmer with had a small tract of land. He was also was one of Muskegon's first Pentecostal preachers. Like other plain folk Pentecostals, Joe was critical of worldly pleasures that arose alongside the city's prosperity. He traveled around town on a bicycle, telling people to give up their worldly ways or they would go to hell. Once, while standing outside a prison, he told a stranger that puffing on cigarettes would send him to hell. The stranger punched him in the eye. In the 1920s, Joe began organizing prayer meetings that evolved into Muskegon's Central Assemblies of God, the church that Jim Bakker would attend. It was racially integrated and comprised a large working-class constituency.¹⁵⁹

Joe Bakker's suspicion of worldly influence also shaped his family's home life. For example, he demanded that his children quit school by the eighth grade in order to work. Hard work, he thought, was more important than school. When his wife Kathrina was dying of cancer in 1956, he began piecing together a pine wood box lined with feed sacks for her. Only after the funeral director told Joe that it was illegal to bury people in homemade caskets did he acquiesce to buying a casket. Joe's commitment to what he saw as Pentecostal faith even led him to stop his son John from entering Bible school. The two never spoke again.¹⁶⁰

Joe Bakker had two daughters and two sons, the youngest of whom was Raleigh, who was Jim Bakker's father. In 1923, Raleigh married a Dutch woman named Furnia whose father was a peddler. They had four children. Their first child, Robert, was born in 1928. The Bakkers had two other boys and one girl, and the youngest was James Orsen Bakker. While raising this family, Raleigh worked at the Sealed Power Corporation's piston-ring plant, a parts supplier for the Detroit auto industry. Despite the Great

Depression, he advanced and was earning forty cents an hour by the end of the 1930s. By 1940, he was able to secure a modest two-bedroom home in a working-class neighborhood.¹⁶¹

As a father, Raleigh was austere and harsh and, like his father, he resisted life's pleasures. Such ideas were common among Pentecostals. The home was a temple in which to protect and discipline children from the outside world. Fathers were to instill discipline and teach children reverence and obedience to avoid the temptations of the secular world.¹⁶² Jim Bakker's father and grandfather followed this model well. His mother, in turn, acted as a dutiful housewife, keeping the home clean and tidy. Both parents emphasized discipline and had difficulty showing emotion to their children. Like all Pentecostals, they wanted their children to be secluded from mainstream society and the temptations of consumer culture.

In this environment, Jim Bakker grew up believing that God was watching — and judging — his every move. Every night he kneeled by his bedside and prayed that this demanding God would not judge him too harshly. As he recalled in a later interview, he feared that “if I didn't read and pray something terrible would happen.” He worried his parents, whose discipline he felt was constraining, as well. His Pentecostal upbringing, as he later recalled, focused exclusively on restricting pleasure.¹⁶³ As he recalled, “I didn't know one thing our church believed, but I knew what our church didn't believe [applause] . . . We don't go to shows: we don't dance; we don't play pool; our women don't wear makeup.”¹⁶⁴

These values were also instilled by his Pentecostal church. The Bakkers spent Wednesday nights and most of Sundays at the Central Assemblies of God Church where Jim's father was an usher. It was a church that demanded an austere lifestyle. The “dos and don'ts of Pentecostal life,” as Charles Sheppard noted, “touched every corner of life the rest of the week.” There was “no smoking, no dancing, no pool playing, no movies, no consorting with the world of sin.” For Jim Bakker, it was an unfriendly environment. He declared, “Although I had been raised in the church, there was little there for a

happy-go-lucky type like myself. Everyone seemed so cold and unfeeling.”¹⁶⁵ He identified instead with the 1950s middle-class culture that emphasized self-fulfillment. His belief in personal transformation was born out of the prosperity, hope and optimism of the 1950s.

The leader of Muskegon’s Central Assemblies of God church was Pastor Rieben who believed in living a simple life. He refused pay raises when they were offered and was not interested in worldly adornments. He painted the church purple because it was the cheapest color. He wore shabby clothes in and out of church. To those who attended the church, this was not an issue. As Charles Shepard described, “Many of the newcomers [to the church] were down and out: the father a drunk, his wife struggling to raise a half-dozen kids in a home with a dirt floor. They were the sort of folks drawn to the Pentecostal movement in its infancy.”¹⁶⁶ They lived simply and believed in the Pentecostal rejection of worldliness and the enforcement of strict rules.¹⁶⁷

In this austere environment, Bakker often found greater emotional support from his grandmother Armilda Irwin.¹⁶⁸ Armilda, in fact, became the most important influence in his youth. He later reflected on those early years by stating, “The sun always seemed to shine at her house, even though it might be raining outside. She had given me the small New Testament that I read at night, and her open love had reached inside my heart . . .” According to Bakker, “She was the one person in my life against whom I can never remember feeling even a twinge of resentment.” He also remembered that, in contrast to his parents’ home, Grandma Irwin’s refrigerator was always full of snacks and treats. It was an early sign that Bakker was having difficulties with the values of traditional Pentecostalism.¹⁶⁹

These conflicts were an outgrowth of a changing world. World War II had brought jobs and higher incomes to Muskegon, and after the war, the region experienced a boom. Homebuilders and the automotive industry also grew rapidly. New neighborhoods sprung up which led to a breakup of many of the city’s ethnic neighborhoods as families opted for newer and more spacious homes. Soon stores such

as Meijer's Thrifty Acres, and Kmart moved out of Muskegon's downtown into surrounding suburbs where they presented a plethora of new goods. The automobile supported these developments, boosting local industry and making travel to these new neighborhoods and their surrounding supermarkets possible.¹⁷⁰ Raleigh Bakker thrived in this environment. He advanced steadily and earned a higher income that allowed him to buy a house in the Muskegon Heights neighborhood. It was a neighborhood in which the "good life" was increasingly defined through the 1950s consumer culture.¹⁷¹

His success, however, conflicted with Raleigh Bakker's Pentecostalism that emphasized frugality and austere living. His children rebelled as they grew older. Bob, the eldest, hopped on a train to California at age thirteen. Later, he took his father's car and headed to Texas. His parents did not object when he dropped out of school in the tenth grade, but they would not let him play football out of fear that the game would lead him to pool halls and beer joints. Instead, Bob enlisted in the Navy, but just eight months later he suffered a nervous breakdown. His family offered little support, and he was forced to confront his issues alone. Raleigh and Furn believed that rather than seeing a psychiatrist, Bob should separate himself from the world and concentrate on prayer.¹⁷²

Jim Bakker also found his parents' Pentecostalism confining, and he slowly drifted away from his their isolated world. Bakker's childhood friends remember him as both confident and mischievous, and given to pranks. His cousin George, for example, recalled him pouring gasoline in an alley to set off a line of fire. He and his friends also routinely biked to the swamp on the edge of city to collect snakes and turtles. And he found ways to make money, much as he would in later years as he built his ministry.¹⁷³

But if his friends saw him as confident and mischievous, Jim saw his life as torn between a restrictive religion and an exciting youth culture. Television was one source of conflict. Pentecostalism always had been hostile toward movies and sometimes novels because they represented earthly pleasures. His father and their church condemned television as "hellivision" and described it as "the pit of hellfire." Jim

Bakker, however, was enthralled with the new medium. He loved shows such as “I Love Lucy,” and began pressuring his father to give up the Pentecostal restriction. His father finally relented when Jim was in eighth grade, but the decision was a traumatic one. Jim’s mother was nearly in tears and told her husband, “I never thought you’d weaken.” This was but one example of the family’s ongoing conflicts over the values of 1950s consumer culture and the values of traditional Pentecostalism.¹⁷⁴

As a teen, Jim was fascinated with display of wealth and extravagance. According to his father, this stemmed from his Aunt Martha, whom Jim encountered when he was at his grandmother’s house. She was the wife of a carpet salesman from Ohio and loved to flaunt her money. As Charles Sheppard explained, “Her home in Lima, Ohio was spacious and strewn with statues and mementos. When she arrived by train for a visit, she brought what seemed like suitcase after suitcase for her jewelry, mink coats, and new outfits for each occasion.”¹⁷⁵ Jim Bakker’s maternal uncles were also wealthy and would often travel to Muskegon by yacht. Their world was radically different from that of his parents, but it was one Jim Bakker found thrilling.¹⁷⁶

Jim wanted his parents to live this way. Raleigh was a devoted Ford man, but Jim wanted a nicer car to drive to high school, and eventually Raleigh relented and purchased a Cadillac. Soon after, Jim began cruising around Muskegon and taking girls to Ovals, a popular lakeside spot. Jim also persuaded his notoriously frugal father to buy one of the older mansions on Webster Avenue that had once belonged to a nineteenth-century lumber baron. Although these homes had lost some of their grandeur, they were filled with ornate woodwork and other displays of their wealth. The move nurtured Jim Bakker’s developing taste for items of status. It exposed him to upper-class Victorian style, which later became a model for much of the décor at Heritage USA. He relished these surroundings and began to throw exclusive parties, including one in which the reigning Miss Michigan was his personal guest.¹⁷⁷

In high school the conflicts became more intense. Jim was enthralled with teenage fads and trends that became a vital part of 1950s youth culture. His church

friends remembered that the worst thing you could do to him “was step on Jim’s white bucks.” His hair was slicked into a ducktail rather than the conventional crew cut. At age 15, he taught his cousin George how to become a “classy dresser” and helped him secure a charge account at a local men’s shop.¹⁷⁸ Increasingly, he resented the family supervision and religious strictures. As he declared in his autobiography, “Most high school kids would sell their souls to be popular, and I was no exception. I was obsessed with popularity and would do almost anything to get it.”¹⁷⁹

Dating was a part of youth culture that Jim Bakker especially enjoyed, and it intensified his desire for cars, clothes, and money. According to a close friend, Jim Bakker, notwithstanding his claims of insecurity, was adept at navigating the high school dating scene and was a “celebrated as quite the skirt chaser.” When not on a date, he spent many of his evenings driving to the beach, cruising for girls.¹⁸⁰ Bakker, however, did not abandon his Pentecostal faith. Instead, he attempted to merge his Pentecostalism with the teen culture. Although he went to dances, he did not violate the Pentecostal prohibition against dancing and instead became the DJ and photographer.

Jim Bakker also became increasingly interested rock ‘n’ roll. During his sophomore year, he became involved with Marlene Way, who was a twenty-year-old Elvis impersonator. Marlene had become a celebrity in Muskegon after she had appeared on Steve Allen’s “Tonight Show.” Jim was intrigued by her celebrity status and eventually agreed to manage Marlene’s performances in the Muskegon area at nursing homes and other venues. This new world of show business produced more conflict with his Pentecostal background. After spending a night with a group of teens who “wore black and danced to Elvis, the personification of defiance,”¹⁸¹ Bakker questioned if he should turn to the “immoral life” of show business, or simply return to the stricter life of his Pentecostal upbringing. In response, he began to hum, “Should I be good or should I be a hood.”¹⁸²

This tension between traditional Pentecostalism and rock 'n' roll highlighted the struggles that many Pentecostal youth had to go through as they reconciled Pentecostalism with 1950s youth culture. This tension can be seen through the prism of other Pentecostals who became famous performers: Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis and James Brown.

Rock 'n' roll was for many Pentecostals the ultimate embrace of worldly pleasure, but ironically, it had its roots in Pentecostalism. Musical scholars have noted that rock 'n' roll took much of its flavor and style from Pentecostal services. In fact, the very figure that Pentecostals deemed most dangerous, Elvis Presley, was raised in a Pentecostal church. His family belonged to Memphis's First Assembly of God, and Elvis watched preachers "jumpin' on the piano, movin' every which way."¹⁸³ Elvis drew on this experience to develop his own musical style. And although he was condemned by many Pentecostals, he never completely left the church. Throughout his career, he recorded gospel music and many of his songs were written by Pentecostal friends.¹⁸⁴

Another example of a rock 'n' roll Pentecostal was Jerry Lee Lewis, whose family was a founding member of the Assemblies of God Church in Ferriday, Louisiana. Here Lewis performed with his family and with his cousin, Jimmy Swaggart. Lewis enrolled in the Southwestern Bible Institute, but became disillusioned with religious life and left the college. For a time, he toured with a local preacher and pianist. Eventually, he signed with Sun Records and chose to spread the musical traditions he learned in church to the secular world. He gained fame, but throughout his life, he lamented the choices he made and the Pentecostal life he had abandoned. At one point, he declared that he would never again play for the worldly masses and would return to church life. Lewis often felt he had to choose between rock 'n' roll and his Pentecostalism. At one point he declared, "I have the devil in me! If I didn't, I'd be a Christian."¹⁸⁵

James Brown was also raised a Pentecostal but left the church for the world of rock 'n' roll. He once said, "Gospel is contentment because its spirit, and you feel that spirit when you sing it. It's the same spirit I feel when I'm on stage today." These

performers, as one scholar has suggested, were Pentecostals who were “thirsting for the wine of the affluent society.”¹⁸⁶ They were representative of many Pentecostal youth who were rejecting otherworldliness and attempting to merge religious faith with a larger American society. This reality was also highlighted by Michael Zeone, who was a childhood friend of Jim Bakker and a fellow Pentecostal. Later in life, Zeone produced a song for the musical *Grease*. As he told Charles Sheppard, “Grease was the story of lives of the other kids, free from the strict rules of the Pentecostal church, led while he [Jim Bakker] was growing up in the fifties.”¹⁸⁷

Bakker had similar experiences. For example, when Bakker told his deacon that he was spinning records in his high school, the deacon demanded that Bakker be ousted from the church. His parents defended him, but he decided to quit spinning records.¹⁸⁸

But he hardly abandoned worldly ways. From a very early age, Bakker had demonstrated a penchant for showmanship, selling and entrepreneurialism. Jim Bakker’s earliest exposure to this world came from his mother’s father, Irwin, who pedaled goods in Muskegon’s black neighborhoods. In 1940 a Muskegon directory listed him as a huckster. The “Kingfish,” as he was known, liked to brag that he could sell iceboxes to Eskimos. Irwin died when Bakker was sixteen, but his influence was evident in Bakker’s younger years when Jim began selling goods door-to-door for spending money.¹⁸⁹

Bakker and a neighborhood friend first began earning money by raking yards. Soon they discovered that they could earn more money by going door-to-door selling melons, cantaloupes and flowers. They also collected and sold newspapers. Once they earned fifteen dollars each by filling up half of the church bus with newspapers. When the friend’s father closed down his freight business, they sold the leftover inventory, taking a percentage of the profits. In high school, Jim worked at a shoe store where he revealed his penchant for selling and showmanship.¹⁹⁰ As his cousin George recalled, “He spoke well, and he had a boyish charm that appealed to the maternal instincts of

women customers. Jim had a handle on the world. He had the ideas, he knew where he was headed, and he knew how to act around girls.”¹⁹¹

Jim’s skill at sales fit neatly with his love to perform. At the urging of his journalism teacher, Bill Harrison, he joined the school paper, and quickly displayed a talent for selling papers. As Harrison recalled, “Jim had so many ideas in fact, that he needed someone he respected to curb his enthusiasm . . . Jim had tremendous energy, a knack for selling himself and a willingness to try what others said couldn’t be done.”¹⁹² With Harrison’s help, Jim learned how to sell advertising for the local school newspaper. He also produced a variety show to raise funds for the paper. By his senior year he was managing Marlene Way’s show, serving as technical director for *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, and was directing the variety show.¹⁹³

Some famous Pentecostals, of course, had merged theater and their faith. Aimee Semple McPherson was an example, but her message usually combined — perhaps in contradictory ways — the Pentecostal message of worldly entrenchment. Bakker was different. He increasingly rejected the austerity. Although Bakker considered himself a Pentecostal, he often ruminated about escaping the confines of Pentecostal life.¹⁹⁴

This changed in his senior year when Bakker abruptly decided to become a minister. According to Bakker, the transformation was the result of a dramatic accident where he hit a three-year-old boy with his car. Following this incident, Bakker claimed he committed his life to Christ, gave up school clubs and work as a disc jockey. It was a dramatic story that Bakker would use throughout his ministerial career, but it was largely fiction. The incident took place two years earlier and did not weigh on Bakker’s decision to become a minister.

Instead, this decision arose out of familial pressure and Bakker’s desire for adventure. Prior to his senior year, Jim Bakker’s alienation from the church was accepted in part because his parents knew his older brother Bob was in line to become a Pentecostal minister. But when Bob — who had attended and dropped out of Bible school in Springfield, Missouri — divorced his wife and married a nineteen-year-old girl,

his chances of becoming a minister ended. This made Jim Bakker next and the familial pressure was intense. “You know,” Jim recalled, “it’s like a mantle somehow has to come down . . . This whole thing, now, has kind of slid on down, and I have to do it.”¹⁹⁵ Hence, he became more involved in church in his senior year. He then surprised his friends and family by deciding to enroll in North Central Bible School in Minneapolis, a small school for blue-collar Pentecostal youths who worked in the evening and took classes in the morning. As friends noted, enrolling in North Central allowed Bakker to make his family happy while providing him with a means to escape the confines of his childhood community.¹⁹⁶

At North Central, Bakker still struggled to balance traditional Pentecostalism with his love of promotion. Many of his fellow students remember his bravado and his almost immediate announcement that he was going to win the world for Christ. His enthusiasm needed an outlet, and he found it with a group of students called the “Holy Joes” who had a “monastic dedication” and would pray for hours in a school basement. Bakker spent so much time with this group praying that he would often return to the dorm to sleep rather than attend class. As Bakker recalled, “I had turned my back on the world completely. In fact, I didn’t even date that first year.”¹⁹⁷

Soon Bakker was frustrated with the school. His teachers were strict and did not provide the supportive emotional religion that Bakker found with the Holy Joes. Consequently, he settled for C’s, although he was a smart student and was capable of doing much better. At times, he failed to complete his classes. He focused on extracurricular activities and became involved in the mission play, and also became editor of the school paper the “Northern Light.” He found outlets for his enthusiasm and energy.¹⁹⁸

In his second year he met a first-year student by the name of Tammy LaValley. Tammy was engaged to be married, but Jim Bakker was enthralled. The following year, she broke off her engagement, and Jim pursued her. It was a quick courtship. As she recalled, “On the second date he asked me to go steady. He asked me to go out the

third night. I did, and he asked me to marry him.”¹⁹⁹ Mesmerized by one another, they spent nearly every moment together and were not shy about their affection or their sexual relationship.²⁰⁰

The engagement caused numerous problems. North Central required permission to date, which Jim and Tammy had not asked for permission. Moreover, they were notoriously open in their displays of affection, which school policy forbade. It prohibited ballroom dancing and other worldly practices. Even an arm around the shoulders of the opposite sex could send a student to the dean’s office for a scolding. Students, moreover, were not allowed to marry. If a couple married, they were suspended for an academic term before being granted readmission. Bakker’s father also opposed the marriage. He did not disapprove of Tammy, who came from a working-class Pentecostal family from northern Minnesota, but worried that they were rushing into marriage. He also rightfully feared that a youthful marriage would put an end to Jim’s ministerial training. In spite of objections, Jim married Tammy.²⁰¹

After their marriage, Jim and Tammy left North Central, and Jim went to work at an elegant restaurant called the Tea Room, where he was able to meet an upper middle-class social set that sported fancy perfumes, expensive cars and other extravagant consumer goods. The Tea Room was ornate and resembled a Florentine palazzo. Its owner, Lena Williams, gave them items that were cracked or defective. For Jim, however, they were enthralling examples of an affluent world. Lena intrigued him with her fur coats, long cigarettes and an apartment decorated in “ornate, Victorian Queen Ann Style.” This was Jim’s first glimpse of a world of conspicuous consumption, and it excited him. He was building a thirst for the trappings of the rich, searching for, as Charles Sheppard suggested, something missing in his “inner world.”²⁰²

The Bakkers began their married life in an apartment that Lena Williams had presented them. They adorned it with paintings and other items donated from Lena Williams. In particular, Jim Bakker recalled a painting of pink roses that reminded him of the positive environment of his grandmother’s house where he had first begun to see

beyond the boundaries of traditional Pentecostalism. It became a symbolic representation of Bakker's rejection of austere Pentecostalism for a more world-affirming and cheerful outlook. Bakker was so moved by this time in his life that he later commented that it was one his greatest regrets that Lena Williams was not alive to witness the opening of PTL's grand auditorium in 1985 with its custom carpet and wall coverings.²⁰³

Jim and Tammy's journey into worldly pleasures inclined them toward accepting new versions of Pentecostalism that embraced affluence. The Bakkers began to meet ministers who preached a more worldly Pentecostalism. Tammy Faye had attended at least one rally of A.A. Allen, who was one of the first Pentecostal ministers who insisted on the gifts of prosperity. "God told me," Allen later declared, "that he had given me the power to bestow power to get wealth. He did not say it was given to every Tom, Dick and Harry, or to just anyone who says 'Lord, Lord.'"²⁰⁴ Russell and Fern Olsen were even more influential. They ran the Minneapolis Evangelistic Auditorium (MEA) out of an old theater. Fern had been a healing evangelist, but she and Russell had gravitated to a more worldly form of Pentecostalism. As Jim Bakker later recalled, Fern loved "grand things" and loved to display her wealth. For example, when traveling by plane, Fern routinely used a limousine to transport her to the airport. It was a calling that demonstrated God's blessing upon them.²⁰⁵

Bakker first heard Russell and Fern Olsen preach in 1959, and they became a model for him. Russell was a rousing preacher who projected tremendous power. Fern was warmhearted, flamboyant, and dressed like a Hollywood starlet. Russell's preaching was upbeat, with a world-affirming message that contrasted with the traditional Pentecostalism of Bakker's youth. Fern Olsen captured the difference when she began services by declaring, "I've got a big God, and I know He'll help me."²⁰⁶ This was not the demanding, vengeful god that had turned Bakker away from his childhood church. It was a "sunny faith," which, as Charles Sheppard noted, would become the cornerstone of Jim Bakker's ministry.²⁰⁷

Bakker began to work for the MEA, where he claimed he got “a rich Bible School and learned that “[i]t’s nice to have a theory, but only results will demonstrate the value of the theory.” These experiences offered a model for his future ministries. He also remembered, in what was a clear reference to prosperity theology, being continually reminded that “what he [God] had promised, he was able also to perform.”²⁰⁸ Now as he preached, he soon began to ask God to pay for his grocery bills, arrange dinner plans and provide him with prosperity, which was followed by declarations that God was fulfilling these financial wishes. This was Bakker’s first realization that he could merge desires for affluence, fame and material comforts without abandoning Pentecostalism.²⁰⁹

It was at MEA where he first received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, a rite of passage for Pentecostals. During this experience, Bakker spoke in tongues for the first time. He began to hold nighttime teen rallies, which combined his love of theater, rock ‘n’ roll and ministry. He brought in performers he had used for his high school talent shows, but now he was the star of the show. He cast himself as an unsaved, sex-crazed teen who would always repent his sins and accept Jesus. It was a performance that mirrored his childhood. He sometimes appeared at MEA as a guest speaker, and he often introduced visiting speakers. These experiences allowed him to meet celebrity ministers and to learn how to enhance his stage presence. His friends began to notice the difference between Bakker’s onstage persona and his offstage demeanor. Onstage the sometimes shy and awkward young man took command of his audience.²¹⁰

In November 1960, Jim Bakker helped MEA organize a week-long Oral Roberts crusade. By this time Roberts was a popular promoter of prosperity theology. Like Russell and Fern Olson, he preached an optimistic theology that claimed that God had both the desire and the power to provide people with wealth. While in Minneapolis, Roberts combined these ideas with his earlier emphasis on healing as a means toward salvation. The crusade raised 15,838 dollars, and Roberts laid hands on over three

thousand people. Jim Bakker was impressed. He would later describe himself as a “General in Oral Robert’s army.”²¹¹

Jim and Tammy’s new worldly faith was also evident in their experience with a traveling evangelist Samuel Coldstone. While visiting the MEA, Coldstone offered them a chance to become missionaries. Coldstone was planning to travel to the Amazon River in “a fancy yacht once owned by Hollywood actor Errol Flynn.” It was a glamorous adventure that appealed both to their growing taste for luxury and their desire to evangelize the world. The journey never happened. Coldstone, they found out, was a fraud, and Bakker had been an easy victim.²¹²

Another product of this new belief was the biography Bakker constructed for himself. As noted earlier, Bakker’s journey to a new world-affirming theology was at odds with his own constructed version of his youth. Although Bakker was a confident young boy who embraced youth culture, he described himself as a shy, insecure youth who became a confident and wealthy man through faith in God. He began inventing this version of his life while at MEA, and he continued to do this for many years until he provided a formal biography in 1976.²¹³

By 1961, both Jim and Tammy had rejected the austere form of Pentecostalism that they had grown up with. In the process, Jim Bakker invented a new version of his youth that celebrated his economic and social rise. In the 1950s, celebrities became increasingly adept at constructing their own images and life stories. Individuals who aspired to “stardom” quickly learned to fit their lives into a predefined narrative. As one scholar has described, those who became famous fit a narrative of the “American dream.” Invariably, this story portrayed a hardworking individual who came from a meager beginning and transformed himself or herself into a success. A variant of this invented narrative became widely used in post-World War II Christianity. For example, faith healers of the 1950s commonly customized narratives of their past in order to increase their appeal as charismatic leaders. These healers built on a much deeper

tradition of using narratives of conversion to promote their life story and theology. Jim Bakker's life story became a similar tool that was adapted to this new era of the celebrity.²¹⁴

Jim Bakker's most important invention was his explanation of his decision to go to Bible school.²¹⁵ It began when he and a female friend took his father's 1952 Cadillac for a ride, cruising the streets and listening to the radio. As Bakker recalled, "Some favorites were playing — Little Richard, Buddy Holly and the Crickets, Ritchie Valens, Fats Domino." With the snow falling, they decided to head back to his church to intercept the ending of the services. As Jim recalled, "I swung the heavy Cadillac into the church's driveway. As I drove in, it seemed as if the car bumped against something like the curb. I didn't think anything about the bump since one of my favorite songs was playing of the radio . . . Suddenly, over the top of the music came a voice . . . 'Jim you've just run over somebody.'"²¹⁶ Bakker had accidentally run over a child who had slid down a snow bank into the road, completely collapsing his lungs. Jim went into a panic and began to scream and cry, and eventually began to pray for the boy. According to Bakker, this led him to commit his life to God and abandon his easygoing high school life, transforming himself from a shy awkward teen into a confident young man.

Bakker's recounting of this story parallels the quintessential conversion experience, a defining moment that led to the acceptance of and devotion to God. Pentecostal narratives, because of their emphasis on the Holy Spirit, also emphasize spiritual healing and speaking in tongues. However, Jim Bakker's conversion story differed from the prototypical Pentecostal conversion narrative. Instead of emphasizing these gifts, he more often described the prosperity and self-confidence that he received after turning toward God.²¹⁷ This was another sign that he was breaking away from his Pentecostal past. Also, unlike many narratives where conversions are instantaneous, Bakker describes a gradual turning toward God and a new, positive life-affirming religiosity.²¹⁸ As Charles Sheppard has illustrated, while this story provided a redemptive narrative that aided the promotion of PTL ministries, it was largely contrived. The

incident with the car actually happened two years before Bakker claimed in his autobiography, and family members and Bakker eventually recanted much of these earlier claims.²¹⁹

By 1961, both Jim and Tammy had rejected the austere form of Pentecostalism that they had grown up with. No longer did they believe that a holy life defined by struggle and retrenchment from the world. Increasingly, affluence was the product of God's will. Belief in God would lead believers to a life of happiness and peace of mind. Over time, they gravitated toward ministers and businessmen who shared these beliefs. Alongside these beliefs, Bakker adopted an entrepreneurial style of ministry that supported his growing belief in prosperity theology. This prepared him to become a leading symbol of this new religious movement.

Chapter 5

Jim Bakker the Televangelist and the Rise of Prosperity Theology in the 1970s

Prior to the 1970s, prosperity theology had been nourished primarily by groups of businessmen who were connected to the Pentecostal movement. They were its primary supporters and most ardent believers. This would change. Over the next decade, this new form of Pentecostalism mushroomed in popularity, and as it did, it transformed American Pentecostalism. Jim and Tammy Bakker became leaders of this movement. It was a remarkable development for this little-known married couple who, in the span of ten years, would become major players in the world of televangelism. They became the leading promoters of prosperity theology by blending affluence, entrepreneurialism, and religion in novel ways. As they developed their shows and networks, they integrated their religious message with a new style that emphasized growth and expansion. They also became consumed with becoming celebrities. By the end of the decade, these ideas became part of Bakker's message and a new Sunbelt form of Pentecostalism. Bakker combined these emphases with a family-centered message that had tremendous appeal among the middle-class Sunbelt suburbanites who were his most avid supporters. In this process, Bakker became a new type of religious figure and an advocate of a new form of cultural conservatism.

This transformation linked the Bakkers to Robertson, his Full Gospel Businessmen allies, Amway, and the Charismatic movement. Charismatics often hailed from prosperous suburban communities and followed the leadership of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International (FGBMFI). They were drawn to the FGBMFI whose message affirmed middle class suburban life and provided followers with happiness and fulfillment. The movement thrived in communities where suburban family life and prosperity reigned, and free market capitalism was heralded. They were drawn to a world-affirming family-centered Pentecostalism that meshed with their middle-class lives. The movement exploded in the 1970s. Millions of people followed and became

members of these new amorphous groups of Pentecostals, leading the Assemblies of God to become the fastest growing denomination in the United States. This rapid growth and the popularity of new religious forms was made possible by a revolution in religious broadcasting. Almost from the start, Jim Bakker was at the center of this revolution.²²⁰

Samuel Coldstone's Amazon adventure had one important consequence for the Bakkers. In an effort to raise money for it, Jim and Tammy headed South to live as traveling Pentecostal evangelists. They would preach in a town for a week, and then move on. For two years they slept on cots in church basements or lived out of their car. Initially, Tammy's makeup and jewelry and Jim's fashionable suits were out of place in the early 1960s South.²²¹ But in time, they became popular, and bigger and wealthier churches began to seek them out. After one weeklong revival in North Carolina, they earned enough money to purchase a trailer. As Bakker remembered it, "It was only a small church, with maybe fifty members, but people were dropping hundred-dollar bills into the offering plate!"²²²

Much of their popularity also owed to a family-style ministry that won an enthusiastic following. In addition to preaching, they used hand puppets made from bubble bath containers to create an array of witty characters that children and parents loved. Jim always ended the revivals with the story of how, after accidentally running over a boy, he had been transformed into a happy, righteous Christian. No longer a rebellious teen, he became a responsible adult. It produced tears and a strong emotional response from people of all ages who raised their hands, approached the altar and gave their hearts to Christ. He, like his mentors at the Minnesota Evangelist Auditorium, created a production that merged religion and entertainment.²²³

The Bakkers' growing following prompted a struggling Christian television station in Portsmouth, Virginia to ask them to produce a Christian children's show. The station's parent company was the Christian Broadcast Network (CBN),²²⁴ which in the

early 1960s was struggling. Pat Robertson depended on telethons and donations to stay afloat. Whenever he preached, Robertson ended with an appeal for support. By 1965 CBN was \$65,000 in debt, and Robertson needed new talent. The Bakkers, he realized, were natural performers and their puppets shows were lively and spontaneous. Robertson hired them to start a children's show, *Come on Over*.²²⁵ It served the network's major goal that was "to provide wholesome and entertaining programs for the youth." It was the start of a partnership that would make both men famous.²²⁶

The Bakkers revolutionized CBN's programming and helped turn it into a popular and financially secure network. Before the Bakkers, CBN ministers stood in front of a camera and lectured on theological subjects. The format mirrored church services and most religious radio programs. It was also akin to camp meetings where one evangelist preached to tents full of believers.²²⁷ Jim and Tammy were different. The focus of their show was their puppets who would appear on a set that consisted of a front porch and a white-framed country house. Tammy controlled the puppets while Jim played the stoic adult who would talk to them. They tried to teach the value of good behavior and the importance of prayer. It was a family-centered message that focused on childrearing and marital happiness.²²⁸

Usually, the shows were not scripted. The puppets were Tammy's and she used them to voice real disagreements she was having with her husband. The puppets were more interesting than the stiff lectures of television preachers. Allie the Alligator represented Tammy's kinder side and Sussie Moppet expressed her anger and frustration. Jim was often nervous to talk to Sussie because he never knew what the puppet would say. As Tammy recalled,

Many times because of our tiredness Jim and I would be on the show arguing about something. I would be so mad and disgusted with him and not even want to do the show. We still had to go on, smile and act happy for the children's sake. I'd get behind the curtain and Sussie Moppet would be the one who would be terribly mad at Jim, and Ally would be the peacemaker . . . by the time the show was over I wasn't mad at Jim anymore. I guess it was therapy for me.²²⁹

Their personal banter created a form of intimacy that appealed to family-oriented Charismatics. Their show allowed viewers to peek into the Bakker's personal lives. They were the neighbors next door who left their windows open. Marital problems, rather than a sign of deviance, were presented as common obstacles to be overcome. Their ability to deal with their own difficulties resonated with viewers. Within months, the Bakkers were receiving 5,000 letters a week from children and families. Tammy was essential to the program's success. Jim often bottled up his emotions, but Tammy was a vivacious personality and the combination of the two made the show the most-watched program on CBN. She was both bubbly and forthright. She giggled, laughed, and cried, becoming the embodiment of Jim Bakker's new joyful version of Pentecostalism.²³⁰

Jim and Tammy's show fit perfectly the emerging Charismatic movement. Charismatic publications had been preaching a similar message of success tied to the nuclear family ideal for years. The formula was simple. Individual success meant happy suburban family life. These publications were filled with stories telling how rebellious youth, drug addicts, and radicals had given up an unfulfilling life for one of family security and economic prosperity. Embracing success and family was the solution to the alienation of modern society. This message reassured middle class husbands and wives who faced a stressful workplace and the challenge of fulfillment in the home. Through belief in God, *FGBMFI Voice* suggested, believers could thrive in a competitive, narcissistic culture while maintaining an emotionally successful family life. It was part of a larger Charismatic narrative that emphasized the adaptability of Pentecostal practice. Charismatics such as John Sherrill had emphasized these ideas as he tried to market American Pentecostalism to middle class audiences. For example, John Sherrill's popular *They Speak in Other Tongues* insisted that typical Pentecostals were "a suburban family with problems much like our own." These same ideas were prominent in the Charismatic movement's early publications. As the husband of an important publisher

recalled, "She[his wife] had a special way with the people for who the magazine is edited: the well-educated, conservative suburbanite from the denominational church." By preaching as a couple, emphasizing family togetherness, and embracing affluence, the Bakkers' show embodied this message. After their daughter Tammy Sue was born in 1970, she frequently appeared as well, which further reinforced their family message.²³¹

Building on the success of *Come on Over*, Jim launched a second CBN show modeled after the "Tonight Show" but with a Christian theme. The show was *The 700 Club* which was named after a telethon that had tried to raise ten dollars from 700 supporters, and it was an instant success. From the start, some of the components that would make Jim and Tammy famous were evident. Rather than preach, Jim spent much of his show conducting interviews with local ministers and celebrities, who told how embracing Christ had improved their lives. He demonstrated, story-after-story, that Pentecostalism could thrive without its traditionally austere worldview.²³²

Jim's personality and the format were crucial to the show's success. Unlike Robertson, who was Yale-educated and seminary-trained, Jim had the folksy charm of a friend sitting on the other side of a table. This informality was quite different from the vociferous and highly emotional evangelists that he had grown up with. It was more akin to turning on the "Tonight Show," and, like Carson, Bakker would sit behind a desk in a suit and tie and invite people to join him. When he did interviews, he would often sit with a guest in a mock living room set with matching sofa and chairs and talk about how the guest had come to Christ and had witnessed the healing power of the Holy Spirit. The guests told stories about how their faith transformed their lives and had led to fulfillment and happiness. Often, the interviews were followed by appeals for money. Tammy frequently appeared on set, supplying an emotional response to the heart-warming stories.²³³

Bakker also differed from other emerging televangelists such as Jerry Fallwell who presented explicit political messages and preached sober sermons. Instead, the

Bakkers employed entertainment and storytelling. This format was an instant success. Bakker understood that stern messages would not work for television. As he later recalled, “Preaching is to go to a large crowd, but when people are in their homes, I felt they [the audience] didn’t always want somebody shouting in their ear.” He told his staff to “look right at the camera lens and make believe he was speaking to one individual in the comfort of their living room.” He also understood, as did Robertson, that middle class Charismatics didn’t “want to watch hard religious programming hour after hour.” Soon Jim and Tammy were local celebrities who became featured guests at local parades and within the community.²³⁴

Another key to Bakker’s success was his ability to raise money. In his first year at CBN, when the station’s telethons were \$40,000 short of their \$120,000 goal, Bakker took over. As Pat Robertson recalled, Bakker looked at the camera and said, “But we’ve fallen short. We need \$10,000 a month to stay on the air, and we’re far short of that.” Then his voice broke and he began to cry. Soon, viewers, many of them weeping themselves, were calling in with pledges. The station managed to more than make up the \$40,000 gap, and this allowed it to pay its debts and underwrite a new budget. It was the first time, Robertson said, that someone at CBN had made a personal connection with the audience. Henceforth, the telethons became a financial windfall. The next year, for example, CBN raised \$250,000 in two days. Soon after, Bakker became the most prominent public face of CBN’s ministry.²³⁵

Part of Bakker’s appeal was his ability to invoke the methods of Pentecostal healers. He would offer healing prayers to callers and some would call back and claim that Jim Bakker had cured their disease or injuries. He also emphasized how belief in Christ was central to a life of happiness.²³⁶ And he realized that presenting viewers with a crisis was an effective way of winning pledges. He learned to exaggerate crises in order to attract funds. Over time, this tendency would become a staple of his ministry and televangelism in general. He understood that viewers, if threatened with the loss of one of their shows, were much more apt to donate funds and to accept the station’s use of

repeated fundraising drives. He was also inclined to exaggerate the number of people who had called into the ministry and whom he had healed. For Bakker, however, fundraising meant growth and expansion. Such goals easily consumed him.²³⁷

Bakker and Robertson also developed other fundraising methods. On *The 700 Club* they placed rows of “counselors” on stage. They were a combination of volunteers and staff. Bakker would then present stories of miraculous healings while reminding the audience that these miracles could be theirs if they would call the network and request a prayer. The counselors would listen to prayer requests and the caller’s troubles. They would also ask for donations. More importantly, they would take down callers’ phone numbers and addresses to begin a mailing list of potential donors.²³⁸

Bakker always wanted to be bigger, to expand, and this meant raising more money. He preached growth and expansion; size, splendor, and ratings were the barometers of success.²³⁹ This was evident in an early CBN mailing that told viewers to “pray that God will provide every financial need connected with the purchase, operation, and future expansion of this work [station]”. This pamphlet also declared, “Pray that God may burden many of his people to intercede daily for the establishment of Christian radio and television.” God, they believed, was undergirding the station’s growth and the ministry’s expansion. Such statements highlight that, although CBN had not yet become an outpost for prosperity theology, echoes of these future beliefs were evident. By donating to the ministry, viewers became part of CBN’s sanctified growth and expansion.²⁴⁰

Bakker’s emphasis on growth was buoyed by changes in Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulation. Prior to the 1960s, the FCC required television networks to designate time slots free of charge to religious broadcasters. In 1960, however, the FCC decided that stations could sell broadcast time to religious broadcasters. Fierce competition ensued. Ministers became entrepreneurs and religion became marketing. In order to survive, religious networks found new ways to attract funds. Bakker and CBN thrived in this environment, and with this new money, CBN

began buying time on nearby networks. This began a wave of expansion that allowed free-market televangelism to take over the airwaves. By 1971, independent evangelical programming accounted for 67 percent of America's religious programming. Over time, this would increase to 92 percent. Evangelical businessmen who wanted to spread the gospel saw market share as sign of success. Bakker became their leader, and he also made money for himself.²⁴¹

Determined to benefit from CBN's success and obsessed with affluence, the Bakkers set up a company of their own called Jim and Tammy Enterprises. It sold songs and story albums to fans, as well as dolls and novelty items. Tammy also supplemented her income by selling costume jewelry from parties at their home. They continued to receive gifts from their fans. Co-workers remembered them receiving diamond rings, clothes, even cars. With this money they bought a waterfront home in Sterling Point which was a neighborhood popular with affluent Jews. Bakker also bought a black Cadillac and Tammy began wearing fur and mink coats. The Bakkers so valued these badges of affluence that they would eat peanut butter sandwiches during the week to afford them. Other CBN workers, meanwhile, struggled to pay bills. For the Bakkers, affluence was a gift from God. Soon Bakker would transform these beliefs into a message that claimed wealth and poverty were the outgrowths of God's will.²⁴²

Wealth and celebrity status soon became an integral part of their popularity. Viewers were giving money and gifts to Jim and Tammy because they saw them as personal friends. Their lifestyle, their family, and their biographies—not their biblical teachings--became the message. Fans relished the intimate stories of their lives, their rise to fame, and their claims of familial happiness. Bakker interjected his own biography into *The 700 Club* interviews on a regular basis.²⁴³ CBN's Charismatic audience loved it all. Business conservatives, who had helped fund and create CBN and shaped its message, had always stressed the importance of individual success. As Bakker became a star at CBN, he also became one of the FGBMFI's favorite speakers. At these functions, he lauded his own success and business acumen. Bakker, meanwhile, also began to

preach the ideology of business conservatism and helped popularize such ideas under the guise of a non-partisan religious organization.²⁴⁴

Between 1964 and 1972, Jim and Tammy Bakker became CBN's leading personalities. They worked long hours and created a host of new shows. Robertson relegated himself to administration. He created rules and structures for his growing organization. He also determined the programming and managed the staff. The partnership thrived. The station expanded, adding affiliates in Charlotte and other cities throughout the east coast. Increasingly, the network was being described as the epicenter of the Charismatic movement, a title once afforded to the FGBMFI and their *Voice* publication.²⁴⁵ Tensions developed, however, because of the Bakkers' ambition. One of the most pressing issues was the direction of *The 700 Club*. While Jim Bakker seemed to embrace traditional Pentecostal practices such as healing on air, Robertson had begun to move away from these displays. He believed healing and speaking in tongues should be a private matter and would turn away some viewers. Bakker also objected to Pat Robertson's decision to air Bugs Bunny and Casper cartoons, as well as older shows such as *Little Rascals*. No doubt fearful that it would cut into the popularity of their own children's show, the Bakkers began to feel slighted. Robertson, however, saw CBN's ratings jump 400 percent when adding this secular programming; it also was significantly less costly than producing new shows. This allegedly led Robertson to cut Bakker's air time.²⁴⁶

Other tensions arose. Robertson decided in 1972 to take over two weekly broadcasts of *The 700 Club*. Bakker also was having conflicts with CBN staffers over issues such as long workdays. He routinely forced his production staff to work long hours, which violated CBN's rules. Robertson had to mediate disputes between the Bakkers and their producer. When Robertson fined Bakker for not following rules, it was the beginning of the end. The two made amends, but Bakker still felt constrained. Bakker left CBN in November of 1972. It was a friendly exit that allowed Robertson and Bakker to remain close allies, at least for a time.²⁴⁷

When he left CBN, Jim Bakker was a star televangelist and a leader of the Charismatic movement. Robertson had been crucial to this success. He had provided Bakker with access to business conservatives, such as Demos Shakarian, who helped build the network. Many of Bakker's colleagues were also FGBMFI members. Like Bakker, they endorsed affluence and viewed it as compatible with Christianity. Over time, Bakker would rely on these groups for economic and intellectual support. He also would use their ideas to formulate his vision of prosperity theology. Robertson also provided Bakker with access to the Charismatic community, which embraced his innovative form of ministry that mixed entertainment, family programming, and entrepreneurialism.

When they left CBN, Jim and Tammy had no clear plans. They went on the road again, this time to raise money for religious TV stations. After holding telethons in South Carolina, Indiana, and Arizona, they hosted a telethon at a small station in Pasadena owned by a church that had carried the "Jim and Tammy" show. The station's manager was a former Pentecostal minister named Paul Crouch. Raised by his mother, he had graduated from Central Bible Institute and Seminary in 1959, and had served briefly as a minister at Bakker's childhood church in Muskegon, Michigan. He then moved on to start the Assemblies of God's Department of Television and Film Production in Burbank, California, and had also worked in religious radio.²⁴⁸

Crouch and his wife Jan formed an instant bond with Jim and Tammy. As Tammy recalled, "We immediately fell in love with them. Jan and I were so much alike it was remarkable." All four shared a love for the dramatic and the extravagant. Years later Tammy recalled the fun she and Jan had shopping for gaudy jewelry, fake eyelashes and home decorations. They had all grown up in austere Pentecostal families, but as adults they celebrated wealth and consumption and yearned for a life of limos, personal jets, and ornately decorated mansions. They soon decided to begin a religious television network in Southern California.²⁴⁹

The prosperity of southern California after World War II made the region hospitable to Bakker's developing message. After the war, the automobile and petroleum industries expanded rapidly and defense spending produced a booming economy. In 1964, for example, 41.5 percent of manufacturing employment was defense-related. A substantial percentage of the region's population consisted of well-paid laborers or middle-class managers. This environment made prosperity theology's claim that success and failure were product of faith appealing and comprehensible. It also created a corporate culture that glorified entrepreneurialism and heralded the benefits of American consumer culture. This same culture meshed with the Charismatic movement's pro-military stances that were evident in their publications.²⁵⁰

These transformations turned Orange County into a vision of prosperity where individual success stories were abundant and the American dream was never in question. When combined with a strong libertarian tradition that existed within agribusiness and the middle class community, it created a culture that embraced laissez-faire capitalism. The suburban communities also reinforced this worldview. Created by companies such as Lockheed Martin, they provided families with the means to luxury, security, worship, and a high-class education that tied its residents to the interests of corporate America and their vision of success. It also insulated these residents from much of the poverty of Watts and other low-income districts. It was a perfect environment for his message of emotional and economic fulfillment.²⁵¹

Lisa McGirr has pointed out that Orange County was a hotbed of activity for the religious right. The evangelical churches, she argues, provided "moral certainties in a time of change." In her view, conservative Christianity came to meet the needs of Orange County conservatives. This religiosity soon became a vital part of the American conservative movement, and it was prosperity theology that drew together free market capitalism and right wing religion. This convergence appeared early in Orange County and made it a prime location for prosperity preachers. It was prosperity theology that undergirded the conservative belief in laissez-faire capitalism and the meritocracy of the

American capitalist system. Orange County had been the birthplace of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International. It was also close to Van Nuys where the Charismatic movement had begun. It was here where publications like *Trinity* and the FGBMFI *Voice* began to target the conservative upper middle class. Like many Orange County conservatives, FGBMFI was an organization whose members were heavily linked to the defense industry in the 1960s and were often upwardly mobile. Also nearby was Robert Schuler whose ministry would eventually be carried on Bakker's network and whose glorification of American consumer culture was rivaled by only TBN and PTL.²⁵² Many local Charismatic churches also became supporters of this movement. Megachurches like Melodyland who supported TBN were known to being friendly environments for these ideas.²⁵³

This environment led to a boom in Pentecostal—often Charismatic—churches in suburban Los Angeles. By 1955, this area was already the fastest growing Assemblies of God district in the United States and Pentecostal churches were soon sprouting up in affluent suburbs around Los Angeles. These churches were monuments to the region's growing affluence. These men and women saw their lives as a reflection of the success stories of prosperity theology and the gospel of wealth. By the 1970s, wealthy Pentecostal churches had already integrated these ideas into their weekly newsletters. FGBMFI *Voice* was widely distributed to businessmen. George Otis also had a local radio show with a similar message to his fellow southern California suburbanites.²⁵⁴

Other nearby evangelical ministers also presented a pro-prosperity message. The most prominent was Bill Bright. Like many of the early promoters of prosperity theology, he lived in southern California and was involved with conservative political causes. Following a call to Christ, he began Campus Crusade for Christ with the intention of turning the world to Christ. Bright was initially reluctant to accept the Pentecostal practice of speaking in tongues. This changed with his growing friendship with Oral Roberts. Soon Bright was not only speaking in tongues, but promoted the prosperity gospel and therapeutic ideas. Bright adopted Oral Robert's terminology of abundant life

in his teachings, which was Oral Roberts term for his belief that Christ would provide followers with fulfillment, health, and prosperity. Bright told his audiences that belief in God would provide financial freedom and that trust in God would relieve them from the economic worries of daily life. He began to teach these ideas on campuses across the country and mass rallies that were filling stadiums. He also began to merge this belief with politics. He joined forces with John Conlan, who was connected to the Full Gospel Businessmen's International and was a conservative congressman from Arizona, to create a publishing company that produced literature that attacked the federal government for excessive spending and high taxes and celebrated entrepreneurialism.²⁵⁵

Orange County embraced prosperity and success. The suburban communities also reinforced this worldview. Created by companies such as Lockheed Martin, they provided families with the means to luxury, security, worship, and a high-class education that tied its residents to the interests of corporate America and their vision of success. It also insulated these residents from much of the poverty of Watts and other low-income districts. It was a perfect environment for his message of emotional and economic fulfillment.²⁵⁶

The area also had its share of Pentecostal businessmen and Charismatics who were ready to support Bakker. They included George Otis and Demos Shakarian. Bakker utilized these connections. For example, one benefactor agreed to staff and fund all of Bakker's telephone lines free of charge through a third party telephone company. Another group of businessmen helped Bakker acquire an abandoned military hanger which became his studio. Demos Shakarian, president of the FGBMFI, also joined Bakker's endeavor, becoming a board member, and producing his own show. The power of the local Charismatic movement also aided Bakker. Because they needed equipment, Bakker and Crouch borrowed cameras from a large Charismatic church named Melodyland.²⁵⁷

Southern California was ready for Jim Bakker. The new station was modeled after CBN and would become Trinity Broadcast Network (TBN). In 1973, Bakker and Crouch signed their broadcast license and outfitted their newly acquired airplane hangar. Jim and Tammy created another children's show and they began a new talk show with the name *The PTL Club*. Despite their advantages, they were short of funds, but, as Bakker recalled, God's gifts of prosperity kept them on the air. As word of the Christian TV station spread throughout the Los Angeles Charismatic community, donations began to arrive.²⁵⁸

Bakker shared the region's entrepreneurial values. He heralded the growth and expansion of his ministries as symbols of providence. He described donations as an "investment in the growth of the ministry." He also began characterizing TBN's expansion as a sign of divine intervention. Preaching that businessmen were heroes made Bakker and Crouch extremely popular, and it fueled TBN's early funding.²⁵⁹

The importance of California can also be seen in the style of the ministry. Unlike southern rural Pentecostals, California Charismatics were not comfortable with speaking in tongues and healing on camera. As Jean Stone, a leading figure of the California movement, declared in 1964, "Speaking in tongues is not spooky; it's wholesome, good, clean, beautiful. We use no weird positions, no peculiar gymnastics. Don't add your little goodies to it. If you make it sound peculiar, you'll scare people pea-green." It was this difference that led some of the early investors to question whether Bakker's emotional style was too southern for Orange County. Speaking in tongues, they thought, should be confined to the privacy of a Pentecostal church.²⁶⁰ This more refined form of Pentecostalism was clearly a reflection of the growth of the Charismatic movement in Orange County and its popularity within the conservative, and prosperous, Sunbelt.

Raising money was essential to their early survival and this meant telethons and Jim's emotional pleading for donations. Jim looked at the camera and said: "We need to pay these people. We need to pay some bills as well. We need a lot of money. If you want to mail it, that's fine. But if you want to bring it down tonight, you can even do

that. ” They turned to new techniques as well such as matching pledges. The telethons worked. They were proof, as Crouch recalled, that a “Thirty-, 60- and 100-fold blessing is, indeed, a glorious truth and blessing for those who will simply obey the word of the Lord!”²⁶¹ They began to tell viewers that if they send money into TBN, God would more than double this donation with economic blessings the way the station had been blessed. It was proof that God was the key to economic prosperity. Here was prosperity theology. Over time, this idea thrived at TBN and would be promoted by over ninety percent of the ministers who appeared on TBN’s networks.²⁶²

By 1975, the weeklong telethons were pulling in over one million dollars. Both Bakker and Crouch used this money to create a network of TV stations. They also moved into a gaudy white mansion that was filled with gold gild and precious antiques, and began broadcasting twelve hours a day rather than six in 1978. It was the beginning of TBN’s climb to the sixth largest broadcaster in the United States and the largest Christian television network in the world. Over the next decade, it acquired twenty independent cable stations and a satellite. By 1990, it was the most powerful religious television network in the world and had revenues of sixty million dollars from donations. By the spring of 1973, Ted Turner was interested in affiliating with TBN in order to compete with Pat Robertson, whose secular programming had begun to encroach on his Atlanta market.²⁶³

Pat Robertson noticed the power of TBN’s message as well. He began to preach these same ideas on *The 700 Club*. Soon, nearly all Charismatic ministers and televangelists began preaching similar ideas across the country. *Charisma*, the movement’s leading periodical in the 1970s, became awash with stories about how God provided the faithful with happy and prosperous lives. One article, for example, began by declaring, “God is rich! Philipians 4:19 gives us a clue to how rich God really is. It says, ‘But my God shall supply all your need[s] according to His riches in glory of by Christ Jesus.’”²⁶⁴ Another southern California Charismatic described how this message of prosperity inspired him: “Suddenly, I saw God not as a cruel taskmaster but as a living,

divine Heavenly father who loved me. The picture of a Judgmental God evaporated.”²⁶⁵ As this author declared, “learning to think positively” and having faith allowed them to live a happy prosperous family life. Whether it was a home sale, job promotion, or a new Cadillac, Charismatics viewed these financial matters as symbol of God’s presence within their lives and the world. As one historian noted, nearly every financial success story was described as a miracle.²⁶⁶

As Pat Robertson’s own research discovered, the Charismatic audience wanted to “see God’s miracles of today’s world” which was a euphemism for prosperity theology and Bakker’s new world affirming form of Pentecostalism. It led to a 30 percent increase in *The 700 Club* viewership and a 67 percent increase among men. Donation revenue also increased 47 percent. These numbers signaled that Charismatic men in particular were gravitating to this developing message.²⁶⁷

To California Charismatics, Bakker, Crouch, and TBN were not preaching greed, but the virtues of success. The problem with America, they believed was not excessive greed, but rather the fact that too few people were not driven to accumulate wealth. Tammy’s fur coats and Jim’s Rolex watches signaled that they understood this vision. Capitalism was a Godly system and refusing to follow its competitive precepts would lead to moral and economic disaster. They also, like Bakker had done at CBN, broadcast stories about the financial success of their ministries, claiming that these successes were evidence of God’s blessing upon the ministry. Crouch even declared, “I believe that someday historians will look back [at the growth of TBN] (if Jesus tarries) and compare the events of that December 23, 1976.”²⁶⁸

During this time Bakker began to translate these ideas into his own version of prosperity theology. In October of 1973, he wrote to TBN supporters in a promotional mailing that God wants “above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health.” These ideas became prominent at TBN. Bakker would use this same claim throughout his career when defending prosperity theology. Within his organization there were others who had begun to promote these ideas. Demos Shakarian was on the board of

directors. George Otis also had his own show on the network. The connection between this pro-business conservatism and the idea of positivity was not the only place Bakker picked up these beliefs. Many others within the Charismatic movement and the Christian Right were expressing similar ideas. Bakker was close to many of these individuals. In the early 1970s there was a plethora of Charismatic writers who began defending laissez faire capitalism as the positive solution to a negative society and most of these people were connected to corporate America through groups like the FGBMFI. Bakker was no exception. In 1977 Bakker wrote, "What happens to people who are always grumbling and complaining? If they're sick, they stay sick. They may even get worse and die. Why? Because they have failed to praise God. They have actually become slaves to their enemies—sickness, poverty, death and all the rest."²⁶⁹ He began to almost exclusively present stories on how faith had led individuals to a life of prosperity and happiness and associated poverty with individual failure.²⁷⁰

This environment was important for Jim Bakker. Although he would leave Orange County after two years, California would always provide Bakker with his largest base of support. His subsequent TV sets paid homage to this background which one commentator called "California casual." This environment was an ideal place for Jim Bakker when he began to fully express his ideas on prosperity theology. Like Southern California, he also never forgot the popularity of the nearby Disneyland. This park--that combined nostalgia for the American past and optimism for the American future--was an ideal model for the expression of his prosperity beliefs. It led Bakker to send his designers back to Orange County more than 10 times a year after he began the construction of his Christian theme park. It was an environment that clearly molded Jim Bakker's vision of an exclusive Christian theme park that merged the promises of exclusive southern California suburbs that surrounded his ministry with a vision of America that mirrored the hope and optimism of Disneyland.²⁷¹

Bakker's pro-family message was also suited for Southern California's conservative social values. It meshed with families whose fathers were most often

professionally employed and whose mothers were most often housewives.²⁷² As Kristian Luker's study of socially conservative California women illustrated, housewives like those in the Charismatic movement viewed feminism and pro-choice movements as an attack on their roles as mothers. In turn, they glorified family life in defense of their social—and economic--world. These feelings were most prominent in women who were married to small businessmen or low-level white-collar workers. These same suburban families flocked to the Charismatic movement in the 1970s. Abortion, liberalization of pornography laws, a vibrant youth culture, and the feminist movement tore at what they believed were core American values. Although they lived in affluent suburbs, they could not block out the influence of these issues. In 1970, for example, Yuppies took over Disneyland. Unlike Charismatics, the Yuppies²⁷³ decried American capitalism and viewed southern California prosperity as a sign of social decline. Charismatic children, moreover, were frequently exposed to the nearby counter-culture movement. They embraced the family unit as shelter from these threats. Faith would strengthen the family, protect their children, and provide them with personal happiness and economic prosperity.²⁷⁴ As they saw it, familial happiness, like prosperity, was a sign of God's presence in their lives.²⁷⁵

Bakker and TBN embraced these ideals. The Bakkers and the Crouches frequently presented themselves as happily married couples--as mothers and fathers, rather than as ministers. This focus was also evident in the network's inaugural newsletter's cover picture, with the title "PTL! Christ is Born" where well-dressed smiling children were placed in front of staff. In another early newsletter they juxtaposed two photos of children with the statement "TV, No. 1 influence in the World Today!" Bakker and Crouch presented a combined message of happy families and prosperity in a cheerful Sunbelt demeanor. Reflecting this focus, their early lineup included "Happiness Is," "The Californians," "The Happy Hunters," and "Faith For Today," along with photos of cheerful hosts.²⁷⁶

Another factor that increased the appeal of this message was the Watergate scandal and the oil crisis. Watergate increased Charismatics' fear that the nation had lost its moral compass. Adding to these fears, the oil crisis and the national calls for individual austerity led many Charismatics to believe the country was undergoing a moral and political crisis. They believed the Sunbelt middle class family was at risk. Rather than embrace austerity and limits, they turned to Bakker's message of familial happiness and individual prosperity, which they saw as a defense of traditional American values. This vision was evident in a thank you letter from TBN's "Happiness Is" staff.²⁷⁷

Maybe someday the Lord will send us a secretary; but in the meantime with 8 children, 2 husbands, 2 homes and many speaking engagements to be kept up between us, we read each letter, send out the books & recipes, pray for each need, and believe God [will be] with you for the answer for all your needs!²⁷⁸

It was a positive world-affirming version of Pentecostalism that combined early-Pentecostalism emphasis on the individual with cheery Sunbelt theology. God created happiness and happiness should be the objective of good Christians.²⁷⁹

Despite TBN's success, the Bakker-Crouch partnership fell apart in less than three years. Bakker was increasingly frustrated with Crouch's refusal to expand the network outside of California. This conflict was further exacerbated by a growing number of investors who were trying to assert control over TBN. Some of these investors were also leery of Jim and Tammy's power. They saw the Bakkers as interloping outsiders who did not fit in the Southwest. Some of Bakker's detractors saw him and his allies as a "bunch of dumb country folks." It was a conflict that led to a dramatic break up and a failed boardroom coup that would split much of the staff into pro and anti-Bakker camps. After the fallout, Bakker left the studio with twenty-five staff members by his side.²⁸⁰

In a period of ten years, Jim Bakker had helped create the two largest religious television networks in America. By the 1976, these stations were able to purchase over 100 affiliates. Although his relationships with these networks faltered, his experiences with these organizations and his connections to the Charismatic movement allowed him to begin to develop his vision of Christianity. Jim revealed his ability to raise money and grow his ministry. His marriage, their wealth and their entrepreneurial drive became symbols of holiness. It was a sign to his audience that the good life was available for anyone who had faith in God. He and Tammy had also become superb fundraisers. They learned how to use emotion, storytelling, and simulated crises to raise millions of dollars.

It meshed with and justified Bakker's ostentatious lifestyle which he increasingly saw as evidence of God's gift of prosperity. With these influences, Bakker began to develop a new entrepreneurial approach to ministry: growth equaled success; success signaled divine providence. Reflecting the interests of suburban supporters, he merged this emphasis with family-centered programs. These ideas melded with Jim Bakker's environment in Orange County and the growing popularity of his message in the affluent suburbs near his broadcast center. Following these successes, he used these messages to create a thriving ministry and theme park in Charlotte, North Carolina.

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Chapter 6

Jim Bakker and the Rise of PTL Ministries

Jim Bakker had made CBN and TBN popular networks by developing a world-affirming, family-centered gospel that appealed to Sunbelt suburban audiences. This was a form of Pentecostalism that was radically different from what he had known as a youth. But this was just the start. After he and Tammy left California, they made their way to Charlotte, North Carolina where he was well known and had close ties. There, he created a third network for a televised ministry known as “PTL” or “Praise the Lord.” Jim and Tammy were the stars of the network and the networks leading show “The PTL Club.” It made them megastars of religious television and leading figures in the rapidly expanding Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. Within a few years, one million viewers were watching the network’s shows each day. Eventually, PTL had over 170 affiliates in the United States, making it the fourth largest network behind ABC, NBC, and CBS, and its shows were airing outside of the United States as well.

Charlotte was an ideal location for Bakker’s new venture. It had once been a center of North Carolina’s textile mills and the mill workers who had flocked to Charlotte’s old-style Pentecostal churches. But now it was a booming financial center that lured white-collar migrants to its businesses and banks and to its sprawling suburbs. These men and women – like millions of others – wanted a soothing, reassuring religion, and Bakker and PTL supplied it hour after hour. In addition, Charlotte’s business leaders had close ties to FGBMFI and these men quickly allied with Jim to turn PTL into an ever-expanding empire dedicated to positive thinking.

By 1974, Jim and Tammy had developed an immensely-appealing style of performance that drew viewers to their shows and kept them entranced with their interviews, the singing, and the personal revelations. Above all, however, the Bakkers had developed a religious message that promised a relationship with Christ while

protecting the family and embracing consumption and prosperity. PTL dedicated itself to Bakker's Pentecostalism and prosperity theology. Bakker's ability to sell this message was vital to his success. To understand how and why Jim Bakker came to represent the excesses of the 1970s and 1980s and how and why he came to embody a massive religious movement that has only gained strength since the 1970s, we must understand Bakker's move to Charlotte and the building of PTL.

For much of the twentieth century, Charlotte would hardly have been an inviting location for a ministry dedicated to prosperity theology and positive thinking. In and around Charlotte, and especially in mill towns such as Gastonia, the older, anti-worldly form of Pentecostalism had flourished in the 1920s and 1930s. It was strongest in the hill country and the Piedmont where farmers and workers resisted the New South vision of industrialization. These men and women called for simple living and decried decadence and the growth of commercial society. They sought a religion that condemned movies, new clothes and other forms of conspicuous consumption. Often, they had turned away from the formality and status-consciousness of mainstream churches to the Pentecostal churches and their emotional, enthusiastic services led by lowly ministers with social backgrounds much like their own. They paid their ministers meager salaries, built simple meeting halls, and attended services in their day-to-day clothes. They also focused on community betterment and they backed millworkers in labor conflicts.²⁸¹

The older Pentecostal churches were still an important part of western North Carolina in the 1960s when the region's economy began to change in profound ways. Charlotte had been a modest regional industrial center, but in the 1960s and 1970s it became a center of banking and finance and a major trucking and railroad hub for the southeast. Once the region's cotton mills had been vital to Charlotte's economy, but by the 1970s IBM, Wachovia, and other service- and information-related businesses had made Charlotte a booming city and had brought to it well-to-do white collar

professionals and their families.²⁸² The most important employer was IBM, which by the 1970s was producing over three-quarters of the world's computer systems. Its decision to establish a research facility and corporate offices in Charlotte meant 10,000 jobs in the city by 1980. IBM headlined Charlotte's new research park, which soon became a center for research-oriented businesses. Eventually Charlotte's banking industry supplanted IBM as the city's largest employer.²⁸³

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Charlotte was a New South success story. Its downtown became a corporate center dominated by glistening skyscrapers and its suburbs housed ever more affluent salaried professionals who had moved to North Carolina from across the United States. Increasingly, these suburbs were self-contained communities.²⁸⁴ One example was Myers Park, which was located in the southern end of Charlotte, and was dominated by men and women who worked in the banking and technology industries. It had its own shopping district, which was underwritten, in part by tax incentives from the local and federal governments. A mostly white community, it was an enclave for families that wanted no part of school bussing.²⁸⁵

As it prospered and emerged as a "White Shirt City," Charlotte developed a new ethos and outlook.²⁸⁶ Increasingly, it was a city of rootless nomads whose only ties were to business, conservative politics, and to making money. "At the bottom, materialism is his [a Charlitonian] life philosophy, [and this translated] thought into political maxims [such as] free enterprise, fiscal sanity and balanced budgets."²⁸⁷ What emerged, of course, was very much like Southern California. Marshall Fray, for example, noted: "The South has been mightily laboring to recreate itself into a tinfoil-twinkling simulation of Southern California, and has unwittingly worked on itself a species of spiritual impoverishment." As in Southern California, suburban prosperity encouraged an unwavering faith in free market capitalism and the idealization of suburban life.²⁸⁸

The banker Hugh McColl embodied much of what became the new Charlotte. Born in Bennettsville, South Carolina, he became the driving force behind the consolidation of a series of southern banks that led to the creation of Bank of America,

the largest banking consolidation in American history. McColl's Bank of America and its rival Wachovia bank turned Charlotte into a worldwide banking and financial center. In a city where businessmen were better known than politicians and celebrities, McColl became an iconic figure, and also achieved great influence over Charlotte's politics. When building projects or major zoning changes were proposed, developers and city officials invariably sought McColl's opinion before bringing these to the public.²⁸⁹

McColl was the symbol of freewheeling, aggressive Sunbelt capitalism that shunned any talk of limits and the negative effects of capitalism. For McColl, business was a battle; he saw himself as a banking cowboy, and he soon gained a reputation as autocratic, harsh, and merciless. Equating the fight to acquire a bank with an invasion by a conquering army, he had a glass grenade at the center of his desk and stock certificates of conquered banks displayed across his office. After he acquired a series of Florida banks in 1982, his staff planted a Florida state flag in his office while they and McColl, who was wearing an "Iwo Jima" style helmet, posed in front of the flag. He then fired the Florida bank executives because they were "lazy." McColl's example came to characterize Charlotte's business community and a new southern style of capitalism that worshiped growth. For businessmen such as McColl, growth depended on private enterprise to transform society, and this, in turn, demanded limited government. This formula seemed an obvious path to prosperity.²⁹⁰

Another product of this free-wheeling southern capitalism was Dexter Yager who had strong connections to conservative evangelical groups. Yager was Amway's promotional guru who settled in Charlotte and began to describe himself as an "adopted southerner." He was a master at creating materials and designing seminars that encouraged people to join Amway. These skills made him one of the wealthiest men in North Carolina. He also had close ties to the FGBMFI and to the prosperity theology movement. Frequently, Yager brought prosperity theology ministers to Amway meetings in order to highlight how God and Amway would make believers wealthy.

Amway also had other connections to the Charismatic movement. Members of FGBMFI were often encouraged to join Amway at their weekly gatherings. In turn, Amway supported conservative evangelical groups.²⁹¹

Yager had grown up in upstate New York and after high school had become a beer salesman. Deeply ambitious, he sought new opportunities without having to attend college. This led him to Amway in 1964. He “ate, slept the business seven days a week,” and in 1969 moved to Charlotte where he had developed a growing line of distributors. While in Charlotte, he quickly became an Amway star and was a millionaire by age 30. He was soon a “Crown Ambassador,” which was rank held by only one other Amway associate. He had also become a charismatic champion of free market capitalism and positive thinking. In the years that followed, he became one of Charlotte’s leading developers and dealmakers—and also a prominent Republican.²⁹²

Yager’s success owed to his mastery in the marketing of Amway’s motivational material that preached the promise of wealth and familial happiness. By 1990, one million Amway associates were selling his materials and he was earning as much as thirty million a year. Each distributor was expected to purchase a tape each week and a book every month, and they were expected to attend Yager’s conventions and workshops. His tapes and materials were filled with Horatio Alger-like stories about how positive thinking could bring wealth and success. Yager also emphasized how believers could have happier family lives, and live the American dream. His seminars became highly emotional meetings where participants were encouraged to release their stress, think positively, and praise God in order to become happier and wealthier. This message flourished in Charlotte where, as Peter Applebome, a local historian, said, “the desire to do good and a desire to do well are knitted together.”²⁹³

Yager preached another message as well and that was to “defeat liberalism.” He filled up the Charlotte Convention Center to hear Ronald Reagan, Jessie Helms, and other promoters of free market capitalism. He also brought in ministers such as Oral Roberts and Charles Schuler who preached prosperity theology. He welcomed visitors to

his ostentatious mansion which became a shrine to the Sunbelt vision of progress. Yager also wore two 10-carat diamond rings, a Rolex, and a matching diamond bracelet that spelled out DEX. His message was his ingenious blend of Dale Carnegie, Ronald Reagan, and Oral Roberts that merged positive thinking with conservative politics. Stop "harboring beliefs of scarcity," he said, and embrace the promise of American capitalism.²⁹⁴

As Charlotte changed, so did its religious communities. The region's Baptists had often shared many of the religious values of North Carolina's Pentecostals. They had united behind a set of moral standards to shield their families from the moral laxity that they associated with urban life. In the late 1960s, however, suburban growth began to challenge these ideals. Carlyle Marney, a prominent Charlotte Baptist preacher, found that increasingly the church-goers were from a different social world with a different outlook. Marney described the people around him as "rich enough to be social leaders; powerful enough to feel no social pressure; pious enough to feel no conviction for their sin and complacent enough to feel no responsibility anywhere." With this social base, the churches were indifferent to community development. As one scholar described, "Marney believed that this Southernfried mystic individualism fostered a culture of indifference and allowed prejudice to flourish in the church and he needed to fight this infiltration of 'vicious individualism.'" Marney also observed that many of his church members were seeking a faith that would boost their individual aspirations and self-fulfillment. Their main social concern, he lamented, was the maintenance of their families' private lives. His congregation, he thought, seemed to attempt to "Make . . . [Christ] just like us and he won't bother us."²⁹⁵ Marney tried to resist these pressures, but by 1970s the changing nature of Charlotte had rendered him less and less in tune with a new evangelical mood. Charlotte had become much more like southern California, and by the 1970s it had a growing Charismatic following that was younger, less southern, more educated, and less concerned about restrictions on worldliness.²⁹⁶

In fact, North Carolina's Assemblies of God churches grew faster than those of any region of the country except California. Here was an audience eager for Jim Bakker's message.²⁹⁷

When Bakker left TBN and California, he headed for Charlotte, which he declared was "ripe for a revival."²⁹⁸ He had become well known in Charlotte during his years with CBN. His shows had been carried over WRET, a CBN affiliate and a religious television station with close ties to the Charismatic movement. Bill Flint, WRET's owner, had often arranged for Bakker to make speaking engagements in Charlotte and he had also aired reruns of Bakker's shows after Bakker had left CBN for California. During his visits to Charlotte, Bakker had quickly won a following with the city's well-to-do Charismatics. An owner of a cosmetics company, for instance, had provided Jim and Tammy with gifts such as clothes and a new Lincoln. In addition to its suburbs teeming with Charismatics, Charlotte offered another advantage: Dexter Yager. As soon as Bakker arrived in Charlotte, Dexter Yager was there to greet him. They had already established close ties through FGBMFI, other prosperity theology ministers, and Amway. Yager would emerge as one of Bakker's most important allies and financial underwriters. As Bakker's chief of security later recalled, Yager's "nod" was "worth a ton" in the Charlotte area and "whatever he endorsed became . . . [He was] like Oprah endorsing your product in the South." Bakker was mesmerized by Yager's success and quickly arranged a seat for him on the board of what would become PTL. Preaching a similar message, Yager viewed Bakker as a natural ally. Over time, Bakker and PTL provided Yager with many recruits and vice versa. One former employee took note of this relationship, recalling that "it seemed that all of my PTL friends' parents were in Amway."²⁹⁹ Bakker also promoted Amway as a means to success within PTL's charities. In the 1980s the two organizations even planned to share a proposed convention center.³⁰⁰

Bakker was especially interested to learn how to apply Yager's inspirational messages and techniques to his own ministry. In fact, he was so enthralled with Yager

that he became an Amway sales associate and attended weekly meetings with Yager, Doug Wead and other important members of the Amway organization. These meetings and the connections with Amway and with Yager inspired Bakker to make prosperity theology an even more important part of his ministry and he began to learn from Yager how to market and sell his message. Yager, meanwhile, endorsed PTL and encouraged his distributors to support Bakker's new network. He also liked to flaunt his own success with PTL employees by walking around the offices with a shoulder satchel containing \$20,000 of "pocket money." More importantly, Bakker began to embrace Yager's message of wealth and success. In doing so, Bakker tailored his message to the wealthier Charismatics who could provide more funding for his young ministry. This in turn tied him more closely to the emerging Sunbelt conservatism.³⁰¹

In late 1975, Bakker began his new ministry at WRET. He had many resources at hand. First, Yager donated all proceeds from his first book to help underwrite PTL. Second, WRET had access to a network of Charismatic businessmen.³⁰² Third, as Bakker highlighted, this ministry depended heavily on donations from other Prosperity theology ministers. In particular, he gave credit to "General Oral Roberts," Rex Humbard, Pat Robertson, and Paul Crouch for providing much of the seed funding for his young ministry. He also brought with him twenty-five employees, many of whom had been with him at CBN and TBN.³⁰³

What began at WRET soon became America's fourth largest broadcast network with one million daily viewers and 170 affiliates. In turn, Christian broadcasting and prosperity theology became a cultural phenomenon and Jim and Tammy became symbols of the growing power of the Charismatic movement. His station became one of the most important purveyors of prosperity theology and home to Robert Schuler, Kenneth Hagan, and others. Moreover, his ministry supported a large array of ministers who helped expand his vision across the globe. For example, he was the sole supporter of Robert McAlister, creator of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God which grew to over seventeen million members worldwide. The Bakkers became national figures

with features in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *The Saturday Evening Post*. Their ostentatious habits gained as much attention as did their booming ministry.³⁰⁴

The foundation of the new network was *The PTL Club* show which Bakker had made a success in California. As with his shows at CBN and TBN, *The PTL Club* was presented in a relaxed style of Christian television that emphasized PTL's message of prosperity and fulfillment. Bakker, wearing his flamboyant plaid jumpsuits and loud ties, usually entered from the back where he chatted with the audience on the way to the stage. The show opened with the song, "Praise the Lord, see what we have done," and then Jim and Tammy would begin the show with fundraising offers. Much like PBS, they encouraged viewers to become PTL members and offered "gifts" for donations. Oftentimes, they would follow their appeals for contributions by bringing guests into the audience for informal discussions about their lives.³⁰⁵

The new version became an instant hit. As he had done at CBN, Bakker interviewed guests who described how their faith had led them to become happier and more successful. Increasingly, however, he highlighted economic success. He promised viewers that God would give them control over their lives despite their circumstances. He presented upbeat, encouraging musical numbers that were accompanied by promises of an abundant life and reassurances that "God loves you." Then he would move to the mock living room set to banter with the support staff before introducing their guests. Much of the banter was about Jim and Tammy's family life. For example, in one episode Jim described Tammy Faye's obsession with wrapping gifts, while Tammy mocked Jim's unwillingness to wrap his own presents. On other episodes, their children—Jay and Sue Bakker-- came on stage and Jim and Tammy would talk about their family vacations and their childrens' various interests or the latest flu bug that was going around the home. They projected an image of an idealized Christian family. They allowed the audience, of course, to see an ideal vision of a happy Christian home. They would also devote entire shows to celebrating the Bakkers' anniversaries, birthdays, and other familial events where they would put together montages of family scenes. During breaks, PTL would advertise other ministers who had shows on the network, as well

other Christian authors. Jim and Tammy also created commercials that promoted giving to their ministry.³⁰⁶

In order to reinforce this relaxed style, Bakker interlaced the show with upbeat musical numbers. Many of these musical numbers were performed by Tammy and some by her daughter Tammy Sue. PTL band members also sang original songs and Christian hymns. Christian artists such as Pat Boone and David L. Cook were also featured. Nearly every song focused on overcoming fear and adversity, along with the importance of self-fulfillment. Some of Tammy Faye's most popular songs, were "Don't Give Up" or "You Can Make it." In her emotional style that signaled to the audience that she understood their struggles, she told the audience that they were not alone and that things would get better if they trusted in the Lord.³⁰⁷

An important part of the show was Bakker's assistant Henry Harrison. Harrison had been with Bakker since his days at CBN, and they had become close friends. Bakker was best man in Harrison's 1972 wedding, and Harrison rented a room from the increasingly wealthy Bakkers. Harrison also became Bakker's co-host, earning the title of the Ed McMahon of Christian television. He was a perfect match for Bakker, who loved the limelight, because Harrison was willing to play second fiddle. His job onstage was primarily to tell jokes, give hugs, and keep guests smiling, ensuring that the show never veered away from its positive message. His role, however, had other important aspects. Over time, Harrison's was transformed into a good-old-boy southerner. Bakker would often prompt him to give a folksy response to questions that provoked laughter.³⁰⁸

Along with musical numbers, *The PTL Club* included interviews with guests. These usually took on three common formats. One of the most common guest were evangelical Christian who had written a books on evangelical family issues that focused on emotional difficulties surrounding marriage or raising children. Other guests were Charismatic preachers, some of whom had programs during other timeslots on the PTL network. These included Robert Schuler, Oral Roberts, and Rex Humbard, and most were prosperity theology ministers. Famous evangelical Christians were also frequently

on the show. These included Mr T., Pat Boone, and Gary Paxton. Invariably, they would describe how Christ had made their lives better or more prosperous. Bakker also interviewed less famous people who had stories about how Bakker's message had transformed their lives.

Bakker also frequently featured phone banks on his show. Bakker had begun using these while at CBN but at the time he used them in the manner of a Pentecostal healer. Now they became a fundraising tool. During many broadcasts, the phones were to the right of the stage and staffed with 60 volunteers who managed viewer prayer requests and donations to the ministry. As telephone counselors recalled, individuals phoned in seeking help for a wide range of problems. Following these confessions, counselors usually provided the callers with prayers and prompts for donations—along with promises that their wishes would be fulfilled. Bakker also used these phone calls to gather mailing lists so that he could promote his motivational materials. Like Yager, Bakker developed a series of tapes and books that promoted positive thinking. In this material, witnesses would testify how giving to Bakker's ministry had transformed their lives. It was a business practice inspired by Yager's own motivational strategies.³⁰⁹

Bakker's version of prosperity theology was designed to meet the needs of Sunbelt migrants who often felt alienated and alone in their suburban enclaves. This led many of them to call Bakker's telephone lines in search of a friendly voice that would sooth their anxieties and promise them happiness. To each caller they provided a reassuring, therapeutic voice regardless of the issue. Sometimes Bakker would discuss calls on the show. One Sunbelt migrant recalled how these phone lines appealed to her. "[While my husband was at work at IBM] I would run into problems and I did not know many people in the area. I called my family a lot, it was just that [at PTL] there was someone I could talk to . . . they were just so friendly and nice."³¹⁰

On the air Bakker would highlight how God had answered his followers' prayers and alleviated people's stress; with faith they were given wealth, health, and happiness. For Bakker these proclamations were proof of God's glory. Bakker even claimed the

verse “Faith without works is dead” should not be used to hold Christians accountable for charitable acts, but rather to hold God accountable for the gifts he promised the faithful. Christians, he claimed, should not obey God based on blind faith. They should praise God for what he does for us (works), and not just on faith alone.³¹¹

Bakker’s Sunbelt supporters, in turn, viewed God as the creator of their prosperity and happiness. One supporter who described herself as a housewife declared,

Why should you believe in a life of miracles? Because if your anything like me, you’ll be tempted to take credit personally for many good things in your life— unless you’re sure the heart of God really did them. But if you ask God to fill your life with wonderful events and happenings, better than you could expect on your own, when they happen, God in His love *gave* you those things, not because of how great you were but because He loves you. And that’s where your deepest joy will be found—in what God in His love has done.³¹²

This encouragement led people to call for nearly every possible ailment or problem, promoting Bakker’s belief that one should turn to God for every possible desire. He also encouraged viewers to overcome their timidity and ask God for help no matter how small or mundane the request might seem. And viewers responded by calling about economic problems, marital problems, psychological problems, behavioral issues and physical ailments. They found someone who would listen to their difficulties and offer them their prayers. Some counselors fielded calls about alcoholism while others specialized in financial matters.³¹³

These calls also included many requests that were clearly a response to Bakker’s sermons on God’s gifts of prosperity. One person from Virginia, for example, wrote that “after sending in our seven requests to PTL, we stepped out in faith that God would answer them. We signed a contract to build a new house knowing God would have to sell our previous home first. God sold the house with perfect timing to see we got into our new home on time.” In all situations, the counselors promised that God would fulfill their wishes no matter how trivial.³¹⁴

The television show, the phone banks, “The PTL Club”---these all made Jim Bakker a famous televangelist. More importantly, they signified his commitment to a new form of Pentecostalism that emphasized wealth, health, and happiness. This was a development that had begun at CBN and was increasingly evident. With Bakker’s ascendancy, Pentecostalism took on a new form. Poverty was no longer a righteous state, but rather a sign of a lack of faith. Prior to the 1970s, prosperity ministers were considered heretical to most Pentecostal denominations, and especially to its largest denomination, the Assemblies of God. By the mid-1970s, the influx of Charismatics into Pentecostal churches changed this. It was, as Edith Blumhoffer suggested, a populist middle-class rebellion that was due in part to Bakker’s promotion of this new form of Pentecostalism. By the end of the decade, sixty percent of the Assemblies of God was comprised of Charismatics who came from upper and middle-class backgrounds with very little connection to traditional Pentecostalism. In turn, the Assemblies of God became a clearinghouse for prosperity ministers, and it also became the fastest growing denomination in the United States. Its members flocked to Bakker, who promised prosperity and happiness within a family setting.³¹⁵

Bakker’s prosperity message was well-suited to Charlotte. Show-after-show followed a standard narrative that reinforced his family-centered version of prosperity theology. Guests began by describing their lives, which were complicated by traumas, economic difficulties, guilt, and insecurity. The guests then began to describe to Bakker how their turn to Christ removed these personal roadblocks. In all cases, their guests overcame these trials and tribulations with prayer and positive thinking. Problems that seemed overwhelming had been conquered. The outcome was always prosperity and happiness.

The theme of every show was that anyone could be seen as a victim and everyone could overcome. In particular, Bakker suggested that the real victims of American society were middle-class men and women trying to enjoy God’s prosperity. Problems were usually personal and self-generated and were overcome by a new

willingness to be happy and to undertake a life-long journey of self-discovery. Oftentimes, stories combined these psychological issues with economic troubles in order to explain how trust in God and positive thinking had led to a life of wealth and happiness. Bakker latter explained: "On our television network I did not want to hear any bad news. I would not allow my staff to book a guest who was sick or having severe financial, emotional, or spiritual problems. If a guest had not come out on 'the victory side of life,' he was not asked to be on the air. I was not being cruel; I just wanted everyone to praise the Lord and be happy."³¹⁶

One example was an interview with Ruth and Doug Glass. Doug Glass was the chief executive officer of Wal-Mart, and Wal-Mart, of course, depended heavily on Sunbelt prosperity. Doug and Ruth were also Charismatic Christians and Ruth had her own ministry. Bakker had read Doug's "search for excellence," which he described as a guidebook on how to be a Christian entrepreneur. Doug Glass's success, he told the audience, was a symbol of his close relationship with God. Ruth Glass concurred, but she also described how her early life had been dominated by poverty, homelessness, and drug use. She overcame these problems by "turning to the Lord." As she and Bakker explained, the key to this transformation was her "willingness to accept success," which allowed her to overcome her fear of failure. Rather than viewing poverty as the outgrowth of social circumstance she, like Bakker, viewed it as an outgrowth of incorrect thinking. With a positive outlook, her troubles subsided and she became both wealthy and happy. Bakker applauded this story and emphasized that Ruth had been able to obtain prosperity and happiness by removing both drug use and poverty from her life. With similar language Bakker described how he succeeded by breaking his "spirit and mindset of poverty," leading to life of "faith and joy." At other times, he praised the heads of wealthy corporations whose prosperity he believed was a sign of God's blessing upon them. They were giving back to society by hiring people, and God was rewarding them for this favor. Their life contrasted with the "loser" of society who lacked faith and gave up their dreams. As he argued, most ghettos are "ghettos of the mind. The gospel will bring people to a higher standard than they've known before. I'm

convinced that Christianity is a lifestyle—a way of life—not a religious experience. And I believe the scripture says, ‘Delight yourself in the lord and he’ll give you the desires of your heart.’³¹⁷

Other less-famous guests expounded on this message. For example, after Bakker reminded his audience to give to his ministry, Judy Chavez described how she had risen out of a childhood of hopelessness to a life of happiness and prosperity. She then declared that in a country where “children were being discarded in garbage cans,” the country desperately needed Jim and Tammy’s uplifting message. Tammy followed by reminding the audience that she grew up in a family without much money, but through faith she had been able to overcome hardship and succeed. Tammy then sang her inspirational song “You Can Make it.”³¹⁸

When Bakker interviewed guests, he often interjected to describe how he and Tammy had fared with similar problems. This combined a sense of intimacy with the show’s emphasis on positive thinking. As always, Bakker invoked the narrative of a life he had constructed. He reminded the audience how he had grown from a shy, poor, insecure boy into a happy, successful preacher. He and Tammy also discussed their own problems and how changing their thinking had allowed them to overcome hurdles. This was a demonstration of struggle and triumph that could be displayed on a daily basis. In one case, a guest described his struggles with agoraphobia, which led nearly everyone on stage, including Jim and Tammy, to declare that they too had overcome this fear of leaving their house. Through these discussions they repeatedly demonstrated that although negativity, poverty, anxiety, and fear abounded in American society, positivity and faith in God allowed people to overcome these roadblocks.³¹⁹

Other guests merged conversion stories with a conservative message and prosperity theology. This was evident in Jim Bakker’s extremely popular interview with Chuck Colson who is known most infamously for his role in Watergate. After a meeting with Thomas L. Phillips, the chairman of Raytheon, Colson gave his life to Jesus. Soon, he began looking back on his life, realizing how “the lord was blessing him” with success

and prosperity. Then he met with other leaders of the Charismatic movement who helped him publish a book about how his faith in Christ had reinvigorated him and given him “peace-of-mind.” No longer was he preoccupied with worldly achievement. He then declared that the country should “praise God for Watergate.” It shattered the “false idol of government worship which had been so prevalent in this country for thirty years.” Both he and Bakker began to discuss how faith was transforming radicals and everyday people into productive members of society, convincing them to stop pushing equality upon a “fallen world.” Colson declared, “there is no utopia on earth” while Bakker quoted from scripture in order to support his message.³²⁰

Not all of Bakker’s guests had an explicitly conservative message. They all, however, presented a message that supported Bakker’s vision of prosperity and happiness through faith. This message also permeated the show’s musical numbers. For example, Tammy's popular song "Enough is Enough" declared: "I’m taking back what is rightfully mine. My health, my joy, my peace of mind. Enough is enough." The chorus of another song was: "What in the world do you want my God can get it for you." Bakker often introduced these songs alongside a sermon in which he would lambast ‘outsiders’ who hated God and want to deny Christians what was rightfully theirs.³²¹

Jim repeatedly told his audience that God wished a life filled with prosperity and pleasure upon those who believe. For example, he usually explained how important God's gifts of prosperity were to his ministry and his vision of Christianity, followed by a declaration that through positive thinking his followers could have anything they desired. It was sinful, he insisted, to not accept that God gives prosperity to those who believe. He said, "God wants to give you good things, and forgive you if you turned away from the things of the world." He then lambasted ministers who talked of hell and not enough about God's gifts, declaring that this message made PTL special and unique. Other times he was even more specific, proclaiming to the audience that they should not settle for Chevys if they wanted Cadillacs.³²² At PTL, he reminded them, the good life was available for anyone who absorbed his message.³²³

Bakker also defended prosperity theology with biblical passages. Bakker's critics and advocates of liberation theology had used the same passages to claim that true Christians should live among the poor and practice simple living. However, Bakker's interpretation of Luke 18:18-23 argued that Christ offered prosperity to his followers and hated poverty.³²⁴

The *Charlotte Observer* showed a cartoon bag holding money and me holding the cameras and Jesus Christ in tattered robes telling to give money to the poor and follow me. If the cartoonist would take a look at the Bible instead of taking it out of context and tell the whole story. Jesus Christ said I am not going to let you outgive me. I am not going to let you be in poverty. He would have given that rich young ruler 100 times more than nobody that is giving up houses will not have a bad time. I am not going to let you outgive me. I am not going to let you be in poverty. He would have given the rich young ruler 100 times his original donation. Mathew said manifold and Luke said 100 times. You will receive 100 times in the present world and eternal life. God was trying get the rich young ruler to get rid of the god money and Jesus would reward him back again. God would get all the glory and give you the desires of your heart.³²⁵

Occasionally, like a traditional Pentecostal, Bakker talked about the presence of the devil in the world. His version of the devil, however, was novel. Unlike traditional Pentecostals who emphasized the devil's role in creating evil and sin, Bakker emphasized how the devil created stress, destroyed dreams, and caused poverty. Thinking positively, having faith, and supporting PTL was not only the key to happiness and wealth, it thwarted the devil's plans to make people anxious and poor. With this understanding, he often described PTL's problems as a devilish plot to destroy prosperity and happiness. For example, later outlining why PTL fell apart he declared, "I think the devil was mad that something so beautiful was being built. . . . I believe the devil said, 'I have to smash Jim and Tammy Bakker.' " ³²⁶

Bakker also used his prosperity message to encourage donations to his ministry. As he told supporters in one of his publications: "As people began to send in their gifts to become Lifetime Partners, we started hearing about dramatic victories in their lives. As they do to the Lord's work, God began pouring out amazing and unexpected

blessings! Daily, I read miraculous accounts where families that had houses or properties that wouldn't sell for years suddenly sold after they gave. Others had their dream home provided . . . their businesses suddenly double, triple, and even increase tenfold. Others had unexpected checks arrive in the mail; people were given new cars, new homes." Bakker followed this declaration with over one hundred pages of supporter testimony about how giving to PTL and faith in Christ improved their lives and led to prosperity. Bakker claimed Christians should embrace prosperity and resist the Devil and his supporters who attempt to deny Christians these unlimited blessings. With the aid of Yager, Bakker began producing cassette tapes and pamphlets that embodied this message. If one thought positively, had faith, and gave to his ministry, God would provide that individual with unlimited riches. On the show and through his mailings he promoted this material incessantly, promising his followers that he held the keys to success and happiness.³²⁷

PTL was carving out an alternative culture that was built on a vision of God that served believers' needs and aspirations. As *Christianity Today* noted, these ideas were rapidly replacing Bakker's earlier promotion of healing. This new type of Pentecostalism was replacing the beliefs of Bakker's youth which he now described as a religion of "can't." Instead, Bakker had created a church that provided blessings, healed families, and provided prosperity. He had integrated Pentecostalism with 1970s middle-class Sunbelt culture.³²⁸

In the 1970s, as sociologists have shown, membership in PTAs, unions, and other associations was declining, leading many people to more private, individualized lives. This was accompanied by a rapid decline of the extended family household and the migration of middle-class people from ethnic neighborhoods to suburbs. Consequently, many of the rapidly growing religious movements of the 1970s focused on serving the needs of suburban migrants. As scholars of this phenomenon have noted, this religious awakening coalesced with 1970s American culture's turn from social justice issues to a greater emphasis on self-gratification. These new religious movements demanded little

commitment, yet they filled a vacuum in the lives of many men and women. Bakker's phone lines illustrated how PTL had adapted to the decline of associational life in the 1970s. It gave lonely people access to inspirational messages twenty-four hours a day that promised to solve problems, grant wishes, and alleviate their loneliness.³²⁹

It was an appealing message for the Sunbelt's highly mobile—and often alienated—middle class. This was highlighted by a supporter who worked in commercial sales and marketing for a television station in Richmond, Virginia.

Well, the Christian television helps me when I'm shot, when I'm worn out and I need uplifting. As many of the media are here today, they know the pressures, the deadlines, the struggle, being on line and like many jobs today at this time, the demands are massive and I get home and I live by myself. I don't have anybody else and this sort of helping me along and continues today.³³⁰

Bakker coupled his message of prosperity with the family-centered themes on his show. These had been part of his ministry from his earliest days at CBN and they merged easily with his prosperity message. Bakker described PTL as a family and told his viewers that their donations would allow them to join "our family." Jim and Tammy presented themselves as a happy, fulfilled, prosperous family whose faith in God allowed them to live an affluent life. Many guests also articulated these themes. Many had written 'how-to' books on raising happy Christian families and how the Bible could be a guide to successful relationships. Many of these books helped parents communicate with their children and emphasized the importance of character development and faith. Others wrote guidebooks on how to protect children from a dangerous and profane outside world. Marriages were also often book topics. Bakker hosted many authors who had written books on how to nurture successful Christian marriages by improving communication and relying on the Bible. Along with his prosperity message, this created thriving ministry.³³¹

Some guests merged positive thinking with promises of family protection. One example was Zig Ziglar. Ziglar was a businessman who became an extremely successful motivational speaker in the 1970s. At his speaking engagements, Ziglar preached positive thinking, and emphasized his faith was key to his business success. Soon he became popular within the Charismatic community. This led him to repeat appearances on *The PTL Club*. In 1986, he presented ideas from his book *Raising Positive Kids In a Negative World*. Sitting across from Tammy, he lamented that America was in downward spiral that began in the year after the 1940s, leading to teenage alcohol abuse, abortion, and drug use. The chief cause was the secularization of American culture which he associated with negativity. As he declared, “If you read some of the earlier definitions of negativism, it is a secular belief, it is anti-scriptural . . . it was sinful, it is a sinful approach to life.”³³²

The solution was embracing positive thinking and Christianity which he viewed as one in the same. Ziglar argued that instilling children with a “positive Christian message” was key to raising successful, productive children and thwarting the secularization of society. Children needed to be protected from negative secular culture which he and Tammy associated with drug use, immorality, and teenage apathy. Parents needed to spend time with their children to instill “positive values” upon their children. They needed to help their children focus on the positive events in their lives and the world. This, he and Tammy believed, would help Christians raise happy, productive, moral children. Both discussed how *The PTL Club’s* message was a shining example of how “positivity” can transform the world.³³³

With the success of his show, Bakker began to expand beyond television production. Bakker didn’t just preach prosperity, he wanted to display it. Bakker had always pushed to be bigger at CBN and TBN, but now he made growth and expansion an all-consuming obsession. For example, he wanted a new studio and when a businessman found a Georgian brick mansion in suburban Charlotte, he fell in love with it. It had been built on twenty-five acres of land, had fixtures of carved brass, and an

indoor pool with Roman columns and mirrors. Bakker spent over 2.8 million to enhance the grounds and buildings. He then turned it into a tourist attraction for the PTL faithful. He added a visitor center that displayed PTL gifts, Bakker's tapes, and books. Tour guides in colonial attire took visitors through classrooms, the butler's pantry, the television studio, the indoor pool area, a meditation garden, the mahogany-covered living and dining rooms filled with vases, imported quilts and pictures of the first three presidents, and the heritage house. *The PTL Club* guests enjoyed even more privileges. They had free access to the pool and the built-in sauna, and were served dinner on red, white and blue plates. Bakker added an adjacent studio with a set that looked like a modern high-end living room with tennis racquets on the wall, crown molding, and glass cabinetry. Outside the studio the landscaped grounds featured walkways and white picket fences.³³⁴

According to one staff member who had come with Bakker from Orange County, this mansion was designed with a Hollywood-like appeal to create a storybook world or what PTL staffers described as "enhanced reality." Bakker's storybook world was inspired by the Carters Grove Plantation located in James City County, Virginia, and by Dexter Yager's red Georgian-style brick mansion. Like Yager, Bakker kept a fleet of luxury automobiles for visitors to see on their way into the building. Bakker also used it as a symbol of the veracity of his prosperity message. In one of his promotional books, he highlighted how he was able to expand his ministry during a time of economic pullback and outside criticism. He then declared that this expansion was possible because he gave to the ministry and God blessed him. In turn, PTL became "the greatest and most blessed" ministry in the world. The more he built, he believed, the more God would bless him financially. He was giving to God and God was rewarding him for it.³³⁵

In order to present this message, Bakker tied his mansion to a nostalgic vision of the southern life. Bakker repeatedly told his tour guides that they needed to be well dressed, pleasant, and courteous. They were to embody the sort of Southern suburban lifestyle presented by *Southern Living*. This was part of a larger reworking of southern

history designed to romanticize the Sunbelt in the 1970s and to minimize the South's social disparities.³³⁶ In this imagined South, racial conflict played no role. Like other Sunbelt promoters, Bakker marketed a new vision of the South where leisure and prosperity abounded for all and the suburban family was the center of daily life. He created a world where it was easy to imagine how faith could lead to a life of prosperity and happiness.³³⁷

Bakker's ideas melded with the suburban Sunbelt vision of a color-blind society that supported individual economic choice and defended consumerism during a time of economic recession. This ideology was predicated on their construction of southern history and their belief in the reality of racial and economic equality in American society, which PTL reconstructed plantation helped to reinforce. This was evident to two observers who noted that guests were quick to remind them that at PTL race did not exist. Bakker also expressed these principles when he declared on a "PTL Club" broadcast that God's promise of prosperity and happiness was available to all whether they were "red, black or brown." In Bakker's world prosperity was simply the outgrowth of one's mindset, not socioeconomic factors, and anyone who believed could achieve.³³⁸

This romanticization of southern history was both a critique of the present conflicts over race and an alternative construction of a mythic past in which challenges to privilege did not exist. Merging images of historic privilege with a celebration of modern family consumption, PTL created a history and a future dedicated to prosperity. Bakker's mansion represented the ideas promoted by George Otis, Richard DeVos and other pro-business conservative Charismatics. They interpreted American history as the story of how American Christianity had created an egalitarian, high-consumption, family-oriented world. In this world prosperity was available for all, and all groups benefited from it. These ideas were also embodied in the image of Charlotte put forth by its most aggressive boosters, and aided Bakker's presentation of world of unlimited prosperity.³³⁹

Bakker's own lifestyle embodied his prosperity message as well. After arriving in Charlotte, he told his co-host, Tim Kelton, that if ministers drove 'worn out cars' they would get 'worn out offerings.' Hence, Bakker drove luxury automobiles, lived ostentatiously and spent audaciously. His frequent weekend trips were known to cost more than \$10,000, as Jim and Tammy would buy the most expensive clothes and jewelry they could find. The couple also had vacation homes throughout the country which they flew to on PTL's private jet. Like his mentor Yager, he also wore expensive watches and jewelry. While critics equated this with greed, Bakker and his followers viewed it as an outgrowth of God's blessing upon the couple and a sign of their success. He would regularly travel throughout his theme park in a limo with a trailing entourage that some noted made Jim and Tammy appear more like movie stars than ministers.³⁴⁰

With Bakker's skyrocketing popularity, American Pentecostalism was transformed in the 1970s. Prosperity ideas had always been strong within the movement, but they also faced opposition from people who came from traditional Pentecostal denominations who viewed the pro-prosperity preachers and their Charismatic supporters as outsiders. With Bakker's esteem, however, the popularity of these ideas among Charismatics, televangelists, and many Sunbelt Pentecostals largely eroded this opposition. As Edith Blumhoffer, a leading historian of the movement, wrote,

The religious experience that had often brought their [Pentecostal followers] grandparents' social ostracism seemed a ticket to health, wealth, prosperity, and general well-being. God commanded them to live out the American Dream, they insisted. Pentecostalism became a means to an essentially selfish, individualistic end.³⁴¹

Bakker was directly responsible for this new form of Pentecostalism. He transformed free-market ideas into a cultural movement and he helped make the Assemblies of God the fastest growing denomination in the United States.³⁴² In turn, as Jay Bakker, Jim Bakker's son, remembered "the words 'God wants you to prosper' became as common

as the message ‘God wants you to do good’ became inseparable.” Another writer also noted that these ideas became so prominent that it became nearly impossible to find Pentecostal preachers who still emphasized the traditional doctrines of sin and redemption.³⁴³

Bakker’s Sunbelt followers embraced his ministry. Living in prosperous suburbs, they were drawn to Bakker’s message of happiness and prosperity. His message of family happiness resonated with these suburbanites whose lives revolved around work-achievement, and suburban family life. They wanted a world with no limits that glorified domesticity. Because of their prosperity—and unlike in many other parts of the country—they still maintained a one income home, and viewed Bakker’s glorification of domesticity as an endorsement of their lives. Day-after-day, Bakker presented them with stories of individuals who overcame poverty and had risen to lives of happiness and wealth. Consumption, in their view, was not an affliction. They viewed the consumer society as the basis of American prosperity. Rootless, but craving community, they turned on their televisions to Jim and Tammy, who promised them peace of mind, prosperity, and familial happiness.

Chapter 7

The Politics of Limits: Jim Bakker and the Rise of a Cultural Conservatism

In the 1970s, Jim Bakker constructed a Charlotte-based ministry that made him a national star. In turn, his message of prosperity and family togetherness became a Sunbelt sensation. It was a perfect match for a booming Charlotte and its white-collar workers. Hungering for community, they endorsed Bakker's and his promises of a world without limits and family togetherness. Consumption was a rightful product of faith in God and positive thinking. This popularity transformed American Pentecostalism and the Assemblies of God denomination with a massive influx of middle class Charismatics. Increasingly, too, this message took on political undertones. As the United States confronted the traumas of Watergate, the end of the Vietnam War, inflation, oil shortages, and other crises, American liberals began to assert that consumption was an affliction. The quest for more of everything, the assumption of limitless prosperity, and the equating of the American dream with economic growth was destroying the economy and environment. Increasingly, liberals preached restraint and the virtue of limiting desires and wants. Both internationally and domestically, Americans had to accept that they lived in a world of limits. The FGBMFI had been fighting this message since the 1950s and now they were joined by a grassroots movement of Pentecostals and Charismatics. Deeply influenced by businessmen such as Yager, Jim Bakker joined in the attack on liberalism and he came to preach this message with vigor and brilliance.³⁴⁴

The Charismatic movement's hostility to a liberalism of restraint had longstanding roots. As noted in earlier chapters, the prosperity theology movement was the outgrowth of businessmen who were searching for a faith that matched their conservative economic worldview. Since the 1960s, they had supported ministers who preached the value of free market principles. They had helped form TBN, CBN, and PTL.

By the mid-1970s, their influence pervaded the Charismatic movement. Bakker regularly featured these evangelical businessmen on his broadcasts. In turn, Bakker looked to these groups to cultivate his ideas. He became part of a broad conservative, evangelical, Sunbelt-centered, cultural backlash against 1970s liberalism. Demos Shakarian and Richard DeVos, he often said, were the primary influences of his religious worldview.³⁴⁵

One of Bakker's closest connections to this movement was his mentor Dexter Yager, who preached prosperity theology and sought to "defeat liberalism." Yager regularly brought conservatives such as Ronald Reagan and Jessie Helms to Charlotte to promote free markets. He also brought ministers such as Oral Roberts and Charles Schuler to preach prosperity theology. Bakker was quick to join the cause as his preaching carried important political implications.³⁴⁶

These implications were quite explicit when he delivered his keynote speech to the Full Gospel Businessmen's Annual convention in 1979. He proclaimed, "When I hear our nation say cut, do this. We are going to dine in the dark and cold I say hogwash, the same God that inspired our forefathers . . . the greatest inventors in the world can inspire them to have new means of power; I mean petroleum; new means of communications; new ways to power our cars. We don't have to sit down and die. If we confess negative we will receive negative."³⁴⁷ This emphasis on positive thinking was a direct outgrowth of Devos' *Believe!* and a retooling of Peale's theology, both of which had earlier roots in Dale Carnegie's business motivational messages of the 1930s. Bakker acknowledged this in 1979 when he admitted there was very little difference between his religious message and that of Carnegie.³⁴⁸ Invoking positive thinking, Bakker argued that America should not try to restrict consumption but should embrace it. For Bakker and his followers, these ideals became indelible features of American society, increasingly making alternative economic visions both unpatriotic and ungodly.³⁴⁹

Bakker's speech was a critique of Ralph Nader and others who were trying to regulate and restrict American capitalism. These defenses of a high-consumption society were increasingly important during the energy crisis of the 1970s. Bakker dismissed

“America’s enemies,” those who declared that the country “will be “dining in the dark” because of fuel shortages. Like increasing numbers of Americans, these commentators argued that widespread fuel shortages, environmental degradation, global competition and rising prices ended the era of unlimited economic expansion. Instead, America was entering an era of regulated growth and conservation.³⁵⁰

Jimmy Carter, who was the first president to campaign on environmental issues, quickly adopted many of these beliefs. He also embraced liberal intellectuals who had come to challenge America’s unquestioned embrace of consumption. In his inaugural address he had told the American people, “We have learned that ‘more’ is not necessarily ‘better,’ that even our great nation has its recognized limits.” This understanding, as scholars have noted, explained Carter’s strong commitment to fiscal conservatism, moralism, and conservation. Carter did not see economic limits as temporary and easily overridden by technological ingenuity. This was a change. Liberals and conservatives during the 1960s, for example, accepted corporate and consumer expansion. Carter did not see limits as temporary and easily overridden. Increasingly Carter, various intellectuals, and other Americans began to envision how the country would function in this new age of limits.³⁵¹

Charismatics and conservative business groups viewed these ideas about limits as anti-American and anti-Christian. In the Sunbelt in particular they challenged suburban prosperity. In these states, job growth was strongest and many governors and politicians had linked their political success directly to expanding investment. Bakker reflected these concerns in 1979 when he spoke in front of the World Harvest Club. He declared:

There is a mounting fear and anxiety in our nation as perhaps never before in our history. Our president has termed it a “crisis of confidence,” but there is a questioning, a concern, a lack of trust in our political leaders, in our government, in our businesses and in ourselves . . . However, I believe the answer to our questions and every problem we face in life is the Bible rather than experts. Just

months ago, all the experts predicted that PTL would fall from attack of certain people and because of some money problems; but God said, “No weapon formed against thee shall prosper.” PTL has not only thrived; it has prospered.³⁵²

This speech was a direct challenge to Jimmy Carter, who asked Americans to adapt to a new age of limits, sacrifice, and practice conservation, challenging the high-consumption society that was supported by Sunbelt prosperity. Carter also admonished the country by declaring, “In a nation that was proud of hard work, strong families, close-knit communities and our faith in God, too many of us now tend to worship self-indulgence and consumption.”³⁵³ Bakker presented an alternative vision in which people lived without limits and the pursuit of self-interest served public needs. These ideas quickly reverberated through the conservative Christian movement, leading to counter rallies that praised America and characterized Carter’s emphasis on limits as anti-American. Bakker’s vision was becoming an article of faith for the conservative movement.³⁵⁴

Bakker’s challenge to the politics of limits tied him to a broader conservative business reaction to 1970s America’s emphasis on regulating and limiting America capitalism. In the 1970s conservative evangelical businessmen and Charismatics proposed laissez faire capitalism as the solution to national problems. One example was George Otis’s, Pat Boone’s and Harald Bredesen’s book, *The Solution to Crisis-America*. All three were close friends of Jim Bakker, and Bredesen and Otis were both founding members of FGBMFI. In their book, the three depicted Ralph Nader as a symbol of the negativity that was taking over America. As they wrote, “Nader’s Raiders attacking our business with a broad ax leaves me with mixed emotions. Anyone can criticize and tear down, but not everyone can build up. It would frighten to trust my land to the don’ters instead of the doers.” They were especially concerned with “the dull cloud of pessimism” that seemed to be infecting young people with a more critical view of American corporations.³⁵⁵

Richard DeVos also echoed these sentiments, describing Nader as a virus that was infecting America's youth with a negative view of capitalism and entrepreneurialism. He then declared, "The real heroes are the men who have been providing America with goods and services for seventy years—the executives, scientists, designers, and workmen who make something good and positive. " He also characterized these problems as both economic and religious. Tracing back through American history, he argued that God blessed the American people with prosperity when they followed the precepts of free market capitalism and obedience to God. He even claimed, without discussing slavery, that the Civil War was punishment for straying from these principles.³⁵⁶

These authors all argued that their vision of American capitalism would liberate Americans from the 'negativity' and guilt that pervaded America. These problems were the product, they argued, of the liberal obsession with oppressed peoples and the negative impacts of capitalism. This led, as DeVos described, to a "neurotic guilt" that was the source of much of America's poverty and the declining power of American society. This guilt was also causing American underachievement and poverty. Unlike liberals, they sought solutions that would not change the fundamental structure of American society. They promoted prosperity theology in order to inspire a more positive vision of capitalism. This, they argued, would lead to growth and affluence. Liberals, by contrast, emphasized education, anti-poverty programs, and economic redistribution, which would force equality in an inherently unequal world, and thereby destroy the nation's entrepreneurial spirit.³⁵⁷

Although DeVos and Otis wanted their movement to rise above politics, their defense of laissez-faire capitalism moved them closer to the Republican Party. Wealthy conservatives who increasingly viewed this religious movement as a cornerstone of modern conservatism, poured money into their cause. For example, Joseph Coors shifted his heavy donations from anti-union efforts to funding pro-prosperity Christian groups. He also became a member of the FGBMFI and featured speaker at

conventions.³⁵⁸ These trends were also evident among individuals close to Bakker. DeVos, already a leader of the conservative movement, invited Ronald Reagan and Jessie Helms to give keynote speeches at Amway rallies. Otis, Boone, Bredesen, and other FGBMFI members were also developing links to the conservative movement. As Pat Boone recalled,

A bunch of us Christians, including Shirley and George Otis, founder of *Voice of Hope Radio* in the Middle East, and some others from our church had gone up to attend a gospel rally and were invited by Ron and Nancy to come to the mansion after the event for a short visit. We happily did. The Reagans were very hospitable and eager to hear about the rally. As we started to leave someone asked the governor if he'd mind if we prayed with him. He welcomed the idea and we joined hands in a circle. We each took turns praying briefly but then something happened that no one expected: George began to prophesize. That is, with our heads still bowed and hands clasped he spoke as if it were a message from God directly to Ronald Reagan. "My son, I am pleased with you. If you continue to walk uprightly before me, you will reside at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue."³⁵⁹

Reagan viewed Amway as the embodiment of his vision for free enterprise. Amway's stories of upward mobility represented a vision of pro-corporate populism that linked his conservative business worldview to personal stories of success and prosperity. Reagan, like Otis and Devos, spent much of the 1960s and early 1970s spreading the conservative free enterprise message, honing his presentation while a spokesman for General Electric. By 1966, in order to separate himself from the dour anti-Communist wing of the Republican Party, he began to focus on "self-help and the efficacy of private enterprise." It allowed him to become a conservative celebrity for the Orange County businessmen. This created an implicit bond with business leaders such as Otis—who became an advisor for Reagan—who were frustrated with the oppressive regulatory environment promoted by Nader.³⁶⁰

Although the businessmen who led the Charismatic movement focused on Nader, their critique of American society in the 1970s was a response to a broader retreat from the embrace of unlimited growth. As they saw it, rising levels of individual consumption after World War II had signaled social progress. During the 1970s, critics of unlimited consumption and corporate expansion and power challenged this view. They attempted to re-envision the future in an era of stagflation, limited resources, and environmental problems. The key to this transformation, they argued, was a new mindset that would minimize these materialistic drives from the psyche of the American people. David Riesman described this phenomenon as the growth of “post-industrial attitudes” while Ronald Inglehart described it as a “post-materialist” mindset. Charles Reich labeled this development as “Consciousness III.” This cultural shift also made Christopher Lasch’s and Tom Wolfe’s books on narcissism bestsellers.³⁶¹

One of the most important factors in this cultural shift was the growth of the environmental movement. Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* vividly revealed how unlimited growth damaged the environment. There followed a slew of books that predicted the rapid depletion of the world’s resources. It was an argument that dovetailed with the counterculture’s anti-materialist attitudes. The environmental movement, moreover, was buttressed in the late 1970s by the oil crisis and stagflation, which reinforced the belief that resources were limited.³⁶²

For Devos and Otis, these beliefs were an attack on the American capitalist system and God’s laws. Otis declared, “We appear to be in the early stages of the breakup of commercial Babylon. We read in the Bible (in Revelation 18) that rich men will weep and howl for their silver and gold, and that they will weep over the ‘great city’ as she collapses. This is a picture of the best man-made economic systems and institutions failing because of their disharmony with God’s laws.” DeVos shared similar fears when he told a story about a group of American soldiers who were captured by communists in North Korea and did not try to escape. He believed that these soldiers’ lack of will was the direct result of a culture that had become complacent and lost its

drive to accumulate wealth. He believed they had become complacent with their modest suburban homes, losing the drive to become successful American capitalists. Complacency, DeVos believed, allowed many Americans to lose hope in the American system, making them vulnerable to Communist seduction. The result was a society that was negative, weak and unpatriotic.³⁶³

The solution was to instill optimism, which would bring the country back in line with God's laws. These leaders of the movement began to argue that the best way to solve the country's economic problems was to promote positive thinking and prosperity theology, which would revitalize the desire to succeed and acquire wealth. They applied Norman Vincent Peale's ideas to defend their vision of American capitalism. As DeVos argued, these ideas would lift individuals and, by proxy, the entire nation out of the economic recession. Moreover, it would improve family relationships, reduce crime and lead to a more moral society. This was the same argument that Amway had used when recruiting new distributors. He also viewed these beliefs as a tool to return the country to laissez-faire Christian capitalism, creating what one sociologist described as a "church-centered solution to the welfare state." It was an ideological shield against Ralph Nader and others who were questioning the benevolence of corporate capitalism and unlimited growth.³⁶⁴

Jim Bakker integrated these ideas into sermons and his theme parks. Where American society emphasized the need to live simply, Bakker lived and built audaciously. Bakker presented a God who would fulfill indulgences and material wants. Whether one hoped to be cured of a disease or to become a millionaire, Bakker presented a God that would fulfill these wishes without sacrifice. This led one Charlotte reporter to describe Bakker as the "an apostle of instant gratification." Tutored by Yager, Bakker began to sound like DeVos who had used positive thinking to defend his belief in laissez-faire economics. This was evident in the story about Mr. and Mrs. Negative, which Bakker repeated on the air, and also in his writings. As he explained,

Have you ever meet Mrs. and Mr. negative and little negative Jr. Even their cats are negative, their dog is negative. They have a fence around their and its ugly broken down fence. You knock on the door. They are always sick; their kids always have runny noses. He lost his job again, can't hold down a job. The kids are on drugs. They are going to stay in that negative realm until they get the word of God, confessing to the lord and realizing there is a positive way out.³⁶⁵

Soon after, these ideas appeared throughout his sermons. His attacks on the liberal emphasis on limits had the effect of soothing and reassuring his Sunbelt base about their own affluence and upward mobility. As he told an audience, "stop apologizing for your wealth" and embrace God's blessings upon you.³⁶⁶ His reference to the fence illustrated the importance that Bakker placed on appearances, and how he linked this to positive thinking. To Bakker, appearance and belief in God were the source of family happiness and prosperity. The only ghettos that existed, he declared, were "ghettos of the mind."³⁶⁷ These ideas meshed with conservative principles because they celebrated the essential fairness of American society. While Bakker acknowledged that poverty existed, his emphasis on faith and positive thinking downplayed socioeconomic causes of poverty. As he told one audience, "You say everything is against me. The system is against me. The recession is against me. God has a special kind of math that has nothing to do with the systems of the world." He added that by affirming through faith and positive thinking anyone could become successful and wealthy. He then told his audience, "It is time to stand against government when government stands against God."³⁶⁸

Bakker's theology became remarkably similar to the earlier rhetoric of conservative business groups. Positive thinking and faith, they argued, made for happy and prosperous family lives. He also lamented "urban populations" and hippies who were the antithesis of his vision of Christianity. He repeatedly told his audience that those who were critical of his and his followers' lavish lifestyles were simply jealous of their success. With this emphasis, Bakker's message became a defense of unregulated free markets and privatized suburban lives.³⁶⁹

Bakker made his network and Television show into a stage for prosperity theology ministers, and he reminded his audience many times that his ministry was working lockstep with such ministers as Oral Roberts, Rex Humbard, Pat Robertson, Paul Crouch, Pat Robertson and others. It was an in-kind payment for these ministers who had provided seed funding to help Bakker start PTL ministries. Bakker also viewed himself as part of the conservative business community, and he used language that mirrored the aggressive Sunbelt style of capitalism. For example, on his show, he often described himself as an entrepreneur and bragged about his success. He did the same when he spoke to an FGBMFI convention. He could out-entrepreneur many of the people in the audience, he said, and then declared that if he had not become a preacher he would have given the businessmen a “run for their money.” He boasted that when combined with the ministries of Billy Graham, the Charismatic movement was larger than GM and Chrysler combined. This power, he said, would show the world that they were “no longer the tail of the donkey.” He followed these declarations by exclaiming that the movement had some of the largest ministries, networks and technologies, which “should make the secular world fear us.” This mixture of hubris and celebration was the perfect religious message for a city that was obsessed with corporate growth and business success.³⁷⁰

Bakker’s faith led him to insist that God would ensure the success of his ever more grandiose ventures. He began plans for a home for retired ministers, a convention center, a golf course, a liberal arts university, and a campground—all of which would have cost well over \$100 million. This was all designed to tie in with historic homes, picket fences, and shopping centers that mixed a Victorian motif with idealized representations of 1950s suburbia.³⁷¹ It would become a real-world example of God's gift of prosperity to believers. As he told a group of businessmen,

I got up on national TV and said this is what I’m going to do [build Heritage Village]. They would say Jim where are you going to get the money. The same place where we got the money for the Heritage Village of broadcasting for world evangelism. They say our studios are the most beautiful in the whole world. We started in recession when it’s crazy to build. All the builders were going

bankrupt. Good men. I broke my heart to see them going bankrupt during the recession. God said build it and spoke the words and God did the rest. Two weeks ago we had our final payment. It is debt free tonight. It happened during recession; we gave them an unbelievable deadline because our lease was up in the furniture store . . . to the finest studios is one big jump. I told him the deadline but you better talk to the man upstairs about the deadline because it was winter and we worked 24 hours and we did not miss one day for 70 straight days. When God is in it all hell can't stop it.³⁷²

Bakker's vision of prosperity was increasingly tied to the future growth and development of PTL ministries. To demonstrate the power of his message, Bakker felt he had to build, and he had to raise money. It became a never-ending cycle. This tied Bakker to what Darren Dochuk described as a corporate formula that equated success with growth and used growth to appeal for funds. In a commemorative book for PTL donors, Bakker described PTL as a miracle from God, and then followed with hundreds of pages of photos of the construction of PTL studios and the Georgian Mansion that was PTL's headquarters, and other ventures. As Bakker's book suggests, the growing expansion of PTL had become an important sign of God's blessing. This message was extremely popular in the suburban Sunbelt and highlights how his incessant growth was meant to challenge liberalism's emphasis on limits.³⁷³

Both Jim and Tammy embodied these ideas onstage and in their private lives. By 1977 the couple had acquired over \$800,000 in jewelry and a large mansion. During this same time, Jim Bakker frequently went on shopping sprees in which he would spend more than \$4,000 on a single suit. Onstage, he showed off Rolex watches, while Tammy wore jewelry and makeup that would become part of her distinctive look. This emphasis on showy display was another rejection of conservation. They were not about to wear cardigan and jeans as had Jimmy Carter. The clothes and jewelry told their followers that through faith it was possible to succeed. For his Sunbelt supporters who lived in prosperous neighborhoods, and who remembered the 1970s as a time of prosperity, these ideals became a more palatable means to understanding their lives.³⁷⁴

These promises of prosperity were not the only focus of Bakker's message. Jim and Tammy continued to present themselves as the epitome of the American middle-class family. They viewed the sexual revolution and a series of federal laws that restricted religious practices within schools as an attack on their understanding of family and an intrusion into their family lives. American culture, they thought, had abandoned its commitment to domesticity and family life. For Bakker's followers, American society's increasing acceptance of gay rights and abortion heightened these fears. Increasingly, they began to describe this acceptance as a sign that the Protestant code of morality was in decline. These beliefs propelled many of his followers into the realm of politics because they believed the government had intruded on their rights to raise their children as they saw fit.³⁷⁵

Bakker became a champion of this movement by his opposition to homosexuality and support for school prayer, but these issues were also important to his followers. Most Charismatics had established ties to the Republican Party and the business community as early as 1964--well before the 1970s--and they were predisposed to favor "family values." They feared that the post-World War II dream of "a heterosexual nuclear family with a working father and a stay-at-home mother living in an upwardly mobile suburban neighborhood was under attack in the 1970s."³⁷⁶ Liberalism, in other words, was anti-family.³⁷⁷

Charismatics were also frustrated by what they saw as their inability to protect their families from broader social changes. With access to television and automobiles, their children were exposed to alternative cultural values and an increasingly pervasive youth culture. This exposure was amplified by the prosperity of their communities, creating numerous avenues for their children to seek out alternative lifestyles. Partly as a result, Sunbelt suburbanites were drawn to a transformed evangelical message that deemphasized sin and redemption while focusing on the joy, protection and comfort of privatized family life.³⁷⁸ This vision of family life was also important to Dexter Yager, who saw his militant capitalism and promotion of positive thinking as the economic

means to restore the traditional family.³⁷⁹ During the 1970s, when middle-class families were being pressured by inflation, unemployment and the increasing necessity of two sources of income, Yager used this message to recruit scores of middle-class men into his organization, many of whom became future members of PTL.³⁸⁰

Bakker also held secularization and the sexual revolution responsible for the rise in drug use and delinquency. While Bakker and other prosperity ministers often agreed with liberal critics who saw the decline of the family as the result of excessive greed in American society, they believed that belief in God would eliminate the hedonistic side of this desire and make the accumulation of wealth a holy enterprise. This was evident on a *PTL Club* show in which Bakker began by reminding the audience about God's promise of prosperity. This was followed by a guest who discussed the problems of teenage drug use. Bakker responded by declaring, "although God gives us many gifts he also gives us a shield to hold up to protect us from the evils of the world. It is his promises and gifts that we must remember."³⁸¹ Each "PTL Club" show offered an alternative vision on how to restore this vision of the American dream in a troubled time.

This vision also increasingly allied Bakker with the Republican Party. His understanding of national decline fit well with the ideas of conservative Republican politicians. Soon, they began to use similar language when defending themselves and their policies. With the help of George Otis³⁸² and other religious conservatives, Reagan combined these ideas with the rhetoric of religious conservatives declaring to one group that "there are people who want to take the 'In God We Trust' off our money. This nation is hungry for religious revival." In rhetoric that echoed Bakker, he also warned that ignoring God could mean the decline of American civilization. Although Bakker did not like to view himself as political and at times shied away from the overt political stances of some televangelists, he began to openly criticize Carter towards the end of 1978 and expounded on how government was intruding on the realm of family and religion. This contrasted with Oral Roberts and Rex Humbard who espoused similar ideas but refused to talk about politics on the air. The primary issues that estranged

Bakker were school prayer and the growing acceptance of gay rights in liberal and mainstream circles.³⁸³

Evangelicals were relatively unaware of gay culture prior to the 1970s. This began to change during the 1960s when some liberal clergy began to endorse homosexuality, and gay rights activists started to advocate for increased rights for gay people. This was followed by the American Psychiatric Association's removal of homosexuality from its list of psychiatric disorders in 1973. This growing acceptance of homosexuality was further buttressed by Jimmy Carter's efforts to reach out to the gay community for the purpose of advocating for increased tolerance and diversity. While Carter expressed disapproval of the gay lifestyle, he also opposed discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. With these beliefs, Carter assured the gay community that he would support Congresswoman Bella Abzug's pending gay rights bill. This stance placed him at odds with much of the evangelical community, and in 1976 gay rights become an increasingly divisive issue.³⁸⁴

This growing divide led to a confrontation in Miami where the first national debate on gay rights occurred. Anita Bryant led a campaign to oppose a local gay rights anti-discrimination ordinance. Bryant had been the runner-up in the Miss America pageant in 1959, and then began a gospel music career that brought her fame and fortune. Married at twenty, she proudly proclaimed her submission to her husband's leadership. She later became the smiling face of the Florida Orange Juice advertising campaign. Like Jim and Tammy, she represented a wholesome image of the traditional American family that appealed to many in the evangelical community. With this popularity in hand, she began to insist that the gay rights agenda infringed on her right to teach her children right and wrong and aided the recruitment of children by homosexual men. These ideas, however, originally had very little appeal in the Miami community. Nonetheless, she was able to popularize her cause through numerous appearances on PTL and CBN. Her campaign against homosexuality mobilized the Charismatic community, which organized counter rallies that opposed Miami's gay

rights ordinance. Moreover, her efforts led to increased contributions to her *Save the Children* organization.³⁸⁵

In the 1970s, Bakker was an important supporter of this anti-gay rights movement. For example, in a speech in 1979, he attacked the state of North Carolina for imposing excessive regulations that he claimed were an attack on the church, and then sarcastically told his audience that this was proof that it was more popular “to be homosexual than to be a preacher in the United States.” The enemies of the church, he proclaimed, were the “carnal namby pamby people who were ripping up the church of Jesus Christ.” They criticized his financial practices, protected the rights of gays, and encouraged failure within American society. He also used Anita Bryant as an example of how the Charismatic movement was pushing back against a federal government that he believed was anti-Christian and subverting the dreams of God-fearing American families. With Bakker’s support, Bryant was able to overturn the gay civil rights legislation in Miami by referendum, which elevated Bryant to heroic status within the Christian conservative community and helped launch her fleeting political career. Bryant’s characterization of Jimmy Carter as pro-homosexual, moreover, further distanced the Democratic Party from Christian conservatives. While this social issue may appear distinct from Bakker’s prosperity theology, he vacillated between them quite easily and saw them as a connected agenda to protect American families from “negativity.”³⁸⁶

Bryant’s campaign was also linked to protecting the American family. Prior to the 1960s it was common in times of rapid social change to scapegoat homosexuals as the cause of societal problems. As late as 1968, fifty-two percent of the American population viewed homosexuals as child predators who were largely responsible for destroying American families. Bakker and Bryant turned to this refrain during the 1970s when American families were stressed from many directions, creating an appealing understanding of social problems for Bakker’s Sunbelt supporters. These supporters, moreover, were competing with a whole range of institutions for the socialization of their children. After-school programs, youth culture, and television became powerful

influences over youth. Bakker and Bryant were providing moral certainty during these changing times without challenging the economic structures that undergirded suburban prosperity.³⁸⁷ This understanding of the family breakdown allowed Bakker to praise American materialism while denying that materialism had contributed to social problems.³⁸⁸

The other major social issue discussed by Bakker in the late 1970s was school prayer. Bakker viewed the removal of Bible reading and prayer in school as another sign that American society had turned against Christian families. This view also broadened Bakker's appeal with less wealthy members of PTL who emphasized these issues over prosperity theology. They viewed Bakker as a defender of Christian values under attack. While some historians have seen this development as the beginning of an evangelical shift away from economic issues, Bakker's career suggests how he combined economic and family issues. His audience celebrated a religious movement that rejected the liberalism of the 1970s and sought to protect an idealized vision of suburban family life. Reflecting these increasingly prominent connections, Ralph Reed recalled in his 1996 book *Active Faith*, "When the pro-family movement talks about lower taxes or job security, we are not trying to hide our 'true agenda', as some critics insist. We are simply addressing both the moral and financial pressures on so many families today." Grover Norquist, in the same year, recognized this increasingly linked agenda, declaring that Christian conservatives "fight against government interference and spending (financed by their own tax dollars) that insults and attacks their values and faith."³⁸⁹ As these quotes suggest, the pro-family movement integrated many of the political ideals of pro-prosperity businessmen who led the Charismatic movement. Ronald Reagan also utilized these themes in his rhetoric. In a critique of Jimmy Carter's energy policy, for example, he characterized Carter's emphasis on sacrifice as an attack on the American family. He then called for a restoration of family values, confidence, localism, low taxes and economic freedom. Tutored by Otis, Reagan demonstrated he understood that prompting family values could be used to defend a broad range of economic policies that supported suburban privilege and the growth of private industry. Many of these

same themes became integrated into Bakker's theme park, which was explicitly designed to provide a luxurious suburban haven from urban problems, where prosperity existed without violence. It was also interlaced throughout Bakker's earlier family imagery that reflected a suburban locale.³⁹⁰

This integration of economic issues with the pro-family movement was also present at the Washington for Jesus(WFJ) rally in 1980 that featured Jim Bakker, Pat Robertson, Demos Shakarian, Paul Crouch, Pat Boone, George Otis and many other Charismatic leaders. In fact, because Bakker had just recently obtained a satellite and was currently broadcasting twenty-four hours a day, many of the people who spoke at the rally had recently signed contracts with Bakker and were also producing shows that were being broadcasted on PTL's satellite network. Otis and Boone were also actively promoting Ronald Reagan among the Charismatic and evangelical community. Other less known ministers, celebrities, and corporate executives also spoke at the event. Like Bakker, the vast majority of these preachers came from the Sunbelt cities, reflecting the popularity of this message in these prosperous suburbs. As Daren Douchek illustrated, its economic support also came from these same regions, and out of 100 sponsors, 85 came from the Sunbelt. In order to organize this rally TBN, CBN, and PTL promoted the event and set up 380 offices across the country.³⁹¹

Abortion, school prayer, and federal deficit spending were the primary concerns of the rally. Organizers promoted Jessie Helms's bill designed to bring prayer back into public schools. Jim Bakker, moreover, told the audience after spending the previous year denouncing Jimmy Carter, "God help us to put the Bible back in our schools and public life, and we may we truly be one nation under God." The combination of issues of reducing government spending and school prayer demonstrate the integration of these social issues with conservative business views. It was also evident in a WJF declaration against the federal government, which read: "Refuse to be swayed by self-seeking interests groups. Only God is the guarantor of the needs of our people. When government usurps the role of God it becomes tyranny." Other ministers told onlookers

to guard against “those who want to attack our lifestyles” who were aiding an attack by Satan against the American home. It was a signal that, like Reed and Reagan, Charismatics’ defense of family values was connected to a defense of a Sunbelt vision and the protection of suburban privilege. Several leaders of the rally also told supporters that conservative Republicans offered the best hope for a country plagued with economic and social problems.³⁹²

Many Charismatics, though staunchly conservative, continued to claim that they were not political. Instead, they were defending the American family and Christianity. Bakker also avoided partisan stances and instead emphasized positive thinking, prosperity theology, and a pro-family message. His agenda aligned him with the Republican Party, but Bakker could declare that he was defending God’s word and not a political agenda.

Bakker portrayed his critics as anti-Christian and opposed to the word of God. Whether it was the federal government, the media, or theological critics Bakker’s reaction was the same. In one telethon, Bakker declared that there existed a devilish plot to rob viewers of their confidence and prosperity, as well as defame PTL ministries. In order to stand in opposition, PTL designed yellow bumper stickers with the words “Enough is Enough.” These stickers would proclaim to the secular media that PTL was fed up with their yellow journalism. He then told the viewers that in order to help them fight this battle they needed to donate to PTL. Bakker also tied his “Enough is Enough” campaign to prosperity theology. People needed to take action in their lives and say “Enough is Enough ” and buy that camper they had always wanted. He told the viewers, “It’s time you say I have had enough of this mess. I have had enough of poverty. I have had enough of pain. I want victory. When we decide up here [pointing to his head] then faith begins to work down here [pointing to his stomach]. Too many people have allowed Satan to go around as a roaring lion.”³⁹³ Instead, he told viewers to put the bumper sticker on their car, live their dreams, and come to Heritage, the PTL theme park. He then offered a ten percent discount for anyone with an “Enough is Enough”

bumper sticker. The devil hated PTL, he said, because they were in thirteen million homes every week, breaking his hold on America. He then argued that the media's critique of his spending habits was born out of jealousy and close-mindedness of people who did not understand God's promises of health, prosperity and happiness to his believers. Like liberals who emphasized limits, they were unbelievers. Bakker used this approach to shield himself against the secular press and liberal critics, while claiming he was above politics.³⁹⁴

The Washington for Jesus rally took place in 1980, an election year. Unlike Robertson and Falwell, Bakker never officially endorsed a candidate. As people around him recalled, he enjoyed being courted by both Carter and Reagan. He, however, privately supported Reagan, who had become familiar with the Charismatic movement through George Otis and Pat Boone and who was ideologically in step with both the social and economic beliefs of Bakker and the conservative Charismatic leaders.³⁹⁵

Bakker also increasingly complained about the growing power of the federal government. As *Christianity Today* wrote in 1979, after observing his message, "[Bakker] flares up at people who blame America for oppressively contributing to the world's poverty, asserting the original principles of America — such as freedom of man and free enterprise — are biblical principles that naturally result in success." It was in direct contrast to Carter, whose concerns over America's role in the proliferation of human rights abuses and global poverty drove much of his foreign policy. It was a stance that led many people around Bakker to assume that he had publicly endorsed Reagan.³⁹⁶

This embrace of conservative politics was also evident in Jim Bakker's speech to the FGMBMFI's world convention in 1980. He told the audience that the Charismatic movement was in a battle. They were "a mighty army to take the world of Christ." Then he warned the audience, "what is going to happen with this flood of government intervention . . . what will happen when all these things come against us." Then Bakker told the audience that together they would stand up against their enemies. He then asked the audience, "who is on the Lord's side." They responded in unison, "I'm on the

Lord's side." As his speech made evident, Bakker and his fellow Charismatics no longer viewed political issues as separate from political issues. Instead, they saw liberal policies as a direct attack on their religious worldview, and God as a defender of the free market.³⁹⁷

Bakker drew closer to the Republican Right when the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) began an investigation into his fundraising practices in the late 1970s. With help from Republican allies in Washington, the investigation was squelched through a backroom deal between conservative Senate Republicans and the FCC commissioners. This was the culmination of a bond between a geographic region, a migratory mobile middle class, and an economically threatened conservative business community.³⁹⁸

By 1980 much of America became friendlier to PTL's message. Ronald Reagan's victory was the most obvious example of the nation's cultural move to the right. Reagan shared the belief in the limitless potential of American capitalism. Wall Street bankers and corporate executives now became heroes, while Ralph Nader faded from the spotlight.³⁹⁹ Like Bakker, the Reagans rejected the cardigan and jeans that Jimmy Carter wore and instead dressed in expensive clothing, mirroring the styles worn on shows like "Dynasty," "Dallas," or the runaway hit "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous." American society associated the pursuit of wealth with happiness, creating what some scholars have described as a second Gilded Age.⁴⁰⁰ In this era, acquisitive values were viewed as the backbone of the American dream and not a sign of greed or decadence. This new ethic contrasted with the 1970s when conservative businessmen feared that the entrepreneurial and acquisitive spirit was dying. Championing this change, Malcolm Forbes wrote after Reagan's election, "Capitalism is back in; people realize that getting rich is just somebody entrepreneuring."⁴⁰¹

Bakker did cultivate political connections and put two Republican Washington insiders—and Reagan aids—on the PTL payroll. PTL board member James Watt was Reagan's secretary of the interior. Watt was a Charismatic who viewed the defense of

free market economics and the promulgation of Christianity as the same.⁴⁰² Doug Wead, who had been Dexter Yager's public relations director and a close friend of Bakker, became increasingly connected to the Republican Party. Like Watt, Wead's beliefs meshed Christianity with free market ideas, prosperity theology, and social conservatism. He was also an Assemblies of God minister. These ideas had brought Amway, PTL, and the Republican Party together during the 1970s and led him to become a biographer for many Amway leaders as well for Ronald Reagan, and James Watt. It was a fusing of organizations, politicians, and religious movements around a common ideological worldview. Bakker was also close to Wead and commissioned him to write a book about his battles with the FCC and the *Charlotte Observer* entitled *Anatomy of a Smear* that would depict both organizations as anti-Christian. Because of his friendship with Bakker, Wead agreed to write the book for free rather than charging his going rate of \$135,000.⁴⁰³ While the book was never released, much of Wead's research was distributed to PTL supporters in pamphlet form in 1986.⁴⁰⁴

Wead became George H.W. Bush's White House liaison on religious matters. With rhetoric that mirrored prosperity theology, he advised Bush to unite social and economic conservatism with a "pro-capitalism" vision that would help cure the negativity within American society. This common vision also led to a fleeting alliance between George Bush and PTL. This relationship began when Wead sent Bush's advisors to PTL. Soon after, PTL provided these advisors with monthly stipends of \$5,000 to \$10,000.⁴⁰⁵ This alliance also led to a meeting between Bakker and George Bush in which Bakker nearly became Bush's chief spiritual advisor, filling the role that Billy Graham had played for previous presidents. Dexter Yager was also a board member for PTL and a leading supporter of the Republican Party in North Carolina.⁴⁰⁶

These links were also reflected in Bakker's praise of Reagan and in the attitudes of the guests at the park. For example, one article in the *Heritage Herald* surveyed the opinions of visitors in regard to the candidates during the 1984 presidential election. All respondents gave Reagan glowing reviews. In contrast, they described Mondale as "too

liberal" and a "quiche eater."⁴⁰⁷ The respondents' reasons for supporting Reagan were also notably congruent. They declared that they supported Reagan because he would lower taxes and was "a man of God." This support was also evident in interviews of PTL supporters who viewed Reagan as an exemplary president, echoing the larger national polls. Bakker also joined Tim LaHaye's American Coalition for Traditional Values (ACTV) which contributed heavily to Reagan's 1984 campaign.⁴⁰⁸

These ties to conservative politics were the fruition of Bakker's new form of cultural conservatism and a Sunbelt-business coalition that carved out an alternative vision to 1970s liberalism. Although Bakker, and many individuals inside and outside the movement, viewed the Charismatic message as "above politics," many were unable to separate the two. In turn, Charismatics became an important cog in the conservative movement. They helped spread a message that made their followers natural allies to the conservative movement and became allied with the Republican Party.

Chapter 8

Heritage USA: The Creation of a Safe Haven

By 1978, Jim Bakker had become a national sensation. His message of happiness and a world without limits was extremely popular. His message challenged 1970s liberalism with its emphasis on limits and the dangers of consumption. He also became increasingly allied with the Republican Party, which endorsed his social and economic message. This was not enough for Bakker. Always determined to expand, to grow, to be bigger, Bakker decided to build a massive Christian theme park. Located on the border of North and South Carolina, Heritage USA was Jim Bakker's 1,200-acre monument to his vision of Christianity. Often depicted as an outgrowth of Jim and Tammy's tackiness and greed, the park was much more.

The park was a pilgrimage site for PTL's charismatic supporters. At the height of its popularity, Heritage became the third most popular theme park in the country — trailing only Disneyland and Disneyworld — and attracted over six million visitors to its water park, campgrounds, concessions, shopping centers, and other amenities. Advertised as a Christian utopia, Heritage USA was built as an alternative to the secular world. It offered visitors family entertainment and security from a dangerous world. And most of the visitors viewed the park not simply as a site for leisure, but as a symbol of the veracity of Bakker's theology and God's promises of health, wealth, and happiness. Over time, the park became a major complex with three housing subdivisions, apartments, and condos. The park embodied PTL's challenge to the call to limit consumer society. Heritage USA demonstrated how Bakker integrated his message into the theme park, making it wildly popular among his Charismatic followers. It was a land where happiness and prosperity were both imagined and real.⁴⁰⁹

Jim Bakker chose the town of Fort Mill, South Carolina as the location for Heritage USA. A suburb of Charlotte on the border of North and South Carolina, it was a

popular housing location among Charlotte's middle class migrants. The Bakkers' home in neighboring Tega Cay was an example of this trend.⁴¹⁰ Once a collection of mill towns, by the 1970s it had become a bedroom community⁴¹¹ that provided easy access to the nearby interstate.⁴¹²

Bakker had been dazzled by Disneyland, and he wanted to build a Christian theme park that celebrated consumer culture and romanticized the American past. He started by purchasing 1,200 acres of land and eventually acquired 22,050 acres.⁴¹³ Bakker devoured books about Disneyland and used it for a model. For example, the original campground of 1,000 campsites was modeled after Disney's Fort Wilderness.⁴¹⁴ Bakker wanted a campground that was affordable but he also wanted it to be "class A." Hence, rather than simple paved sites, he insisted on bricked roads for parked vehicles. He wanted to impress visitors with the notion that God provided better accommodations than they could find outside of Heritage USA and for only \$14 a night.⁴¹⁵ He especially wanted to screen campers from road traffic and to do this he purchased nearby farmland to help separate the park from the outside world. Following the construction of the campgrounds, he built bunkhouses, eating establishments, bathhouses, and a general store.⁴¹⁶

Ever ambitious, Bakker wanted to supplant Disney as the world's leading theme park. One former staffer recalled, "We knew they were kicking our tail in attendance [Disney]. And that was our goal: to be number one, and who has got the best product. They got Mickey Mouse and we have God; who would you rather spend time with?" Heritage USA was determined to out-build, out-sell, and out-promote other secular attractions. As Bakker explained it, "The church people were going to Disneyland, they were going to Disneyworld. They were going other places, but they weren't going to camp meeting anymore, and we wanted to be able attract the church back, the family back to the campground." This environment, Bakker believed, insulated people from the strains of their daily lives and "opened them up" to the message of God's promises of prosperity and happiness.⁴¹⁷ He also hoped the splendors of the park would encourage

people to bring in their non-Christian friends, who would be so impressed that they would give their life to Christ and embrace the Charismatic message.⁴¹⁸

This was an ambitious plan but it required ever more revenue. Initially, Bakker relied on PTL Club appeals for donations. But he needed more funds to match his aspirations. By 1982, he was required to raise one million dollars a day to keep the park solvent. By now the PTL memorabilia and gifts for donations were losing their appeal and revenues were actually decreasing. These problems were compounded by Bakker's poor management, which Charles Sheppard described as a combination of "poor planning and impulsive decision making." His costs and expenses always outstripped revenues.⁴¹⁹

As a result, Bakker developed new ways to raise funds. As always, he claimed these ideas were inspired by God and God's desire to provide prosperity to his followers. This resulted in Heritage USA's partnership plan, which he devised in 1984. Bakker touted it as an "investment opportunity" that allowed people who donated \$1,000 to PTL to become lifetime partners in his ministry. As partners, they would be entitled to free lodging for three nights a year at Heritage USA for the rest of their lives. Bakker followed this with a variety of membership plans that offered varying benefits.⁴²⁰

The partnership plan led Bakker to focus on wealthier Charismatics.⁴²¹ As most surveys have shown, the audience for religious television was slightly less well off than the average American. Bakker's Charismatic audience was actually more affluent than the larger population. Bakker exploited this advantage. The number of donations dropped by nearly twenty percent, but revenue increased because of the cost of the partnerships. This made Bakker dependent on a smaller but wealthier audience (which he identified with the help of a marketing firm). The new typical partner was "educated, more upper middle class. Driving the more high-end Cadillac; not a Mercedes." Bakker understood, as one assistant indicated, that this population could afford visits to the

theme park as well as the price of partnerships. In turn, Bakker became even more deeply committed to preaching prosperity theology.⁴²²

Bakker soon broadened his conception of Heritage USA from a theme park to a total living community. He told a reporter, "Our dream is to have people in Charlotte look out their windows and say, 'What is that city we see on the horizon?'" As a result, he began to transform this plush campground into a site for spiritual renewal, consumption of Christian goods, and a site for family vacations, education, and living. He began building opulent hotels, schools, suburban neighborhoods, farms, auction houses, and condominiums. The transformation of Heritage also transformed Bakker, according to his son, into an urban planner. After 1982, Bakker spent the majority of his time creating an environment that matched his message.⁴²³

He built a park that would appeal to his Sunbelt Charismatic audience. This audience had never accepted any emphasis on limits, which they saw as "negative." They celebrated entrepreneurialism, and lived in prosperous suburbs which made them uncomfortable with any calls to restrict consumption. These charismatics were also highly mobile, separated from their traditional support structures and living in isolated suburbs which forced them to seek connections. Moreover, they worked in jobs that demanded "positive thinking," and they craved an environment that embraced this same message. Bakker made sure his park embraced this message. In every nook and cranny, it oozed optimism, limitlessness, and prosperity. In turn, Heritage USA became their "heaven on earth."⁴²⁴

America's problems, Bakker always insisted, stemmed from negative thinking. Visitors to Heritage entered into a well-manicured world where they were greeted by "friendly people." As one observer noted, "The very first personnel most people meet are the greeters, those smiling waving workers who give a personal 'hello' to each motorist passing through the front gate."⁴²⁵ This emphasis on cheerfulness was important to Bakker. An employee who expressed "negativity" to a guest would be dismissed. One visitor commented: "In the real world they put you down. Here you are

free."⁴²⁶ As one critic recalled, inside the resort it was nearly impossible to avoid eye contact with friendly workers who were always upbeat. For many who visited, Heritage USA allowed them to "recharge" so that they could fare the stress of the "real world."⁴²⁷

These attitudes were the foundation of Bakker's prosperity theology. On his show, he reminded his audience that at Heritage USA the good life was available for anyone who came. God, after all, promised prosperity to his followers. Bakker portrayed Heritage USA as the embodiment of God's promises of prosperity. Its growth, its luxury were signs that God favored Charismatics. Those who followed Bakker could visit or even live in "Heaven on Earth."⁴²⁸

Bakker astutely appealed to Charismatics by designing his park around a romanticized (and sanitized) account of the historical past that fit their understanding of history. Charismatics, Michael Lienesch has noted, viewed the early twentieth century as the apex of Christian capitalism—a time when wealth was widespread and Christian values were ubiquitous. It was an era before the welfare state when "benevolent industrialists increased the wealth of millions, and the majority of people were charitable."⁴²⁹ According to another scholar, this romantic image was used often by the New Right to appeal to people who were yearning for a "simpler, more innocent—and imagined-- time when there were no limits to America's resources, power, and influence."⁴³⁰ This use of history simultaneously challenged the liberal vision of progress, while supporting Charismatic's conservative economic worldview. It also reinforced the movement's belief that sacrifice was not needed to create a more just and equitable society. When asking his architect to design a plan, Bakker demanded luxurious hotels from early twentieth century America. Bakker wanted the park to evoke this period and its values. Bakker made this evident in planning documents, in which he detailed his understanding of American Christian history.⁴³¹

In these narratives, Bakker linked American providence to conservative economics. About early America he wrote, "private property was understood to be

classic to a Christian civilization." It was the "most important factor determining the character of that [17th century] society." As he recalled, these ideas flourished in a "Christian America." It was a story about how God created "prosperity from the resources of this country," which accompanied and grew in tandem with the rise of Protestant evangelicalism. This bond endowed the country with the Christian principles of free enterprise that would lead individuals and the country to success. Bakker wrote that up through the nineteenth century these Protestant beliefs had tied religion, civilization, and morality together in a trinity that was vital to the success of American society.⁴³²

After the 1920s, these "Christian values" had been challenged by urban life that no longer "depended on observing the Sabbath, praying, Bible reading, eschewing profanity, and abstaining from strong drink and loose women."⁴³³ In Bakker's view, this was the beginning of the end of a Protestant America, which he believed began to collapse with the Great Depression. The "Victorian era" had embraced conservative religious and economic values. Heritage USA would pay homage to their understandings of history, and much of the park was designed around Bakker's romantic view of the early twentieth century.⁴³⁴

With these ideas in mind, Bakker paid close attention to the entrance to the park. In order to separate the secular world from one of infinite possibilities, he set the entrance amidst miles of hardwood forest. Once in the park, visitors would see streets lined with perfectly mowed grass, well-kept gardens, a split rail fence, and a sign that declared to visitors "Speed Controlled by God." After passing the childhood home of Billy Graham, they were brought up to the gatehouse, where they were given maps and directions by cheerful guides. It was, as a *Washington Post* reporter recounted, the last checkpoint before entering "a trash-free, profanity-free, sin-free zone." Visitors were then ushered into the entrance of the Heritage Grand hotel, which was attached to a Victorian-styled shopping mall that mixed ornate styles with Disney-like colors. They

were entering a zone where, according to Darren Green, "[p]overty, crime, juvenile delinquency , sex, drugs — all were supposedly nonexistent."⁴³⁵

The hotel was a scene of opulence. Limousines were permanently parked in front of it. The white pillars of the main entrance were covered in colonial style flags and doormen awaited the guests. Inside, visitors were surrounded by an ornately decorated grand foyer with velvet-covered furniture. A young man in a black tie and tuxedo played music on a gold gilded piano. The carpet was patterned in red and gold, and Victorian style marble and gold gilt were evident throughout the interior. Along with representing images of early twentieth century luxury, these images were also reflective of the mansions and lifestyles that had become symbols of success in the 1980s through shows like "Dynasty."⁴³⁶ The rooms were also designed in a similar manner with velvet chairs and full-length mirrors in what Bakker called the "Waldorf-Astoria-Style." They had marble countertops, chairs, and crown molding throughout; the walls were covered in high-end vinyl wallpaper. The carpet, as Jim Bakker bragged, was custom made with the Heritage Grand Logo inscribed, and the hotel room doors were also custom made with wainscoting designed explicitly for the Heritage Grand. Bakker also put double sinks and closets in the rooms to accommodate families and the needs of husbands and wives. As Bakker told his supporters, it was designed to remind visitors that elegance was for everyone and not just for VIPs, and that they were all a "King's Kid."⁴³⁷

Adjacent to the Grand was the shopping mall, which also had a Victorian façade. It was a near-replica of Disney's Mainstreet USA, and even used Disney's pastel-colored paint themes. The mall, which was the most crowded part of the park, had a wide range of stores. Most employed a Christian theme. The Heavenly Scent Shop sold luxury perfumes. The Christian bookstore and the Jerusalem Shop sold items that appealed specifically to the Charismatic community such as the inspirational books put out by Jim and Tammy and other evangelical and Charismatic authors. The doll shop sold a pro-life talking doll that said, "God made me even before I was born." The Jerusalem Shop departed from the Victorian theme by evoking the style of an Israeli city and sold wooden and silver figurines imported from Israel. Other shops, such as Grandma

Fairall's Ice Cream Parlor, Noah's Toy Shoppe, and Ye Olde Bookstore presented themselves as throwbacks to a simpler time. Like Disney's Mainstreet USA, the shops were designed to take visitors back to an imagined time of innocence when "everybody was nice." All of these shops were under a ceiling covered in painted clouds washed in artificial blue light and surrounded by indoor clouds created by a fog machine. The thoroughfare of the mall was also designed to evoke a bygone era. Lined with lighted leafless trees, park benches, and antique cars, the mall gave the visitors the feeling that they have been transported back into an idealized past where community and friendliness abounded.⁴³⁸

Outside the Grand, most other projects took on these themes, but there were notable exceptions. One was the water park. It had a wave pool and was located on a man-made island in front of the Heritage Grand. While it was not devoid of religious imagery, it mirrored the look of other high-end water parks that arose throughout the country and had the nation's largest wave pools. Another exception was the nearby roller-skating rink. The arcade also became a favorite spot of kids who visited the park. Many visitors, because they believed they were in a safe Christian atmosphere, remembered sending their kids off to the water park while they visited the mall and other attractions. Many claimed that this was the only place in the country where they would have been comfortable doing this.⁴³⁹

Other attractions kept to the Victorian theme. Two of these were the Farm Village and Heritage Village. In the Farm Village moderately priced bunkhouses, a country chapel, and a series of country inns were surrounded by white picket fences. Bakker also had working farms that supplied produce for the restaurants throughout the park. Alongside these attractions were a series of Victorian mansions that were designed to be alternative lodgings to the Heritage Grand.⁴⁴⁰ Bakker decorated the interior of these buildings ostentatiously like the Grand, matching the style of the Gilded Age in books he was studying. Bakker re-envisioned these often-secular capitalists as Christian heroes and saw their lifestyles as symbols of the promises of God to the

faithful. Bakker also made careful plans to interlace the themed hotels with carefully disguised modern conveniences.⁴⁴¹ There were other developments. A new series of housing subdivisions were designed to fit the Victorian and Gilded Age motifs.⁴⁴²

Bakker also planned on building a shopping center and restaurant modeled after the Crystal Palace. Bakker had been inspired after visiting the Infomart in Dallas which was based on London's Crystal Palace built in 1851. Bakker had read numerous books on it and was impressed with its opulence and beauty when he discovered it was used as a church on Sundays and became a model for future shopping malls throughout the world. He decided it was a perfect model for fusing of laissez-faire capitalism, Christianity, and a romantic vision of history. He was also aware that his fellow prosperity minister Robert Schuller had used a similar design to build his monument to prosperity theology in southern California. Schuller was a frequent and favorite guest of Bakker, and the PTL network carried his show.⁴⁴³ Bakker wanted this Crystal Cathedral to replace the park's current studio, and it would have an auditorium that would be larger than Charlotte's Civic Center. Bakker had planned to share the Crystal Cathedral with Dexter Yager. As his associates recalled, he wanted it to become the "greatest evangelistic center on earth" and was his attempt to show the world that he could outbuild the auditoriums of Robert Schuler and Oral Roberts.⁴⁴⁴

The Victorian theme of Heritage also allowed Bakker to appeal to the evangelical faith in domesticity and the movement's glorification of family life. The corrosive secular culture of the 1960s, in the view of most Charismatics, had destroyed a once-stable system of family life. Hence, Heritage USA sought to suggest the values of "small town America." Heritage stood as a symbol for men and women who hoped to escape or thwart social decline.⁴⁴⁵

Much of Heritage's popularity owed to Bakker's ability to make the park and community both a haven in a dangerous world and a model for thwarting social decline. These ideas appealed to Sunbelt evangelicals who glorified family life and who hoped to

shield their children from social change. In a presentation about Heritage USA, Bakker declared that after the 1930s America had faltered. This trend reached a crescendo during the 1960s. Without its religious moorings, America became overly individualistic and self-centered; the American people lost their work ethic. Bakker then stated, "Over half a century the disenfranchisement of the human spirit had intensified until the 1960s when America forgot the real worth of small town values . . . The 1960s brought individualism to an insane level and fostered unbridled individualism at the expense of the community." It was these trends that had produced alienation. Heritage USA was designed to glorify and sustain "small town values." Reflecting a broader American critique of the 1960s, Bakker promised that, with God, consumerism and individual aspiration could exist without the loss of "small town values." Inside Heritage, there was no conflict between individual aspirations and community.⁴⁴⁶

Visitors poured into the park and new residents moved to its communities. One former resident recalled that her family often relocated because her father worked for IBM. When they moved to Charlotte, her parents became enthralled with the "glitz and the glamour" of Heritage USA. Always seeking more money, they admired the emphasis on prosperity. Meanwhile, her brother had behavioral problems and become involved with drugs. For her family, PTL seemed an ideal place. They purchased a home in Dogwood Hills, one of Heritage's suburban communities, and enrolled their children in PTL's Christian school. Her mother believed this would bring them closer to God and prosperity while sheltering their family from harmful influences. As a child, the daughter saw the community and the park as a special place. She was not alone. Visitors who came to Heritage USA saw it as a shelter from a nasty world. It seemed to offer a solution to every problem. Many visitors described the park as "heaven on earth," and readily let their children move around unsupervised. Her parents believed that "the Christian atmosphere" would shield her safely from the pressures of sex and drugs.⁴⁴⁷ Bakker made this message explicit. As a designer recalled, "[Bakker] wanted to develop an environment in which a family could come and kids could run free and play and mom and dad would not be worried." Here people would be renewed and families would be

refreshed.⁴⁴⁸ The park was an example of what “could be” if more people turned to Christ and listened to Jim Bakker’s message and thought positively.⁴⁴⁹

Other visitors saw the park in a similar light. Because they believed they were in a safe Christian atmosphere, one supporter remembered sending children to the water park alone. The attached suburban neighborhoods, as Bakker often told his audience, were a chance to “live in paradise.” Like the rest of Heritage USA, these neighborhoods were seen as a safe alternative to danger — threats of crime, drugs, and violence — found outside of the park’s walls. This sense of safety led one resident to praise these communities where “little old ladies go walking at night without fear. You can walk in the dark. I can go running if I so desire at midnight. I have no fear.”⁴⁵⁰

Bakker always made clear that Heritage was intended as an antidote to the 1960s. In one presentation, he began with an image of New York City and moved on to images of “city people” and “hippies.” After these images, he presented pictures of 1960s demonstrations, followed by the Watts Riot and another riot in New York City. These scenes were then followed by idyllic images of Heritage USA’s Victorian village. Bakker offered a park where conflict, unrest, and protesters did not exist and where there was “no loneliness or despair.” PTL would show the world that it was possible to build a world without “urban populations, hippies, and protesters.” This was a soothing message to his conservative Sunbelt base, fearful of black militancy and the counter-cultural youth movements and social chaos in general. Other PTL supporters also echoed these sentiments. For example, when explaining why people came to Heritage USA, the former vice president of operations declared, “This was a safe haven from the cities. American cities were a mess. We represented an alternative.”⁴⁵¹

Bakker’s narrative of America’s decline in the 1960s was rooted in prosperity theology.⁴⁵² Richard DeVos also used inner city unrest as an example of how America had lost its way in the 1960s. Bakker, as well, frequently declared that the ghetto only existed in people’s minds. Charismatic magazines also lamented urban agitation, which they saw as a sign of individual moral failure. For Bakker and DeVos, these urban

problems and the welfare state were signs that America turned away from the free enterprise system mired in an unhealthy dependency that sapped the will to work.⁴⁵³

Heritage USA was in many ways a symbol of this transformation. It was a haven for people who, in the words of one person who grew up in an attached suburb, "just wanted to wall off the outside world" because they had lost faith in the direction of secular society.⁴⁵⁴ In this community, they could achieve the promised life and God would provide prosperity and a safe environment for their families. In order to support this ideal, Bakker employed more security officers than the entire county's police force and created a system of tunnels that allowed security to move around the ground inconspicuously. He also reminded his security that they should blend in with the premises, creating an illusion that faith alone maintained this secure environment. For individuals who felt alienated by the direction of American society, Bakker offered a privatized, Christianized vision of familial bliss.⁴⁵⁵

This vision offered a suburban Sunbelt ideal that celebrated consumer culture and wealth, while rejecting attacks on suburban privilege. When responding to why people visited Heritage, the park's former vice-president of operations declared, "Cities were a mess . . . Folks could go to the hotel, get settled, and turn the kids loose. They knew they were safe. They could ride the trains and the buses. They could ride the trams . . ." Others shared this sentiment. Another supporter of PTL who was raising a family in the Oakland suburbs remembered PTL in a similar light: "They [her kids] went to public schools. I was very active in the school. There were a lot of negative elements around our kids. We lived in Oakland, California. When we got back to Heritage USA, I took a sigh of relief that I did not have to watch them every second. Oakland was crime infested. We lived in the hills, not there in the city, but the schools were dangerous. You had to be careful."⁴⁵⁶

Although much of Heritage USA reflected the beliefs of the Charismatic movement, Bakker also paid homage to some traditional Pentecostal restrictions. Inside the grounds, dancing, drinking swearing, and skimpy bathing suits were banned.

Lifeguards at the pool were also instructed to monitor guests to make sure everyone wore "modest swimwear." Many of these rules were extended to Heritage's suburbs, which banned tobacco. Some of these restrictions were still important for Pentecostals, especially older Pentecostals. This is why, as Bakker later recalled, he banned dancing and alcohol despite the desire of many younger visitors, and Bakker himself, to have dancing on the premises. He also recalled that he did not disapprove of drinking but he feared serving liquor would cause an uproar. The motivation for these restrictions was two-fold. One was the traditional Pentecostal fear of worldliness, and another was an evangelical desire to sanitize American culture. Modest attire was often described as a rejection of a culture that had given up on family values and had become too narcissistic in the 1960s, leading to the sexual revolution. The existence of these regulations illustrate that although Bakker gravitated toward the Charismatic community, he still felt it was necessary to appease traditional—and often older--Pentecostals.⁴⁵⁷

Another popular attraction at Heritage USA was its seminars and counseling services. These services began in 1983 soon after Bakker began construction of the Heritage Grand. He wanted to make Heritage a place where Christians would come to heal their marriages and alleviate the strain of modern life. For these services, Bakker turned to Fred Gross, who was a psychologist and a founder of the Christian Psychology movement. Prior to the 1970s, most evangelicals were skeptical of psychology and they equated self-improvement with narcissism. Gross, in fact, noted on a "PTL Club" broadcast that he still received a great deal of criticism for his emphasis on the self.⁴⁵⁸

This began to change in the early 1970s when Bakker and other evangelicals began embracing self-help and positive thinking. American psychology was changing as well. It had begun to deemphasize therapy as a prelude to institutionalization and was using it instead as a means to self-actualization. While professional psychologists never fully embraced popular psychology or the positive thinking movement, they increasingly emphasized the importance of self-esteem. For many Charismatics, these ideas

dovetailed with their beliefs that mental transformation was crucial to wealth, health, and happiness.⁴⁵⁹

Fred Gross was an ideal person to blend these worlds. He saw himself as an entrepreneur, evangelist, and a psychologist. He also embraced the lifestyle of Bakker and other Prosperity theology ministers. Critics saw him as an opportunist eager to sell his services, but his claims that he could solve any problem undoubtedly drew him to Bakker. Heritage USA began a partnership with Gross's *Christian Therapy Program*, which claimed to offer quicker recovery than secular treatment programs, and combined the use of prayer and the biblical teachings with more traditional treatments. Gross's program combined standard therapeutic practices with Pentecostal healing practices. In his own practice, which was based in Hollywood, he easily moved from casting out demons from his patients to talking about defense mechanisms and releasing anger. He also used visits to Disneyland as a form of recreational therapy for his patients. With the help of Vi Azevedo and other Charismatic healers, he combined these emphases into a series of seminars that were designed to heal marriages, help families, and offer spiritual healing.⁴⁶⁰

The marriage seminars were the most popular of these workshops. They combined group prayer and exercises to improve communication and intimacy between husbands and wives. One reason for its popularity was the Charismatic community's simultaneous embrace of individual fulfillment and the cult of domesticity.⁴⁶¹ Charismatics came to accept both worldviews. Women were expected to live lives that were self-fulfilling, while devoting themselves to their children and husbands. These workshops created a communal environment where families could navigate these often conflicting worlds. PTL marketed the workshops as a means of cleansing people in order to be "set free" and create more fulfilling family lives. One follower recalled how these workshops allowed her to release her inner pain in order to become a "better wife and mother."⁴⁶² Betty, another former PTL member who attended multiple workshops, had felt unappreciated by her husband and children. Hence, she had difficulty fulfilling her

"biblically assigned role" at home. This led her to a PTL workshop that allowed her to "be free to give and receive love. My inner hurt of lack of mothering was ministered to by my dear loving Christians. I now have freedom to love."⁴⁶³ After purging her inner pain, she declared that she was able to become a better wife and mother while also feeling fulfilled. One way the workshop accomplished this was by presenting attendees with a chair that represented a person with whom they were angry and allowing them to vent their pent up anger. The workshops also employed Freud and Jungian therapies, and "psychospiritual practices" such as casting out demons. They created a sense of community for Charismatics who were lonely and alienated. They held hands and prayed with people who saw the world as they did. Many of these visitors also felt that Heritage USA's 'positive environment' allowed them to share their pain with others.⁴⁶⁴

These workshops also targeted improving communication skills for husbands and wives who had grown distant from each other. Counselors gave exercises which forced participants to practice displaying affection for their spouse. Some believed it saved their marriages and healed their families. As one former participant recalled, "They helped you learn how to love each other again. They said if anyone is afraid to go home come up for prayer, and our whole table went. A Jamaican lady prayed for us. Then she prayed for the others. We thought we were seventeen again, dating again. We were on our second honeymoon." These same strategies were applied to Heritage's family workshops where different members would be asked to confess their sins. This was followed by exercises to help the family work on communication skills.⁴⁶⁵

These therapy programs were an extension of Jim Bakker's belief that positive thinking could solve people's personal and economic troubles.⁴⁶⁶ Bakker believed Satan was the cause of fear and anxiety in America, breaking up marriages and causing stress, anxiety, and poverty. Therefore, counseling would help his followers erase doubt from their lives, destroy Satan's influence, allowing the world to become prosperous and happy. This was clearly part of a new Pentecostalism that celebrated the self and the search for personal happiness and wealth. Oftentimes during these workshops the

leaders would cast Satan out of a participant, declaring that with Satan gone all fear and doubt would follow. The workshop was yet another way to find happiness and attack the devil.⁴⁶⁷

Heritage USA also sponsored charitable services. Bakker preached prosperity, but he also called for charitable giving and privately-sponsored social services. Bakker advertised these dual missions on his show and frequently proclaimed that Heritage USA could supply opulence while providing for the needy.⁴⁶⁸ One of the most important charitable programs was the Opportunity Farm, which was a vocational training facility for "street people." A three-week program, it taught participants how to use construction equipment and basic construction skills. It also included mandatory pastoral counseling in order to become a productive citizen. PTL members took a great deal of pride in this program that took in "what society called bums" and "taught them how to fend for themselves."⁴⁶⁹ It sought to encourage independence rather than dependence. Another initiative was Fort Hope, which was a rehabilitation program for alcoholics and addicts. It was also a short-term program that combined faith and therapy. After completion, the clients supposedly became productive Christian citizens.⁴⁷⁰

Heritage USA also had a charitable store known as the People That Love Center, which supplied food and clothing to needy people. Inside were shelves of canned goods that were given away to needy people who visited. The center also had a large closet with clothes. Over time, Bakker helped develop satellites in other parts of the country. Bakker made sure that the items available were of the highest quality, and reminded the workers regularly "not to give anything out that your own children wouldn't use." It also reportedly had money available for those who could not pay their rent.⁴⁷¹

Another social service was the home for unwed mothers, which was part of PTL's answer to abortion. As the director recalled, PTL wanted to offer a positive alternative for women who lacked resources. It took in about 25 pregnant women who agreed to

follow PTL's "total Christian approach" and helped them through their pregnancy.⁴⁷² Still another initiative was Kevin's House, which was a home for hard-to-adopt handicapped children. Prior to entering any of these programs, PTL required participants to profess their faith in Christ. Unusual for a Christian charity, this requirement fulfilled the Charismatics' belief that faith in God was essential for prosperity and happiness.⁴⁷³

Another important Heritage building was the World Outreach Center, which held offices for most of PTL's executives and was a training center for missionaries who then go off to help evangelize the world. Spreading his message to the world was important for Bakker. From his first year at North Central Bible School, when he declared to his classmates that he was going to bring the world to Jesus, he planned to spread the gospel throughout the world. By 1980, Jim Bakker was broadcasting versions of his show in Japan, South Korea, Africa, and Latin American countries. PTL was also sending money to Brazil and Africa to aid missionary allies.⁴⁷⁴ Steeped in prosperity theology, the center, Bakker hoped, would transform other peoples into prosperous Christians and lift the world up from poverty. He also broadcast images of Heritage USA in order to show the world what God was building for his believers in the United States.⁴⁷⁵

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Bakker also promoted Heritage USA on *The PTL Club*, and as his funding needs increased, his promotion of Heritage USA became incessant. Although "the PTL Club" was designed as an interview-style show, after 1982, the majority of time was spent advertising Heritage USA and promoting different options. As Charles Sheppard explained, "With building costs mushrooming, marketing, once a small part of the Bakkers' show, had now eclipsed evangelism."⁴⁷⁶ By the mid-1980s he would spend entire episodes highlighting Heritage's accommodations.⁴⁷⁷

In this process, the show provided his audience with a brick-by-brick history of the construction of the Christian retreat alongside images of the luxurious accommodations that were available to guests; every marble countertop and custom wood door became evidence of God's gifts of prosperity and the entitlement of those

who became members. Merging these presentations with positive thinking, he presented Heritage USA as a refuge from the negative and hostile secular world. It was a place where luxury belonged to everyone and "the weak feel safe" and affluence was sanctified.⁴⁷⁸ He also routinely reminded the guests that Heritage USA was a haven for Christians and a beacon to the world that would demonstrate what was possible through true faith in Christ.⁴⁷⁹

Bakker also routinely presented Heritage USA as a refuge for Charismatics from an outside world that did not understand them. Attacks upon him were attacks upon the park and his followers. These declarations were usually followed by appeals for money, which he stated would demonstrate to the world that "No weapon formed against me shall prosper." While some commentators saw this narrative as a cynical fundraising attempt, others close to Bakker claimed that he honestly believed that his critics were part of a satanic plot.⁴⁸⁰ Although most of these attacks were targeted at the "secular world" and his critics, Bakker also spent a great deal of time focusing his attacks on the *Charlotte Observer*, which his followers described as an anti-religious liberal newspaper trying to destroy Heritage USA.⁴⁸¹

Heritage USA was a monumental accomplishment. It was also a new type of ministry. Sprawling across the borders of North and South Carolina, it drew in over six million visitors annually. Inside the gates, prosperity and happiness abounded and the troubles of the outside world were left behind. For many, it validated Bakker's message. God was blessing the ministry and allowing the park to grow and prosper. Inside the gates, families were safe from the social pressures of secular America. God's promise of prosperity had created a world where charity, opulence, and happiness coexisted. From across the nation, people flocked to Bakker's ministry and park. They most supportive became lifetime partners. They devoured his message and became the foundation of his religious empire.

Chapter 9

A Worldly Embrace: PTL's Followers

Jim Bakker was one the most important leaders of the Charismatic movement and one of the most influential televangelists of the 1980s. Some twelve million men and women watched his network shows. Nearly six million supported PTL with money, repeated visits to Heritage, and hours of devotion to PTL shows. Some of Bakker's most rabid followers left their jobs and homes to move to Charlotte where they immersed themselves in his ministry. They decorated their homes with PTL memorabilia and thought of the Bakker family as close friends. These men and women became the backbone of PTL. They boosted his network and their donations and made possible the building and expansion of Heritage USA. They believed in prosperity theology and positive thinking, and they made Bakker and PTL a national phenomenon.

What drew them to PTL? Who were these men and women? And why their passion for Bakker and PTL? Outside the world of evangelical Christians, Bakker's most loyal followers were often portrayed as poor, dull southerners who were easily duped by Bakker's promises of prosperity and happiness. The satirist P.J. O'Rourke helped implant these stereotypes when he told his readers that a typical PTL member was someone who would have joined the Klan had it not been for PTL. He claimed that to understand PTL's audience one should imagine a grandmother who was home alone writing checks for PTL with every last dime she owned. When describing visitors to Heritage, he also declared that "Many of them were old, none looked very well-off. There was a dullness in their movements and expressions. Even their kids looked somber and thick." His wife added: "This is white trash behaving itself—the only thing worse in the world worse than white trash *not* behaving itself."⁴⁸²

These dismissive characterizations reflected widely-held stereotypes about PTL, but they also were grossly inaccurate. Some PTL viewers, to be sure, were poor, rural Southerners. But many PTL contributors were well-to-do suburbanites. Many of the Sunbelt suburbanites, moreover, had grown up outside the south and then moved to

Charlotte and other Sunbelt cities. There are no detailed demographic studies of who donated to PTL or who watched the PTL network. Clearly, however, both donors and viewers came from a wide cross-section of American society.⁴⁸³

In broad, general terms, some generalizations about the PTL loyalists are possible. First of all, the men and women who watched PTL and donated money to PTL were religious evangelicals. Specifically, they were Charismatics and often supporters of Prosperity Theology. They were mostly of the middle class (sixty-five percent had professional occupations), who often hailed from growing Sunbelt regions, and whose view of their own economic and family lives allowed them to identify with Bakker's vision of a God who offered unlimited wealth and happiness. Many were two-parent families in which the wife was a full-time mother. They had come to embrace a cultural conservatism that emphasized the family, individual success, limited government, and entrepreneurial freedom.⁴⁸⁴

These followers shared other characteristics. They were politically conservative. Their religion had become intertwined with their broader understanding of the American economy and their work lives. They were also geographically mobile. Many had been raised outside the South and had moved in search of a better job. Frequent relocations produced for many of them a sense of detachment and loneliness.⁴⁸⁵

Hence, they were drawn to PTL and Bakker's message. One reason was Bakker's emphasis on positive thinking. For businesspeople, this was a means of coping with the emotional demands of their work. Dealing with rejection on a daily basis, Bakker's uplifting message encouraged them to persist. He also gave people—and families—emotional connections in a culture where friendships were difficult to maintain. If they thought positively, happiness—and success—would follow. His followers also embraced Bakker's conservative worldview. Their life-stories were a testament to the feasibility of success in American society. Often living in prosperous suburbs, they saw his promises of success as a reflection of their lives.

The exceptions to this profile are also telling. Supporters who did not fit this broader profile were less committed to Bakker's prosperity theology and to conservative politics. Instead, they were drawn to Bakker's hopeful message—and ignored other aspects of Bakker's gospel. Unlike the more typical members, they viewed their lives as filled with difficulty and could not conceive of a God who provided happiness—and prosperity—for those who wished it. They were also less financially important to PTL.⁴⁸⁶

Because there is no systematic survey of PTL members and how they came to identify with Bakker, this chapter will explore these questions through interviews. It will highlight what drew men and women to PTL and how their lives predisposed them to embrace Bakker's message. This chapter is based on over thirty interviews with former PTL lifetime partners. To become a partner, one had to contribute a minimum of \$1,000 to PTL ministries, and there were 500,000 such members who were among Bakker's most loyal supporters. They watched PTL on a regular basis, they visited Heritage USA, and they provided the majority of funds for PTL's million-dollar-a-week expenses. As Bakker understood, the wealthier—and most fervent—members often bought numerous memberships.⁴⁸⁷

One of Bakker's most fervent supporters was Evyln. Evyln had grown up in the 1950s in Alberta, Canada in a family marked by an absence of emotional support. As a young adult, Evyln moved often. She succeeded in school and received a degree in nursing. During this time, she also met her husband who attended a Lutheran church. After a couple of years of marriage, they moved to Ontario where they lived for two years, before her husband took a job with a paper mill in Arcata in northern California. There had been four openings, and, as Evyln remembered it, God favored them. Her husband was soon promoted to a supervisory position and they lived comfortably. Soon she lived in a prosperous suburban neighborhood, and her career as a nurse provided her with a steady income. Nonetheless, the move to California had been difficult. One

problem was finding a church that offered emotional support. She stated that if not for an older couple who lived next door, she and her husband would not have remained in California. Having been uprooted from her family and church, she found appealing Bakker's message of emotional fulfillment.⁴⁸⁸

This sense of isolation also attracted her to the Charismatic movement. Her involvement began after she had her first child. As she recalled,

A friend had been reading a book...*They Speak in Other Tongues*. She had given it to me and I was kind of ignorant. We went to a meeting and the other 3 ended up doing all the talking. I was just astounded. When we got home I just started praying that the lord would start filling us with the holy spirit. I was one of the first ones to get filled. I was starting to have dreams and visions and adventures. I just had a baby..I had a 6 month old baby. It was so amazing. I would have strange desires to do something. It was so foreign to me. Before we would go to church and that was it; nothing like this. There were a couple of Lutheran ladies...I laid down and saw and felt like I should go over to my friend's house..they were members of PTL also. I grabbed my baby and went there. I noticed a green car in front. I saw 2 ladies and I kneeled down before them and spoke in tongues.⁴⁸⁹

Such stories were typical of the early Charismatic movement. Many of the early Charismatics were uprooted men and women who found mainline churches unfulfilling. Much like Evyln, they sought to shelter their families from a rapidly changing world. Very often, too, women who became Charismatics described themselves as "housewives."⁴⁹⁰ Hence, they prized the traditional family and emphasized family togetherness. Evyln reflected these values. Although she worked as a nurse for part of her life, when asked what she did during the 1960s and early 1970s, she emphasized that she had raised her children. For the first years of their lives, she was a full-time mother. This commitment to her family, she insisted, shielded her from much of the social and economic turmoil in the country. As a Charismatic, she believed that the Holy Spirit had strengthened the bond between parents and children.⁴⁹¹

For a time, Evyln was able to balance her newfound Pentecostal beliefs with her traditional Lutheranism by holding prayer meetings outside of the church. She and other Charismatics would meet in living rooms where they practiced the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes her Lutheran minister would attend. Soon she began watching Jim Bakker and then Pat Robertson. She was immediately impressed with Bakker. She enjoyed Jim and Tammy's personalities, and described Jim Bakker as a "gifted businessman." Besides admiring the Bakkers, she enjoyed Bakker's interviews. She was inspired by the stories of people whose lives were transformed—and made more prosperous--after turning to Christ. It was a contrast to the local culture which she described as dominated by hippies and drug-users. These unproductive hippies threatened to corrupt America and her efforts to inculcate her daughter with a strong work ethic and family values.

Soon after, she bought two lifetime partnerships, although she never visited Heritage USA. Over time, she also became politically active by the 1980s, and was the leader of what she described as a pro-family movement whose mission was to protect the family against abortion, homosexuality, and drugs. She held quarterly meetings to discuss the progress of this pro-family agenda. She prepared pamphlets outlining the positions of political candidates on family issues, and she developed close political ties with the local Republican Party. She also recalled spending most of her time attacking "anti-family Democrats." Like other Charismatics, she saw her political activism as an extension of her religious beliefs. She lamented the decline of her local community and the rise of immorality, and drug use, and she believed these problems could be eradicated by a revival of the Holy Spirit and the promotion of a religious revival. Personal salvation, she thought, was inexorably linked to social regeneration and the protection of family life.⁴⁹²

Her commitment to conservative politics had deeper roots. Although Evyln attributed her commitment to social issues of the 1970s as the main reason for her support of the Republican Party, she had been a conservative since she moved to

California.⁴⁹³ She explained, “Most of the people we hung out with in our prayer group and church were Republicans although I do remember a couple that were Democrats for a while but they finally saw the light.” The relationship between Evelyln’s prayer groups and conservative politics was even more noteworthy because conservatism was rare in Arcata, which was a remote lumber town with a handful of small manufacturing plants and a local university. The city and surrounding countryside had also become an outpost for counter culture back-to-the-land experiments (and with these there also developed an underground economy tied to producing cannabis). These factors made the area extremely liberal. In the 1970s, Republicans usually won less than ten percent of the vote and the Green Party held the majority of the city council. As Evelyln recalled, this made it very difficult for her to spread her conservative views. Evelyln’s political views were a minority within the community; they were consonant with the views of California’s Charismatic movement and its Sunbelt base. So was her prosperity.⁴⁹⁴

Their success, she concluded, was a product of God’s will and his willingness to bless her family. Wealth and happiness, she was convinced, were the outgrowth of faith and not socio-economic circumstances. At the same time, she saw societal breakdown as the outgrowth of personal failure. Her family’s affluence allowed her to leave work after she had children and this predisposed her to Bakker’s pro-family message. She remains a fervent supporter of Jim Bakker to this day.⁴⁹⁵

Another PTL lifetime partner with a similar background is Garlene.⁴⁹⁶ Garlene grew up in Cleveland, where her family attended a Presbyterian Church. She and her husband eventually moved to a Dallas suburb where they began a family and became very successful and wealthy. After she moved to Dallas, she questioned her Christian identity, even though she attended a Christian church. As she recalled, “We thought we were Christians but we weren’t.” It was not uncommon for Charismatics to characterize other Christians as not full believers. While many Charismatics avoid proclaiming they are better than other Christians, they believe that the movements’ embrace of supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit makes it a more complete version of

Christianity. She also emphasized her rejection of the social gospel. As she recalled, “I went to a Presbyterian Church on Sunday and youth group but I never got the gospel . . . just the social gospel.” In time, she came to see liberal Christianity’s emphasis on social reform as a form of heresy. The only path to social and personal regeneration was through a personal and experiential religion. She also began to embrace the Charismatic movement’s view of poverty and wealth, which saw both as the product of personal initiative and God’s favor.⁴⁹⁷

This transformation was a reflection of her life. Her path to the Charismatic movement began in 1972 when she attended an expo held by the Campus Crusade for Christ. Campus Crusade was started by Bill Bright who, like Garlene and many of the early promoters of the Charismatic movement, was a politically conservative businessman. Soon she began watching Jim Bakker when he hosted the *The 700 Club* because he “preached the Charismatic message.” She became a Charismatic Christian and joined a Methodist church. Soon after, she purchased four lifetime partnerships with PTL. She also gave to Bakker’s ministry regularly. While above and beyond what she needed—and used—it was not unusual for PTL’s wealthier partners.⁴⁹⁸

At about the time she became a Charismatic, she and her husband became wealthy as a result of their successful packaging company. Although Garlene acknowledged that she and her husband worked hard to achieve this success, she attributed most of her wealth to faith in God and to her baptism of the Holy Spirit and her involvement with the Charismatic movement. Although she had “more than [her] fair share of material blessings,” she still did not feel fulfilled. The Charismatic movement gave Garlene and her husband peace of mind that wealth alone could not provide. Becoming a born-again filled an emptiness in her life and she soon became a self-described Jesus-freak. In addition, she came to equate the gospel with prosperity theology. She fervently maintained that God provided prosperity to those who believed, and further commented that “we all know Jesus was not a pauper.” Her faith in God also sustained her during hard times. At one point, she was diagnosed with

cancer and had no insurance to cover her treatment. Consequently, she was forced to remove funds from the profit-sharing and pension funds of her business in order to pay her bills. She persevered, she thought, through these trials because of God's blessing of prosperity. She credited God with sustaining the business for seven more years, before selling it to another "good Christian" for a significant profit.

Like many businesspeople who supported Jim Bakker, she also embraced the message of positive thinking. Men and women who faced these pressures were heavily represented in PTL and the Charismatic movement, and⁴⁹⁹ Garlene exemplified this connection. As an owner of a company that distributed wholesale plastic supplies, she spent a great deal of time cultivating relationships with clients and suppliers. When a salesperson left the company and attempted to take his accounts with him, she was forced to travel for weeks in order to retain suppliers and customers. To save her business, she needed to hide her frustration and her sense of betrayal. When visiting clients, she presented herself as positive and unfazed by the situation. Positive thinking and her religious faith allowed her to do this. It was no coincidence that it was during this time that she turned to a religious movement that helped her control her emotions in the face of a stressful crisis.⁵⁰⁰

Sunbelt cities such as Dallas were characterized by service-oriented businesses that pressured employees to become entrepreneurs for the organizations. In order to compete in a global economy, firms also demanded that employees use their free time to advocate for the company's broader goals. As a result, many employees sacrificed their home life and free time to become part of this new environment. They benefited from the better-paying position, but the pressures were intense, and they met them by joining religious institutions that could meet emotional demands and sanctify their success. When Garlene talked about her life, these realities were evident. Business pressure was always there, and she talked about how her strong faith—and positive outlook—got her through these difficulties.⁵⁰¹

Garlene viewed wealth as a product of positive thinking and religious faith, and she understood her personal biography as a testament to the feasibility of success in American society. When she described her success, she was quick to acknowledge that her story was a testament to the power of faith. She also explained that faith and hard work lead to success. These beliefs led Garlene to affiliate with the Republican Party. She remembered how this created a conflict for her when Jimmy Carter ran for President as an evangelical Christian. As she recalled, “I did not vote for him and I was not sure if it was my prejudice against Democrats. I just couldn’t vote for him. I was a Republican my whole life.”⁵⁰²

Another couple who were strong supporters of Jim Bakker were Jim and Tracy. They both worked for IBM, and Jim was an executive in sales. After they were married, IBM moved them to New York, Dallas, and then Charlotte. These frequent moves were common for both IBM employees, and the fast-growing Sunbelt companies. In fact, IBM bragged that their workforce’s interchangeability was a key to their success and their employee training emphasized this. Employees responded, by declaring that IBM stood for “I’ve Been Moved.” Many complained that this movement made it difficult to bond with communities. Numerous studies also demonstrated that families—and especially women—had difficulty adjusting to these rapid changes, showing signs of increased anxiety and homesickness.⁵⁰³

Jim and Tracy recalled similar experiences. As Tracy declared, “Charlotte was a great place. We knew very few people at first, but there were some nice people. Jim was busy at work most of the time, and we [the kids and she] were at home. I enjoyed it, it was just . . . I came from a close-knit community. I wanted it for my kids. We wanted them to be surrounded by a positive family environment.” Like many women who relocated due to Job demands in the 1960s, she felt isolated. Tracy took a two-year leave from IBM when her children were young. During this time, she spent most of her days at Heritage USA, getting to know the staff, and socializing with other guests. She, like many other members, described it as “heaven on earth.” Inside the park, her kids

enjoyed the attractions and met many friends. She also was able to attend many tapings of “The PTL Club.” She also commented on the safety of the park, declaring that “It was a godly place. This is why I allowed my children to be unsupervised at times . . . It was one of the best times my lives. It was just wonderful.” They also relished the sense of community the park created, spending many of their holidays and family events there.

Their politics also meshed with Jim Bakker’s message. Like many PTL members, they held a conservative worldview and supported prosperity theology. They were life-long Republicans, and became social conservatives in the 1970s. For them, however, the most important issue was “keeping taxes down.” The park became an embodiment of their social view. It was a shrine to American prosperity, and had a “positive” atmosphere that contrasted with a society that increasingly emphasized limits. These beliefs also made the couple strong supporters of Prosperity theology. Tracy commented, “Prosperity theology is God’s theology . . . he provides wealth to those who believe.” She followed these comments by declaring that it was difficult to “find a positive Christian message.” This is why, she declared, she and her husband enjoyed Jim and Tammy. As a family, they watched the show daily. They also defended Jim Bakker’s lifestyle, declaring, “some people out there were just jealous of his success . . . although [some] things did get out of hand.”

Bill and Tammy were another Charlotte-based PTL couple who shared a similar experience. The couple had grown up in Buffalo, New York, and married after college. Bruce joined the army in 1967 because he needed work and he “spent too much time partying in college.” The couple spent the next twenty years hopping from one military post to the next. As Bill recalled, “I moved up pretty quickly [in the army], but this also required a lot of transfers.” Tammy worked odd jobs and raised their daughter. In 1974, she began to watch CBN, and became a Charismatic Christian. Soon she began to pressure Bill to become part of the movement. Bill was skeptical of religion in general, and refused to join, but this changed after the couple began attending a large

Charismatic church in suburban San Antonio with other military friends. As Bill recalled, “I started witnessing things that I could not explain, just things, lots of things.” Although Bill was reluctant to describe the events in detail, he “declared that he witnessed how the Holy Spirit performed miracles upon many people’s lives, healing the sick and bringing “bringing people out of dumps into prosperous lives.” Soon they began watching *The PTL Club*. For them, the show was a stark contrast to “rotten” environment of the 1970s.” As Bill recalled, “We had gas lines [in the 1970s], Jim Carter, the whole thing, it was rotten.”⁵⁰⁴

Soon the couple began making trips to Heritage USA whenever they drove from Texas to New York to visit family. They were impressed. As Bill recalled, “it was an oasis from the world.” Like “The PTL Club,” they viewed the park as a contrast to a “rotten” world outside the gates. This excitement over PTL led the couple to retire to Rock Hill, South Carolina in 1984. As locals recalled, many people were making a similar migration. A former PTL lifeguard recalled that most visitors came from Pennsylvania, Ohio and sometimes Florida, quickly transforming the close-knit, suspicious community into a Charlotte suburb.⁵⁰⁵ It was a community that, in Bills words, understood “Christ’s promises and blessings to faithful.”⁵⁰⁶ Some had jobs at PTL, and others worked in Charlotte. Soon, they began visiting the park regularly, creating many new friends.⁵⁰⁷

Bakker’s strongest supporters often described their lives as prosperous and their personal lives as outstanding. The previous examples are evidence of that. There were other, less typical, members, however, whose lives were very different. Although they did not support the entirety of Jim Bakker’s message, they used his positive message to cope with tragedy and difficult times in their lives. For these PTL partners, prosperity theology was less important in their religious lives, and their commitment to Bakker was weaker. Nonetheless, their stories illustrate how Bakker’s message could meet different needs.

One example is Doty. Doty had grown up on a farm near Teays Valley, West Virginia. He spent most of his childhood helping with chores and repairing farm

machinery. As he recalled, he and his father “worked liked a dog.” He became a Jack of All Trades who could raise cattle and chickens, fix machinery, and operate his father’s saw mill. “It helped me in life, he said, and I determined I did not want to be a farmer.” He entered the Army after high school and served in the Korean War. Upon returning from Korea, he had wanted to attend college and became a high school football coach, but he could not afford the tuition. Instead, he reenlisted for another four years and later returned to city that had very few jobs.⁵⁰⁸

Eventually, he found work as a maintenance man for an industrial plant where he used his repair skills. He spent the next forty years with this company. He enjoyed the work, but when he retired, the company cut his pension. He said bitterly: “that’s gratitude and corporate thievery.” Doty’s work did not require emotional control. Nor did he believe that God had delivered material blessings upon him. Instead, when thinking back on his life, he often said “God’s university is adversity” or “You learn more in the valleys than you do the mountaintops.” His job, he said, “kept me out of poverty.” His church life was also very different from those that characterized the Charismatic movement. As a child, he attended a “small country church” and was raised by a musical family that sang gospel and country music. This experience led him to appreciate church even though he did not commit to the church in his younger years. This lack of commitment, as he recalled, is why after Korea he spent “too much time drinking” and hanging out with people whom he later realized were not good friends.

He developed a renewed interest in God and the church following the death of his teenage son who was killed by a speeding driver. Doty recalled how he was profoundly changed: “He broadsided him; my boy took the brunt of it; my life was devastated; that drove me to Christ; you got to see you are not in control of your life; the most traumatic thing in my life. I loved the boy; we were close buddies; it just took my arm off; I can’t . . . It still bothers me to this day.” Following this new commitment, he began watching PTL and signed up as a partner in order to find a “more spiritual atmosphere.” He was little interested in PTL’s prosperity teachings or family-centered

social message. He watched “The PTL Club” because he derived comfort from Bakker’s message of hope.

Doty’s view of prosperity also had political implications. For example, when asked about these ideas he stated, “Some of the things the Pentecostal movement does there is no basis for. Some things are not in the Bible. The prosperity teachings were part of it. I don’t think the Bible teaches that. I know a lot of people who named it but did not claim it . . . Today we are looking for earthly things and that is a totally different type of values than those early Christianity had in mind.” Prosperity theology ministers, he thought, were as greedy “as Washington politicians.” They were both self-serving men who cared little for the average person. Although he was frustrated with contemporary Washington politics in general, he still saw himself as a life-long Democrat. America, he thought, needed more presidents like Harry Truman and Franklin Roosevelt whom he viewed as champions of the common person and not corporate America. This was an economic worldview that stood in contrast to the wealthy Charismatic supporters.

Earnest and Doris joined PTL for similar reasons. They were born in Lexington, Kentucky and lived their entire lives in a city that was increasingly populated by newcomers. As a youth, Earnest had been a member of the local Disciples of Christ church and his wife was a Methodist. After they were married, they felt their churches were not meeting their emotional needs and they joined a Charismatic Church. As Doris recalled, this search for a more emotionally-fulfilling religion began after she gave birth to a set of twins, one of whom had cerebral palsy. This strained their marriage and their finances, which forced Earnest to work long hours in order to make ends meet. As she remembered, “I was pretty well nuts with four kids. He was a fireman, and drove an ambulance. I can’t tell you how many jobs he had.” With this stressful life, she turned to PTL’s positive message. These experiences, however, led them to reject the principles of prosperity theology. As Earnest commented: “In God’s economy everything belongs to him. I don’t think I can demand from God; just snap my fingers and he is my sugar

daddy.” This belief also led them to praise “social Christianity.” They also stated that the most important role of the church was “to be a leader in world for helping the poor.”⁵⁰⁹ These beliefs motivated them to travel to Peru in order to work in orphanages and soup kitchens. They also rejected conservative politics. They were committed Democrats until the Monica Lewinsky scandal when they voted Republican for the first time.⁵¹⁰

Although Earnst and Doris were not wealthy, they were not poor. Some impoverished people, however, did support PTL. As a local social worker who knew them recalled, most were also trying to fill an emotional void in their lives. Many simply could not afford the \$1,000 fee that was required of lifetime partners, marginalizing their status in this money-driven ministry. Some did. As one former receptionist from Heritage USA's largest hotel commented, about one in every twelve guests had their clothes packed in “paper bags” and appeared to be from meager backgrounds.

One of these less wealthy members was Betty, who had grown up on the outskirts of Allentown, Pennsylvania in a house that her father had converted from a chicken coop. She remembered her childhood as difficult, largely because her parents argued a lot. It helped, she said, that her parents worked long hours and were not home very often. Betty was responsible for maintaining the household and cooking meals for her family, which added to the difficult nature of her youth. So did the lack of approval she received from her parents. As she recalled, “My mom was the boss and she was demanding. She did not let me make my own decisions. I just did it . . . I was just trying to survive.” As with Bakker’s own family, there was an absence of emotional support while growing up.⁵¹¹

After high school, she married, but the marriage got off to a bad start. First, her mother refused to attend the wedding. Following the wedding, Betty discovered that her husband had come from an abusive family and had difficulty communicating with her. Searching for ways to ease her emotional pain, she started to watch Oral Roberts on television, which she found more satisfying than her own Lutheran church.

Roberts' emphasis on emotional healing and positive thinking drew her into the Charismatic movement. Eventually, she and her husband traveled to Oral Roberts University where Oral Roberts personally laid hands on her to heal her emotional pain. As she recalled, this seemed to alleviate many of her marital problems and she began to watch PTL. She then looked for support from PTL when she and her husband had marriage difficulties in the late 1970s. As she recalled, they had been seeking counseling and nothing seemed to work. Then they decided to become members of PTL and take part in a three-day inner healing seminar. As she recalled, it was very difficult for them. Nonetheless, they viewed it as a bargain because "we went for \$300 for three days; it was much cheaper than a psychologist." Betty's reasons for becoming a member of PTL fit a larger pattern of less wealthy PTL followers.⁵¹² Betty was drawn to the emotional healing potential—not Bakker's vision of success or Heritage USA's lavish grounds.

Her politics was also different. Her parents were essentially apolitical and never voted. Betty became politically engaged when she joined the Charismatic movement, and gradually aligned herself with Charismatic's conservative outlook. But her beliefs did not appear to be connected to any particular worldview. When asked about political issues, she responded that she simply relied on the advice from the televangelists she watched on television. These included Jim Bakker, Oral Roberts, and Pat Robertson.

These less-wealthy supporters contrasted starkly with Bakker's more fervent followers who supported the entirety of Bakker's message and contributed heavily to the ministry. Still, there were others. Many of these members, while not wealthy, had a comfortable economic situation and supported Jim Bakker. They were Republicans, spoke glowingly about PTL's message, but did not defend prosperity theology vehemently.⁵¹³ One of these was Warren, who had grown up in Huntington, West Virginia in the late 1930s. His father was a mechanic and worked in a rail yard, while his mother was employed at a drug store. After high school, Warren worked at the CNO railway and later became a sales representative for a linen supply company. Then he

started his own business. Although he recalled the 1930s as being difficult, he felt that he had job and economic security throughout his life. His success was impressive because unemployment was high in Huntington during the 1950s as a result of the mechanization of coal mining and a decline in local manufacturing jobs.⁵¹⁴

Warren began watching Jim Bakker in the late 1970s. He was drawn to the emotional style of Bakker's preaching and the neatly manicured grounds at Heritage USA, which he described as "a nice place to take a family." Like many salespeople who joined PTL, he sought an emotional sanctuary where he could renew himself and express his emotions. He recalled watching Jim Bakker on his extended sales trip across West Virginia and Kentucky. He was also impressed with Heritage USA, and especially the Heritage Grand hotel. It was clean and ornate. He, however, had conflicting views about prosperity theology. When asked about this, he approached the topic with ambivalence and noted how he felt Jim and Tammy got "way out of hand." They did, however, declare (a bit later) that "God will provide to the faithful." This ambivalence characterized his political views as well. As a youth, his mother was a Republican and his father a Democrat. His mother's relatives were Republican Party activists and his grandmother was a "block-beater" for the Party. He believed his father became a Democrat because of his union job at the American Car and Foundry factory. Often his parents argued about politics, but when he entered the world of sales, he gravitated to the Republican Party. When he became an independent businessman, his commitment to the Republican Party grew even stronger. The Democrats, he thought, distributed too many handouts, which contrasted with his philosophy of a "days pay for a day's work."⁵¹⁵ Like Bakker's Sunbelt supporters, Warren's view of his economic situation was optimistic. When asked about his economic status, he indicated he never had difficulty obtaining work and was always financially secure.

Similar supporters were the Pulaskis, who came from modest backgrounds, yet were drawn to many aspects of Bakker's message. As their daughter recalled, they were both born in rural Pennsylvania, and after marrying, they moved to suburban

Allentown, Pennsylvania. Allentown was an ideal family-centered community where “everything they needed” was within walking distance. After they married, they left their Lutheran church and joined a non-denominational evangelical church. In the 1970s, they became enthralled with Jim and Tammy and Heritage USA. As their daughter recalled, her mother was home during the day, and she began to watch PTL for company and also identified with Tammy’s free spirit. Watching the show became a family event. While their daughter was unsure if they approved of prosperity theology, she remembered that her parent were impressed with the “glitz and the glamour” of the Bakkers and Heritage USA, and the “high-class atmosphere” of the PTL program. She also remembered her mother explaining that God was blessing the Bakker family, whom she described as a “nice Christian family.” Like many Charismatic women, Mrs. Pulaski was a full-time mother, who found appealing Jim and Tammy’s emphasis on the family.⁵¹⁶

Although similar to many PTL families, the Pulaskis tended to be more moderate in their politics. This set them apart from the more fervent defenders of prosperity theology who were much more hostile toward liberal activism. While the Pulaskis believed government’s role in society should be limited, they were not hostile to social reform. For example, in the 1960s, Mrs. Pulaski, as her daughter remembered, felt tremendous sympathy for African Americans and also supported government aid for those in poverty.⁵¹⁷ Although their support for the Republican Party was linked to their belief in smaller government, they were not zealots, nor were they stark defenders of prosperity theology.

Why this ambivalence about prosperity theology? The way Jim Bakker presented these ideas offers some explanation. In many broadcasts, Bakker simply told followers about how God was blessing his life and the lives of PTL followers, and this allowed supporters to interpret the meaning of his message and mold it to their own beliefs. This was often followed by requests for money, after which Bakker told viewers that if they gave to the ministry they would be rewarded. The promises of prosperity were

also integrated into the décor and environment at Heritage USA.⁵¹⁸ As one former employee noted, PTL's promises of prosperity were mostly unspoken:

If you did not believe that [prosperity gospel] then people felt sorry for you. It is why you didn't prosper if you didn't have God on your life. It was talked about but it didn't have to be. For guest the whole atmosphere said this can be yours if you just sew your seed and follow Christ; look what we done here because we said yes to God. There were limos that sat in front of the hotel all the time. Where do you go as a Christian where you see limos sitting around.⁵¹⁹

Jim Bakker, in his retrospective book *I Was Wrong*, also highlighted how his faith was connected to the grandeur of Heritage USA. As he recalled, "At PTL, I believed that by constructing large buildings, a great television network, and other marvelous, big programs, and far-reaching ministries, I believed I was showing faith through works."⁵²⁰ Bakker's message was often presented through story and suggestion rather than through preaching. This further illustrates the difficulty that arises when trying to survey people about motivation.⁵²¹ Although not all followers explicitly approved of prosperity theology, they all praised Heritage USA's "high-class" amenities and saw the park as a symbol of God's blessing. They approved of religious organizations spending money on lavish settings and grounds.

These views also revealed their acceptance of Bakker's claims that God's blessing had allowed him to create this "heaven on earth." For them, the park was a blending of consumer society and religion in a way that blurred the lines between the promises of America's consumer culture and that of religion. This relationship, as weak as it was, still bound them to the movement's conservatism. Government, they felt, should not redistribute wealth. Like other believers of prosperity theology, they viewed wealth and poverty as the outgrowth of personal faith and morality, leading them to become supporters of the Republican Party as well as Bakkers' ministry.

Another PTL supporter who came from a modest background was John who grew up in Kentucky. When he was five, he and his family moved several miles north to Louisville. Although they were churchgoers, he did not become involved with religion until his late twenties, at which time he joined a local Pentecostal church, which had about 150 members. Most of the parishioners were blue-collar workers. It was a blue-collar Pentecostal church which, as John noted, was in sharp contrast to the nearby Charismatic churches whose parishioners were wealthy, less southern, and more likely to promote prosperity theology. As was true of many of PTL's working-class PTL members, John's connection to the Republican Party was weaker. Reflecting on the 1970s, he did not remember being politically active but felt he probably would have sided with the Republican Party on issues such as gay rights and abortion.⁵²²

John also did not explicitly defend PTL's prosperity message. Nonetheless, PTL's lavish environment appealed to him and convinced him to become a partner and supporter. As he remembered, "I think the two things that got my attention was [sic] the fact that everything they did was first class. There was always a positive message. When we were there . . . it was like I don't belong in this social league but they are letting me in anyway. That is what attracted me to them. It was first class. Everything they did was just was the same caliber as ABC, CBS and here is Christian TV that is doing that on that scale. I thought it was a true miracle." Like many moderate supporters, John's view of the park became symbolized his belief in prosperity theology. It was a symbol that Bakker's faith created prosperity.

Another similar supporter was Ken. Ken's path to PTL fit a larger pattern of many PTL supporters. He had first begun a business career before joining the Charismatic movement. As was the case with many Charismatics, he found himself in a career that demanded emotional control and a high level of performance while separating him from his family and friends, and this placed heavy emotional demands on him.⁵²³

Ken spent his childhood in a middle class farming community in southern Virginia and then moved to suburban Richmond where he enrolled in high school. His family, however, was originally from the Midwest. Because of his continued appreciation for the Midwest, he decided to attend Western Michigan University where he received a degree in business. During this time, he became involved in the Charismatic movement. After graduation, he returned to Richmond where he began his business career. He then followed a lucrative job opportunity and moved to a suburb of Washington DC in 1977. After this move, he broke away from the Catholic Church and joined the Assemblies of God. It gave him a sense of community in a city where he had no family and few friends. Soon after, he began watching PTL on his office television. Whenever he felt discouraged or unmotivated, he would turn on PTL and the “positive message” would help him get through the day. Although Ken accepted Bakker’s prosperity message, he was more attached to PTL’s positive thinking. He could turn on PTL’s twenty-four hour network at any time and hear a positive encouraging message. Between Tammy singing “Never Give Up” or Robert Schuler telling his followers that failure “just means you haven’t succeeded yet,” he was able to find an encouraging message. This gave him the energy and encouragement to meet with his next client with new vigor. ⁵²⁴

Ken’s politics and views on prosperity theology were also similar to other moderate supporters of Bakker. He was not an explicit supporter of prosperity theology. He did see, however, PTL’s lavish amenities as an example of God's blessing. He also condoned Jim Bakker’s lifestyle and his ostentatious spending habits. He only questioned Bakker’s financial activities after he became a partner and began to doubt the long-term viability of PTL’s business model. Ken’s politics also mirrored many other PTL supporters who were conservative in the 1960s for economic reasons, before becoming social conservatives in the 1970s. As he recalled, “I am a pro-lifer...I think the nation made a mistake when they took prayer out of school.” He viewed religious revival as the foundation of social reform, and believed faith was the means to

prosperity for the nation and the individual. By the end of the 1970s, he believed these ideas were reflected in PTL and his local Pentecostal church.

Another moderate supporter of Bakker was Evlyn S.⁵²⁵ Evlyn S. was from Pennsylvania and she spent her entire life in the town where she was born. The daughter of steel mill worker, she grew up attending an Evangelical United Church, and decided not to attend college after high school. Instead, she married her high school sweetheart. Her husband joined the army and after he was discharged he went to work at the local steel mill like her father. As she recalled, “the jobs in factories paid better than many college jobs so he could not find a reason to go to college.” Unlike many PTL followers, Evlyn never moved about the country, but like many Charismatic women, she grew up in an economically conservative family, and became a housewife. She found appealing PTL’s conservative economic and social message. Home alone during the days, she enjoyed Jim and Tammy’s inspirational messages. Soon Evlyn viewed morality, Christianity, and family life as inter-connected. By the end of 1970s she explained her political choices as a product of her religious beliefs, and began voting for the first time. As she explained, “I looked to the Bible when it came to politics and tried to find good Christian candidates who were against abortion.”⁵²⁶

PTL members came from a wide cross-section of American society. They were drawn to PTL for different reasons. Those who were most committed to PTL and believed in prosperity theology also demonstrated strong conservative leanings. Working in jobs that imposed heavy emotional demands while providing significant economic rewards, they were drawn to Bakker’s prosperity theology and positive thinking. Others embraced his pro-family message the blended with their suburban family lives. These connections highlight how Bakker’s theology message was able meet the emotional and political needs of these middle-class men and women. Their lives and careers made them receptive to prosperity theology. This relationship explains why PTL’s membership was strongest in the Sunbelt states such as California and North Carolina which witnessed a large influx of middle class migrants during the 1970s. The

combination of affluent suburbs, economic opportunity, and the nature of their work allowed these suburbanites to view their lives and social change in a similar fashion. While social issues often solidified many PTL members' commitment to the Republican Party, most were already conservative well before these issues became paramount to their political outlook. This relationship was reflected in the early surveys of the Charismatic movement and helped solidify the strong bond between Bakker and the Republican Party. His supporters were drawn to both movements by a socio-political worldview that led them to support both prosperity theology and the Republican Party. For these members, their approval of the opulence of Heritage USA often indicated an acceptance of Jim Bakker's message. Their acceptance of these ideas reinforced their belief that, in American society, success and failure were largely the result of personal choice.

These men and women's geographic mobility also created a sense of alienation that drew them to Jim and Tammy's hopeful, family-oriented message. This appealed to mothers who were home alone in the suburbs, businesspeople who traveled long hours, and spouses with marital problems. Along with many other Americans in the 1970s, PTL members felt adrift in a society where close friendships were difficult to maintain. Bakker's ministry provided a therapeutic solution for these people along with an economic message that fit their lifestyle. They were Jim Bakker's foundation.

Bakker, however, was having difficulty. His message always demanded that he demonstrate how Heritage USA was defying economic reality, showing the veracity of his prosperity theology. He built bigger, faster, and took risks. Criticism arose. Bakker became increasingly defensive. A similar trend was occurring in his personal life. His spending was out of control. While always ostentatious, his spending became even more audacious, and his lifestyle became raucous. Obsessed with Heritage, his family and marriage was falling apart. Soon Bakker and his followers would realize PTL, Jim Bakker and Heritage USA were on the precipice.⁵²⁷

PTL's Pillars Of Support

Support for the ministry of the PTL Television Network comes from millions around the world. Nine states in the USA, however, comprise more than half the total number of PTL Partners. Listed below are those states and the percentage of PTL's partners from each.



State	Percentage
CALIFORNIA	9.46%
TEXAS	6.21%
PENNSYLVANIA	5.99%
OHIO	5.76%
FLORIDA	5.72%
MICHIGAN	4.90%
NORTH CAROLINA	4.58%
NEW YORK	4.49%
ILLINOIS	4.09%

Source: PTL Television Group

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Chapter 10

Falling from Grace: The Downfall of PTL Ministries

By the mid-1980s Heritage USA covered 2,500 acres and was visited by over six million visitors annually. This growth was astounding for this seven-year-old resort. Inside the gates, Bakker's followers were promised a world where negativity and limits did not exist. Its waterpark, suburbs, and other accommodations stood as a shrine to Bakker's wildly popular form of Pentecostalism. By this time, one-half of American evangelicals described themselves as Charismatic, swelling the movement to over 35 million followers.⁵²⁹ And many of them made pilgrimages to Heritage, which they embraced as a shrine to affluence, prosperity and family togetherness.⁵³⁰ But Bakker's world did not survive. By 1989, the resort was in bankruptcy, he was in jail, and PTL's members were holding worthless memberships.

This downfall was one of the most dramatic events of the 1980s. For observers and writers it highlighted Bakker's sly manipulation of his followers and the power of his charisma. He became an *Elmer Gantry* figure, using religion and charisma to extract funds out of his uneducated, rural followers for his personal gain. To skeptics, Bakker—like Gantry—would break all rules, contradict all values, and break the law to sustain his way of life. Soon Bakker-like characters were turning up on television shows like *Murder She Wrote*, *Mike Hammer*, *Spencer for Hire*, and *Saturday Night Live*.⁵³¹ Popular music mocked him as well. Metallica, for example, wrote *Leper Messiah*, which declared "the sheep are gathering set the trap, hypnotize now you follow." Others described his followers as sheep and poor rural folk. Suicidal Tendencies' *Send me Your Money*, which was an explicit critique of Jim and Tammy Bakker's appeals for money, declared "We'll take your momma's dentures if they got gold in them." A similar narrative was also popular in Hollywood. The 1989 spy film *License to Kill* created two characters based on Jim and Tammy Bakker named Joe and Deedie Butcher. In the film, these televangelists used their ministry to dupe naive followers into sending them money as a cover for a massive drug smuggling operation that sustained a luxurious lifestyle.⁵³²

The popular image of the disgraced Bakker was that of someone who willfully manipulated his followers, promising them rewards that he knew did not exist. These portrayals were not wrong. Heritage USA had needy followers who became mesmerized by Bakker's promises of wealth and happiness. From his youth, Bakker had shown a willingness to exaggerate his monetary needs in order to raise funds, and neither he nor Tammy showed remorse for their lifestyle. Jim admittedly only gave his viewers positive news, obfuscating the problems of his ministry. He also used his ministry to finance his ostentatious lifestyle, despite economic problems.⁵³³

Yet, the sources of Bakker's downfall were more complex. His primary supporters were not uneducated dupes. They were Sunbelt suburbanites who were drawn to Bakker's message of a world without limits. For them, his emphasis on the positive—and obfuscation of the negative-- was not manipulation, but rather the means to a happy, fulfilled Christian life. They wanted a God who would fulfill their every desire, regardless of economic realities, while protecting their family from social pressures. This was what Bakker promised them. His followers saw these ideas as a reflection of their Sunbelt suburban lives. For them, Bakker's obsession with growth was a sign of his divine providence. Heritage USA's Victorian mansions were signs of a world without limits. The more Bakker built, the more his followers endorsed his message. Increasingly, however, Heritage USA was short of revenues. Alongside these problems, the Bakkers' image as an ideal Christian family broke down when rumors of affairs and drug use began to surface. This created a cavernous gap between Bakker's message and the reality of his life. In turn, Heritage USA depended on the obfuscation of these problems. This created a "house of cards" that was toppled when exposés highlighted these contradictions and PTL's financial problems. In an attempt to stave off disaster, Bakker began to sacrifice parts of Heritage USA that were less noticeable to guests beginning in 1984. Despite massive fundraising drives, Bakker could not prevent the problems of 1980s America infiltrating their community and resort.⁵³⁴

One program that demonstrated these problems was the Heritage USA school. Bakker frequently presented Heritage as a refuge for children, shielding them from drugs, sex, and violence, while leading them to success and prosperity. This motivated one mother to enroll her daughter in PTL's Christian school where she became class president. As she recalled, the school was far different than the image Bakker had presented on his show. The school was understaffed because Bakker had put most of the PTL's money into new buildings and other projects. Sometimes classes were held in tents, and Bakker frequently pulled students out of school in order to fill seats in the auditorium for *The PTL Club* broadcasts. The school was inadequate and the students realized this. One former student said:

You went to a scoring station and checked your own work, which was easy to cheat on 'cause the answers were right there. And at the end of that book you would staple it together and take the test at the end of the book. Well you already knew what the book was like because it was right there at the end of the book. You had to go to the teacher's desk to take the test. There were no classroom lectures. The second year they brought someone in for math and TV production. It was hard to teach yourself math. Social studies and English were out of the book. A lot of us were not doing anything. I learned to memorize answers and put them where they go.⁵³⁵

There were other issues as well. Heritage was supposed to be a shelter from drugs and promiscuity. But a former student recalled that she and her classmates routinely purchased drugs at a nearby gas station. Without much supervision, they often went to a wooded area for drugs and casual sex. This behavior, she claimed, was widespread among the students and the PTL security staff were helpless to stop it. She even recalled, while working at the park with her friends, mocking visitors who told them that they should not be using drugs. They laughed at Bakker's claims that Heritage was a drug-free alternative to the outside world. As she recalled, "A lot of parents wanted PTL to raise us. They relied a lot on it. You are going to go there . . . ok. Being a parent now, how in the world do you do that?" These problems were compounded by the behavior of adults at the park. She recalled some of PTL's executive staff having

group sex while she was in another bedroom with her friends. As a teenager, this led her to conclude that this was normal behavior. Austin Miles, who was a close associate of Bakker and had a show on PTL's network and, saw much of the same side of PTL.⁵³⁶ As he recalled, "An intense sexual energy could be felt around both Heritage USA and Heritage Village . . . Young people who came to attend the school of evangelism quickly paired off. It became a common occurrence to round a corner and interrupt two young people in an intimate embrace." He also remembered the Jacuzzi in Jim Bakker's office being described as the "floozy Jacuzzi" because it was regularly used by male PTL staff members to seduce women.⁵³⁷

The Bakkers' presentation of themselves as "the first family of Christianity" was also breaking apart amidst rumors of drugs and infidelity. Tammy Faye Bakker had a brief affair with Gary Paxtonm who was a recording artist and a frequent guest on PTL. In fact, their marriage had been in trouble since Bakker had begun to build Heritage USA.⁵³⁸ Tammy was frustrated with Jim's long hours and his obsession with expanding PTL and Heritage. Tammy's schedule, however, was nearly as hectic. In addition to the *The PTL Club*, she had her own daily show, *Tammy's House Party*. She was also busy recording and producing new albums. Their children often spent much of their time with other PTL employees and very little with their parents. They roamed around Heritage USA. As Jay Bakker recalled, "I could charge anything from my parents' account, and I was not above tendering bribes of pizza, drinks, candy bars, and new toys in order to get new kids to hang out with me." Tammy Sue led a similar lifestyle. As Charles Sheppard explained, when she was fifteen, she told Jim she wanted a car. Despite the fact she did not have a license, Jim bought her a new car and let her drive it around the grounds. Their friends also received privileges, such as traveling in limos, knowing that no one would scold them.⁵³⁹ It was a far cry from their idealized TV image. Stories about Bakker's infidelity and the cover-up of his affair with Jessica Hahn were also beginning to surface after 1986.⁵⁴⁰

There were also ever-present financial and business problems. For example, when planning the water park, Bakker never determined what size the park should be relative to PTL's income and projected visitors. While it surprised the project's contractors, Bakker told them that he was confident that God would provide for whatever they needed. Bakker made other bad financial decisions. He, for example, broke a contract with the first waterpark builder because he found another company that could supply a wave pool with bigger waves. This ended up costing PTL \$256,000. In addition, ostentatious bonuses and weekend retreats cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.⁵⁴¹

By 1984, PTL was having difficulty paying bills, and many Charlotte contractors refused to do work for Heritage unless they were paid in advance. PTL, meanwhile, had \$28.5 million in liabilities and \$8.6 million in assets, which made it a high risk. Jim Bakker's solution was to offer more memberships to Heritage USA despite a lack of accommodations. He turned "The PTL Club" into an hour-long advertisement for Heritage USA and its lifetime partnerships, while reducing funding to foreign missions and charitable programs. One member, Larry Hall, an early PTL board member who was pushed out of the organization, warned Bakker that instead of the building frenzy that "he should work to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and propagate the Bible. If Jesus was to return today then PTL should be out building people, not buildings."⁵⁴²

Bakker increasingly sacrificed much of the charitable and missionary work of Heritage USA in order to keep guests happy and the money flowing. The construction of Kevin's House for hard-to-adopt handicapped children was one example. It was built in "Farmland USA" next to the Heritage Grand Mansion in a style that fit this Victorian village. It was also, as Charles Sheppard illustrated, a "shrewd instrument for raising money."⁵⁴³ The house was named for Bakker's second cousin Kevin Whitum. Seventeen-years-old in 1986, Kevin suffered from brittle bone disease, which caused him to have an adult-sized head and the body of a small child. On one broadcast, Kevin was put on the air, where he described his affliction and his early life of bouncing around from one

foster home to another. With music playing in the background, he then went on to describe how hard it was to get around in the world in a wheelchair and what he would like in his dream home. Bakker told the audience, while crying, that he was going to build a house for Kevin and people like him. He also promised the viewers that, with their help, they would build this house in thirty days because Kevin was sick and he could die at any time. As he had done many times before, Bakker invoked a sense of crisis to bring in funds. Hastily built, the house never met local building codes and Kevin and his adoptive family became its only residents.⁵⁴⁴

The charity programs also created a problem for Bakker because his promises of prosperity and mental transformation appealed to people who were economically and emotionally distraught. He often told viewers on *The PTL Club* that if they were hurting and in trouble, they should come to Heritage. Some did, after selling what little they owned. Patricia McHale, who ran a local Christian charity named Pilgrim's Inn, offered a typical profile: "The little family in Oregon who was maybe working minimum wage and the wife was working and had three kids; they sold what they had; by the time they got here the car was broken down."⁵⁴⁵

This influx of people in need was a problem for a ministry that was spending most of its money on luxurious accommodations. Heritage initially put them in tents in a back section of the campground, which led to the creation of a small tent city of people without money, jobs, or food. One security guard remembered being worried that this "rowdy" area of the campground was jeopardizing security. The issues of poverty and unrest were penetrating the gates of Bakker's community. Eventually, PTL began to push people out in order to restrict the size of this tent city, but this meant forcing many economically distraught men and women on the local community.⁵⁴⁶ According to Patricia McHale, PTL could not feed and clothe people within the campgrounds. She took blankets and food to the campgrounds. She recalled, "Then their campground; they did not know what to do with them; they put them in a campground in really deplorable conditions; they did not offer them money to go back home. I would go there with my

groceries; it was families with children, some in wheel chairs." She also discovered children sleeping in torn and wet blankets in broken tents. Despite these conditions, as she recalled in bemusement, these distraught people would often tell her that if Bakker knew they had these problems, he would certainly have helped them out. She also began getting calls from people who had been turned away at the gate. When she visited Heritage USA's People that Love Center, she found: " It was like no one was ever in there; if you come to Salvation Army or Pilgrim's Inn you can see people have gone through; I was there many times; it was like what's going on here?" Others noted similar problems at other PTL charities. The conclusion was obvious: PTL's dire financial situation made it more interested in appearances.⁵⁴⁷

Before long, people were streaming into local charities with reports that they had been turned away from Heritage USA. Soon Pilgrims Inn, the Salvation Army, the Red Cross, and another local charity were receiving as many as fifty people a day. When a story appeared in a newspaper, Jim Bakker sent a representative over to McHale, who placed a \$1000 check on her table and said, "we read your article and would like to make a donation, but we want it to stop." It was a donation that, as she recalled, helped them deal with the problem for a couple of weeks, but it was not a long-term solution. Bakker followed this by inviting the local social-service organizations to an extravagant lunch, but offered no financial assistance to any of the agencies. He was simply trying to contain the critical news stories, which called into question his claim that through faith he could build a society that promised prosperity for all without sacrifice.⁵⁴⁸

There were also problems with PTL's staff. At the top of PTL's structure there were Bakker's close friends who were paid well and who lived well. They also engaged in sexual indiscretions. Further down the PTL hierarchy, however, many PTL workers did not know about these problems, and others simply looked the other way. Many faithful employees were shocked when the revelations became public. They still saw PTL in the way Bakker had presented it on the air. Even within PTL there were two distinct worlds. Most of Heritage USA's employees lived on small salaries and wages. In fact, as Austin

Miles recalled, some full-time PTL employees were paid so badly that they qualified for the federal food stamp program. Jim Bakker frequently forced these employees to attend his daily broadcast without compensation. This led to a high turnover rate and "a sense of disloyalty and dissension." While some people at PTL were living a life of prosperity, many others were not. If made public, these problems would challenge Bakker's promise that prosperity was a right of all the followers of his ministry.⁵⁴⁹

These problems were compounded by a lax organizational structure. As the former vice president of operations remembered, the organization's numerous divisions became a collection of independent organizations with no effective oversight. There was also no inventory system, and employees frequently had to purchase their own supplies. For example, when PTL built the road to Kevin's House, it hired 24 people but only had 12 shovels. This led to deep-seated resentment and frustration among PTL's employees. Heads of departments, moreover, often did not obtain competitive bids for projects, which encouraged widespread kickbacks. Bakker tried to clean up the mess, but he was unwilling to upset underlings who had created their own little empires.⁵⁵⁰

Having sold Heritage USA as a Christian utopia free of the problems of mainstream society, Bakker now found that Heritage USA embodied many of these problems. It led to a rapid breakdown of his ministry in 1986, as its contradictions became increasingly public knowledge. The breakdown was dramatic and elevated PTL and Bakker to the front page of newspapers across the United States, leading to his downfall, and creating one the most dramatic news stories of the 1980s.⁵⁵¹

Bakker's movement had also come under attack from other Pentecostals who helped expose the ministry's shortcomings. Most significantly, Jimmy Swaggart, whose half-hour show aired on Bakker's network, began to attack Bakker's theology and the Charismatic movement, which he claimed was a corruption of traditional Pentecostalism. This critique first surfaced when Swaggart, on his show, lambasted "the husband and wife team" who were corrupting God's word. Although it was not clear if he was referring to the Bakkers or the Crouches, it demonstrated that he had become

increasingly critical of Bakker's desire to build and his promotion of prosperity theology, eventually telling Bakker that he was turning away from God. Bakker spurned the warnings, and minimized the problems within PTL's charities. Swaggart's ministry emphasized traditional Pentecostalism's focus on sin and anti-worldliness which led Bakker to describe him as a "doom and gloom" prophet. These differences surfaced when Swaggart endorsed a book entitled *The Seduction of Christianity* which condemned the prosperity gospel as heretical. Bakker rightfully understood this as an attack on his ministry, and began to attack Swaggart on his show, eventually removing him from his network. Other prosperity ministers reacted in kind. For example, Paul Crouch, whose network also broadcast Swaggart's show, ran a scroll bar during Swaggart's broadcasts declaring that the network did not endorse Swaggart's beliefs. In response, Swaggart began to publicize allegations about Bakker and his ministry, and encouraged the Assemblies of God to defrock Bakker. Swaggart viewed this conflict as an opportunity to attack the Charismatic movement and bring them into his ministry.⁵⁵²

More damning revelations also surfaced, leading to Bakker's resignation. The most significant was the discovery by Charles Sheppard of the *Charlotte Observer* that Jim Bakker, years earlier, had an affair with Jessica Hahn and was using PTL funds as hush money.⁵⁵³ Reporters also began to uncover how Bakker's close affiliation with the Republican Party blocked an earlier investigation by the FCC. At the time, Bakker believed his ties to Ronald Reagan would shield him from any federal scrutiny. Then there emerged stories of wife-swapping, other affairs, and drug use at PTL. On March 19, 1987, Jim Bakker resigned and moved to Palm Springs. For a time, he lived in the guesthouse at Dexter Yager's estate where he continued to broadcast a new show. Amidst the upheaval, Jerry Falwell temporarily took over control of PTL ministries, preventing Jim and Tammy's return, and gutting the organization of Bakker's supporters. Envious of Bakker's satellite network, he soon began to make public their financial and moral lapses, while lambasting the greed and selfishness of Jim and Tammy Bakker. This was the beginning of what some have described as a 'holy war' between the nation's televangelists over the fate of the Bakkers and the remains of their empire. Against

Bakker stood Falwell, Swaggart, and a host of mainstream media critics. On Bakker's side were Robert Schuler, Oral Roberts, Paul Crouch, Jack Hayford and Kenneth Copeland.⁵⁵⁴ It was a closing of the ranks of the prosperity theology movement.⁵⁵⁵ His supporters preached prosperity theology and Hayford, Crouch, and Schuler all were from Southern California where these ideas were thriving. Clearly, they understood that if critics were able to expose Bakker's greed, it would embolden outsiders to peer into their ministries and attack their beliefs.⁵⁵⁶

With these revelations, the PTL ministry was doomed. After Bakker's resignation, donations fell by sixty percent. Falwell's takeover only delayed and possibly hastened this downfall, as many of Bakker's Charismatic supporters viewed Falwell as an outsider who did not deserve their loyalty. They also did not appreciate his characterization of Bakker's wealth as a symbol of his immorality. This negative environment was exacerbated by the daily coverage of what Falwell called "the Watergate of the religious world," which led to a thirty percent decline in donations to religious institutions nationally. Moreover, as a *LA Times* survey showed, after the scandal favorable ratings of all religious broadcasters fell dramatically except for Billy Graham. This was compounded by the IRS's revocation of PTL Ministry's tax-exempt status, dating back to 1980. By April of 1988, PTL was bankrupt and up for sale at the command of federal courts. Jim Bakker's effort to buy back Heritage failed. Eventually, the property was divided up and sold.⁵⁵⁷

For Bakker and other PTL leaders, legal troubles soon followed. This surprised Bakker who still believed his political connections would shield him from prosecution. First, there was a class action by a group of PTL partners who were seeking damages for their now worthless partnership plans, and the IRS was demanding Bakker pay \$666,492 in taxes due to inaccurate income claims. More importantly, the federal government was now investigating Bakker and his supporters' illegal financial practices while they were in charge of PTL ministries. Then, on November of 1988, Bakker was indicted on eight counts of mail fraud, and sixteen counts of wire fraud. Further bad news arose

when Bakker discovered that the federal government had made plea agreements with three of Bakker's closest allies in exchange for their testimonies. The most damning of these agreements was the settlement between the government and Richard Dortch, PTL's vice president, whose testimony would become integral to the Federal government's case against Bakker. In exchange for testimony, he plead guilty to three counts of fraud and was given ten years in prison.⁵⁵⁸

In the case, the government set out to prove that Bakker was running a religious pyramid scheme. At the center of these argument was Bakker's partnership plan. As noted in earlier chapters, Bakker devised this plan in 1983 because donations were stagnating while Bakker's plans for his Christian theme park were expanding exponentially. He then began offering supporters a three-night stay at Heritage USA for the rest of their lives in exchange for a \$1,000 donation. He followed this offer with promises that he would leave half of the rooms in the Heritage Grand hotel available to partners. This new program lead to an influx of donations while focusing Bakker's attention on the wealthier portions of his audience. This lead him to increasingly emphasize prosperity theology and the resort-side of theme park. During this process, he also began to divert money and rooms away from partner benefits in order to pay for other building projects at Heritage USA. These funds were also used to pay for Bakker and his friends' exorbitant lifestyle and the hush money given to Jessica Hahn. The government argued that this diversion was the outgrowth of a deliberate scheme devised by Bakker to defraud his followers for personal gain.⁵⁵⁹

The key to the government's case was Bakker's intent. They needed to prove that this diversion of funds was willful and not the result of bad business practices. This forced the Justice Department to construct a narrative of Bakker that depicted him as a greedy, manipulative huckster who duped his poor, unknowing followers into his scheme so that he could fleece them of their money and live the extravagant lifestyle. This was the same narrative used by much of popular culture and the media. With the increasingly public revelations about Bakker's affairs and greed, many had already been

convinced. Reflecting these perceptions, Charles Sheppard, who won the Pulitzer Prize for his reporting on Bakker, described the downfall of PTL ministries as the outgrowth of Jim Bakker's narcissistic personality disorder. Always needing adulation, he surrounded himself with sycophants and created a material world that he used to overcompensate for the lack of an emotional, loving mother. In this narrative, Bakker's audience was made up of gullible and misinformed outsiders who were duped by Bakker's false promises.⁵⁶⁰

To support their case, the prosecution presented video evidence of promises Jim Bakker made to partners that he did not fulfill. This evidence was nearly identical to that which was used by the FCC in 1979. As they demonstrated, Bakker knowingly oversold his partnerships and choose not to present this information to his supporters. They also presented evidence from Bakker's staff that he understood that these deceptions were occurring. Numerous PTL partners also testified that they believed Bakker mislead them, and given better information on PTL broadcasts, they would not have given money to PTL ministries. Others testified that they had difficulty getting reservations at the Grand with their partnership cards. Backing up this evidence, was testimony and video evidence of Bakker's lifestyle. The prosecution showed the jury images of Bakker's estates throughout the country, his ever-expanding benefits package, his private jet, extravagant shopping trips, and his fleet of vehicles. They contrasted these images with testimony of low-level PTL employees who described their difficult lives, denial of overtime pay, and inadequate work environments. Supplementing these testimonies, they presented witnesses who highlighted how Bakker underfunded PTL's charity work to compensate for other expenses and his lifestyle. According to one critic of the prosecution, these tactics were a form of "class warfare" which were meant to create a negative perception of Bakker in order to distract the jury from determining Bakker's intent. Nonetheless, these depictions allowed the prosecution to represent Bakker as a person who would willingly divert funds for personal gain.⁵⁶¹

The defense responded by depicting these economic problems as minor, while illustrating how Bakker's belief in prosperity theology allowed him to believe that PTL would overcome these obstacles with ease. In this process, they brought many Bakker supporters to the stand. In general, they testified to their continued support for Bakker, their beliefs that Bakker used his funds appropriately, and the good work PTL did with the funds. Some also testified that they never had difficulty obtaining reservations for their memberships at PTL. They also noted that, contrary to the prosecution's depictions, Bakker's lifestyle was not the product of an elaborate deception, but was rather just compensation for the leader of PTL ministries. Also, many of these people, when asked about the relationship between Bakker's lifestyle and his underfunding of his charity work, seemed generally confused by the question. Still committed believers in prosperity theology and hailing from prosperous Sunbelt suburbs, they understood wealth as the product of God's grace and personal choice, not socioeconomic realities. It prevented them from understanding how PTL's shortchanging of charity work and partner benefits could have been related to Bakker's greed. Immersed in a world that promised charity alongside unlimited prosperity, they believed it was not necessary to sacrifice wealth for the sake of charity. Instead, they continued to embrace Bakker's vision of a limitless world where prosperity was available to everyone, and poverty was the outgrowth of personal failure, not the product of broader communal economic decisions.⁵⁶²

Bakker's lawyers also presented images of other famous evangelists' homes, highlighting the similarity between Bakker and these ministers. Bakker himself argued that, although he oversold partnerships, he had enough rooms for his partners, because he knew a large percentage of his visitors came from the west coast, whose distance from Charlotte led them to underutilize their memberships. Bakker also described the numerous ongoing building plans that would have provided more rooms for partners. He also, like his supporters, used prosperity theology in his defense. He told the jury that although Heritage lacked rooms, if allowed to return to PTL, God would bless the

grounds by providing money for the completion of the ongoing construction projects, creating ample rooms for paying guests and partners alike.⁵⁶³

The defense's arguments were unconvincing. For the jury, Bakker's use of partners' funds for his extravagant lifestyle, his reliance of prosperity theology over good business practices, and the gap between Bakker's knowledge of PTL's financial situation and what was shown on television was enough to convict him of fraud. The jury did not accept Bakker's religion as a justification for his poor financial conduct, and showed very little sympathy for a person they viewed as a symbol of greed in America. The conviction, however, was not the most stunning conclusion to the trial. Judge Potter sentenced Bakker to 45 years in prison which he declared would send a signal to all the "money grubbing preachers" that he was sick of their antics. Although Bakker's sentence was reduced to five years upon appeal, this sentence signaled the end of PTL ministries and Jim and Tammy's leadership in the Charismatic movement. Outside of the courtroom, they were also treated as pariahs. Talk show hosts, comedians, and commentators praised the downfall of these corrupt preachers. The Charismatic and evangelical community also largely abandoned the Bakkers, hoping this distance would help revive the struggling televangelism community.

Bakker's downfall reflected American society's backlash against the 'greed is good' mantra of the 1980s and the increasing power of the "pro-family" conservative movement. By the late 1980s, a series of insider trading scandals made many Americans question the beneficence of unregulated greed and its effects upon American society. Compounding these fears, was the alarms raised by the rising consumer debts rates which led many Americans to question American's rush to acquire wealth. The power of religious conservatives also began to wane. Following Falwell's public support for the Government of South Africa, books such as *The Handmaid's Tale* began to popularize the fear that the Religious Right desired to transform America into a regimented society where undesirables and women in particular would have their rights taken away and would be subjected to state violence. Moreover, stitching these two movements

together, the early indifference of Reagan's administration and conservative religious community toward the struggle against AIDS and led many to conclude that these movements lacked compassion. For Bakker's critics, PTL's downfall was a victory over these values, and the charismatic leader who allowed them to flourish. With Bakker gone, they believed the movement he created would disappear.⁵⁶⁴

Chapter 11

Conclusion and Epilogue

Late in 1989, Jim Bakker was escorted to a federal prison in Rochester, Minnesota. Within a year, Jim and Tammy Bakker would be divorced. Soon after, Jim Bakker would renounce prosperity theology.⁵⁶⁵ For many critics, it was the end of Jim Bakker and his movement. It was not. Following Bakker's imprisonment, a host of new preachers arose to take his place. These ministers catered to the Charismatic movement Bakker helped build. By 2009, the movement numbered over 35 million in the United States. Internationally, its growth was even more substantial. Numbering less than four million in 1970s, the Charismatic movement had over 100 million members in 2009. It was a testament to the continued popularity of Bakker's message, and to the power of the movement that had made him famous. From his days at CBN, Bakker had depended on Sunbelt suburbanites and businessmen who nurtured his movement. Together, these groups created the foundation of Bakker's success.⁵⁶⁶

Bakker and the Charismatics had created a markedly different form of Pentecostalism by the late 1970s. The movement no longer embraced populist and anti-worldly rhetoric, and it was no longer dominated by plain folk Pentecostals who celebrated simplicity. Preaching a mixture of prosperity theology and positive thinking, he took this Sunbelt message from Southern California to Charlotte, North Carolina where the city's burgeoning suburban prosperity and conservative business leadership created a favorable environment. He created a religious message that endorsed entrepreneurship and individual consumption.

His message merged this entrepreneurial message with a pro-family message. God was not only a provider of wealth; he also was the key to familial happiness. In order to present this message, he held up his family as an example of how faith creates familial happiness. Faith, he argued, would protect children and families from the social

pressures of American society, and allow families to live prosperous, happy lives. These ideas thrived in the Sunbelt suburbs where parents struggled to protect their children from changes in American society. Able to afford a one family income, they viewed Bakker's pro-family message as an endorsement of their lives and their concern over protecting their children. Representing this vision, Bakker rejected legislation to take prayer out of school, homosexual rights, and embraced the pro-life movement.

Jim and Tammy Bakker's mastery of these messages made them leaders of the Charismatic movement and stars of American Televangelism. It was a remarkable ascension for this little-known married couple who left college in 1971 with a car filled with their belongings. Over the next twenty years, they also became leading promoters of prosperity theology. They created three of the most important broadcasters of this message: CBN, TBN, and PTL networks. In order to build this empire, the Bakkers became tremendous fundraisers. From Bakker's early years on television, he mixed his vision of Christianity with appeals for cash and promises of growth. Over time, these appeals became more sophisticated after he mixed these appeals with promises of earthly and spiritual rewards.

Out of this arose a new form of cultural conservatism. For its members, free market economics became akin to God's law. Federal government intervention in the economy was akin to heresy. The poor were poor because they lacked faith, and the rich were prosperous because God was blessing them. Prosperity, consumption, and wealth were the rights of all who believed in Christ. In turn, the Republican Party became the party of God. Culture became politics, and politics became religion. Bakker's followers relished his vision of a world without hippies, urban underclasses, or poverty. In this world, they believed their children would be safe from the social pressures of the 1970s and 1980s. As others have noted, Bakker helped create "a new kind of fundamentalism that only a short time ago was considered to be on the lunatic fringe of religious practice."⁵⁶⁷ In turn, Charismatic churches became the fastest growing segment of Protestantism in the United States and the world.⁵⁶⁸

One example of the continued popularity of this message was the fate of Bakker's network. The same year that Bakker went to jail, Morris Cerullo an up-and-coming Assemblies of God prosperity minister, purchased Bakker's studio for \$7 million dollars. Cerullo had been a popular guest on PTL and was a close friend of Jim Bakker. Based in San Diego, California, Cerullo moved his studio to Charlotte and named his network *The Inspiration Network*, which was remarkably similar to Bakker's. Like Bakker, Cerullo used a combination of positive thinking, prosperity theology, and aggressive fundraising to make his ministry a success. He also lived pretentiously and promised his followers that through faith and giving to his ministry they would prosper. Also like Bakker, Cerullo made audacious promises to his viewers.⁵⁶⁹

Cerullo was not the only success story to build on PTL. BeBe and CeCe Winans, who started as PTL singers, became Christian music megastars in the 1990s. They were among the first African Americans to be played on contemporary Christian music stations. They have since won three Grammys, two NAACP Image awards, and produced three Gold and two Platinum albums. With this success, they became two of the most popular African American preachers in the country.⁵⁷⁰ Most recently, they gave the eulogy at Whitney Houston's funeral. They told the crowd, "*I don't want anybody leaving here thinking God wants anyone here broke!*" Bebe then mockingly stated "I don't believe in this prosperity gospel." He followed with, "I don't know what other gospel there is . . . I want you to understand that what God desires for everyone, is for everyone to be healthy and prosperous." Numerous other ministers attached to PTL also became successful. For example, one frequent guest host and a PTL singer became the assistant editor of *Charisma Magazine*.⁵⁷¹

Bakker also influenced the rise of prosperity theology internationally. At the height of his success, he funded prosperity ministers across the globe through his global outreach program. One of these was Reverend Robert McAlister who was a Charismatic missionary to Brazil. Hoping to create a Portuguese version of PTL, Bakker sent McAlister \$50,000 dollars a month for a year in 1978. At the time, McAlister was

preaching at a small funeral parlor in Rio De Janeiro. With Bakker's aid, he soon grew this small congregation into the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (UCKG) which now numbers over 12 million. It obtained TV stations throughout Brazil and became a major political player in Brazilian politics.

Working primarily in the Brazilian slums, he offered followers a sense of empowerment through God during a time of economic crisis. McAlister was leading what scholars have described as the third wave of Brazilian Pentecostalism. Like the Charismatic movement in America, McAlister became dependent on the use of television and radio to produce his message. He also preached the prosperity gospel, telling his fervently loyal followers that they should start businesses and give their profits to his church so that God can reward them. As Rowan Ireland illustrated, it contrasted with earlier forms of Brazilian Pentecostalism which tended to be more "critical of Brazilian social, political, and economic injustices." Soon after, the UCKG had twenty-two congresspersons, over thirty television stations, and a national newspaper.⁵⁷²

Bakker also had influenced the growth of prosperity theology in Africa. Benson Idahosa, who hosted PTL: Africa, was a Bakker acolyte. Idahosa was born in a non-Christian community in Nigeria as a member of the Benin tribe in 1938 and converted to Christianity while he was a teenager. He then traveled to Dallas, Texas where he attended Christ for the Nations Institute, an outpost of the Charismatic movement. He returned to Africa, declaring, "My God is not a poor God." He soon began establishing churches and preaching prosperity throughout Nigeria and in neighboring countries, but he did not have enough capital to broadcast his message beyond a few regions in Nigeria. Then, with help from a missionary friend in the United States, he appeared on the PTL network with Jim Bakker. He then returned to Africa with a \$900 a week stipend and began broadcasting the "PTL Redemption Hour." On the show, like Bakker, he dressed ostentatiously and promised his followers that faith in God would lead to riches.

It was the beginning of the rapid spread of the prosperity gospel across Africa. By 2009, over 100 million Africans were Charismatic Christians.⁵⁷³

PTL had other success stories. In Korea and Japan, Paul Yonggi Cho, who hosted PTL's "Asian" edition became an international star. Like Bakker, Cho became one of the most prominent prosperity gospel ministers in the world and promised that faith would bring followers health, wealth and happiness. Also like Bakker, his biography was a constructed success narrative. Over time, he grew his South Korean-based church to 850,000 members, making it the world's largest. Bakker also had a Spanish version, which Bakker called PTela and was hosted by Juan Romero. The show format mirrored Bakker's PTL Club format. Like Bakker, Romero sat in a mock American-style living room and interviewed guests who often described how their belief in God provided them with health, less stress, and prosperity. The show launched Juan Romero's career and made him one of Latin America's most famous singer/evangelists.⁵⁷⁴

The prosperity theology message also thrived through the continued growth of the Full Gospel Businessmen International. Beginning in the late 1970s, the organization focused on spreading its influence across the globe. This was partially because of lackluster growth in the United States. As in America, its recruiters used business connections to recruit people into their organization, promising these members a God that would provide happiness, prosperity, and tranquility. These recruits returned to their home country promoting this new vision of God that embraced entrepreneurialism and material happiness. By 2006 FGBMFI had over 3,000 chapters in Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The organization pooled its money to sponsor military prayer breakfasts, retreats, airlifts, and missions to many countries. It also helped fund a wave of new prosperity theology ministers across the globe. For example, it funded George Otis's radio ministry which was broadcast throughout the Middle East. With this success, the organization attracted many international high-profile members who provided important business and political connections. By 1996 the FGBMFI had close to one

million members, becoming—according to some—the most important para-church organization in the world.⁵⁷⁵

In America, prosperity theology was no less popular. It continued to grow faster than any other religious movement. One of the most popular ministers was Pat Robertson. His unsuccessful run for president highlighted both the limits and the growing political power of the Charismatic movement. Robertson, as surveys discovered, owed his popularity almost completely to the Charismatic movement and had very little support outside of it. Nonetheless, his campaign demonstrated the growing political power of the Charismatic movement, which managed to overwhelm Republican caucuses in many states. Reflecting the proclivities of the movement, he emphasized both social and economic conservative political outlooks, but as observers noted, devoted a majority of his attention to attacking social welfare programs and promoting small government.⁵⁷⁶

Paul Crouch and his Trinity Broadcast Network became the largest religious network in the world by the 1990s and may have reached ninety-two million American households. With this power, Crouch became allies to major politicians across the country. The network's ministers continued to use the formula Bakker and Crouch developed. Surrounded by gold-gild, they presented themselves as exemplars of the prosperity message. Just before a show goes on the air, a TBN employee tells the audience "this [studio] is all yours. Bet you didn't know you were so rich." While asking for donations, they promise believers a world where there are no limits to desires, wants, or opportunity. Poverty, failure, and depression are relegated to negative thinking and the presence of the devil in the world. If they have faith and give to their ministry they will live a life of familial happiness.⁵⁷⁷

Since the 1980s, the prosperity gospel has moved in several directions. Some prosperity ministers took Bakker's message to extremes. For example, ministers at the Church of Hakeem in Los Angeles routinely told their followers to shout, "Richer faster! Richer faster! Richer faster!" Other ministers claimed that prosperity would make

believers become like God. This, however, was not the norm. In general, there was a mainstreaming of the prosperity gospel, paralleling the mainstreaming of the Charismatic movement.⁵⁷⁸

This was evident in the megachurch movement of the 1990s. Its massive growth was largely fueled by prosperity theology ministers. The megachurches first emerged in America's Sunbelt, particularly in California, Florida, and Arizona. These ministers also increasingly penetrated the secular media, becoming regular guests on Fox News, Good Morning America, and Black Entertainment Television. Commanding an audience that has been estimated at twenty percent of the American population, they became superstars. Their literature expanded out beyond the movement and their books repeatedly climbed to the top of the *New York Times* best-sellers list.⁵⁷⁹

One of the most popular of these ministers is Joel Osteen. Like earlier prosperity theology minister, Osteen promises that faith will lead to riches. He, however, abstained from many of the aggressive tactics that had characterized prosperity theology to this point. He also traded in gaudy jewelry for modest attire and tailored suits. He presented an uplifting message that is akin to reading a self-help book, alongside occasional reminders that his message is based on God's word. This was evident in his motto: "Discover the champion in you." His goal was not to teach theology, but rather to get people "excited about God's love" which he believed would lead people to Christ. As Alan Wolfe noted, it was a Hollywood version of God where happy endings were always present.⁵⁸⁰

The movement gained national attention in other ways as well. For example, following Oprah Winfrey's endorsement, *The Secret* by Rhonda Byrne became a national phenomenon and overnight bestseller. While the book did not explicitly endorse prosperity theology, its central theme was that through mental visualization and positive thinking it was possible to obtain great wealth. When defending these beliefs, the book also referred to many of the same individuals who had inspired the prosperity theology movement.⁵⁸¹ Hanna Rosin, a writer for *The Atlantic*, even argued that this

movement's increasing popularity was a key factor in the economic crash of 2007 because it's emphasis on easy riches led many Sunbelt suburbanites to invest unwisely in speculative economic ventures.⁵⁸²

Another reason for this success was that many of the factors that made prosperity theology popular in the 1970s still existed in the 1990s. Sunbelt cities like Charlotte maintained their prosperous suburban communities, whose members worked in fast growing entrepreneurial industries. Inside and outside of work, they were driven to succeed, trying to create the prosperous family life. In the 1990s, the Sunbelt middle class continued to work in highly competitive, emotionally demanding jobs. Banker's hours no longer existed. In Charlotte, these pressures only increased after the 2009 financial meltdown. From 2006 to 2009 financing and insurance jobs fell by fifteen percent. Fearful of downsizing, Charlotte's middle class worked long hours, driven to out-work the competition and attract new clients. It was a hyper-entrepreneurial culture. As one time-use expert declared, "We have become walking resumes. If you're not doing something, you're not creating and defining who you are." When these employees were not working they were networking, promoting their companies' products, or going to power lunches. Similar to Amway's message, they are reminded that everyone has the potential to be successful, and if they work hard they will be able to live the "good life." This social environment—as it had in the 1970s--pushed many of these Sunbelt suburbanites toward the new form of Pentecostalism that Jim Bakker had nurtured. Busy, but craving family, they found a religion that promised happiness, success, and tranquility.⁵⁸³

The success of prosperity theology after 1990 was also linked to a transformed American political landscape. When Bakker's ministry began in the 1970s, the entrepreneurial Sunbelt values that undergirded his movement were a direct challenge to mainstream American culture. During this time, his ministry provided his suburban Sunbelt base with a religious alternative to these broader American values. Throughout the 1980s, these ideas became the ideological backbone of a new Republican coalition

that advocated for low taxes, unregulated capitalism, and localism as an alternative to a society based on limits. After his downfall, these commitments became institutionalized and they increasingly defined the center of the American political landscape. Both parties increasingly viewed unregulated free-market consumer capitalism and suburban life as the basis for individual and national prosperity. With this favorable environment, prosperity theology thrived, becoming the religious backbone of the conservative ascendancy of the 1990s.⁵⁸⁴

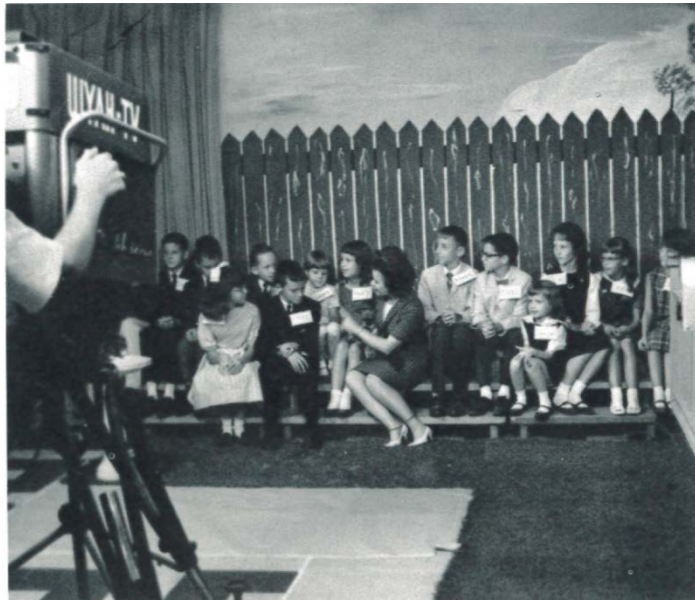
George W. Bush also gravitated toward the movement. He hired Doug Wead, Dexter Yager's former assistant and an Assemblies of God minister, as his religious advisor. Deeply rooted in the prosperity theology movement, he advised Bush to merge messages of positivity with his embrace of free market principles. Bush also became enamored with Dallas-based prosperity minister T.D. Jakes. Like Bakker, Jakes preached that thinking positively and having faith was the key to success and wealth. Bush took this message to heart. Bush was obsessed with portraying himself as an optimist. As he declared in 2006, "A leader must know where they want to lead and all I ask is that they [his staff] come in the oval office they convey a message of optimism . . . [my office] must convey that an optimistic guy comes to work every day."⁵⁸⁵ As Barbra Ehrenreich argued, these beliefs may have contributed to Bush's inability to assess disturbing intelligence reports leading up to 9/11, and his inability to respond to growing economic problems.⁵⁸⁶

This environment also created even stronger links between the prosperity theology movement and the Republican Party. On the advice of Doug Wead who had fostered most of Bakker's political connections, Bush chose Crouch as his most important religious ally. In response, Crouch praised Bush and other prominent Republicans throughout his network's broadcasts while attacking big government. Additionally, a whole host of rising young ministers furthered these bonds by attacking liberal social and economic programs while praising Republican candidates across the country. In turn, Republicans increasingly used religious language when defending

economic and social programs. Bush, for example, increasingly argued that faith was integral to the success of various private and public initiatives, attracting impressive numbers of religious conservatives to his campaign.⁵⁸⁷

The lines between religion and politics were blurred. This was evident in the 2006 tax debates within the Bush Administration. Although the national debate was originally discussed as an economic issue, religious conservatives increasingly described Republican tax initiatives as “pro-family.” This framework was promoted by members of the Christian Right, but also by think tanks such as DeVos’s Acton Institute.⁵⁸⁸ Increasingly, conservatives viewed low taxes and small government as religious and moral issues.⁵⁸⁹ This blurring of politics and religion was also evident in the Tea Party movement.⁵⁹⁰ As surveys discovered, many of its members came from conservative religious backgrounds. While they focused on lowering taxes, they also emphasized the need to put God back in government. For these members, these issues were not disparate. Attending churches with prosperity theology ministers or watching TBN, they believed God rewarded individual initiatives and prospered the worthy. These connections were also evident for some the movement’s leaders. Michelle Bachman, for instance, traveled with a property gospel minister during her 2011 campaign. Sarah Palin had deep ties to the Charismatic movement and the Assemblies of God. Free market principles had become a moral and religious issue. It was a landscape that highlighted the fact that, although Jim Bakker’s ministry was in ruins, the movement he once led had become largely institutionalized.⁵⁹¹

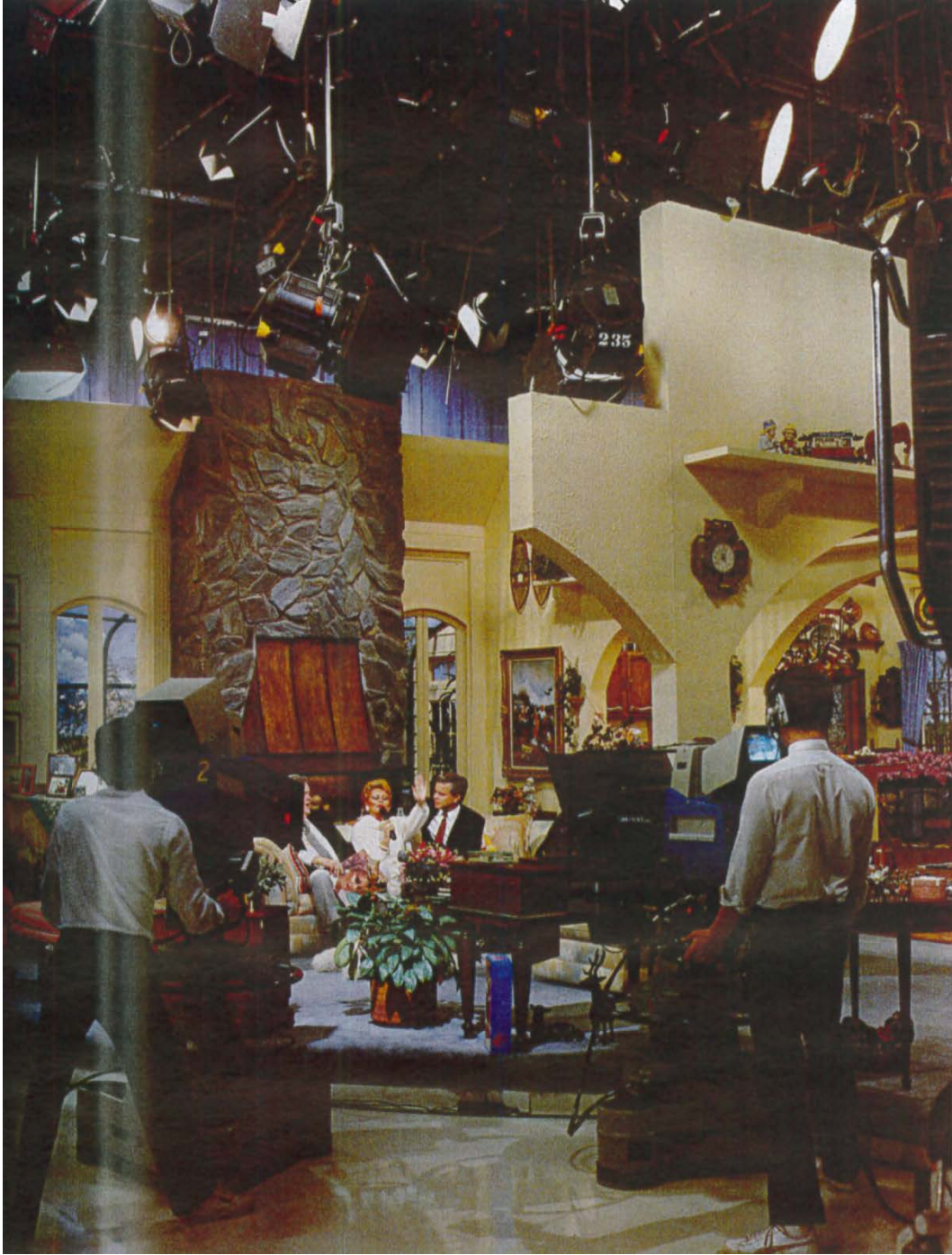
Appendix



An early taping of the *Jim and Tammy Show*⁵⁹²



Pat Robertson, Henry Harrison, and Jim Bakker at a CBN telethon⁵⁹³



Jim and Tammy on the set of *The PTL Club* in the 1980s⁵⁹⁴



Inside the Mall at Heritage USA⁵⁹⁵



*Enlarge your house; build on additions;
spread out your home! For you will
soon be bursting at the seams...*

ISAIAH 54:2 TLB

An artist's rendering of the left side of Bakker's Crystal Cathedral given to PTL

Partners.⁵⁹⁶



Photo of the front of the Heritage Grand Hotel used in PTL promotional material.⁵⁹⁷

¹ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 4/14/1986); Thomas C. O'Guinn and Russell K. Belk, "Heaven on Earth: Consumption at Heritage Village, USA," *The Journal of Consumer Research* 16, no. 2 (1989): 214; Wicker Tom, "In the Nation a Ministry of Loot," *New York Times*, May 30, 1987; "Ptl's Dual Views of TV," *New York Times*, April 27, 1987; *Ptl's Dual Views of TV*; Gary L. Tidwell, *Anatomy of a Fraud: Inside the Finances of the PTL Ministries* (New York: Wiley, 1993), 25.

² The term Pentecostal is derived from the Jewish term *Feast of Weeks*, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the followers of Christ as described in the *Book of Acts*. Pentecostal's view their movement as a revival of the spiritual purity and power of this age. See Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 17-19.

³ See Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Randall J. Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008). For the origins of the Assemblies, see Edith Waldvogel Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993); Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 53; Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals: The Charismatic Movement in the Churches* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1972), 33-40.

⁴ R. Laurence Moore, *Selling God: American Religion in the Marketplace of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 241; Paul Buhle, *Popular Culture in America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 167. For a discussion on the origins of celebrity ministers see Harry S. Stout, *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), xiv.

⁵ "Keeping the Faith," *New York Times*, August 27, 1989.

⁶ Kenneth L. Woodward, "A Disneyland for the Devout," *Newsweek*, August 11, 1986, 1.

⁷ Russell Watson, "Fresh Out of Miracles," *Newsweek*, May 11, 1987, 70 and Richard N. Ostling, "TV's Unholy Row," *Time*, April 6, 1987, 60; Charles Brewer, interview with the author, Spring, 2008; PBS, *Praise the Lord*; Mary Mitchell, "Biggest Bargain Family Vacation in Dixieland," *Saturday Evening Post*, May-June, 1982; Mary Adams McLendon, "Jim Bakker: Seen by Millions Known by Few," *Saturday Evening Post*, April, 1981; Philip Yancey, "The Ironies and Impact of PTL," (1979).

⁸ For a definition of Folk Theology see Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson, *Who Needs Theology?: An Invitation to the Study of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 27-29. Also see Hunter James, *Smile Pretty and Say Jesus: The Last Great Days of PTL* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993).

⁹ Art Harris and Michael Isikoff, "The Bakkers' Tumultuous Return," *Washington Post*, June 12, 1987.

¹⁰ Jim Bakker, *Showers of Blessings* (PTL, 1986), xiv.

¹¹ Bakker, *Showers of Blessings*, 4.

¹² Hanna Rosin, "Oral Roberts and His Green Buick" <http://www.slate.com/id/2238858/>. Keith A. Roberts, *Religion in Sociological Perspective* (Australia ; Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson, 2004), 225-227. Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011), 167-192.

¹³ Quoted in Joe E. Barnhart and Stephen Winzenburg, *Jim and Tammy: Charismatic Intrigue inside PTL* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1988), 230.

¹⁴ Frances FitzGerald, "Jim and Tammy," *The New Yorker*, April 29, 1990, 45.

¹⁵ Charles E. Shepard, "Mystery of Bakker Explained: Narcissistic Personality Disorder," *Palm Beach Post*, October 10, 1989; James A. Albert, *Jim Bakker: Miscarriage of Justice* (Chicago: Open Court, 1998), 10; C. Muck Terry, "No Business Like Church Business," *Washington Post*, October 29, 1989; Tidwell, *Anatomy of a Fraud: Inside the Finances of the PTL Ministries*.

¹⁶ Jack W. Hayford and S. David Moore, *The Charismatic Century: The Enduring Impact of the Azusa Street Revival* (New York: Warner Faith, 2006), 8-15. Stanley M. Burgess, Gary B. McGee, and Patrick H. Alexander, *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Regency Reference

Library, 1988), 810-830. Dean Merrill, "The Fastest-growing American Denomination," *Christianity Today*, January 7, 1983, 29-34.

¹⁷ See, for example, Burgess, McGee, and Alexander, *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 147. This grew in the 1960s in Van Nuys, California (1961). Soon after, it appeared in nearly all the Protestant denominations, the Roman Catholic Church, and, to a lesser extent, in Eastern Orthodox communions. See Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 144-147.

¹⁸ William C. Martin, *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America* (New York: Broadway Books, 1996); George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980). Joel A. Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997). Mark A. Noll, *Religion and American Politics: From the Colonial Period to the 1980s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

¹⁹ Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*. For an earlier discussion on the convergence of the sunbelt and the Christian Right see Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001). Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009). Daniel K. Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). Daniel K. Williams, "Jerry Falwell's Sunbelt Politics: The Regional Origins of the Moral Majority," *Journal of Policy History* 22, no. 2 (2010). Michael Lienesch, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1993).

²⁰ Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*; Matthew Avery Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); Jarod Roll, *Spirit of Rebellion: Labor and Religion in the New Cotton South* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010); Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South*; Mickey Crews, *The Church of God: A Social History* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990); John Lawrence Brasher, *The Sanctified South: John Lakin Brasher and the Holiness Movement* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

²¹ Charles Sheppard, interview with Author, Spring, 2008; Charles E. Shepard, *Forgiven: The Rise and Fall of Jim Bakker and the PTL Ministry* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1989). Sheppard acknowledged much of this in an interview. Given a chance to write a second book, he would have liked to explore the motivations of PTL's followers.

²² Jay Bakker and Linden Gross, *Son of a Preacher Man: My Search for Grace in the Shadows* (San Francisco: Harper, 2001). Jim Bakker and Ken Abraham, *I Was Wrong* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996), 7-11. By the 1980s, Jim Bakker's obsession with grandeur and growing Heritage USA began to frustrate Tammy. Eventually this drove a wedge between their marriages, as the park became Bakker obsession, sometimes working fifteen hours a day. See and Randy Barbato Fenton Bailey, *The Eyes of Tammy Faye* (Universal Studios/Lions Gate Films).

²³ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of the author: labeled October, 1989).

²⁴ For an overview of Calvinism's relationship to these ideas see Roy M. Anker, *Self-Help and Popular Religion in Early American Culture: An Interpretive Guide* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1999). For a discussion on the Character Ethic see Richard Weiss, *The American Myth of Success; from Horatio Alger to Norman Vincent Peale* (New York: Basic Books, 1969); John G. Cawelti, *Apostles of the Self-Made Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965); Richard M. Huber, *The American Idea of Success* (New York, : McGraw-Hill, 1971); Daniel Horowitz, *The Morality of Spending: Attitudes toward the Consumer Society in America, 1875-1940* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985). Rodgers also supports these notions by illustrating how leisure did not have a role in political discussions of the nineteenth century. See Daniel T. Rodgers, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978). James L. Nolan, *The Therapeutic State: Justifying Government at Century's End* (New York: New York University, 1998), 3; Christopher P. Loss, "Religion and the Therapeutic Ethos in Twentieth Century American History," *American Studies International* 40, no. 3 (2002). On the relationship of these ideas to the burgeoning consumer culture see Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 207; Horowitz, *The Morality of Spending*. On the rise of middle class anxiety, see T. J.

Jackson Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization: Advertizing and the Threreputic Roots of the Consumer Culture," in *The Culture of Consumption : Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980*, ed. Richard Wightman Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 3.

²⁵Lears, *From Salvation to Self-Realization: Advertizing and the Threreputic Roots of the Consumer Culture*. New Thought grew in the late nineteenth century. The movement was broad and diverse. Generally speaking, they believed that the human self was divine and sickness originates in the mind. For the early movement see Beryl Satter, *Each Mind a Kingdom: American Women, Sexual Purity, and the New Thought Movement, 1875-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999). Christian Science emphasized that humanity and the universe was whole. They believe that through knowing and understanding anything is possible, and disease and sickness are conquerable. See Ann Beals, *Introduction to Christian Science* (New York: Bookmark, 2001).

²⁶Quoted in Huber, *The American Idea of Success*, 281.

²⁷Giles Kemp and Edward Claflin, *Dale Carnegie: The Man Who Influenced Millions* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 73.

²⁸Peter N. Stearns, *American Cool: Constructing a Twentieth-Century Emotional Style* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 123.

²⁹Dale Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1936), xvi; Huber, *The American Idea of Success*, 277; Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (New York: Norton, 1978).

³⁰Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, 67.

³¹Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women : A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870*, 208; Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*, 60; Huber, *The American Idea of Success*, 237 & 298.

³²Nicole Woolsey Biggart, *Charismatic Capitalism: Direct Selling Organizations in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

³³Kathy Lee Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1998); Biggart, *Charismatic Capitalism*.

³⁴Biggart, *Charismatic Capitalism*, 106.

³⁵Biggart, *Charismatic Capitalism*, 107-109; Richard H. Roberts, *Religion and the Transformations of Capitalism: Comparative Approaches* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Stephen Butterfield, *Amway, the Cult of Free Enterprise* (Boston: South End Press, 1985).

³⁶Donald B. Meyer, *The Positive Thinkers, a Study of the American Quest for Health, Wealth and Personal Power from Mary Baker Eddy to Norman Vincent Peale* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965).

³⁷For a discussion of this debate, see Brasher, *The Sanctified South*, 27-29.

³⁸Brasher, *The Sanctified South*, 2-15. Melvin Easterday Dieter, *The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996).

³⁹Some historians have contested the Pentecostal links to economically marginal individuals, highlighting how the Pentecostal emphases on anti-worldliness lead the movement to celebrate poverty. This led some middle class followers to exaggerate their impoverishment, skewing the early descriptions of the movement. See Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*; Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South*. For the origins of the Assemblies, see Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*; Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 53; Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, 33-40.

⁴⁰Recent histories have illustrated that even though the movement was extremely popular among the poor, it also had a significant amount of middle and even some upper-class adherents. Like the less-prosperous members, the middle class members shared the movement's identification with poverty and simple living. See Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, 141-158.

⁴¹Alan Wolfe, "Holy Realists," *New Republic* 225, no. 9/10 (2001); Crews, *The Church of God*; Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South*, 172.

⁴²Pentecostals embraced zeal as a symbol of a more pure church experience before modern society corrupted American religious practice, zapping the church of its energy and values. These beliefs were linked to their broader critique of commercialization and modernization which created a more refined

church experience for middle class evangelicals. See Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South*.

⁴³ Elmer Gantry was a novel published in 1926 by Sinclair Lewis. The term grew to reflect Lewis's characterization of Pentecostal and Evangelical preachers. They had questionable moral character and were hypocrites and charlatans. They bilked their followers for money using a message they did not believe. See Michael James McClymond, *Embodying the Spirit: New Perspectives on North American Revivalism* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 19-23.

⁴⁴William A. Clark, "Sanctification in Negro Religion," *Social Forces* 15, no. 4 (1937); "Cut Her Child's Hand Off," *New York Times*, April 12, 1904; "Tried Martyrdom by Fire," *New York Times*, August 26, 1906; "Holy Rollers Enjoined," *New York Times* August 9, 1909; "Fanatics' Dance Raided," *New York Times*, October 14, 1910; "A Trouble-Making Religion," *New York Times* November 14, 1920; "Holy Rollers in a Fight," *New York Times* 1911; "Men of the Mountains," *New York Times*, September 9, 1923; "Ask Curb on 'Holy Rollers'," *New York Times*, July 14, 1925; Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, 199-211; Bruce Barton, *What Can a Man Believe?* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill company, 1927); Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 59-64.

⁴⁵*Latter Rain Evangelical*, March 1929, 19.

⁴⁶Meyer, *The Positive Thinkers, a Study of the American Quest for Health, Wealth and Personal Power from Mary Baker Eddy to Norman Vincent Peale*, 240; David Harrington Watt, *A Transforming Faith: Explorations of Twentieth-Century American Evangelicalism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991), 137-150.

⁴⁷S.A. Jamison, "The Seven Fears and the Seven Cheers," *Pentecostal Evangelical*, 2/13, 1926, 2; Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979); R. Laurence Moore, *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 146-149; Liston Pope, *Millhands & Preachers, a Study of Gastonia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942). For a discussion on the direction of the scholarship see Jimmy Wayne Jones, "Modern American Pentecostalism: The Significance of Race, Class, and Gender in Charismatic Growth" (Arkansas State University, 1992); Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South*; Wolfe, "Holy Realists"; John B. Boles, Charles Reagan Wilson, and University of Mississippi, eds., *Religion in the South: Essays*, Chancellor's Symposium Series 1984 (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1985), 71-72.

⁴⁸Moore, *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans*, 34.

⁴⁹Burgess, McGee, and Alexander, *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, 249; Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, 154-155.

⁵⁰Alexander Dowie, "Zions Onwards Movement," *Leaves of Healing*, 1/10/1896, 1896, 250.

⁵¹On the populist movement see Charles Postel, *The Populist Vision* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). McMath, 1993 #2621; Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976). Postel's work emphasizes the forward-looking and progressive nature of American Populism. It also deemphasizes the restorationist rhetoric within American populism. This contrasts somewhat with Pentecostalism's emphasis on restoration. Other works, however, have seen a stronger restorationist element within the movement. See O. Gene Clanton, *Populism: The Humane Preference in America, 1890-1900* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1991); Robert C. McMath, *American Populism: A Social History, 1877-1898* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993). For a broader view of nineteenth century American populism see Ronald P. Formisano, *For the People: American Populist Movements from the Revolution to the 1850s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008). Dowie, also like many of the Populists, he emphasized the backsliding of the Protestant churches in America. These ideas are interlaced throughout Dowie's magazine. Dowie, *Zions Onwards Movement*, 55; Dowie, *Zions Onwards Movement*, 409; Alexander Dowie, "God's Handwriting on the Walls of Zion," *Leaves of Healing*, 5/10/1896, 1896, 326; Alexander Dowie, "Zion's Onward Movement," *Leaves of Healing*, Jan/31/1896, 1896, 250-315.

⁵²Alexander Dowie, "A Father and Judge in Zion," *Leaves of Healing*, Nov/8/1896, 1896, 27.

⁵³Grant Wacker noted a specific example of two North Carolina Populists who came into the movement and gave up their political life for one within the Pentecostal ranks. Keith King also noted that the agrarian ideal was tied to the Pentecostal movement in Texas. In both these cases a Pentecostal solution to

inequality supplanted Populist ones. There were other forms of crossover, too. Others have noted that Pentecostal numbers were conspicuously high in counties where Populism was popular. Wayne Flynt has also noted that in Alabama many Southern reformers came out of the Holiness movement. Another Pentecostal historian, Mickey Crews, argues that the same forces that created the Populist movement led to the formation of the Church of God in Tennessee. Although all authors who have studied this see parallels, there is a difference of opinion on who is broken down by county. Kingsford's 1974 dissertation sees weaker and parallels. This is different from Wacker, who notes that at a county level, there was conspicuous coincidence of movements. See Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, 220; Randall J. Stephens, "The Convergence of Populism, Religion, and the Holiness-Pentecostal Movements: A Review of the Historical Literature," *Fides et Historia* 32, no. 1 (2000): 58 Also see Argersinger, who argues that Populism took hold in Pentecostal strongholds after local churches failed due to economic pressure. Peter H. Argersinger, "Pentecostal Politics in Kansas: Religion, the Farmers' Alliance, and the Gospel of Populism," *Kansas Quarterly* Fall (1981); Crews, *The Church of God*.⁵⁴Pope, *Millhands & Preachers, a Study of Gastonia*, 121-125; Wayne Flynt, "Religion for the Blues: Evangelicalism, Poor Whites, and the Great Depression," *The Journal of Southern History* 71, no. 1 (2005): 28-36

⁵⁵Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, 162. Despite this early equality, women gradually left their leadership positions in the 1920s. The key to this transformation was the increasing freedom women gained in the 1920s. Following the rise of the "New Women," there was a cacophony of writings from Fundamentalists and some Pentecostals that women had abandoned their feminine virtue and were no longer the moral backbone of the American religious home. Female independence was becoming synonymous with moral backsliding. College education, voting, and female public education were all seen as institutions that removed women from the home and their proper role in society. The flapper, moreover, was depicted as a "vulgar" woman who knew nothing of virtue. It was a revitalization of the image of the woman as a temptress that was pervasive in society prior to Victorian America. By the end of the decade, most Pentecostal denominations would start restricting women's ordination, and the predominance of women's leadership within the movement became exceptional rather than normative. Newer work has argued that the rise of Fundamentalism was a gendered reaction to the growing freedom of women, and that its emphasis on worldly exclusion was an attempt to reassert Victorian gender norms. It was also the beginning of a growing celebration of the cult of domesticity within American Pentecostalism, which Bakker and other Pentecostals exploited during the 1970s and 1980s. Despite this early equality, women gradually left their leadership positions in the 1920s. The key to this transformation was the increasing freedom women gained in the 1920s. See Betty A. DeBerg, *Ungodly Women: Gender and the First Wave of American Fundamentalism* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2000); Margaret Lamberts Bendroth, *Fundamentalism & Gender, 1875 to the Present* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

⁵⁶Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, 230-231; Dowie, *Zion's Onward Movement*, 409; Dowie, *God's Handwriting on the Walls of Zion*, 326.

⁵⁷ Alice Luce, "Seed Thoughts," *Pentecostal Evangelical*, May 4, 1935, 3.

⁵⁸S. Chadwick, "Faith for Desperat Day," *Pentecostal Evangelical*, 2/13, 1932, 8-13; Mary Martha Naylor, "Happy Days," *Gospel Gleaners*, 4/15, 1934, 2-4; W.E. Moody, "The Secret Place," *Pentecostal Evangelical*, 3/11, 1933, 2-5; C.E. Shield, "The Depression a Blessing " *Pentecostal Evangelical*, 3/11, 1933, 14; James Salter, "A World of Cheer," *Pentecostal Evangelical*, 3/18, 1933, 5-7; Ministers Wife, "Keep Hold of the Promises," *Gospel Gleaners*, 12/23, 1934, 2-5; Ernest S. Williams, "Be Ye Ready," *Pentecostal Evangelical*, 4/1, 1933, 7-9; Sutton, *Aimee Semple Mcpherson and the Resurrection of Christian America*, 50-51; D. G. Hart, *That Old-Time Religion in Modern America: Evangelical Protestantism in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002), 102.

⁵⁹Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 132.

⁶⁰ Tona J. Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial: Radio, Religion & Popular Culture in America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 67.

⁶¹The primary home for female leaders during the 1930s were seminaries. There also a handful of female preachers, which contrasted with other evangelical denominations where this did not occur. Thomas A. Tweed, *Retelling U.S. Religious History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 74; Ann

Braude and others, "Women and American Religion," in *Religion in American life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Bendroth, *Fundamentalism & Gender, 1875 to the Present*, 44-47. Tweed, *Retelling U.S. Religious History*, 74; Braude and others; Bendroth, *Fundamentalism & Gender, 1875 to the Present*, 44-47.

⁶²Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America*, 30-34.

⁶³Daniel Mark Epstein, *Sister Aimee: The Life of Aimee Semple McPherson* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1993), 20-35.

⁶⁴Quoted in Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America*, 76.

⁶⁵Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America*, 72-81; Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial: Radio, Religion & Popular Culture in America*, 70-74.

⁶⁶Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America*, 108-195.

⁶⁷Matthew Sutton, "Clutching to "Christian" America," *Journal of Policy History* 17, no. 3 (2005): 330; Daniel Yankelovich, *New Rules, Searching for Self-Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down* (New York: Random House, 1981), 215.

⁶⁸Pope, *Millhands & Preachers, a Study of Gastonia*, 121-125; Flynt, "Religion for the Blues: Evangelicalism, Poor Whites, and the Great Depression": 28-36. Flynt points out that earlier scholars viewed Southern evangelism and Fundamentalism as intrinsically conservative because they concentrated on sources by leaders of major denominations and papers run by these organizations, which were linked to these groups' class interest and not the smaller poorer churches and their members. See David Edwin Harrell, *Varieties of Southern Evangelicalism* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1981), 42&36.

⁶⁹David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism and Social Concern* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1977); Barry Hankins, *God's Rascal: J. Frank Norris & the Beginnings of Southern Fundamentalism* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1996), 99; D.G. Hart, "Mainstream Protestantism, "Conservative" Religion, and Civil Society," *Journal of Policy History* 13, no. 1 (2001): 24&41. It is important to note that dispensationalism was much weaker in the South, while the focus on otherworldliness was common to both Northern and Southern evangelicals, although Northern Fundamentalists were more militant in their stance. See Roll, *Spirit of Rebellion*.

⁷⁰Jim Bakker, *Jim Bakker at FGBMFI* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Chapel Hill Southern Folklife Collection).

⁷¹Matthew William Tallman, *Demos Shakarian: The Life, Legacy, and Vision of a Full Gospel Business Man* (Lexington, KY: Emeth Press, 2010); Demos Shakarian, John L. Sherrill, and Elizabeth Sherrill, *The Happiest People on Earth: The Long-Awaited Personal Story of Demos Shakarian* (Old Tappan, NJ: Chosen Books : distributed by F. H. Revell Co., 1975).

⁷²Matthew W. Tallman, "Tallman, M.. Demos Shakarian: The Life, Legacy, and Vision of a Full Gospel Business Man" (Regent University, 2009), 44-67.

⁷³Shakarian, Sherrill, and Sherrill, *The Happiest People on Earth: The Long-Awaited Personal Story of Demos Shakarian*, 50-53; Tallman, *Tallman, M.. Demos Shakarian: The Life, Legacy, and Vision of a Full Gospel Business Man*, 120-134. Mark Bellinger, *Demos: The Man of Fellowship* (Long Beach, California: Upright Enterprises).

⁷⁴Stephen Ellingson, *The Megachurch and the Mainline: Remaking Religious Tradition in the Twenty-First Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Edith Waldvogel Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God: A Popular History* (Springfield, MO: Radiant Books, 1985); Vinson Synan, *The Twentieth-Century Pentecostal Explosion: The Exciting Growth of Pentecostal Churches and Charismatic Renewal Movements* (Altamonte Springs, FL: Creation House, 1987).

⁷⁵James Randi, *The Faith Healers* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1987), 171.

⁷⁶David Edwin Harrell, *All Things Are Possible: The Healing & Charismatic Revivals in Modern America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), 58-67.

⁷⁷Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 214.

⁷⁸Rev Gordon Lindsay, *Voice Of Healing Magazine*, August, 1954, 15; David Edwin Harrell, *White Sects and Black Men in the Recent South* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971), 103.

⁷⁹"Unjust Jude," YouTube, accessed June, 12, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-cOIGQnFgA>.

⁸⁰This does not mean that they rejected his populist language. See for example, *Voice of Healing Magazine*, June, 1953.

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- ⁸¹ Rev Gordon Lindsay, *Voice of Healing Magazine*, August, 1954, 5; Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 214; Harrell, *White Sects and Black Men in the Recent South*, 103.
- ⁸²Randi, *The Faith Healers*, 131.
- ⁸³Reprinted in *The Robesonian*, Thursday, January 9, 1969.
- ⁸⁴Jerome D. Frank, *Persuasion and Healing; a Comparative Study of Psychotherapy* (Baltimore,: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).
- ⁸⁵ Social sciences, by the end of the 1960s, began to criticize their earlier studies. One particularly interesting study analyzed the basis of the interviewers. It demonstrated a strong and undeniable link between the researchers' negative perceptions of Pentecostalism and their descriptions of the movement as pathological. See Virginia H. Hine, "Pentecostal Glossolalia toward a Functional Interpretation," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 8, no. 2 (1969); Frank, *Persuasion and Healing; a Comparative Study of Psychotherapy*; James Dow, "Universal Aspects of Symbolic Healing: A Theroretical Synthesis," *American Anthropologist* 88, no. 1 (2009); Bryan R. Wilson, *Religious Sects: A Sociological Study* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1970); John Simpson, "Speaking in Tongues: Infantile Bable or Song of Self? (Part II)." *Pastoral Psychology* 15, no. 146 (1964).
- ⁸⁶Jack Coe and Lindsay, *The Story of Jack Coe; from Pup Tent to World's Largest Gospel* (Shreveport, LA: Herald of Healing, 1951).
- ⁸⁷Jack Coe, *Tried...But Freed!* (Shreveport, LA: Herald of Healing, 1956).
- ⁸⁸ Quoted in Harrell, *Varieties of Southern Evangelicalism*, 55.
- ⁸⁹Tweed, *Retelling U.S. Religious History*, 33&47.
- ⁹⁰Watt, *A Transforming Faith: Explorations of Twentieth-Century American Evangelicalism*; Larry Eskridge and Mark A. Noll, *More Money, More Ministry: Money and Evangelicals in Recent North American History* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 61; Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1997), 267.
- ⁹¹David Aikman, *Billy Graham: His Life and Influence* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 5-9.
- ⁹² On the growth of a new Cold War nationalism, see John Fousek, *To Lead the Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 168-177; Martin, *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America*, 26-29; Sara Diamond, *Not by Politics Alone: The Enduring Influence of the Christian Right* (New York: Guilford Press, 1998), 59-60.
- ⁹³Billy Graham, *Peace with God* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1953), 187.
- ⁹⁴Carol V. R. George, *God's Salesman: Norman Vincent Peale & the Power of Positive Thinking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
- ⁹⁵George, *God's Salesman*, 46-57. These connections were essential to the political drift of this movement because there were liberal promoters of these ideas. It can be seen in books like *The Doors of Perception*, which saw these ideas' implications very differently than people like Carnegie. The groups that influenced Pentecostalism came out of this conservative tradition and the same movement that Peale looked toward. See Douglas C. Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Mark Oppenheimer, *Knocking on Heaven's Door: American Religion in the Age of Counterculture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).
- ⁹⁶Huber, *The American Idea of Success*, 325.
- ⁹⁷ It is important to note that the major side-story to his success is that Peale also owed much of his success to his middle class female readership who eventually pressured his magazine into running stories of comfort and strength over the industry-centered narratives that Peale developed. George, *God's Salesman*, 119. For other links between business and religion in the 1960s, see Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009), 69-76.
- ⁹⁸ Their Glory is their Shame, " *International Healing Magazine* (March, 1962); Harrell, *All Things Are Possible*, 138-150.
- ⁹⁹Shakarian, Sherrill, and Sherrill, *The Happiest People on Earth: The Long-Awaited Personal Story of Demos Shakarian*, 34; Harrell, *All Things Are Possible*.

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- ¹⁰⁰ See Demos Shakarian, "God's Dairyman," in Oral Roberts and G. H. Montgomery, *God's Formula for Success and Prosperity* (Tulsa, OK: Abundant Life Publication, 1966); Shakarian, Sherrill, and Sherrill, *The Happiest People on Earth: The Long-Awaited Personal Story of Demos Shakarian*, 36-39.
- ¹⁰¹ Tallman, Tallman, M.. *Demos Shakarian: The Life, Legacy, and Vision of a Full Gospel Business Man*; Shakarian, Sherrill, and Sherrill, *The Happiest People on Earth: The Long-Awaited Personal Story of Demos Shakarian*, 34.
- ¹⁰² Shakarian, Sherrill, and Sherrill, *The Happiest People on Earth: The Long-Awaited Personal Story of Demos Shakarian*.
- ¹⁰³ Ellen Liebman, *California Farmland: A History of Large Agricultural Land Holdings* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983), 100-109; Donald J. Pisani, *From the Family Farm to Agribusiness: The Irrigation Crusade in California and the West, 1850-1931* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Ernesto Galarza, *Farm Workers and Agri-Business in California, 1947-1960* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977).
- ¹⁰⁴ "Guns Roar in Milk Strike," *Los Angeles Times*, January 23, 1934, 1; Milk Strike Stirs Rift," *Los Angeles Times*, January 7, 1934, 1. *Los Angeles Times*, February 22, 1942, 13; Shakarian, Sherrill, and Sherrill, *The Happiest People on Earth: The Long-Awaited Personal Story of Demos Shakarian*, 50-57.
- ¹⁰⁵ Yancey, "The Ironies and Impact of PTL".
- ¹⁰⁶ Shakarian, Sherrill, and Sherrill, *The Happiest People on Earth: The Long-Awaited Personal Story of Demos Shakarian*, 89-90.
- ¹⁰⁷ Shakarian, Sherrill, and Sherrill, *The Happiest People on Earth: The Long-Awaited Personal Story of Demos Shakarian*.
- ¹⁰⁸ Vinson Synan, *Under His Banner: History of Full Gospel Business Men's International* (Costa Mesa: Gift Publications, 1992).
- ¹⁰⁹ "Braxton Banks on Business," *The Oracle*, December 4, 1981, 9-11; *FGBMFI Voice*, August, 1978; Oral Roberts, *Oral Roberts' Life Story, as Told by Himself* (Tulsa, OK: 1952), 114-120; Whiteville Chamber of Commerce, <http://www.whitevillechamber.org/>; David Edwin Harrell, *Pat Robertson: A Personal, Religious, and Political Portrait* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 114-120.
- ¹¹⁰ Braxton Banks on Business, *The Oracle*, December 4, 1981, 9-11.
- ¹¹¹ David Edwin Harrell, *Oral Roberts: An American Life* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 310-322. He later said that he felt: "that I didn't have a prayer if I became Christian, because they taught you so much that you are to deny yourself and . . ." Roberts carried these feeling with him through the rest of his life.
- ¹¹² Harrell, *Oral Roberts*, 310-322.
- ¹¹³ Harrell, *Pat Robertson*.
- ¹¹⁴ *Full Gospel Men's Voice*, February, 1953, 1.
- ¹¹⁵ *Ibid*.
- ¹¹⁶ Quebedeaux, *New Charismatics*, 50-63.
- ¹¹⁷ *New York Times*, May 17, 1964; *Trinity*, May-June, 1964; Cecil David Bradfield, *Neo-Pentecostalism: A Sociological Assessment* (Washington DC: University Press of America, 1979), 39. This finding stood in stark contrast with most research on evangelicalism. Most scholars have argued that the evangelical community became political in the 1970s with *Roe V. Wade*, the prohibition of prayer and Bible reading in public schools, and other social issues that led evangelicals to rebel against the federal government. But clearly many Charismatics were politically committed long before the 1970s. See Bradfield, *Neo-Pentecostalism*. Also see Kenneth D. Wald, *Religion and Politics in the United States* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 186; Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith since World War II* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 117-125.
- ¹¹⁸ One example was the story of Angelo Ferri, who in his twenties, converted to Christianity. He then married and began working at a chemical company. As a young man he was "disappointed that all too many Christians pointed their fingers saying 'You're not right with God. There's sin in your life.'" Through the ups and down in his business career, good fortune came his way when he fostered a close relationship with Christ. Soon after, he became the world's largest potato producer. He said, "God's promise is for all. Material prosperity and wealth are His products for all who love and serve Him."

Success, Ferri emphasized, depended on divine intervention and hard work. See *FGBMFI Voice*, March, 1974, 3.

¹¹⁹*FGBMFI Voice*, March, 1972, 4; George Otis, *High Adventure* (Old Tappan, NJ: F. H. Revell Co., 1971).

This political philosophy was also evident in the politicians who spoke in *Voice* and in front of the FGBMFI. They were usually Republicans. One was Richard Nixon, a personal friend of Demos Shakarian, who told FGBMFI of his commitment to “beat back God-less, totalitarian doctrines of Communists.”

Other Congressmen and politicians followed in Nixon’s footsteps. They included Congressman John Conlan, who took over leadership of the Christian Freedom Foundation. Like his future publication, he promoted merging free market ideas with American Christianity.” See “Richard Nixon, The Minds and Hearts and ‘Souls of Men,” *FGBMFI Voice*, 1962; “Reagan was Healed of Ulcers by Prayer Group, Ex-Aide Says,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 1978, A28.

¹²⁰*FGBMFI Voice*, Jan, 1972, 15. This was also evident in North Carolina which saw a boom in Pentecostal churches in Charlotte and cities with a large military presence. See *District Bulletin*, Assemblies of God District of North Carolina, December, May 1961-December, 1967, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

¹²¹Ruth Carter, *Amway Motivational Organizations: Behind the Smoke and Mirrors* (Winter Park, FL: Backstreet Pub., 1999); Carter, *Amway Motivational Organizations: Behind the Smoke and Mirrors*; Butterfield, *Amway*; Charles Paul Conn, *The Possible Dream: A Candid Look at Amway* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1977).

¹²²Carter, *Amway Motivational Organizations: Behind the Smoke and Mirrors*; Carter, *Amway Motivational Organizations: Behind the Smoke and Mirrors*; Butterfield, *Amway*; Conn, *The Possible Dream*.

¹²³“The Gospel According to Amway,” *Sunday Punch*, January, 4, 1987.

¹²⁴Butterfield, *Amway*, 32. This led to speeches at conventions like the one given by Birdie Yager, the wife of Dexter Yager, who became one of Jim Bakker’s closest friends. In Birdie’s speech before more than 10,000 cheering people, she proclaimed “Don’t you know this business was put together by him [God]? You know it has never really bothered Dexter and me when people would put this business down. Then people ask us why you don’t stop and rest? People ask why don’t you just retire? You are rich enough. They don’t understand that I did not build this business to get rich. We are building this business because God told us to, and he is making us rich because he does that with everyone who obeys him.” Like members of the FGBMFI, they envisioned God as a business motivator who rewarded success and punished non-believers. Birdie Yager Speaks to Amway.” video clip, accessed September 1, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cppcVaATRDg>; Thomas Robbins and Dick Anthony, *In Gods We Trust: New Patterns of Religious Pluralism in America* (New Brunswick, N.J., U.S.A.: Transaction Publishers, 1990); Butterfield, *Amway*.

¹²⁵Biggart, *Charismatic Capitalism*, 107-109; Roberts, *Religion and the Transformations of Capitalism: Comparative Approaches*; Butterfield, *Amway*.

¹²⁶Biggart, *Charismatic Capitalism*; Conn, *The Possible Dream*. Biggart notes that this new structure was actually started in 1941 and was then developed into its modern form in 1950. Carter, *Amway Motivational Organizations: Behind the Smoke and Mirrors*; Peter J. Vander Nat and William W. Keep, “Marketing Fraud: An Approach for Differentiating Multilevel Marketing from Pyramid Schemes,” *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* 21, no. 1 (2002).

¹²⁷Conn, *The Possible Dream*, 93-99; James W. Robinson, *Empire of Freedom: The Amway Story and What It Means to You* (Rocklin, CA: Prima Pub., 1997), 8-12. On the incentive system see, Mike Wallace, “Soap and Hope Investigation of the Amway Corporation,” (1982).

¹²⁸One of the possible reasons for this shift in focus is because the conservative focus on attacking labor organizations had shifted toward consumer organizations in the World War II economy because labor had been weakened significantly, therefore making consumers in a demand-driven economy more important.

¹²⁹Robinson, *Empire of Freedom: The Amway Story and What It Means to You*, 193-196.

¹³⁰Wilbur Cross, *Amway: The True Story of the Company That Transformed the Lives of Millions* (New York: Berkley Books, 1999); James Reichley, *Conservatives in an Age of Change: The Nixon and Ford Administrations* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1981); Jerald F. TerHorst, *Gerald Ford and the Future of the Presidency* (New York: Third Press, 1974); Donald T. Critchlow, *The Conservative Ascendancy: How the GOP Right Made Political History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 125; Bud Vestal, *Jerry Ford, up Close: An Investigative Biography* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1974), 86-103; David Vogel, *Fluctuating Fortunes: The Political Power of Business in*

America (New York: Basic Books, 1989), 213-134. Their most important political contact was the Republican congressman from their home district, Gerald Ford. This was a perfect match. Although the leaders of Amway were usually viewed as being on the far right of the Republican Party and Gerald Ford was viewed as a moderate on many issues, their desire to roll back New Deal liberalism and reduce the regulatory power of the federal government helped solidify a lifelong friendship between Richard DeVos, Jay Van Andel, and Gerald Ford. This friendship and support was beneficial to Ford because he greatly needed industry support. Grand Rapids was a conservative district where support from industry leaders was requisite in order to succeed as a Republican, and Ford had failed to receive some of these early endorsements. At the same time, the DeVoses became increasingly important powerbrokers in Michigan politics and they soon latched on to Ford; they became lifelong supporters and family friends who would often vacation together. Ford, however, viewed his relationship between this growing industry and an ascending politician as more than just pragmatic. Like James Robinson, he saw Amway as beacon for the free enterprise system, which exemplified what was possible by rolling back American liberalism. Expressing these convictions, Ford spoke at an Amway convention in 1965 and then submitted DeVos' keynote speech into the congressional record, along with spreading Amway brochures to other political contacts.

¹³¹"Selling America," http://www.amquix.info/amway_classics.html; Lienesch, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right*, 110-152.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ Folder titled "Center of Free Enterprise Folder" of the Ford Presidential Papers, Gerald Ford Library Box A11; Folder titled "Center of Free Enterprise Folder" of the Gerald Ford Congressional Papers in Box R19, Gerald Ford Library.

¹³⁴ *Sports Illustrated*, "Reaching for the Stars," May 03, 1976, 42-60; "There's a Reverend Billy in the White House Again, but It's Zeoli, Not Graham," *People Magazine*, April 25, 1975, 10; "The Other Born-Again President," *Time*, Jan 02, 2007, 2; John McCollister, *God and the Oval Office: The Religious Faith of Our 43 Presidents* (Nashville, TN: W Pub. Group, 2005); Randall Herbert Balmer, *God in the White House: A History: How Faith Shaped the Presidency from John F. Kennedy to George W. Bush* (New York: HarperOne, 2008), 69-74; Sidney Schwartz, <http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Amway/AUS/index.htm>.

¹³⁵ Bill Toms, interview with author, Spring, 2008; Jim Bakker, *The Big Thre Mountain Movers* (Plainfield, New Jersey: Logos, 1977). Austin Miles, *Don't Call Me Brother: A Ringmaster's Escape from the Pentecostal Church* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1989).

¹³⁶ "The Gospel According to Amway," *Sunday Punch*, January, 4, 1987.

¹³⁷ Butterfield, *Amway*, 32.

¹³⁸ Thomas Robbins and Dick Anthony, *In Gods We Trust: New Patterns of Religious Pluralism in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990); Butterfield, *Amway*.

¹³⁹ David Edwin Harrell, *Pat Robertson: A Life and Legacy* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2010), 115-20.

¹⁴⁰ David John Marley, *Pat Robertson: An American Life* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 9-11.

¹⁴¹ Harrell, *Pat Robertson: A Life and Legacy*; Harrell, *Pat Robertson*; Marley, *Pat Robertson: An American Life*.

¹⁴² Pat Robertson and Jamie Buckingham, *Shout It from the Housetops* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1972), 11.

¹⁴³ Pat Robertson and others, *Biography. Pat Robertson--Preaching Politics* (United States: A&E Television Network, 1996), 63-67; Robertson and Buckingham, *Shout It from the Housetops*, 11.

¹⁴⁴ Harald Bredesen and Pat King, *Yes, Lord!* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2007), 90-95.

¹⁴⁵ Bredesen and King, *Yes, Lord!*, 79.

¹⁴⁶ Harrell, *Pat Robertson*, 40; Robertson and Buckingham, *Shout It from the Housetops*, 63-64.

¹⁴⁷ Harrell, *Pat Robertson: A Life and Legacy*, 28; Robertson and Buckingham, *Shout It from the Housetops*, 190-200.

¹⁴⁸ Harrell, *Pat Robertson*, 43; Robertson and Buckingham, *Shout It from the Housetops*, 63-64.

¹⁴⁹ Quoted in Harrell, *Pat Robertson*, 114.

¹⁵⁰ Pat Robertson and Bob Slosser, *The Secret Kingdom* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1982), 192.

- ¹⁵¹Robertson and Slosser, *The Secret Kingdom*, 43-69. Also see Pat Robertson, *Answers to 200 of Life's Most Probing Questions* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1984), 271.
- ¹⁵²Robertson and Slosser, *The Secret Kingdom*, 192-196; Jim Bakker and Robert Paul Lamb, *Move That Mountain* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1976), 57-59; Marley, *Pat Robertson: An American Life*, 195. Robertson also branched out into other ventures that included a charter jet service, fax-based news service and the marketing of other religious symbols. It illustrated another way in which his entrepreneurial past melded with the religious interests. Bill Sizemore, "Is Anything Wrong with Pat Robertson Making a Killing?" *Washington Post*, August 26, 2005. Gary Cohen, "On God's Green Earth," *U.S. News & World Report*, April 24, 1995.
- ¹⁵³Harrell, *Oral Roberts*, 460-465.
- ¹⁵⁴*The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled November, 1985); Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 3.
- ¹⁵⁵Shepard, *Forgiven*, 4-7; Catherine A. Brekus, *The Religious History of American Women: Reimagining the Past* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 176.
- ¹⁵⁶Jim Bakker's planning documents indicate that Heritage USA was an attempt to create an alternative to the 1960s by molding it after the 1950s and Victorian America. See Chapter 7.
- ¹⁵⁷Alan Bryman, *Disney and His Worlds* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Neal Gabler, *Walt Disney: The Triumph of the American Imagination* (New York: Knopf, 2006), 16-20; Andrew Kopkind, "Jim Bakker's Lost America," *Esquire*, December, 1987, 178.
- ¹⁵⁸Jonathan Eyler and Muskegon Area Chamber of Commerce., *Muskegon County: Harbor of Promise: An Illustrated History* (Northridge, CA: Windsor Publications, 1986).
- ¹⁵⁹Shepard, *Forgiven*, 4-7; Brekus, *The Religious History of American Women* 176.
- ¹⁶⁰Shepard, *Forgiven*, 5-8.
- ¹⁶¹Shepard, *Forgiven*, 7.
- ¹⁶²Bendroth, *Fundamentalism & Gender, 1875 to the Present*.
- ¹⁶³Jim Bakker, *Prosperity* (Charlotte: PTL Ministries), Cassette(tape in possession of author). This statement was used in a speech about prosperity in a section where he is criticizing traditional Pentecostalism.
- ¹⁶⁴Jim Bakker, unpublished interview. Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 6; Bendroth, *Fundamentalism & Gender, 1875 to the Present*.
- ¹⁶⁵Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 22.
- ¹⁶⁶Shepard, *Forgiven*, 15.
- ¹⁶⁷Ibid.
- ¹⁶⁸Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 7. Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 275-284; Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Huber, *The American Idea of Success*, 120; Eva S. Moskowitz, *In Therapy We Trust: America's Obsession with Self-Fulfillment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 12-20.
- ¹⁶⁹Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 8-10.
- ¹⁷⁰Frederic Read, *A Long Look at Muskegon* (Benton Harbor: 1976), 42.
- ¹⁷¹May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*, 37; Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Knopf: Distributed by Random House, 2003), 314-329; Beth L. Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 11; Muriel G. Cantor, "The American Family on Television: From Molly Goldberg to Bill Cosby," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 22, no. 2 (1991); Kopkind, *Jim Bakker's Lost America*; Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York, NY: BasicBooks, 1992), 28-31. Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 453; Jon Savage, *Teenage: The Creation of Youth Culture* (New York: Viking, 2007), 101.
- ¹⁷²Shepard, *Forgiven*, 9; Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, 213.
- ¹⁷³Shepard, *Forgiven*, 11-13; Kopkind, *Jim Bakker's Lost America*.
- ¹⁷⁴Shepard, *Forgiven*, 12. Bakker in a later sermon said that, while his hometown minister also thought TV "was the pit of hellfire," he was discovered to be hiding a TV antenna in his attic. See Bakker, *Jim Bakker at FGBMFI*.

- ¹⁷⁵ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 61; Neil Eskelin, *Pat Robertson: A Biography* (Lafayette: Huntington House, 1987), 61.
- ¹⁷⁶ Eskelin, *Pat Robertson: A Biography*, 61; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 60-67.
- ¹⁷⁷ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 13-16.
- ¹⁷⁸ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 10-15; Savage, *Teenage: The Creation of Youth Culture*, 98.
- ¹⁷⁹ Savage, *Teenage: The Creation of Youth Culture*, 98.
- ¹⁸⁰ Savage, *Teenage: The Creation of Youth Culture*; Thomas Hine, *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager* (New York: Bard, 1999); Grace Palladino, *Teenagers: An American History* (New York: BasicBooks, 1996); Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America*, 11,46,55; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 16; Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 6.
- ¹⁸¹ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 12.
- ¹⁸² Steve Bruce, *Pray TV: Televangelism in America* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 28.
- ¹⁸³ Craig Mosher, "Estatic Sounds: The Influence of Pentecostalism on Rock and Roll," *Popular Music and Society* 31, no. 1 (2008): 31.
- ¹⁸⁴ Stephen R. Tucker, "Pentecostalism and Popular Culture in the South: A Study of Four Musicians," *Journal of Popular Culture* 16, no. 3 (1982): 72; Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South*; Mosher, "Estatic Sounds: The Influence of Pentecostalism on Rock and Roll": 101. Also see *The Christian News*, July 6, 1987.
- ¹⁸⁵ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 20-22; Tucker, "Pentecostalism and Popular Culture in the South: A Study of Four Musicians": 70.
- ¹⁸⁶ Tucker, "Pentecostalism and Popular Culture in the South: A Study of Four Musicians": 70.
- ¹⁸⁷ Tucker, "Pentecostalism and Popular Culture in the South: A Study of Four Musicians": 70.
- ¹⁸⁸ Quoted in Tucker, "Pentecostalism and Popular Culture in the South: A Study of Four Musicians": 67; Jim Bakker, *Unpublished Audio Interview*, tape cassette(tapes in possession of author).
- ¹⁸⁹ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 8.
- ¹⁹⁰ This is not a direct quote but rather Charles Sheppard's interpretation of George's comments. See Shepard, *Forgiven*, 11.
- ¹⁹¹ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 11.
- ¹⁹² Shepard, *Forgiven*, 16.
- ¹⁹³ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 16.
- ¹⁹⁴ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 16-18; Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, 33.
- ¹⁹⁵ Quoted in Shepard, *Forgiven*, 16. Also see Bakker, *Unpublished Audio Interview*.
- ¹⁹⁶ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 25.
- ¹⁹⁷ Quoted in Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*.
- ¹⁹⁸ Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 25.
- ¹⁹⁹ Tammy Bakker, *I Gotta Be Me* (Harrison, AK: New Leaf Press, 1978), 43-45.
- ²⁰⁰ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 31.
- ²⁰¹ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 32.
- ²⁰² Bakker, *Unpublished Audio Interview*; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 30-36. Originally coined by Thorsten Veblen, it originally referenced a group of late 19th-century nouveau riche who emerged from the second Industrial Revolution and used their wealth to display their social status. This phenomenon, Veblen argued, was driven by the anonymity of urban living, which prevented individuals from being able to differentiate themselves on the basis of social standing. Bakker's desire for possessions, such as the Cadillac and the old Victorian mansion, combined with his insecurity about his social standing, seemed to demonstrate that consumption represented a means to personal and social security. While the Bakkers were not wealthy, their rapid ascent up the economic ladder was very consistent with this pattern. Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class; an Economic Study of Institutions* (New York: Vanguard press, 1927); Don Slater, *Consumer Culture and Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press ;Blackwell Publishers, 1997); Juliet Schor and Douglas B. Holt, *The Consumer Society Reader* (New York, NY: New Press, 2000); Virginia Postrel, "Inconspicuous Consumption," *The Atlantic*, July/August 2008.
- ²⁰³ Bakker, *Unpublished Audio Interview*.
- ²⁰⁴ Quoted in Barnhart and Winzenburg, *Jim and Tammy*, 98.
- ²⁰⁵ *Voice of Healing*, May, 1954; Bakker, *Unpublished Audio Interview*.
- ²⁰⁶ *Voice of Healing*, January, 1954.

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- ²⁰⁷ Bakker, *Unpublished Audio Interview*.
- ²⁰⁸ Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 24.
- ²⁰⁹ Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 24-26; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 27.
- ²¹⁰ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 26-27.
- ²¹¹ It is also notable that he described Pat Robertson as his general in the same sermon. He, like Roberts, was committed to prosperity teaching. Bakker, *Jim Bakker at FGBMFI*; Harrell, *Oral Roberts*; Meyer, *The Positive Thinkers, a Study of the American Quest for Health, Wealth and Personal Power from Mary Baker Eddy to Norman Vincent Peale*.
- ²¹² Shepard, *Forgiven*, 26-27.
- ²¹³ See for example, *The PTL Club*, videorecording (In possession of author: labeled 3/31/1986); *The PTL Club*, Videorecording (In possession of author: labeled Heritage Grand Partner Center); *The PTL Club*, videorecording (In possession of author labeled: 4/7/1986);
- ²¹⁴ Joshua Gamson, *Claims to Fame: Celebrity in Contemporary America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 35-40.
- ²¹⁵ Gamson, *Claims to Fame: Celebrity in Contemporary America*, 40-45; Eva Illouz, *Oprah Winfrey and the Glamour of Misery: An Essay on Popular Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 31; Barnhart and Winzenburg, *Jim and Tammy*, 96-100.
- ²¹⁶ Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*.
- ²¹⁷ He does, however, discuss when he first spoke in tongues at the MEA in Minneapolis.
- ²¹⁸ James Craig Holte, *The Conversion Experience in America : A Sourcebook on Religious Conversion Autobiography* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992), 3.
- ²¹⁹ In Jim Bakker's Forensic Evaluation at trial he confirms Sheppard's timeline by declaring that he decided to go into ministry his senior year, when "he gradually felt he was being called to ministry." Forensic Evaluation, USA vs. James O. Bakker, C-CR-88-205, Western District, North Carolina. Shepard, *Forgiven*.
- ²²⁰ Richard Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics II* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983); Harrell, *Pat Robertson*, 113.
- ²²¹ Tammy Faye Bakker, funeral audio recording, in possession of the author, August, 2007; Shepard, *Forgiven*.
- ²²² *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled November, 24, 1986.).
- ²²³ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 33-39.
- ²²⁴ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 33-39.
- ²²⁵ This would later be called *The Jim and Tammy Show*.
- ²²⁶ Shepard, *Forgiven*; Robertson and Buckingham, *Shout It from the Housetops*, 188.
- ²²⁷ Neil Eskelin, *Pat Robertson: A Biography* (Lafayette: Huntington House, 1987), 94-100. Harrell, *Pat Robertson: A Life and Legacy*. Sara Diamond, *Spiritual Warfare: The Politics of the Christian Right* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1989); Eskelin, *Pat Robertson: A Biography*, 94-100; Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 51-56.
- ²²⁸ Eskelin, *Pat Robertson: A Biography*, 125.
- ²²⁹ Bakker, *I Gotta Be Me*, 65; Fenton Bailey, *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*.
- ²³⁰ Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*; Shepard, *Forgiven*; Fenton Bailey, *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*.
- ²³¹ See FGBMFI *Voice*; also see *Trinity Magazine*. For a description of the social makeup of the early movement see Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics II*. For the relationship on middle class families and these ideas see Joseph Veroff, Elizabeth Ann Malcolm Douvan, and Richard A. Kulka, *The Inner American: A Self-Portrait from 1957 to 1976* (New York: Basic Books, 1981); Yankelovich, *New Rules, Searching for Self-Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down*; John L. Sherrill, *They Speak in Other Tongues* (Old Tappan, NJ: Spire Books, 1964), 112.
- ²³² Shepard, *Forgiven*, 74.
- ²³³ Shepard, *Forgiven*; Fenton Bailey, *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*; Marley, *Pat Robertson: An American Life*.
- ²³⁴ Daniel Nicholas, "Pat Robertson: A Profile," *Religious Broadcasting*, June, 1983, 11; Fenton Bailey, *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*; Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 51-56; Barnhart and Winzenburg, *Jim and Tammy*, 39-47. For the employees of CBN's perspective on Jim Bakker's role in the *700 Club* see *Forbes*, July, 7, 1980, 123; Trial Transcript, 1603-1606; PBS, *Praise the Lord*.
- ²³⁵ Marley, *Pat Robertson: An American Life*, 43.

- ²³⁶ This understanding of Bakker's origins is based on his own writings, early preaching where he gives intellectual credit to Richard DeVos for these ideas. As well be discussed in later chapters, these ideas were honed and perfected by another Amway leader Dexter Yager who became a personal mentor while he was in Charlotte. See Bakker, *The Big Thre Mountain Movers*, 134-136; Miles, *Don't Call Me Brother: A Ringmaster's Escape from the Pentecostal Church*.
- ²³⁷ Quentin J. Schultze, *Televangelism and American Culture: The Business of Popular Religion* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991), 130-135; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 40.
- ²³⁸ Diamond, *Spiritual Warfare*, 18-25.
- ²³⁹ Jeffrey K. Hadden and Charles E. Swann, *Prime Time Preachers: The Rising Power of Televangelism* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1981), 67.
- ²⁴⁰ Pat Robertson, *Shout It from the Housetops, Cbn 25th Anniversary Edition 1961-1986* (Viginia Beach: Christian Broadcast Network, 1986), 56.
- ²⁴¹ , (!!! INVALID CITATION !!!).
- ²⁴² Shepard, *Forgiven*, 42-45.
- ²⁴³ Fenton Bailey, *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*.
- ²⁴⁴ Jim Bakker Amway Connections are numerous and will be elaborated on latter. He was an Amway Distributor while in charge of PTL. He attended weekly meeting led by Yager where he was trained in how to recruit and motivate people. Also, a good deal of the money from PTL was Amway money. He also planned on sharing the costs of a building on PTL grounds with Amway. When PTL fell, it was an important Amway individual who sheltered him at his mansion for 1 year. The Vice President of PTL operations and many other PTL employees were also involved in Amway. See Morrill Jim and Nancy Stancill, "Amway the Yager Way - Dexter Yager's Empire Embraces 1 Million People from Britain to Brazil. He's an Evangelical Capitalist Who Wants to Sell You Soap - and Change Your Life. But Some of His Methods Buy Controversy," *Charlotte Observer*, March 19, 1995. For Charismatic ideas on capitalism see Lienesch, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right*.
- ²⁴⁵ Harrell, *Pat Robertson: A Life and Legacy*, 60-72.
- ²⁴⁶ Harrell, *Pat Robertson: A Life and Legacy*, 39; Bakker, *I Gotta Be Me*, 69.
- ²⁴⁷ Robertson gradually took over *The 700 club*. By the last two years of Bakker's time at CBN he was doing the show every other night. Bakker, *I Gotta Be Me*, 84. The situation that led to this breakup varies depending on the individual and the time. For Jim Bakker's perspective soon after see Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*. For Tammy Faye's perspective years later see Barnhart and Winzenburg, *Jim and Tammy*; Bakker, *I Gotta Be Me*. Prior to the fall of PTL, Robertson downplayed any differences he and Jim had while working together. For another perspective see Shepard, *Forgiven*. After the fall, he downplayed the role Jim Bakker had at CBN and generally distanced himself from anything to do with the Bakkers. See Art Harris and Michael Isakoff, "Robertson's Bakker Connection," *Washington Post*, February 6, 1988; Frye Gaillard, "The Child Who Would Be King," *Southern Magazine*, July, 1987, 32.
- ²⁴⁸ Bakker, *I Gotta Be Me*, 92.
- ²⁴⁹ "Pastor's Empire Built on Acts of Faith, and Cash," *Los Angeles Times*, September 19, 2004; Bakker, *I Gotta Be Me*, 92-94.
- ²⁵⁰ Bradfield, *Neo-Pentecostalism*, 5-7. McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*, 220-265.
- ²⁵¹ McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*, 240-247; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 182.
- ²⁵² Robert Schuller, like Bakker, preached positive thinking and prosperity theology. His church was called the Crystal Cathedral. Made of glass and steel, it was symbol of Southern California's embrace of modernity and consumption. His most famous quote was "if you can dream it, you can do it!" Bakker invisioned a similar—but much larger--Crystal Cathedral at his future themepark. He also published numerous books outlining his version of prosperity theology. See McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*, 249; Robert Harold Schuller, *My Journey: From an Iowa Farm to a Cathedral of Dreams* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001); Robert Harold Schuller, *Success Is Never Ending* (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1993); Robert Harold Schuller, *Believe in the God Who Believes in You* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1989).
- ²⁵³ McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*, 257; Tallman, *Demos Shakarian: The Life, Legacy, and Vision of a Full Gospel Business Man*; Shakarian, Sherrill, and Sherrill, *The Happiest*

People on Earth: The Long-Awaited Personal Story of Demos Shakarian; Otis, *High Adventure*. *Christianity Today*, Oct. 28, 1991, 44. The one major exception to this is Calvary Chapel which grew out of the Jesus Movement and whose membership was largely taken from the countercultural movement of the 1960s. Some people have, however, seen his increasing willingness to go on TBN as an implicit endorsement of Prosperity Theology. See Chuck Smith, *Charisma Vs. Charisma* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1983), 135. where Smith says "The latest wind of pernicious, unscriptural doctrine to blow through the ranks of some charismatics is the 'what-you-say-is-what-you-get' teaching, otherwise known as the prosperity doctrine" Their website also declares, "We believe that the health and prosperity doctrine is a perversion of Scripture and is often used to fleece the flock of God. We do not believe that God can be commanded by man to heal or provide, but that we must always submit to His perfect will even in affliction." See <http://www.calvarychapelblythewood.com/beliefs.php>; Robertson and others, *Biography*. Pat Robertson--*Preaching Politics*, 39.

²⁵⁴ Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 186; Sherrill, *They Speak in Other Tongues*.

²⁵⁵ John G. Turner, *Bill Bright & Campus Crusade for Christ: The Renewal of Evangelicalism in Postwar America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 150-160&287; Richard Quebedeaux, *I Found It!: The Story of Bill Bright and Campus Crusade* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979); Bill Bright, *Handbook of Concepts for Living: A Compilation of the Nine Transferable Concepts* (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life Publishers, 1981), 329. Daren Dochuk also discusses Bright and his promotion of prosperity theology. He, however, does not qualify his role to the 1970s. See Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*.

²⁵⁶ McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*, 240-247; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 182.

²⁵⁷ Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 118-123; Paul F. Crouch, *I Had No Father but God: A Personal Letter to My Two Sons* (Tustin, CA: Trinity Broadcasting Network, 1993), 50-53. Bakker, *The Big Three Mountain Movers*, 83.

²⁵⁸ Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*; Crouch, *I Had No Father but God: A Personal Letter to My Two Sons*.

²⁵⁹ TBN, *Thirtieth Anniversary* (Santa Ana: Trinity Broadcast Network, 2003); McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*.

²⁶⁰ Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics II*, 184.

²⁶¹ Paul F. Crouch, *Hello World!: A Personal Message to the Body of Christ* (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 2003), 52-55.

²⁶² William Lobdell, "The Prosperity Gospel; TBN's Promise: Send Money and See Riches," *Los Angeles Times*, September 20, 2004.

²⁶³ William Lobdell, "The Prosperity Gospel; TBN's Promise: Send Money and See Riches," *Los Angeles Times*, September 20, 2004; Bakker does not explicitly discuss how this event transformed his thinking about prosperity. Crouch, however, does illustrate that he believes it helped transform the thinking of everyone who witnessed the response to the early telethons. Shepard, *Forgiven*, 53; Bakker and Lamb, *Move That Mountain*, 121; Bakker, *I Gotta Be Me*, 97; Crouch, *Hello World!: A Personal Message to the Body of Christ*; Crouch, *I Had No Father but God: A Personal Letter to My Two Sons*, 79. For a general discussion on the relationship between economic standing and the Prosperity Gospel see Bradley Koch, "The Prosperity Gospel and Economic Prosperity" (Indiana University 2009), 15-25&46. Koch notes that in his survey that income does not predict adherence to this movement, education level has a negative influence, suggesting that this social capital replace the need to adhere to this ideology of upward mobility and wealth. For a discussion on the regional makeup of contemporary prosperity gospel see. Milmon F. Harrison, *Righteous Riches: The Word of Faith Movement in Contemporary African American Religion* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 14. Harrison does note that the movement seems to be strongest in the South but does not claim that it is rural or urban. He also does not relate it to the growth of the South and the Sunbelt. Shepard, *Forgiven*, 52.

²⁶⁴ Unknown Author, "Positivity," *Charisma*, September, 1982, 23.

²⁶⁵ Unknown Author, "Learning," *Charisma*, September, 1982, 16.

²⁶⁶ Bruce, *Pray TV: Televangelism in America*, 72.

²⁶⁷ Schultze, *Televangelism and American Culture: The Business of Popular Religion*, 135.

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- ²⁶⁸ Jim Bakker, Trial Transcript, 1103-1206; *Trinity Broadcasting Network Newsletter*, "TBN Outreach By Satellite," p.1, February 1977; Crouch, *Hello World*, 120.
- ²⁶⁹ Bakker, *The Big Thre Mountain Movers*, 83.
- ²⁷⁰ TBN, *Thirtieth Anniversary*, October 1973. On his later use of these ideas see Bakker, *Prosperity*.
- ²⁷¹ Don Hardister, interview with author, July, 2008; Bryman, *Disney and His Worlds*; Gabler, *Walt Disney: The Triumph of the American Imagination*; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*.
- ²⁷² Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics II*, 191.
- ²⁷³ Yippie stands for Youth International Party. They were a youth-oriented and countercultural revolutionary offshoot of the free speech and anti-war movements of the 1960s. It was founded by Abbie Hoffman, Anita Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, Nancy Kurshan, and Paul Krassner. See McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*, 240.
- ²⁷⁴ Kristin Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 126-192.
- ²⁷⁵ McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*, 222-236; Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*.
- ²⁷⁶ TBN, *Thirtieth Anniversary*, October 1973.
- ²⁷⁷ Natasha Zaretsky, *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968-1980* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 186; Otis, *High Adventure*.
- ²⁷⁸ TBN, *Thirtieth Anniversary*, June 1974.
- ²⁷⁹ McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*, 236-242; TBN, *Thirtieth Anniversary*, December 1973, June 1974, March 1974.
- ²⁸⁰ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 58.
- ²⁸¹ See, for example, *North Carolina District Bulletin*, The bulletin, August, 1965; Pope, *Millhands & Preachers, a Study of Gastonia*. For a similar study that focuses on coal towns see Crandall A. Shifflett, *Coal Towns: Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1960* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991); Deborah Vansau McCauley, *Appalachian Mountain Religion: A History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995); Rob Christensen, *The Paradox of Tar Heel Politics: The Personalities, Elections, and Events That Shaped Modern North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 71; Jacquelyn Dowd Hall and others, *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 215. Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South*. There is a debate among scholars of Pentecostalism and Southern history about the degree to which economic deprivation influenced the development of the movement. All acknowledge that the connections between this movement and working class life were strong. Some scholars like McCauley and Stephens deemphasize the role of economics and emphasize how the ideological movement was not simply the product of economic determinism but a legitimate ideological alternative to mainstream cultural values. Others, such as Harell and Flint, are more willing to characterize this movement as a direct outgrowth of working-class southern life while agreeing that this movement was an ideological challenge. This scholarship, broadly speaking, was a response to early histories of Southern religion that emphasized the continuity within Southern religious practice. Pope, *Millhands & Preachers, a Study of Gastonia*, 136; Hall and others, *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World*, 281. A.G. Garr, *Gems from the Pulpit* (Los Angeles: Frank a Sharp, 1927); Garr, *Gems from the Pulpit*, 17,14,177; Steve Thompson, "A. G. Garr and the Pentecostal Revival," (2010); David R. Goldfield, *Cotton Fields and Skyscrapers: Southern City and Region, 1607-1980* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 128-150. C.M. Ward, *Recession or Revival?* (Springfield, MO: Assemblies of God National Radio Department, 1958); Ward, *Recession or Revival*; C.M. Ward, *Revivaltime* (Springfield, MO: The General Council of The Assemblies of God, 1965); C.M. Ward, *Revivaltime* (Springfield, MO: The General Council of The Assemblies of God, 1955); C.M. Ward, *Revivaltime* (Springfield, MO: The General Council of The Assemblies of God, 1972). *Ward Story* (Harrison, AK: New Leaf Press, 1976), 185. J Carlyle Sitterson, "Business Leaders in Post-Civil War North Carolina, 1965-1900," in Sitterson, ed., *Studies in Southern History* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1957). Also see Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990). For Baptist and Methodism's view on worldliness in the New South see Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and*

Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920; Hunter Dickinson Farish, *The Circuit Rider Dismounts* (Richmond, VA: The Dietz press, 1938); Briane K. Turley, *A Wheel within a Wheel: Southern Methodism and the Georgia Holiness Association* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999), 140-155.

²⁸² Thomas W. Hanchett, *Sorting out the New South City: Charlotte and Its Neighborhoods* (Chapell Hill: The University of North Carolina Press 1993), 223-227.

²⁸³ "What's Up in the Park?," *Charlotte Observer*, November 4, 1996; "Here's why 60 Jobs are Coming from New York," *Charlotte Observer*, February 4, 1994; "Council Won't Delay Annexation," *Charlotte Observer*, February 25, 1986; Bruce J. Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 171; Hanchett, *Sorting out the New South City*.

²⁸⁴ Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 241; Richard M. Bernard and Bradley Robert Rice, *Sunbelt Cities: Politics and Growth since World War II* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 239; Hanchett, *Sorting out the New South City*.

²⁸⁵ Mary Norton Kratt and Thomas W. Hanchett, *Legacy: The Myers Park Story* (Charlotte, NC: Myers Park Foundation, 1986). Myers Park residents also used their economic and political power to prevent the development of multifamily dwellings in their neighborhood. See "Money Talked in Battle Over Rezoning," *Charlotte Observer*, March 24, 1974. As one resident recalled, "The rezoning helped stabilize the neighborhood, and even increased property values, as families began buying and renovating the old houses." Dr. Thomas W. Hanchett, "Myers Park: Charlotte's Finest Planned Suburb," *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission* (2010).

²⁸⁶ For a discussion on the relationship between Sunbelt growth and these ideas see Steven P. Miller, *Billy Graham and the Rise of the Republican South* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

²⁸⁷ Numan V. Bartley, *The New South, 1945-1980* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 345.

²⁸⁸ Carl Abbott, *The New Urban America: Growth and Politics in Sunbelt Cities* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 55-57. For the development of the Sunbelt see Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (New York: Free Press, 2001); Ann R. Markusen, *The Rise of the Sunbelt: The Military Remapping of Industrial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Raymond A. Mohl, *Searching for the Sunbelt: Historical Perspectives on a Region* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993); James C. Cobb, *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development, 1936-1980* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982); Bartley, *The New South, 1945-1980*. On the relationships of suburbanization and the Sunbelt to the rise of conservatism see Kevin Michael Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005); Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Bartley, *The New South, 1945-1980*, 439. On the relationship between North Carolina Republicans and conservatism see Amos Esty, "North Carolina Republicans and the Conservative Revolution," *North Carolina Historical Review* 82, no. 1 (2005).

²⁸⁹ Elizabeth Leland, "Mccoll, the Misunderstood Who Is This Powerful, Driving and Driven Man?," *Charlotte Observer*, September 12, 1989; Leland, *Mccoll, the Misunderstood Who Is This Powerful, Driving and Driven Man*; Mark Washburn, "Mccoll Reflects on Economy, Arena, Mother," *Charlotte Observer*, October 25, 2001; Rick Rothacker, *Banktown: The Rise and Struggles of Charlotte's Big Banks* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 2010).

²⁹⁰ "A Bank Cowboy Rides Off," *Charlotte Observer*, April 26, 2001; "As Steel Shaped Pittsburgh, Banking Defines Charlotte," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, June 27, 2006; *Charlotte Observer*, October 24, 2010; *Charlotte Observer*, April 30, 1989. For other dissuasions on McColl and Charlotte see Rothacker, *Banktown: The Rise and Struggles of Charlotte's Big Banks*; Peter Applebome, *Dixie Rising: How the South Is Shaping American Values, Politics and Culture* (New York: Times Books, 1996); William Graves and Heather A. Smith, *Charlotte, NC : The Global Evolution of a New South City* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 37. For a discussion on economic downturns and banking in Charlotte see *Charlotte Observer*, April 30, 1989. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics*, 116-118.

²⁹¹ Interview with Bill Toms, August, 2001. Bill Toms was PTL Member. He recalled that many FGMBFI members were around PTL and people moved back and forth between these organizations. He attended some FGMBFI meetings but claimed he was not a member. He also revealed that his son was currently an Amway member and follower of prosperity theology. He declared, "they are [both] essentially preaching the same thing."

²⁹² Bradfield, *Neo-Pentecostalism*; Jim and Stancill, *Amway the Yager Way - Dexter Yager's Empire Embraces 1 Million People from Britain to Brazil. He's an Evangelical Capitalist Who Wants to Sell You Soap - and Change Your Life. But Some of His Methods Buy Controversy*; Stancill Nancy and Jim Morrill, "Yager Motivational Tapes Reel in Cash," *Charlotte Observer*, March 19, 1995.

²⁹³ Nancy and Morrill, *Yager Motivational Tapes Reel in Cash*; Wallace, *Soap and Hope Investigation of the Amway Corporation*; Biggart, *Charismatic Capitalism*, 137. Applebome, *Dixie Rising*, 155.

²⁹⁴ Don Hardister, interview with the author, Spring, 2008; Clifford Glickman, "Amway Coming This Way Huge Convention Means Big Business," *Charlotte Observer, The (NC)*, May 11, 1989; Diane Suchetka, "Eager for Amway Rock Hill Gears up for Big-Tipping Conventioneers," *Charlotte Observer*, May 12, 1989; Morrill Jim and Nancy Stancill, "Yager Puts Money Behind His Politics," *Charlotte Observer*, October 9, 1995; Nancy and Morrill, *Yager Motivational Tapes Reel in Cash*; Jim and Stancill, *Amway the Yager Way - Dexter Yager's Empire Embraces 1 Million People from Britain to Brazil. He's an Evangelical Capitalist Who Wants to Sell You Soap - and Change Your Life. But Some of His Methods Buy Controversy*; Conn, *The Possible Dream*; Butterfield, *Amway*; Wallace, *Soap and Hope Investigation of the Amway Corporation*. On the rise of business conservatism in North Carolina see Esty, "North Carolina Republicans"; Numan V. Bartley and Hugh Davis Graham, *Southern Politics and the Second Reconstruction* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 175-178; Paul Luebke, *Tar Heel Politics: Myths and Realities* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 193; Christensen, *The Paradox of Tar Heel Politics*; Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980*, 215. For a recent summary of literature of southern suburbanization see Matthew D. Lassiter and Kevin M. Kruse, "The Bulldozer Revolution: Suburbs and Southern History since World War II," *Journal of Southern History* (August 2009), 691-706.

²⁹⁵ John Jesse Carey, *Carlyle Marney, a Pilgrim's Progress* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1980), 43; Donald G. Mathews, *Religion in the Old South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 24; Holland Thompson, *The New South; a Chronicle of Social and Industrial Evolution* (New Haven: Yale university press, 1919), 214.

²⁹⁶ "The Magnificent Marney," *Charlotte Observer*, January 31, 2004; "FROM MYERS `S PARK ` TO MYERS PARK," *Charlotte Observer*, December 14, 1986; Malcolm Boyd, James Luther Mays, and Carlyle Marney, *The Man in the Middle* (Pittsburgh), sound recording; Curtis W. Freeman, "All the Sons of Earth: Carlyle Marney and the Fight against Prejudice," *Baptist History and Heritage* (2009). This demographic linkage is also reinforced by a Fort Mill reporter whose father also worked for the paper and noted that the highest concentration of PTL followers was from the Tega Cay neighborhood where the Bakkers lived. Located near Fort Mill, it was a wealthy suburb whose demographics mirrored that of Myers Park. She also recalled that most of the people in this neighborhood were new arrivals to the area; this same neighborhood became home to Jim and Tammy Bakker and a large number of PTL followers. Jenny Overman, interview with the author, Spring 2008.

²⁹⁷ "The Magnificent Marney," *Charlotte Observer*, January 31, 2004; "FROM MYERS `S PARK ` TO MYERS PARK," *Charlotte Observer*, December 14, 1986; Boyd, Mays, and Marney, *The Man in the Middle*; Freeman, "All the Sons of Earth: Carlyle Marney and the Fight against Prejudice". This demographic linkage is also reinforced by a Fort Mill reporter whose father also worked for the paper and noted that the highest concentration of PTL followers was from the Tega Cay neighborhood where the Bakkers lived. Located near Fort Mill, it was a wealthy suburb whose demographics mirrored that of Myers Park. She also recalled that most of the people in this neighborhood were new arrivals to the area; this same neighborhood became home to Jim and Tammy Bakker and a large number of PTL followers. Jenny Overman, interview with the author, Spring 2008.

²⁹⁸ "Bakker Religious Show," *Florence Morning News*, SEPTEMBER 7, 1975.

²⁹⁹ Don Williams, interview with author, Spring, 2002.

³⁰⁰ Linda Brown, "Kevin Whittum Leaves Heritage USA," *Charlotte Observer*, June 8, 1989. Shepard, *Forgiven*, 202. Don Hardister, interview with the author, Spring, 2008.

³⁰¹ Miles, *Don't Call Me Brother: A Ringmaster's Escape from the Pentecostal Church*.

³⁰² During this time Bakker spoke at different FGBMFI functions and used these meeting to attract funding to his ministry. He took members on private tours of his "mansion," which led many to contribute to his ministry. See James Johnson, Trial Testimony, 714-717. Bakker, of course, had a well-developed relationship with this organization dating back to his CBN years.

³⁰³ Bakker, *Jim Bakker at FGBMFI*.

³⁰⁴ "PTL Network President Jim Bakker Says ", *Washington Post*, September 8, 1980. Holly Miller, "Will the Real Tammy Bakker Pleas Stand Up?," *The Saturday Evening Post*, Jan/Feb, 1981; Mitchell, *Biggest Bargain Family Vacation in Dixieland*. Charles E. Shepard, "Brazil and Mcalister," *Charlotte Observer*, January 26, 1986. Paul Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics in Asia, Africa, and Latin America* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001). R. Andrew Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil: The Pentecostal Boom and the Pathogens of Poverty* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997).

³⁰⁵ These following descriptions are based on an observation of over two hundred hours of taped PTL episodes from 1984 to 1987. There are some archived versions of earlier shows that are not currently available in the hands of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center. Many have also lost significant quality due to age.

³⁰⁶ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 1/7, 1986).

³⁰⁷ See, for example, *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: 3/31 1986).

³⁰⁸ Ken Garfield, "PTL Alumni Hope New Heritage Can Revive Old Dream," *Charlotte Observer*, September 7, 1992; Garfield, *PTL Alumni Hope New Heritage Can Revive Old Dream*; Blair Skinner, "Ptl's Uncle Henry' Dead at 67," *Charlotte Observer*, February 9, 1995; Skinner, *Ptl's Uncle Henry' Dead at 67*; Jeff Borden, "Stations Poke Fun at PTL - Events Spark Flurry of Radio Spoofs," *Charlotte Observer*, September 3, 1987; Ken Garfield, "Uncle Henry," *Charlotte Observer*, September 12, 1995; Ken Garfield, "Uncle Henry - in the PTL Drama, Henry Harrison's Christian Convictions Compelled Him to Stand by His Friends - Even after Their Fall," *Charlotte Observer*, March, 9, 1995; Ken Garfield, "Uncle` Wants Part in Heritage`S Rebirth," *Charlotte Observer*, January 6, 1990; Garfield, *Uncle` Wants Part in Heritage`S Rebirth*; Miles, *Don't Call Me Brother: A Ringmaster's Escape from the Pentecostal Church*; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 69.

³⁰⁹ See, for example, Bakker, *Prosperity*; Jim Bakker, *How to Accomplish the Impossible with the Big Three Mountain Movers* (Nashville, TN: GRT), sound recording; Jim Bakker, *God Answers Prayer* (Charolette, NC: PTL Television Network, 1979); Jim Bakker and Jeffrey Park, *Eight Keys to Success* (Charlotte, NC: PTL Television Network, 1980).

³¹⁰ Tracy, interview with author, Spring, 2008. This PTL member is further profiled in Chapter 8.

³¹¹ Bakker discusses how these ideas warped his vision of God in Jim Bakker and Ken Abraham, *Prosperity and the Coming Apocalypse* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998), 8.

³¹² PTL Television Network, *PTL Club Devotional* (Charlotte: PTL Television Network, 1980), January 13.

³¹³ Jim Bakker, *The Big Three. World Convention in Chicago Illinois, Full Gospel Buiness Men's International* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Chapel Hill Southern Folklife Collection). Bakker, *God Answers Prayer*.

³¹⁴ Robert Wuthnow, *Sharing the Journey: Support Groups and America's New Quest for Community* (New York: Free Press 1994); R. Marie Griffith, *God's Daughters: Evangelical Women and the Power of Submission* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Robert William Fogel, *The Fourth Great Awakening & the Future of Egalitarianism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); Zaretsky, *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968-1980*, 197. For how these ideas infiltrated the youth movements of the 1960s and transformed it in the 1970s; see Preston Shires, *Hippies of the Religious Right* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007); Sam Binkley, *Getting Loose: Lifestyle Consumption in the 1970s* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); Wendy Kaminer, *I'm Dysfunctional, You're Dysfunctional: The Recovery Movement and Other Self-Help Fashions* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1992).

³¹⁵ Although there is no survey of the denomination in the 1950s, most observers note that it was dominated by plain-folk and not the middle classes. See *The Assemblies of God at the Crossroads: Charisma and Institutional Dilemmas*. For a discussion of this growth see *Christian Century*, October 17, 1990, 932-934; Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God*, 231.

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- ³¹⁶ Bakker and Abraham, *Prosperity and the Coming Apocalypse*, 5; Kaminer, *I'm Dysfunctional, You're Dysfunctional: The Recovery Movement and Other Self-Help Fashions*, 54.
- ³¹⁷ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 11/25 to 12/25, 1985); Interestingly Bakker told Doug and Ruth that he had read many books on the rise of Wal-Mart and hoped to structure PTL after Wal-Mart's example. It was yet another sign that Bakker saw himself as much as an entrepreneur as a minister. In these books one can see parts of Bakker's drive for profits. For example lessons emphasize maximizing profit, and constantly innovating as keys to success. Shepard, *Forgiven*, 224. Bakker, *Showers of Blessings*, 21.
- ³¹⁸ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 4/21-4/25.); A look at Jim Baker and the 'PTL', *The Rock Hill Herald*, October 3, 1979.
- ³¹⁹ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled Nov. 4-7, 1985); The bubbling up of anxiety is often attributed the presence of the devil in the world.
- ³²⁰ Jim Bakker, *The Best of PTL* (Fort Mill, South Carolina: PTL Ministries), audiocassette. This collection contains eight cassettes. Besides Colson, the most well-known interviewees were prosperity ministers. They included Kenneth Copeland, Robert Schuller, Morris Cerullo, and Oral Roberts.
- ³²¹ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled , " 4/21-4/25 1986).
- ³²² Ibid.
- ³²³ Philip Yancey, "Jim Bakker Made Me Do It," *Christianity Today*, October 16, 1987; also see *Together*, Fall/Winter 1984. For another example see Bakker and Abraham, *Prosperity and the Coming Apocalypse*, 22.
- ³²⁴ For an example of a critic using this see *Christianity Today*, September 7, 1979; Bakker, *The Big Three. World Convention in Chicago Illinois, Full Gospel Business Men's International*; Bill Moyers, *God & Politics: The Kingdom Divided* (PBS Video); James H. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970).
- ³²⁵ Bakker, *The Big Three. World Convention in Chicago Illinois, Full Gospel Business Men's International*.
- ³²⁶ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 4/21, 1985); *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 1985 11/24-11/25); "Second Coming of Jim, Tammy Devil," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 11, 1989. Jim Bakker, *Survival, Unite to Live* (Harrison, AK: New Leaf Press, 1980), 128. This was also evident in Bakker's description of the Devil as a 'Dream Killer.'
- ³²⁷ Bakker, *Showers of Blessings*; Inc Heritage Village Church and Missionary Fellowship, *The PTL Family Devotional* (Charolette: PTL Network, 1981).
- ³²⁸ Philip Yancey, "The Ironies and Impact of PTL," *Christianity Today*, September 21, 1979. Bakker, *God Answers Prayer*.
- ³²⁹ Wuthnow, *Sharing the Journey: Support Groups and America's New Quest for Community*; Griffith, *God's Daughters: Evangelical Women and the Power of Submission*; Fogel, *The Fourth Great Awakening & the Future of Egalitarianism*; Zaretsky, *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968-1980*, 197. For how these ideas infiltrated the youth movements of the 1960s and transformed it in the 1970s see Shires, *Hippies of the Religious Right*; Binkley, *Getting Loose*; Kaminer, *I'm Dysfunctional, You're Dysfunctional: The Recovery Movement and Other Self-Help Fashions*.
- ³³⁰ Karl Garmager, Trial Testimony, 953-954. The lives of PTL members will be highlighted further in Chapter 8. Most fit Garmager's profile. They were mobile, prosperous, but often lonely. They found solace and comfort in PTL message of hope and prosperity.
- ³³¹ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (In possession of author: labeled 3/31 1986); *The PTL Club*, videorecording (In possession of author: labeled Nov. 4, 1986).
- ³³² Zig Ziglar, *Raising Positive Kids in a Negative World* (Nashville: Oliver Nelson, 1985); Lienesch, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right*, 95. *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled October 20-October 24, 1986); For Ziglar's association with the Christian Right see "Housewives of God," *New York Times*, November 12, 2010.
- ³³³ Ibid.
- ³³⁴ Jane Lee Lisenby, "That PTL Mansion is 'Quality Place'," *Charlotte News*, Sept 3, 1977; Jane Lee Lisenby, "Come Along For a Guided Tour of Heritage," *Charlotte News*, Sept, 5, 1977; Jim Bakker Trial, Transcript, 1608.
- ³³⁵ Bakker, *Showers of Blessings*, 25.

³³⁶ On the disparity that survived the Sunbelt transformation see Cobb, *The Selling of the South*; Phillip J. Wood, *Southern Capitalism: The Political Economy of North Carolina, 1880-1980* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1986); Ronald D. Eller, *Uneven Ground: Appalachia since 1945* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008); Goldfield, *Cotton Fields and Skyscrapers*.

³³⁷ Bakker was forced to remove the automobiles due to internal and external criticism. He would, however, revisit this idea at the Heritage Grand (his future resort hotel), as visitors remembered that there were always limos parked out front that were used to chauffeur guests to and from the airport. Inc Heritage Village Church and Missionary Fellowship, *Jim and Tammy Bakker Present the Ministry of Heritage Village Church* (Toronto: Boulton Publishing Services, 1986), 33. For the connections of these symbols see Kari A. Frederickson, *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932-1968* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001). Tara McPherson, *Reconstructing Dixie: Race, Gender, and Nostalgia in the Imagined South* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003). For the rise in popularity during the PTL era see *Charlotte Observer*, April 2, 1975. "The Good Life," *Time Magazine*, September 27, 1976. Jack Temple Kirby, *Media-Made Dixie: The South in the American Imagination* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), 142.

³³⁸ For a discussion on this, see Belk, "Heaven on Earth: Consumption at Heritage Village, USA". *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 4/7 to 4/11 1985).

³³⁹ Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*, 121-124; McPherson, *Reconstructing Dixie*; Lienesch, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right*, 107-121. George Otis and Pat Boone, *The Solution to Crisis-America* (Old Tappan, NJ: F. H. Revell Co., 1972); Richard M. DeVos and Charles Paul Conn, *Believe!* (Old Tappan, NJ: F. H. Revell Co., 1975); Heritage Village Church and Missionary Fellowship, *The PTL Family Devotional*.

³⁴⁰ For details of these Bakker's personal habits see Shepard. This was recalled by other employees of the park, some of whom were part of the entourage. One former lifeguard remembered the tension when it came. Bakker demanded perfection and he would sometimes get angry if he saw something he did not like. In this environment, Bakker seemed like a superstar to employees like him. He recalled that guests often had the same outlook as they would usually only see Bakker as he traveled the grounds only with an entourage. James Williams, interview with author, Spring, 2010.

³⁴¹ Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 258. For the strength of these ideas in the 1980s also see *Heritage Herald*, September, 1984; A broader example is Charisma review of *The Seduction of Christianity*, which was extremely hostile; See "Is Christianity being Seduced," *Charisma Magazine*, March, 1986, 32-34. This reaction was very similar to Bakker's reaction to this same book. See conclusion for more on Bakker's reaction.

³⁴² While prosperity theology is evident throughout American Pentecostalism, it was strongest in the Assemblies of God. Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 244.

³⁴³ Bakker and Gross, *Son of a Preacher Man: My Search for Grace in the Shadows*, 191; Gil Troy and Vincent J. Cannato, *Living in the Eighties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 191; Ann Rowe Seaman, *Swaggart: An Unauthorized Biography of an American Evangelist* (New York: Continuum, 1999), 269. Also reflecting on this environment, Jim Bakker recalled (after recanting the prosperity gospel) that during this time any criticism of the prosperity gospel was discounted by the movement as the outgrowth of people who loved poverty, making any critique of these ideas nearly impossible. See Bakker on the growing relationship between this movement and self-help literature; see Erling Jorstad, *Popular Religion in America: The Evangelical Voice* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1993), 82.

³⁴⁴ *The Assemblies of God at the Crossroads: Charisma and Institutional Dilemmas*. This article appeared in the *Christian Century*, October 17, 1990, 932-934. Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God*, 231.

³⁴⁵ Bakker, *The Big Three Mountain Movers*, 78. Bakker, *The Big Three. World Convention in Chicago Illinois, Full Gospel Business Men's International*.

³⁴⁶ Nancy and Morrill, *Yager Motivational Tapes Reel in Cash*; Wallace, *Soap and Hope Investigation of the Amway Corporation*; Biggart, *Charismatic Capitalism*, 137.

³⁴⁷ Bakker, *The Big Three. World Convention in Chicago Illinois, Full Gospel Business Men's International*.

³⁴⁸ *The Rock Hill Herald*, October 3, 1979.

³⁴⁹ Bakker, *The Big Three. World Convention in Chicago Illinois, Full Gospel Business Men's International*.

³⁵⁰ Bakker, *The Big Three. World Convention in Chicago Illinois, Full Gospel Business Men's International*.

- ³⁵¹ As Robert M. Collins notes that while this emphasis on limits became the defining characteristic of Carter's presidency, it was also the product of the environment of his presidency as he backed away from of the pro-growth rhetoric that he had campaigned on. Robert M. Collins, *More: The Politics of Economic Growth in Postwar America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 158; Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer, *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), 124-126; Kevin Mattson, "What the Heck Are You up to, Mr. President?": *Jimmy Carter, America's "Malaise," and the Speech That Should Have Changed the Country* (Bloomsbury: New York, 2009); W. Carl Biven, *Jimmy Carter's Economy: Policy in an Age of Limits* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).
- ³⁵² Reprinted in Bakker and Park, *Eight Keys to Success*, 68.
- ³⁵³ John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, The American Presidency Project [online]. Santa Barbara, CA. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3259>.
- ³⁵⁴ For a discussion of the importance of this speech to the conservative movement see Mattson, "What the Heck Are You up to, Mr. President?": *Jimmy Carter, America's "Malaise," and the Speech That Should Have Changed the Country*, 178-180; James C. Roberts, *The Conservative Decade: Emerging Leaders of the 1980s* (Westport, CN: Arlington House, 1980).
- ³⁵⁵ Otis and Boone, *The Solution to Crisis-America*. For charismatic's similar views see *Charisma Magazine*.
- ³⁵⁶ DeVos and Conn, *Believe!*, 68.
- ³⁵⁷ DeVos and Conn, *Believe!*; David Chilton, *Productive Christians in an Age of Guilt-Manipulators: A Biblical Response to Ronald J. Sider* (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1985); Frank Schaeffer, *Is Capitalism Christian?: Toward a Christian Perspective on Economics* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1985). For a contrasting book which Chilton's book is a direct response to see Ronald J. Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: A Biblical Study* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984).
- ³⁵⁸ Peace Corps Online, "Group Watch: Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International " (2002). <http://www.peacecorpsonline.org/messages/messages/2629/1008731.html>.
- ³⁵⁹ Pat Boone, *Pat Boone's America--50 Years: A Pop Culture Journey through the Last Five Decades: An Autobiography* (Nashville, Tenn.: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 98-100; Otis, *High Adventure*; Paul Kengor, *God and Ronald Reagan: A Spiritual Life* (New York: ReganBooks, 2004). Deborah Huntington and Ruth Kaplan, "Whose Gold Is Behind the Altar? Corporate Ties to Evangelicals," "Press-On" 1 and 2(1981), 1-10; Russ Bellant, *The Coors Connection: How Coors Family Philanthropy Undermines Democratic Pluralism* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1991), 54.
- ³⁶⁰ Bob Slosser, *Reagan inside Out* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1984); Matthew Dallek, *The Right Moment: Ronald Reagan's First Victory and the Decisive Turning Point in American Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 227; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*, 190; Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands*, 247-248.
- ³⁶¹ Matthew Hilton, *Prosperity for All: Consumer Activism in an Era of Globalization* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009); Daniel Horowitz, *The Anxieties of Affluence: Critiques of American Consumer Culture, 1939-1979* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004).
- ³⁶² Hilton, *Prosperity for All: Consumer Activism in an Era of Globalization*; Horowitz, *The Anxieties of Affluence*; Justin Martin, *Nader: Crusader, Spoiler, Icon* (Cambridge, MA: Perseus Pub., 2002); Lawrence B. Glickman, *Buying Power : A History of Consumer Activism in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).
- ³⁶³ Otis and Boone, *The Solution to Crisis-America*, 87.
- ³⁶⁴ Jay Van Andel, "The Government versus the Entrepreneur," *Policy Review*, 10 (Fall 1979); Jay Van Andel, Jay, "Regulatory Agencies: Friends or Foes?," *Human Events* 38, no. 4 (1978) ,8; DeVos and Conn, *Believe!*, 136.
- ³⁶⁵ Bakker, *The Big Thre Mountain Movers*, 126-127. Also Jerry Falwell, for example, began to organize "I love America" rallies where he praised American providence and emphasized the need for revival as the key to restoring American prosperity. See Jerry Falwell, *Listen, America!* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980), 117. Jerry Falwell, *America Can Be Saved* (Murfeesboro,TN: Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1979).
- ³⁶⁶ Bakker, *Prosperity*.
- ³⁶⁷ *The Rock Hill Herald*, October 3, 1979.
- ³⁶⁸ Bakker, *The Big Three*. *World Convention in Chicago Illinois, Full Gospel Buiness Men's International*.

³⁶⁹ Bakker, *The Big Thre Mountain Movers*. Shepard, *Forgiven*, 72-75. For a discussion on the relationship between suburbanization and equality in the post 1970s America see Kevin Michael Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue, *The New Suburban History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). Also see PTL Planning Documents, General Section.

³⁷⁰ Bakker, *Jim Bakker at FGBMFI*. Shepard, *Forgiven*, 136. Bakker, *Showers of Blessings*, 67; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*. For a discussion on Charlotte's booster image see Graves and Smith, *Charlotte, NC : The Global Evolution of a New South City*; Applebome, *Dixie Rising*. Bakker's support of the prosperity theology community was also evident in his "Best of PTL" collection which was largely comprised of other prosperity ministers. See Jim Bakker, *The Best of the PTL Club* (Charlotte, NC: PTL Television Network), sound recording.

³⁷¹ Kopkind, *Jim Bakker's Lost America*.

³⁷² Bakker, *The Big Three. World Convention in Chicago Illinois, Full Gospel Buiness Men's International*. Bakker also used the growth of these early years in Bakker, *Jim Bakker at FGBMFI*. to demonstrate to the FGBMFI that if you are positive and have God on your side he will provide the means to make your business grow; it will become a symbol of the power of Christ and a beacon to world of the power Christian ministry. With this belief in God, he told the audience, there is no need to worry about money and capital. Shepard, *Forgiven*, 77.

³⁷³ *Charlotte News*, September 20, 1977; *Charlotte News*, October 7, 1977; PTL Club Heritage Village, *Heritage Village* (Charlotte: PTL Club Heritage Village, 1977). The Stars and Stripes, September 20, 1976. For Bakker's discussion on this cycle see Bakker and Abraham, *Prosperity and the Coming Apocalypse*, 8; Bakker and Park, *Eight Keys to Success*.

³⁷⁴ For a discussion of his followers beliefs see Chapter 8

³⁷⁵ Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right*; Hart, *That Old-Time Religion in Modern America: Evangelical Protestantism in the Twentieth Century*; Martin, *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America*. For a discussion on the rise of family issues in importance after 1940 within the evangelical community see Watt, *A Transforming Faith: Explorations of Twentieth-Century American Evangelicalism*, 138-153.

³⁷⁶ Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*. The families that joined often hailed from prosperous Sunbelt communities. Most frequently, the husbands had professional jobs and the wives were full-time mothers. They viewed their vision of the "traditional family" as under attack by feminists and pro-life advocates and the more lenient divorce laws.

³⁷⁷ Kevin M. Kruse Mathew D. Lassiter, "The Bulldozer Revolution: Suburbs and Southern History since World War II," *Journal of Southern History* 75, no. 3 (2009); Richard J. Meager, "Right Ideas: Discourse, Framing, and the Conservative Coalition" (CUNY, 2007).

³⁷⁸ David Harrington Watt, "The Private Hopes of American Fundamentalists and Evangelicals," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 1, no. 2 (1991).

³⁷⁹ See, for example, Ron Ball and Dexter Yager, *Successful Family Ties* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Pub., 1988); Dexter Yager and Ron Ball, *The Mark of a Millionaire* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1990).

³⁸⁰ Zaretsky, *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968-1980*; Mathew D. Lassiter, "The Bulldozer Revolution: Suburbs and Southern History since World War II": 692; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*. For Yager's discussion on gender see Ball and Yager, *Successful Family Ties*; Dexter Yager and Ron Ball, *Dynamic People Skills* (U.S.A.: InterNet Services Corp., 1997); Biggart, *Charismatic Capitalism*; Butterfield, *Amway*. Yager's vision of the family was extremely patriarchal. See Ball and Yager, *Successful Family Ties*.

³⁸¹ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled Nov, 1985).

³⁸² For a discussion on Otis's relationship with Reagan see Doug Wead and Bill Wead, *Reagan, in Pursuit of the Presidency, 1980* (Plainfield, NJ: Haven Books, 1980), 241; Kengor, *God and Ronald Reagan*, 135; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 388. Otis was a close friend of Reagan, and tutored him on how to communicate with the evangelical and Charismatic community.

³⁸³ Hart, *That Old-Time Religion in Modern America: Evangelical Protestantism in the Twentieth Century*, 150; Kengor, *God and Ronald Reagan*, 165; Zaretsky, *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968-1980*, 92; Gil Troy, *Morning in America: How Ronald Reagan Invented the 1980s* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 37.

³⁸⁴ Peter Cava, "Gay Rights and Moral Panic: The Origins of America's Debate on Homosexuality by Fred Fejes," *Journal of American Culture* 32, no. 4 (2009); Fred Fejes, *Gay Rights and Moral Panic: The Origins of America's Debate on Homosexuality* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Dudley Clendinen and Adam Nagourney, *Out for Good: The Struggle to Build a Gay Rights Movement in America* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1999).

³⁸⁵ Mel White, Interview with Author, Spring, 2009; Fenton Bailey, *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*. There is also a great deal of literature by reporters on Jim Bakker's alleged homosexuality, see Shepard, *Forgiven*; Larry Martz and Ginny Carroll, *Ministry of Greed: The inside Story of the Televangelists and Their Holy Wars* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988).

³⁸⁶ This does not negate the fact that working-class people became members of PTL. They, however, were less inclined to support Bakker's prosperity beliefs. They also were not the target of PTL's message and were not prominent within the PTL's as will be discussed later. See Hart, *That Old-Time Religion in Modern America: Evangelical Protestantism in the Twentieth Century*, 169.

³⁸⁷ Moreover, the conservative businessmen and leaders of the charismatic community consistently denied that societal breakdown was caused by economic conditions throughout their literature. Like Bakker they preached that failure and success were a matter of attitude, belief and motivation See ...

³⁸⁸ Jimmy Carter Archives, Memos Folder, Suggestions Relating to Conservative Evangelicals. Zaretsky, *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968-1980*.

³⁸⁹ Ralph Reed, *Active Faith: How Christians Are Changing the Soul of American Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1996), 7. "Tax Revolt as a Family Value," *The Public Eye Magazine*, Winter 2006.

³⁹⁰ "Time to Recapture Our Destiny," July 17, 1980

<http://reagan2020.us/speeches/nomination_acceptance_1980.asp, 1/11/2009. Bakker, *The Big Three. World Convention in Chicago Illinois, Full Gospel Business Men's International*. For a discussion on Heritage USA see next chapter.

³⁹¹ "200,000 March and Pray at Christian Rally in Capital," *New York Times*, April 30, 1980. Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right*, 183. "Religious Rally on Mall in the Capital Draws Support and Criticism," *New York Times*, April 27, 1980. Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*.

³⁹² Z0496, Washington for Jesus, produced by Tim Frasca and Adi Gevins, Los Angeles: Pacifica Radio Archive, 1980, Recorded: in Washington D. C., April 29, 1980; After critics began to complain about the overt political nature of this rally, Bright and Robertson removed some of the most overt political statements from their position papers and minimized the role politicians would play in the rally; *Christianity Today*, May 23, 1980.

³⁹³ Bobby Chris Alexander, *Televangelism Reconsidered: Ritual in the Search for Human Community* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1994), 144.

³⁹⁴ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 3/31/1986); *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled Cho Episode).

³⁹⁵ Schulman and Zelizer, *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, 14; Zaretsky, *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968-1980*, 197; Bakker, *The Big Three. World Convention in Chicago Illinois, Full Gospel Business Men's International*.

³⁹⁶ "A look at Jim Bakker and the PTL," *Christianity Today*, September, 21, 1979; The influence of this ideology is important because, as Clyde Wilcox notes, televangelists are more influential than pastors who preach explicit politics in determining political conservatism. See John Clifford Green, Mark J. Rozell, and Clyde Wilcox, *The Christian Right in American Politics: Marching to the Millennium* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2003), 61&172.

³⁹⁷ *The Rock Hill Herald*, October, 3, 1979; FGBMFI 27th World Convention Highlights, audiocassette, in possession of author (July, 1980).

³⁹⁸ Harold Bernstein, Interview with author, Spring 2008; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 158&142; Burton Ira Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr* (Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 45. ³⁹⁸ PBS, *Praise the Lord*; Shepard, *Forgiven*. UNDER FOWLER, F.C.C. TREATED TV AS COMMERCE, NYT, January 19, 1987. Joint Dissenting Statement of Commissioners Joseph R. Fogerty and Henry M. Rivera, FCC, UD-WW, 26-A, Box 17.

³⁹⁹ Quoted in Troy, *Morning in America: How Ronald Reagan Invented the 1980s*, 56.; Also see Bob Batchelor and Scott Stoddart, *The 1980s* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 2007); Troy, *Morning in America: How Ronald Reagan Invented the 1980s*; James T. Patterson, *Restless Giant: The United States*

from *Watergate to Bush V. Gore* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Nicolaus Mills, *Culture in an Age of Money: The Legacy of the 1980s in America* (Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1990). Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 255-259; Schultze, *Televangelism and American Culture: The Business of Popular Religion*; Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 140-160.

⁴⁰⁰See, for example, Troy, *Morning in America: How Ronald Reagan Invented the 1980s*, 16; Michael C. McHugh, *The Second Gilded Age: The Great Reaction in the United States, 1973-2001* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2006).

⁴⁰¹Bakker and Gross, *Son of a Preacher Man: My Search for Grace in the Shadows*, 9; Patterson, *Restless Giant: The United States from Watergate to Bush V. Gore*, 159. Forbes quoted in Troy, *Morning in America: How Ronald Reagan Invented the 1980s*, 56.

⁴⁰²In Watt's case it was through Joseph Coors. See Jacqueline Vaughn, *Green Backlash: The History and Politics of the Environmental Opposition in the U.S* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1997), 165.

⁴⁰³From "Anatomy of Smear," *Together Digest*, 1986.

⁴⁰⁴Don Hardister, interview with author, July, 2008; *Phoenix New Times*, June 10, 1992; "Bush and the Bakker Connection; On His Way to the White House, the Vice President Wooed the Preacher," *The Washington Post*, December 18, 1988; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 345-347; On Reagan's support for Televangelism, also see "Religious Broadcasters," *Washington Post*, February 4, 1984.

⁴⁰⁵George Bush Presidential Library, Doug Wead Papers, CNP File.

⁴⁰⁶Glickman, *Amway Coming This Way Huge Convention Means Big Business*; Suchetka, *Eager for Amway Rock Hill Gears up for Big-Tipping Conventioneers*; Jim and Stancill, *Amway the Yager Way - Dexter Yager's Empire Embraces 1 Million People from Britain to Brazil. He's an Evangelical Capitalist Who Wants to Sell You Soap - and Change Your Life. But Some of His Methods Buy Controversy*; Jim and Stancill, *Yager Puts Money Behind His Politics*; Nancy and Morrill, *Yager Motivational Tapes Reel in Cash*; Conn, *The Possible Dream*; Butterfield, *Amway*; Wallace, *Soap and Hope Investigation of the Amway Corporation*. This never came to be because of the downfall of PTL and Bakker. Don Hardister was the original source for this story in the Washington Post. He, however, claimed that the Washington Post mistook what he said when he described the proposed relationship. This would have led to an unofficial position for Bakker, not an official cabinet position as Hardister believed the paper insinuated. He also made a similar claim, after significant pressure from Washington (as he told me), in a Washington Post article in December of 1988. See "Spokesman Denies Bush Talked of Administration Spot With TV Preacher Jim Bakker," *The Associated Press*, December 19, 1988.

⁴⁰⁷*Heritage Herald*, November 24-December 7, 1984; While taxes come up when the students are asked who they would vote for, the issues of abortion and school prayer also came up in the section when they were asked if they approved of his job so far.

⁴⁰⁸On Reagan see *Heritage Herald*, November 24-December 7, 1984; Another important connection was Doug Wead who was Yager's public relations advisor and friend of Bakker's while writing campaign material for the Republican Party; much of this same material was distributed at Amway functions whose members were closely tied to PTL. He was a charismatic Christian and a Republican candidate who became the religious advisor to George H.W. Bush and tutored George W. Bush on religious matters. Like many Charismatics he combined the free market ideology and social conservatism in his campaign material. See Documentary; Bill Minutaglio, *First Son: George W. Bush and the Bush Family Dynasty* (New York: Times Books, 1999), 212-240; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 374. Don Hardister, interview with author; "Bush Preaches Politics on N.C. Visit," *Charlotte Observer*, November 9, 1985; Although the original story about the relationship between Bush and Bakker claimed that Bakker and Bush proposed the possibility of a cabinet position. Another way Bakker became involved in politics was through his membership in the group American Coalition for Traditional Values, which distributed "Presidential Biblical Scorecards." In these scorecards Reagan unsurprisingly wins on all issues. He even gets high marks for a "balance budget" despite his record deficit budgets illustrating how ingrained these free market ideas had become in the conservative Christian movement. According to ACTV these were described as "traditional moral values." See *Detroit Free Press*, September 9, 1984; *Newsweek*, June 9, 1986, 107. For more on the role ACTV played in evolution of the Christian Right see Matthew C. Moen, *The Transformation of the Christian Right* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992); Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right*, 206.

⁴⁰⁹ While there has been very little scholarship on the Bakkers, two articles have been written about Heritage USA. The earliest article by Thomas O'Guinn and Russell Belk concentrated on how Heritage USA sanctified consumption and created a haven for conservative evangelicals. The authors argued that Heritage USA reflected the values of a conservative protestant culture that blended the endorsement of Christianity and consumption as part of a broader political agenda. Darren E. Green's 2008 article argued that Heritage USA did not reflect the values of an increasingly politicized religious right, but rather reflected the values of a growing evangelical subculture that clamored for opportunities to sanitize American culture, which they believed had become too raucous and immoral. In their view, these motivations signified that PTL was not part of an increasingly politicized religious right. Although both of these articles reflect many of the motivations of builders of Heritage USA, neither connects the park to Bakker's beliefs, nor the Charismatic movement nor Bakker's Sunbelt suburban base, and neither explores the implications of prosperity theology on the political and cultural landscape. Moreover, while O'Guinn and Belk argue that the park's celebration of consumer culture fits into the broader visions of the religious right's view of capitalism; it does not discuss the implications of these ideas. Heritage USA sanitized America. Newly discovered planning documents demonstrate that Bakker understood Heritage USA as both a refuge for Christians and an example of the type of world possible if more people followed his beliefs. These beliefs reflected his endorsement of social conservatism and his vision of a world where harmonious self-interest existed alongside a high consumption society. He presented an alternative to secular society which could serve the needs of all members without forcing people to make sacrifices. The park promised middle-class families a godly refuge from the dangers of American society in an environment that mirrored the exclusive suburbs of Orange County where he first developed these ideas. Belk, "Heaven on Earth: Consumption at Heritage Village, USA"; Darren E. Green, "Selling a "Disneyland for the Devout": Religious Marketing at Jim Bakker's Heritage USA," in *Shopping for Jesus: Faith in Marketing in the USA*, ed. Dominic Janes (Washington, DC: New Academia Pub., 2008), 151.

⁴¹⁰ Hanchett, *Sorting out the New South City*, 323.

⁴¹¹ Most of the people who lived in Fort Mill traveled by interstate to Charlotte for work.

⁴¹² Charles Sheppard, interview with author, Spring, 2008; Jenny Overman, interview with author, Spring, 2008; Louise Pettus. 1987. *The Springs Story*, Springs Industries, Fort Mill, SC. Lynn Willoughby, *The "Good Town" Does Well: Rock Hill, S.C., 1852-2002* (Orangeburg, SC: 2002); Hanchett, *Sorting out the New South City*. On the relationship between highway growth and the development of North Carolina see Luebke, *Tar Heel Politics*.

⁴¹³ Jim Bakker, Trial Testimony, 1597-1720. Bakker continued to buy land as Heritage grew until he owned over four square miles.

⁴¹⁴ Richard E. Foglesong, *Married to the Mouse: Walt Disney World and Orlando* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

⁴¹⁵ Roe Messner, Trial Testimony, 816-889; Designer's Trial Testimony; Bakker Trial Testimony, 1720-1800; Bakker, *Unpublished Audio Interview*. "Biggest Bargain Family Vacation in Dixieland," *The Saturday Evening Post*, May/June, 1982.

⁴¹⁶ Designer's Trial Testimony; Bakker Trial Testimony, 1720-1800; *Heritage Herald*, April, 1984; *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled May-June, 1986)

⁴¹⁷ Bakker, Trial Testimony, 1720-1800; Don Hardister, interview with author, Spring, 2008; William E. Schmidt, "TV Minister Calls His Resort 'Bait' for Christianity," *New York Times*, December 24, 1985.

⁴¹⁸ Bakker, Trial Testimony, 1720-1800; "The PTL Club," December 11-16, 1986.

⁴¹⁹ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 236-240. Bakker Trial Testimony, 1720-1800.

⁴²⁰ Jim Bakker, Trial Transcript, 1729-40; Tidwell, *Anatomy of a Fraud: Inside the Finances of the PTL Ministries*, 21-82.

⁴²¹ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 235-256.; Jim Bakker, Trial Transcript, 1730-1740.

⁴²² *Charlotte Observer*, January 25, 1987; "Evangelism and Wave Pools at High-Tech Retreat," *Miami Herald*, July 25, 1985; Jeffrey K. Hadden and Anson D. Shupe, *Televangelism, Power, and Politics on God's Frontier* (New York: H. Holt, 1988); Schultze, *Televangelism and American Culture: The Business of Popular Religion*, 67; Martz and Carroll, *Ministry of Greed: The inside Story of the Televangelists and Their Holy Wars*, 46. Don Hardister, Interview with Author, Spring, 2010.

⁴²³ Schmidt, *TV Minister Calls His Resort 'Bait' for Christianity*. Bakker and Gross, *Son of a Preacher Man: My Search for Grace in the Shadows*, 22. Jeff Park who was with Bakker through the entire duration of

Heritage USA and published its newsletter and ran the PTL's charity acknowledged that Bakker's emphasis on prosperity grew as the park expanded; Jeff Park, interview with author, Spring, 2009. Bakker also alludes to this throughout his recollections. See Bakker and Abraham, *I Was Wrong*; Bakker and Abraham, *Prosperity and the Coming Apocalypse*.

⁴²⁴ *Heritage Herald*, Nov-Dec, 1984, 5; Ken, interview with the author, spring, 2010.

⁴²⁵ "Bargain Family Vacation in Dixieland," *The Saturday Evening Post*, May/June, 1982. Bakker and Park, *Eight Keys to Success*, 66-70.

⁴²⁶ *Heritage Herald*, November, 1986.

⁴²⁷ Ruth, interview with author, Spring, 2008; *Heritage Herald*, June, 1987; P. J. O'Rourke, *Holidays in Hell* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1988), 95-96.

⁴²⁸ *Heritage Herald*, June 1987; The "PTL Club," August 20, 1984; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 132. For other observers that noted this emphasis on positivity, see Belk, "Heaven on Earth: Consumption at Heritage Village, USA"; Mitchell, *Biggest Bargain Family Vacation in Dixieland*.

⁴²⁹ Lienesch, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right*, 113.

⁴³⁰ Belk, "Heaven on Earth: Consumption at Heritage Village, USA".

⁴³¹ Lienesch, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right*, 113.

⁴³² PTL Documents, "General Section," (In author's possession).

⁴³³ PTL Documents, "General Section."

⁴³⁴ PTL Documents, "General Section."

⁴³⁵ Rosenfield, Megan, "Heritage USA and the Heavenly Vacation; South Carolina Theme Park Caters to Born-Again Christians," *Washington Post*, June 15, 1986; Green, *Selling a "Disneyland for the Devout": Religious Marketing at Jim Bakker's Heritage USA*, 151.

⁴³⁶ Belk, "Heaven on Earth: Consumption at Heritage Village, USA". *Heritage Herald*, June, 1987.

⁴³⁷ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled November, 10/4-10/5, 1985)

⁴³⁸ Interestingly like other portions of the park the ice cream parlor mixed images and decor of Victorian America with a 1950s style soda fountain and described it as authentic; *Heritage Herald*, Nov-Dec, 1984, 5; Belk, "Heaven on Earth: Consumption at Heritage Village, USA"; Antony Thomas, *Thy Kingdom Come* (Roxie Cinema). Rosenfield, Megan, "Heritage USA and the Heavenly Vacation; "South Carolina Theme Park Caters to Born-Again Christians," *Washington Post*, June 15, 1986.

⁴³⁹ This was made evident in my interviews of PTL members. This was also highlighted through the trial transcripts. Their experiences will be detailed more fully in the following chapter. Heritage was the first major water park in South Carolina to have a wave pool and large waterslides. They helped the state develop many standards for future parks.

⁴⁴⁰ This part of Heritage was still under construction when it went under. The collapse put an end to the plans for some of the Victorian homes and the Crystal Palace although much of the Farm Village had been built. For a detailed description of Bakker's future plans see Jim Bakker, Trial Transcript, 1600-1757. For a discussion on how the movement romanticized robber barons see Lienesch, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right*, 119-132.

⁴⁴¹ Jim Bakker, Trial Transcript, 1600-1757; PTL Documents, "General Section."

⁴⁴² Bakker even planned to offer housing for people who would become permanent shop owners in his artificial village; ⁴⁴² PTL Documents, "General Section."

⁴⁴³ Bakker, *The Best of the PTL Club*; Schuller, *My Journey: From an Iowa Farm to a Cathedral of Dreams*.

⁴⁴⁴ Bakker, *Unpublished Audio Interview*. The PTL Club, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 8/18/1986-8/22/1986); Don Hardister, interview with author, July 2008; Bakker during their peak season claimed to have over 30 thousand people on the grounds at one time, but routinely exaggerated these numbers. See Miles, *Don't Call Me Brother: A Ringmaster's Escape from the Pentecostal Church*, 250. Yager planned to hold his Amway conventions there because Charlotte's auditorium was becoming too small for his needs. Although it was never completed, the cathedral would have been the largest church in America, able to seat more than 30,000 people.

⁴⁴⁵ Hart, *That Old-Time Religion in Modern America: Evangelical Protestantism in the Twentieth Century*, 87; Kopkind, *Jim Bakker's Lost America*, 175-183. For more on the followers of PTL see chapter 8.

⁴⁴⁶ PTL Documents, "General Section"; Bakker and Abraham, *Prosperity and the Coming Apocalypse*, 7-9.

⁴⁴⁷ *Heritage Herald*, November, 1986, newsletter (in author's possession).

⁴⁴⁸ Joyce Scarborough, Trial Transcript, 1553;

⁴⁴⁹ Lynn, interview with author, Spring, 2008.

⁴⁵⁰ Betty Sacco, Trial Transcript, 657; "Evangelism and Wave Pools At High-Tech Retreat," *Miami Herald*, July 12, 1985; By 1985 PTL's suburbs population was 4,162 residents. See "PTL's Drive to Buy Land," *Charlotte Observer*, November 24, 1985.

⁴⁵¹ PTL Documents, General Section; For a discussion on the relationship of the Sunbelt suburbs to the backlash see McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*; Kruse and Sugrue, *The New Suburban History*; Kruse and Sugrue, *The New Suburban History*; Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*.

⁴⁵² Bakker discussed social issues on his show and in his publications, but when discussing why the 1960s represented the downfall of America, he chose not to mention any of them; although they could have been seen as an outgrowth of what he described as excessive individualism which was a language similar to pro-life activists. See Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*.

⁴⁵³ DeVos and Conn, *Believe!*, 44-72.

⁴⁵⁴ Lynn, interview with author, Spring, 2008.

⁴⁵⁵ Don Hardister, interview with author, July, 2008; Jim Bakker, Trial Transcript, 1640-1700.

⁴⁵⁶ Ruth, interview with author, Spring, 2008.

⁴⁵⁷ Bakker, *Unpublished Audio Interview*. *Heritage Herald*, November 24, 1984.

⁴⁵⁸ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: 4/7-4/11, 1986).

⁴⁵⁹ While there were critics like Hank Hanegraaff, their opposition was increasingly falling on deaf ears. This was evident in *Charisma Magazine's* discussions of his book which dismissed it hastily. For Bakker's discussion on these connections see Bakker and Abraham, *I Was Wrong*, 8. See "Is Christianity being Seduced," *Charisma Magazine*, March, 1986, 32-34. Also see Sara Diamond, *Not by Politics Alone: The Enduring Influence of the Christian Right* (New York: Guilford Press, 1998), 59-60.

⁴⁶⁰ Bakker and Abraham, *I Was Wrong*, 21; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 156-157. For more information on Gross and his program see Donald A. Eisner, *The Death of Psychotherapy: From Freud to Alien Abductions* (Westport, CN: Praeger, 2000), 168-174; Jorstad, *Popular Religion in America*. "Aetna Suit Alleges Major Billing Scam," *Los Angeles Times*, December, 10, 1995. Shepard, *Forgiven*, 196-198.

⁴⁶¹ The cult of domesticity is the glorification of separate spheres for men and women. It arose in the late nineteenth century and celebrated the home as the women's sphere. These ideas meshed with the Charismatic movement which had a large number of families with full-time mothers. See Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (1966); May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*; Coontz, *The Way We Never Were. The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 1985, 11/24-12-25); Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), 48-50; Hart, *That Old-Time Religion in Modern America: Evangelical Protestantism in the Twentieth Century*. Dating back to the 1960s, this vision of the American family had come into conflict with the therapeutic ideas that were popular within Charismatic circles and undergirded prosperity theology. In fact one of its outgrowth, which became known as the "human potential movement" saw all family ties as a threat to a person's self-realization and self-fulfillment. It was an idea that was supported by portions of the feminist movement who saw the cult of domesticity as constraining many women's personal happiness.

⁴⁶² Tammy Gloss, interview with author, Spring, 2008.

⁴⁶³ *Heritage Herald*, November 24, 1984.

⁴⁶⁴ Betty Haas, interview with author, Spring, 2008; *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 8/18/1986-8/22/1986); She was latter used on PTL advertisements to demonstrate the success of these programs. Griffith, *God's Daughters: Evangelical Women and the Power of Submission*, 32-56. For a discussion on these conservative gender ideals with the broader conservative movement see Donald G. Mathews and Jane Sherron De Hart, *Sex, Gender, and the Politics of Era: A State and the Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*; Jane J. Mansbridge, *Why We Lost the Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

⁴⁶⁵ Ruth Albert, interview with author, Spring, 2008.

⁴⁶⁶ Swaggart, for example, saw these programs as not-church related and part a broader culture of self-indulgence, see Bakker and Abraham, *I Was Wrong*; "Bakkers Are Less Deserving of Sympathy Than

Swaggart," *Columbus Dispatch*, November 20, 1989; Seaman, *Swaggart: An Unauthorized Biography of an American Evangelist*.

⁴⁶⁷ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 4/21-4/25, 1985); Bakker, *Unpublished Audio Interview*.

⁴⁶⁸ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 4/21-4/25, 1985);

⁴⁶⁹ Betty Sacco, Trial Testimony, 655.

⁴⁷⁰ *Heritage Herald*, May, 12-25, 1984;

⁴⁷¹ *Heritage Herald*, June, 12-25, 1985; Jeff Park, interview with author, Spring, 2010.

⁴⁷² *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled HVChurch, 1984); Sacco, Trial Transcript, 655; *Heritage Herald*, May, 12-25, 1984; *Heritage Herald*, November 24-December 7, 1984; Gertrude Williams, Trial Testimony, 1403.

⁴⁷³ Patrica Khulkin, interview with author, Spring, 2008; Patrica Khulkin, Trial Transcript, 2049-2055; Thomas, *Thy Kingdom Come*; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 415-420.

⁴⁷⁴ Reflecting these beliefs, most literature of the Christian right viewed lax and immoral lifestyles as the root of third-world poverty. See Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Lienesch, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right*. For a charismatic defense of these beliefs see Vinson Synan, *An Eyewitness Remembers the Century of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen, 2010).

⁴⁷⁵ For a list of countries where PTL broadcasted see *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 3/19/1985). Also see *Together Magazine*, January/February, 1984, newsletter (in author's possession)

and *Heritage Herald*, November, 1986. Shepard, *Forgiven*, 90-116.

⁴⁷⁶ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 269.

⁴⁷⁷ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled Nov. 5, 1986). Bakker also told this same story privately to Charles Sheppard. See PBS, *Praise the Lord*.

⁴⁷⁸ *The PTL Club*, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled Nov. 5, 1986);

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid*.

⁴⁸⁰ Bakker effectiveness of using this method to deflect criticism was evidenced by his attendance numbers that continued to rise despite the allegations that were being reported in the 1986. See *Time*, June 8, 1987; *Charlotte Observer*, October 13, 1985.

⁴⁸¹ While many reporters liked Bakker, they were driven to investigate deeper because Bakker continually misled and lied to them when they asked questions about money and finances at Heritage USA. For the paper, it was a clear-cut story of abuse of power, which they believed was their duty to expose. This focus on abuse of power actually led the paper to waver on printing the stories of sexual indiscretions because some believed it had little to do with their broader focus on exposing Bakker's misuse of funds. As one reporter declared, "A huckster is a huckster whether he is minister or not." James, *Smile Pretty and Say Jesus*, 64-66.

⁴⁸² O'Rourke, *Holidays in Hell*, 95. Also see Jean Seligmann, "The Inimitable Tammy Faye," *Newsweek*, June 8, 1987, 69. It was also evident in Frank Zappa's song "Jim and Tammy's Upper Room" where he mocks PTL followers and describes them as "riff-raff." For Bakker's view of the popular culture interpretations see Bakker and Abraham, *I Was Wrong*, 535.

⁴⁸³ For a discussion of the demographics of the Charismatic movement also see Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*.

⁴⁸⁴ Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics II*, 72.

⁴⁸⁵ Yankelovich, *New Rules, Searching for Self-Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down*; Binkley, *Getting Loose*, 63; Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991).

⁴⁸⁶ McCandlish Philips, "Glossolalia Wins New Adherents," *New York Times*, May 17, 1964; Bradfield, *Neo-Pentecostalism*.

⁴⁸⁷ Tidwell, *Anatomy of a Fraud: Inside the Finances of the PTL Ministries*, 45. Due to an electronic failure the exact dates of the interviews were lost. The transcripts, however, were saved. Therefore, the interview dates will be cited broadly.

⁴⁸⁸ Evelyln, interview with the author, Spring, 2008.

⁴⁸⁹ Evlyn.

⁴⁹⁰ Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics II*, 191.

⁴⁹¹ For some example of this see Trinity Magazine and FGBMI publications; also see Chapter three where I discuss the content of these magazines in more depth.

⁴⁹² Evlyn.

⁴⁹³ She used the word “life-long” but, being from Canada, this probably occurred after her move.

⁴⁹⁴ Susie Van Kirk, Humboldt County: A Briefest of Histories, May 1999, Humboldt County Library. Eureka Standard, April, 2006 "Eureka's Socialist Mayor" *On This Day in Arcata: From the Pages of the Arcata Union and the Arcata Eye*, (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Pub., 2008).

⁴⁹⁵ Evlyn.

⁴⁹⁶ Although some scholars have associated the strength of Prosperity Theology with the poverty, this was not the case for members of PTL and I grew in popularity as the movement became increasingly prosperous.

⁴⁹⁷ Garlene, interview with the author, Spring, 2008.

⁴⁹⁸ Turner, *Bill Bright & Campus Crusade for Christ: The Renewal of Evangelicalism in Postwar America*, 150-160&287; Quebedeaux, *I Found It!: The Story of Bill Bright and Campus Crusade*; Bright, *Handbook of Concepts for Living*: , 329. Daren Dochuk also discusses Bright and his promotion of prosperity theology. He, however, does not qualify his role to the 1970s. See Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*. Don Hardiester, Interview with the Author. Hardiester pointed out that they understood that wealthy members contributed much more financially to the ministry and bought more partnerships.

⁴⁹⁹ Barbara Ehrenreich, *Bright-Sided: How the Relentless Promotion of Positive Thinking Has Undermined America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2009).

⁵⁰⁰ Huber, *The American Idea of Success*, 285; Stearns, *American Cool: Constructing a Twentieth-Century Emotional Style*.

⁵⁰¹ For a discussion on these broader changes to middle class work life see Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society; a Venture in Social Forecasting* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); Juliet Schor, *The Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1991); Arlie Russell Hochschild, *The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1997); Neil Fligstien and Ofer Sharone, "Work in the Postindustrial Economy of California " *The State of California Labor* (2002).

⁵⁰² Garlene. Bradfield, *Neo-Pentecostalism*, 60.

⁵⁰³ Thomas J. Watson, *A Business and Its Beliefs; the Ideas That Helped Build Ibm* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), 50-57. Hochschild, *The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work*. Susan J. Matt, *Homesickness: An American History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 222.

⁵⁰⁴ Bill and Tammy, interview with the author, Spring, 2008.

⁵⁰⁵ Willoughby, *The "Good Town" Does Well: Rock Hill,S.C., 1852-2002*. Jenny Overman, interview with author, Spring, 2010; Charles Sheppard, interview with Author, Spring, 2010;

⁵⁰⁶ Although he did not explicitly include material blessings the interviewee did infer that these were part of God's promises to the faithful.

⁵⁰⁷ Bill and Tammy, Interview with the Author, Spring,2010; Willoughby, *The "Good Town" Does Well: Rock Hill,S.C., 1852-2002*. Charles Sheppard, interview with author, Spring, 2010.

⁵⁰⁸ Doty, interview with the author, Spring,2008; Bradfield, *Neo-Pentecostalism*.

⁵⁰⁹ E. Cawley, Interview with the author, Spring, 2008; There is an interesting paradox between the Cawleys and the wealthier members such as Garlene. Although both identified themselves as Charismatic, they had very disparate views on “social Christianity.” While Garlene believed social Christianity represented a false belief system, the Cawley’s viewed this as the most important role of the church.

⁵¹⁰ The importance of prosperity theology to their political worldview was also highlighted by their weak commitment to social issues. Although they opposed abortion, neither of them was passionate about the pro-life movement nor did they indicate it was central in determining their voting positions.

⁵¹¹ Betty, interview with the author, Spring, 2010.

⁵¹² Her story is most similar to Doty and the Cowley’s who turned to PTL after difficult life events.

⁵¹³ Some of this ambivalence was the outgrowth of Jim Bakker’s downfall. Many were skeptical about discussing their beliefs with outsiders, believing that outsiders simply wanted to ridicule the movement. In

this environment, while many supported the tenants of Prosperity Theology, they were hesitant to exclaim their commitment to me—especially at the beginning of the interviews.

⁵¹⁴ Eller, *Uneven Ground: Appalachia since 1945*, 25-30. Miller, Doris C. *A Centennial History of Huntington, W.Va., 1871--1971*. Warren, interview with the author, Spring, 2008.

⁵¹⁵ As he developed this association, interestingly, “abortion and school prayer are not big issues” to him.

⁵¹⁶ Nina Pulaski, interview with the author, Spring, 2008.

⁵¹⁷ See previous chapter on Heritage USA; These ideas were important to their political affiliations because they were not concerned about social issues such as school prayer and abortion.

⁵¹⁸ See previous chapter and Alexander, *Televangelism Reconsidered: Ritual in the Search for Human Community*.

⁵¹⁹ James Williams, interview with the author, Spring, 2008.

⁵²⁰ Bakker and Abraham, *I Was Wrong*, 352.

⁵²¹ These difficulties were acknowledged by Brad Koch who attempted to do a 2007 survey of these ideas soon after numerous prosperity theology ministers were brought before congress due to their economic malfeasance. He speculated that these events could have led people to mislead questioners about their beliefs due to embracement. This seems even more probable because most of the prosperity theology ministers have their audience within the Charismatic movement which is strongly conservative. Another problem was that many Charismatics do not like answering questions about politics upfront because they think it could sully their movement. Like Bakker, they do not like pigeonholing their movement in any general direction because they worry that it might make it less appealing to outsiders. Many even refuse to use the word evangelical and simply define themselves as Christians even though their beliefs clearly reflect membership in a distinct religious community. Koch, *The Prosperity Gospel and Economic Prosperity*.

⁵²² John, interview with the author, Spring, 2008.

⁵²³ It was a very similar story to that of Garlene. Both were also mobile people who turned to Christ after they became interested in business. Both were attracted to PTL’s therapeutic ideas. They both also came into the Charismatic movement through Campus Crusade for Christ. He also came to PTL while he was a successful businessperson and began watching PTL on his spare time while in the office.

⁵²⁴ Ken, interview with the author, Spring, 2008.

⁵²⁵ She shares the same first name as a previous interviewee. I used Evyln S. to distinguish.

⁵²⁶ Evlyn S., interview with the author, Spring, 2008; Brian, interview with author, Spring, 2008.

⁵²⁷ Shepard, *Forgiven*. Bakker and Abraham, *I Was Wrong*. Fenton Bailey, *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*.

Bakker and Gross, *Son of a Preacher Man: My Search for Grace in the Shadows*.

⁵²⁸ *Heritage Herald*, newsletter (in possession of author), January, 1984.

⁵²⁹ Douglas G. Jacobsen, *The World's Christians: Who They Are, Where They Are, and How They Got There* (Chichester, West Sussex; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 236. Also see *Together Digest*, Spring, 1986.

⁵³¹ “Elmer Gantry Lives,” *New York Times*, March 26, 1987. Robert Abelman and Stewart M. Hoover, *Religious Television: Controversies and Conclusions* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex Pub. Corp., 1990), 13-22.

⁵³² The one partial exception to these depictions was the Eurhythmic’s *The King and Queen of America* which subtly depicted the Bakker’s success not as a product of manipulation but by offering American’s a vision of progress that they identified with. “Bakker’s Punishment Is Fitting; PTL Swindles Came from the Top,” *Sun-Sentinel*, October 26, 1989; Shepard Charles E and Gary L. Wright, “Bakker Gets 45 Years - Ex-PTL Leader Fined \$500,000, Taken to Alabama Prison,” *Charlotte Observer*, October 25, 1989; M. Banks Adelle, “Spectators Part of the Show in Scramble at Bakker Trial,” *THE ORLANDO SENTINEL*, September 17, 1989. For an article that also points to the myopic nature of this narrative see, “Bakker Not Alone in Wrongdoing,” *Fayetteville Observer*, September 12, 1989.

⁵³³ Jean Seligmann, “*The Inimitable Tammy Faye*,” *Newsweek*, June 8, 1987, 69; Shepard, *Forgiven*.

⁵³⁴ Jeff Park, interview with author, Spring, 2008; Karl Garmager, trial testimony, 960.

⁵³⁵ Lynn Murray, interview with author, Spring, 2008; Many of these problems were confirmed by another parent who had a child at the school. Ken Holmes, interview with author, Spring, 2008.

⁵³⁶ Miles was Pentecostal minister who became a close ally with Bakker. His book highlights how he became immersed in Bakker's world of constant fundraising and immorality, and how he escaped. See Miles, *Don't Call Me Brother: A Ringmaster's Escape from the Pentecostal Church*.

⁵³⁷ She recalled that even to this day some of her friends who grew up at PTL still preach one way and act another. She believed this is the result of their learning while at Heritage USA that hypocrisy was normal. For an example of Bakker's discussions of PTL and drugs see "The PTL Club," 4/21-425, 1986; Jeff Park, Interview with author, Spring, 2008; Miles, *Don't Call Me Brother: A Ringmaster's Escape from the Pentecostal Church*, 262&251.

⁵³⁸ This was the second time they had been separated. They were first separated in 1977 when Tammy Faye left for Hawaii for a week but then decided to return to Jim. See Martz and Carroll, *Ministry of Greed: The Inside Story of the Televangelists and Their Holy Wars*, 75.

⁵³⁹ Although their behavior was not known to many, it had led parents within the local community to warn their children to stay away from the Bakker children because as one local girl recalled "they were trouble." Jenny Overman, interview with author, Summer, 2008.

⁵⁴⁰ Lynn Murray, interview with author, Spring, 2008; Mel White, interview with author, Spring, 2008; Thomas, *Thy Kingdom Come*; Miles, *Don't Call Me Brother: A Ringmaster's Escape from the Pentecostal Church*, 238. There is a debate on why the Bakkers' marriage fell apart. Many people recall Bakker no longer showing interest in women, leading him toward homosexual relationships. In their view, Bakker's personal discovery is why he began to become more accepting of homosexuality. Some believed that this attitude was reflected in Tammy Faye and Jay Bakker's advocacy for gay rights after PTL failed. They became some of the most outspoken advocates for gay rights within the evangelical community. Tammy Faye, for example, interviewed an openly gay man on PTL who had AIDS without condemning him. It was a stark contrast to the attitudes of almost every other major televangelist. These attitudes, moreover, were distributed throughout the PTL organization. As Mel White recalled, they "just thought it was not an important issue." While Falwell and a host of insiders repeated this narrative, Jim Bakker and his family and others patently deny this. They insist that the cause of this distance was Bakker's busy schedule. They also argue that the reason for the growing relationship between Jay, Tammy, and the gay community was the result of their alienation from the evangelical community who shunned them after PTL fell. In its place many people from the gay community embraced them, which led them to re-evaluate their beliefs about homosexuality, which had already been weakened by Tammy's interviews while at PTL. Austin Miles, for example, remembered "Hushed talk about 'the pretty boys' could be heard in many corners of the complex, especially in the executive offices. Miles, *Don't Call Me Brother: A Ringmaster's Escape from the Pentecostal Church*, 262-266; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 173. Mel White recalled Richard Dortch openly asking for help on how to deal with Bakker's lack of interest in women.

⁵⁴¹ Jeff Park, interview with author, Spring, 2008; Shepard, *Forgiven*.

⁵⁴² Shepard, *Forgiven*, 245-260&87. "Evangelists Divided Over Theology, *New York Times*, March, 28, 1987; Jimmy Swaggart was much less dependent on the charismatic community and was more representative of traditional Pentecostal beliefs. See Michael Bakker who discusses these motivations extensively at his trial. See Jim Bakker, Trial Testimony, 1600-1625.

⁵⁴³ Shepard, *Forgiven*, 415-421; Thomas, *Thy Kingdom Come*.

⁵⁴⁴ The PTL Club, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled 5/5-5, 1989). Bakker towards the end was raising money for projects and diverting to pay back other expenses on a regular basis. He, for example, raised \$74 million for the construction of "The Towers," which was a high-rise lodging facility but spent only \$14 million on its construction. It led some to label Bakker's enterprise as a sophisticated Ponzi scheme, see James, *Smile Pretty and Say Jesus*, 69.

⁵⁴⁵ Patricia McHale, interview with author, Spring, 2008.

⁵⁴⁶ The reaction by PTL to this growing problem seemed to change over time as it multiplied. At first, these people were put up in the back of the campground. Later on, they were given a one week stay and then a one night. Eventually, as McHale recalled, people were reporting being turned away at the gate if they did not have lodging for the evening. See Schmidt, William E., "TV Minister Calls His Resort 'Bait' for Christianity," *New York Times*, December, 25, 1985. Patricia McHale, interview with author, Spring, 2008; Don Hardister, interview with author, July, 2008. Jeff Park, the head of PTL's Charities, minimized these problems, indicating they were the outgrowth of a few of Bakker's overzealous promotions. Jeff Park,

interview with author, Spring, 2009. He also acknowledged that these issues arose after Bakker's obsession with building got out of hand.

⁵⁴⁷ Another problem she had with the People that Love Center was that she was being told by some people who had tried to go there that they were inquiring about whether or not the needy person had given their life to Christ before they were allowed to get goods. It is impossible to know if these stories were true. PTL, however, did depict this center as a way to turn people who were in need toward Christ and evangelized during their visit. See *Heritage Herald*, March 31, 1984; *Heritage Herald*, May 11, 1984; PTL claimed in 1984 that the center helped a total of 19,000 people a year and that 200 people came through the center inside the ground of Heritage every week. It is impossible to know if these numbers were accurate, given Jim Bakker's habit of fudging numbers and the fact the he had difficulty feeding the poor within the grounds and their director admitted money was hard to come by when Bakker started building. It seems, however, despite the fact that Bakker was already under economic duress, that he gave money to it when it was new and prominent on the PTL Club broadcast. He then, as Jeff Park illustrated, became even more fervent about building and, began to pull back funding in order to build more lodging and pull in more income. See *Heritage Herald*, October 27, 1984 for the early numbers. It is also interesting that Bakker no longer seemed to put in yearly numbers when advertising the center in the Herald after 1986. See for example *Heritage Herald*, November, 1986. Albert, *Jim Bakker: Miscarriage of Justice*, 34-36.

⁵⁴⁸ Patrica Khulkin, Trial Transcript, 2049-2063. Don Hardister indicated that PTL got stricter as the numbers of homeless people increased. Originally they were living in the campground; at another point they were given one week to stay. By 1985, as the New York times reported, homeless people were given a one-night stay before kicking them out and sent them on to the local shelters. See *New York Times*, December 24, 1985.

⁵⁴⁹ Ken Holmes, interview with author, Spring, 2008; Miles, *Don't Call Me Brother: A Ringmaster's Escape from the Pentecostal Church*, 251; Shepard, *Forgiven*, 155.

⁵⁵⁰ Ken Holmes, interview with author, Spring, 2008. Ken was hired around 1984 to fix ongoing budget problems. An attempt to reign in departments had happened unsuccessfully in 1981 as well when the Bakker hired budget director Porter Speakman and bought an IBM computer system to track expenses. Both times these people ran into trouble from the start. As Charles Sheppard illustrated, Bakker was a poor model for constraint and was constantly breaking the regulations and spent money how and where he wanted at the drop of a hat. Along with his unwillingness to confront his department heads, this made it difficult for him to reign in the separate departments; He also repeatedly scoffed at financial advice that he viewed as negative. One advisor recalled, after asking Bakker where the money would come from, Bakker snapped back saying "Financial people will never be visionaries." This attitude was yet another sign of how Bakker combined his prosperity theology with his financial decisions, leaving it up to God and his ability to raise funds to supply the funds for his visions while avoiding anything negative which he saw as connected to Satan. See Shepard, *Forgiven*, 196-200.

⁵⁵¹ See for example, "What TV Evangelists Need is Miniseries Robbing Peter to Pay Paul?," *Sun Sentinel*, March 26, 1987.

⁵⁵² "Evangelists Divided Over Theology," *New York Times*, March, 28, 1987; Seaman, *Swaggart: An Unauthorized Biography of an American Evangelist*, 269 (Shepard, 1989 #670. Shepard, *Forgiven*. On his audience see Martin E. Marty, R. Scott Appleby, and American Academy of Arts and Sciences., *Fundamentalisms and Society: Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Shepard, *Forgiven*, 425; Michael James Giuliano, *Thrice-Born: The Rhetorical Comeback of Jimmy Swaggart* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999), 49-53. For example, in 1982, he began to criticize the prosperity gospel movement by depicting the movement as an outgrowth of greed, not God's word. In particular, he warned people to stay away from a "husband and wife team," which was a clear reference to Jim and Tammy Bakker and Jan and Paul Crouch. Instead of emphasizing this message, his ministry emphasized traditional Pentecostalism's focus on condemning sin and worldly behavior.

⁵⁵³ Hahn had been a PTL member and then became a staff secretary for Jim Bakker. For more on the scandal see Richard N. Ostling, *TV's Unholy Row; A Sex and Money Scandal Tarnishes Electronic Evangelism*, *TIME*, April 6, 1987, 60.

⁵⁵⁴ Hayford was a Pentecostal minister from Van Nuys California where the Charismatic movement was born. See Jack W. Hayford, *Jack W. Hayford Jr.: A Spiritual Biography* (New York: Warner Faith, 2006). His ministry is Closely tied to that movement. He was preached prosperity and was close to many of the

leaders of this movement. For example, Jan and Paul Crouch and Pat Boone are elders of his Church. Also see <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/hayford/general.htm> Copeland has become one America's leading prosperity ministers and an important ally of the Republican Party. His ministry career started through a friendship with Oral Roberts. His ministry is headquartered in Newark, Texas. James, *Smile Pretty and Say Jesus*. John Stewart, *Holy War: An inside Account of the Battle for PTL* (Enid, OK: Fireside Pub. & Communications, 1987), 19-27.

⁵⁵⁵ Most of the media described these groups as the outgrowth of rivalries and friendship. Sheppard, however, in his book points out how it was connected to these minister's beliefs. See Shepard, *Forgiven*.

⁵⁵⁶ Shepard, *Forgiven*. According to a ghostwriter who worked for both Falwell and Bakker, Falwell was concerned with some of the Bakker's behavior, but believed that his main motivation during this time was Bakker's satellites, which he did not have. From the onset, he believed, Falwell saw Bakker's problems as an opportunity. Mel White, Interview with the author, Spring, 2009. For Falwell's interpretation see Jerry Falwell, *Strength for the Journey: An Autobiography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 402-446. For the Bakker's version see Bakker and Abraham, *I Was Wrong*; Fenton Bailey, *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*. For a discussion on the repercussions of the political shielding see PBS, *Frontline. Holy War, Holy Terror* (United States: WETA-TV, 1986). For a discussion on Bakker's affiliation with the Republican Party see Albert, *Jim Bakker: Miscarriage of Justice*.

⁵⁵⁷ March 1987 *Los Angeles Times* poll cited in Hadden and Shupe, *Televangelism, Power, and Politics on God's Frontier*. Shepard, *Forgiven*, 540-550.

⁵⁵⁸ Albert, *Jim Bakker: Miscarriage of Justice*, 12-27.

⁵⁵⁹ Albert, *Jim Bakker: Miscarriage of Justice*, 26.

⁵⁶⁰ Albert, *Jim Bakker: Miscarriage of Justice*, 10; Terry, *No Business Like Church Business*, 550-554; Tidwell, *Anatomy of a Fraud: Inside the Finances of the PTL Ministries*.

⁵⁶¹ Albert, *Jim Bakker: Miscarriage of Justice*, 190-192, 146. Jim Bakker, Trial Testimony, 1600-1640.

⁵⁶² See, for example, Louise Grimes, Trial Testimony, 1686-1692; Lochie Schuessler, Trial Testimony, 966-971.

⁵⁶³ Jim Bakker, Trial Testimony, 1600-1640.

⁵⁶⁴ Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986); Steve Bruce, Peter Kivisto, and William H. Swatos, *The Rapture of Politics: The Christian Right as the United States Approaches the Year 2000* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1995), 20-32; Arlene S. Skolnick, *Embattled Paradise: The American Family in an Age of Uncertainty* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), 184; Elin Woodger and David F. Burg, *The 1980s* (New York: Facts On File, 2006), 263. *Bakker Not Alone in Wrongdoing*.

⁵⁶⁵ This transformation occurred, according to Bakker, when he discovered poor people in Jail who had strong faith. He describes this transformation in Bakker and Abraham, *I Was Wrong*, 352. Also see "Jailed Bakker Renounces Gospel-of-Riches History," *Seattle Times*, September 11, 1992.

For his live announcement on his new show see

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klAqz1DEwnM&feature=player_embedded

⁵⁶⁶ Jacobsen, *The World's Christians*, 56-60.

⁵⁶⁷ Steve Brouwer, Paul Gifford, and Susan D. Rose, *Exporting the American Gospel: Global Christian Fundamentalism* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 27.

⁵⁶⁸ Jacobsen, *The World's Christians*, 236.

⁵⁶⁹ He, however, did run into legal troubles in countries across the globe. See Simon Coleman, *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 30; Garfield Ken, "For Many, That Feeling's Finally Back," *Charlotte Observer*, October 9, 1990; Linda Brown Douglas, "Cerullo Appeals for Money," *Charlotte Observer*, November 16, 1991, 1991; Ken Garfield, "Cerullo Gives Us a Chill," *Charlotte Observer*, December 19, 1990; Ken Garfield, "How Will Cerullo Lead?," *Charlotte Observer*, December 14, 1990; Garfield, *Uncle` Wants Part in Heritage`S Rebirth*.

⁵⁷⁰ They also symbolized the growth of the prosperity theology movement within the African American community. Shayne Lee argues that the message's is a means to cope with the contrast between their lives and the promises of American consumer society. The message help explains why they have not

succeeded and how they can succeed. Sarah Posner, *God's Profits: Faith, Fraud, and the Republican Crusade for Values Voters* (Washington, DC: PolipointPress, 2008), 16. BeBe was also a close friend with Whiney.

⁵⁷¹ Piers Morgan Don Lemon Soledad O'Brien, "Funeral for Whitney Houston," *CNN*, February 18, 2012; "Whitney Houston's Funeral Recap," *Nashville Examiner*, February 19, 2012; Darden Kathryn, "Gospel Music 101: Who Are Bebe & Cece Winans? Gospel Artists Bebe Winans and Cece Winans," *Nashville Examiner*, September 2, 2009; Brunson Rick, "Bebe, Cece Sing for Joy," *The Tampa Tribune*, September 6, 1991.

⁵⁷² Edward L. Cleary and Hannah W. Stewart-Gambino, *Power, Politics, and Pentecostals in Latin America* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997), 129; Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil*, 118; Virginia Garrard-Burnett and David Stoll, eds., *Rethinking Protestantism in Latin America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 70; Paul Freston, *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 18. Freestone notes that, although it did not disappear, the UCKG the demonization of the left died down significantly in the mid 1990s.

⁵⁷³ Ruthanne Garlock, *Fire in His Bones: The Story of Benson Idahosa* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1981); Kelechi Onyemaobi, *Benson Idahosa: A Pencil in God's Hand* (Lagos, Nigeria: Patrioni Books, 1995); Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 16-20. "Gospel Riches, Africa's rapid embrace of prosperity Pentecostalism provokes concern--and hope", *Christianity Today* 51, no. 23(2007).

⁵⁷⁴ The PTL Club, videorecording (in possession of author: labeled March 19,1985). Hong Young-gi, "The Backgrounds and Charictaristics of the Charismatic Mega-Churches in Korea," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 3, no. 1 (2000); Chung Soon Lee, "The Pentecostal Face of Korean Protestantism: A Critical Understanding," *Asia Journal of Theology* 20, no. 2 (2006). On Cho's biography and introduction to these ideas see Nell L. Kennedy, *Dream Your Way to Success: The Story of Dr. Yonggi Cho and Korea* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1980); Yong-gi Cho, *Salvation, Health & Prosperity: Our Threefold Blessings in Christ* (Altamonte Springs, FL: Creation House, 1987); Karen Hurston, *Growing the World's Largest Church* (Springfield, MO: Chrism, 1994).

⁵⁷⁵ Val Fortherby, *The Awakening Giant: The Miraculous Story of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International* (Marshall Pickering, 2000); Brouwer, Gifford, and Rose, *Exporting the American Gospel*, 28; Tallman, *Demos Shakarian: The Life, Legacy, and Vision of a Full Gospel Business Man*, 400-420.

⁵⁷⁶ Paul A. Djupe and Christopher P. Gilbert, *The Prophetic Pulpit: Clergy, Churches, and Communities in American Politics* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 185; John C. Green and James L. Guth, "The Christian Right in the Republican Party: The Case of Pat Robertson's Supporters," *The Journal of Politics* 50, no. 1 (1988); Stephen D. Johnson, Joseph B. Tamney, and Ronald Burton, "Pat Robertson: Who Supported His Candidacy for President?," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 28, no. 4 (1989).

⁵⁷⁷ Posner, *God's Profits: Faith, Fraud, and the Republican Crusade for Values Voters*, 171-172.

⁵⁷⁸ Marvin Harris, *Why Nothing Works: The Anthropology of Daily Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 145-150; Matthew T. Lee and Margaret M. Poloma, *A Sociological Study of the Great Commandment in Pentecostalism: The Practice of Godly Love as Benevolent Service* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009), 53-64.

⁵⁷⁹ Hanna Rosin, "Did Christianity Cause the Crash?," *Atlantic*, December, 2009.

⁵⁸⁰ Lee and Poloma, *A Sociological Study of the Great Commandment in Pentecostalism: The Practice of Godly Love as Benevolent Service*, 50-55; Alan Wolfe, *The Transformation of American Religion: How We Actually Live Our Faith* (New York: Free Press, 2003), 76.

⁵⁸¹ See Rhonda Byrne, *The Secret* (New York: Atria Books, 2006), 1-20.

⁵⁸² Rosin, *Did Christianity Cause the Crash*; Cathrine Bowler, "Wanted: Celebrity and the American Prosperity Preacher," *theotherjournal.com* (2010). <http://theotherjournal.com/2010/12/07/wanted-celebrity-and-the-american-prosperity-preacher/>; Peter Birkenhead, "Oprah's Ugly Secret," *Salon* 1, no. March 5 (2007). http://www.salon.com/life/feature/2007/03/05/the_secret.

⁵⁸³ Hochschild, *The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work*, 15-32; Schor, *The Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure*; Rothacker, *Banktown: The Rise and Struggles of Charlotte's Big Banks*, 215-223.

⁵⁸⁴ Mathew D. Lassiter, "The Bulldozer Revolution: Suburbs and Southern History since World War II"; Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*.

⁵⁸⁵ "George W. Bush, "Get Motivated," YouTube Recording (December 2, 2009), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wi9bgk6eBQ> (March 13, 2012).

⁵⁸⁶ Barbara Ehrenreich is a well-known social critic who has written extensively on the struggles of the American working class. On Jakes see Shayne Lee, *T.D. Jakes: America's New Preacher* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 75-79.; Paul Kengor, *God and George W. Bush: A Spiritual Life* (New York: ReganBooks, 2004), 132.; Stephen Mansfield, *The Faith of George W. Bush* (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2005).; Ehrenreich, *Bright-Sided: How the Relentless Promotion of Positive Thinking Has Undermined America*, 9-11..

⁵⁸⁷ Posner, *God's Profits: Faith, Fraud, and the Republican Crusade for Values Voters*; Critchlow, *The Conservative Ascendancy: How the GOP Right Made Political History*, 270-276. Pat Robertson also endorsed the Tea Party Movement—but not particular candidates—on his *700 Club*, one time declaring that "God sent the Tea Party to stop America from sliding into 'chaos.'" See

<http://www.rightwingwatch.org/content/robertson-tea-party-gods-answer>. Also see,

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQou2WNXtxQ> where Robertson and Reed discuss the Tea Party.

Reed declares he is "a big fan" and was close with many of the leaders of the movement who were strong Christians.

⁵⁸⁸ This organization was designed to be "a faith-based proponent of free-market economies worldwide." They were particularly interested in halting the growth of liberation theology. The DeVos family has been a big supporter of the Acton Institute, with Betsy DeVos previously serving on the Board of Directors and the DeVos family being the major donors to the think tank. Richard M. Mosey, *2030, the Coming Tumult: Unlimited Growth on a Finite Planet* (New York: Algora Pub., 2009), 160-1702; Acton Intitute for the Study of Religion and Liberty, ed. Sourcewatch, http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Acton_Institute. Jeff Smith, *The Acton Institute's War on the Poor*, The FUNdamentalist, May 1995.

⁵⁸⁹ By 2000 a majority of evangelicals believed in prosperity theology. These numbers are much higher among religious conservatives. Some have estimated that over three-quarters of the moment profess these ideas. Michael J. Graetz and Ian Shapiro, *Death by a Thousand Cuts: The Fight over Taxing Inherited Wealth* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 74-77. Richard J. Meagher, 2006, "Tax Revolt as a Family Value: How the Christian Right Is Becoming A Free Market Champion," *The Public Eye* magazine, (Winter), pp. 1, 8-14, http://www.publiceye.org/magazine/v21n1/meagher_tax_revolt.html

⁵⁹⁰ Crashing the Tea Party, *New York Times*, August 16, 2011; For the relationship between the Tea Party and the Religious Right see Ronald P. Formisano, *The Tea Party: A Brief History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 51-63.

⁵⁹¹ Posner, *God's Profits: Faith, Fraud, and the Republican Crusade for Values Voters*. Tevlin: Bachmann-Hammond: Just the ticket for our times, *Star Tribune*, September 27, 2011. Margaret M. Poloma and John Clifford Green, *The Assemblies of God: Godly Love and the Revitalization of American Pentecostalism* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 234; Neil J. Young, "Money, God and Greed: The Tea Party and Capitalism " (2011). http://www.huffingtonpost.com/neil-j-young/money-god-and-greed_b_857466.html.

⁵⁹² Heritage Village Chuch and Missionary Fellowship, *Jim and Tammy Bakker Present the Ministry of Heritage Village Church*, 19.

⁵⁹³ Pat Robertson, *Shout It from the Housetops Revised Edition* (Virginia Beach: Bridge Publications, 1986), 57.

⁵⁹⁴ Heritage Village Chuch and Missionary Fellowship, *Jim and Tammy Bakker Present the Ministry of Heritage Village Church*, 31.

⁵⁹⁵ Heritage Village Chuch and Missionary Fellowship, *Jim and Tammy Bakker Present the Ministry of Heritage Village Church*, 107.

⁵⁹⁶ Heritage Village Church and Missionary Fellowship, *Jim and Tammy Bakker Present the Ministry of Heritage Village Church*, 198.

⁵⁹⁷ Heritage Village Church and Missionary Fellowship, *Jim and Tammy Bakker Present the Ministry of Heritage Village Church*, 14.

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