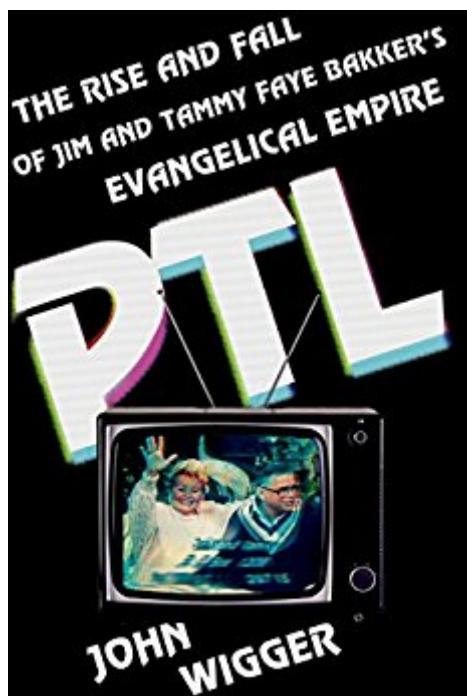


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PTL: The Rise And Fall Of Jim And Tammy Faye Bakker's Evangelical Empire



Synopsis

In 1974 Jim and Tammy Bakker launched their television show, the PTL Club, from a former furniture store in Charlotte, N.C. with half a dozen friends. By 1987 they stood at the center of a ministry empire that included their own satellite network, a 2300-acre theme park visited by six million people a year, and millions of adoring fans. The Bakkers led a life of conspicuous consumption perfectly aligned with the prosperity gospel they preached. They bought vacation homes, traveled first-class with an entourage and proclaimed that God wanted everyone to be healthy and wealthy. When it all fell apart, after revelations of a sex scandal and massive financial mismanagement, all of America watched more than two years of federal investigation and trial as Jim was eventually convicted on 24 counts of fraud and conspiracy. He would go on to serve five years in federal prison. PTL is more than just the spectacular story of the rise and fall of the Bakkers, John Wigger traces their lives from humble beginnings to wealth, fame, and eventual disgrace. At its core, PTL is the story of a group of people committed to religious innovation, who pushed the boundaries of evangelical religion's engagement with American culture. Drawing on trial transcripts, videotapes, newspaper articles, and interviews with key insiders, dissidents, and lawyers, Wigger reveals the power of religion to redirect American culture. This is the story of a grand vision gone wrong, of the power of big religion in American life and its limits.

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Customer Reviews

Very concise and detailed book on Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker rise to the top and their ultimate downfall with a very in-depth look at the PTL organization, the Bakkers and those that believed in them and their ministry. It takes the reader from the initial meeting of Jim and Tammy, building of the ministry, their life and the demise of the PTL. This book held my interest and I could not wait to pick up reading from where I left off. The book details many of the mis-deeds that transpired and it also gives y a good look at the people that were associated with Jim Bakker and PTL and how they dealt with him, and tried to do the best they could for the PTL organization. When I finished up with this book, that old saying came to my mind: "Pride goeth before the fall". Thanks to NetGalley, the author and the publisher for the ARC of this book in return for my honest review.

This is THE all-inclusive book for information on PTL, Jim, Tammy Faye, and all who surrounded them. Not only is the book full of so much research; it also entertaining. I found myself looking forward to reading more. I grew up in the Pentecostal church. I also took summer vacations to PTL. I remember my grandmother having a "You Can Make It," magnet on her fridge. I have already recommended it to friends in person and highly recommend it here. Thanks to the author and netgalley for allowing me to read the book in order to give my honest review.

This is by far one of the BEST books I have read about the PTL scandal. It explains in full detail all of the internal problems at PTL and what lead to it's downfall. A well written, thought provoking account that give new insight into the scandal and how the Bakkers lost everything. A MUST READ for anyone that either has followed the scandal or is curious about it.

One of the most interesting and detailed accounts of the rise and fall of PTL. This is a great book for anyone with an interest in religion, pop culture or business. The author provides an accurate and superbly in depth look at not only the personalities but also the business practices at PTL. Fascinating and impossible to put down.

This was a great read. Sure, it's full of scandal, intrigue, deception, and corruption, but it's surprising how fair the author is in his approach. Rather than simply charting their mistakes, the book also demonstrated what Jim and Tammy Faye did well. They became household names through vivacious personalities and creative innovations that tapped into emerging religious and cultural forces. In an odd way, their downfall was a symptom of that success as they got caught up in the allure of wealth and fame.

An intriguing book--and not just for the lurid details, but for the account of American culture in the 1970s and 1980s, and the place of the Bakkers in the history of American Evangelism. It seems pretty evident from the book that the author is an Evangelical too, who is wrestling with dealing with the consequences of his own beliefs.

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