



Pat Robertson hopes to use his millions of viewers as springboard to Presidency

son's Prison Fellowship to the Billy Graham Crusade—do report their finances to the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability. But none of the top 10 moneymakers belong to the council. Bakker's PTL pulled out after critics accused him of using PTL money to buy a Mercedes-Benz, a Rolls-Royce, a mountainside home in California, a houseboat and a mink coat for Tammy. Most of the big televangelists do belong to the National Religious Broadcasters, which now is tightening its accountability rules.

A contrast in outlays

Evidence suggests that the big television ministries direct fewer of their dollars to humanitarian and missionary programs than do the traditional churches. J. Marse Grant, editor emeritus of the *Biblical Recorder*, the journal of the North Carolina Baptist Convention, examined the operations of seven leading television personalities. Those preachers, he found, took in \$293 million in 1983 and together sponsored four churches, one hospital, five colleges and universities and seven weekly TV programs. In contrast, the Southern Baptist Convention that year received \$231 million in missions offerings. It supported 3,450 missionaries in 106 countries; 3,792 home missionaries; 438 chaplains in the military service, hospitals and business places; 67 colleges and universities; 1,100 ministers to students on 1,100 campuses; 32 weekly broadcast programs, and spent \$5 million for hunger and disaster relief.

Competition from televangelists is prompting numerous changes in mainstream denominations. The Southern Baptists now are in the TV business, using several million dollars in church funds to run a cable network known as the American Christian Television System (ACTS). Unlike other religious networks, it doesn't solicit funds on the air. The electronic preachers also have an impact on religious thought. "The fundamentalist and evangelical TV ministry is driving all of the churches to the theological right," argues Robert V. Smith, professor of philosophy and religion at Colgate University. "There was a time when the United Methodist Church was quite open on the issue of homosexuals. The door is now closing. There will no longer be the ordaining of an avowed homosexual." Taped music lifts spirits in Baptist congregations. Episcopal churches offer healing services. Says Calvin College's Schultze: "There is a changing notion of what is true faith and what is true worship."

But some religious leaders are convinced that the importance of television

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FALWELL



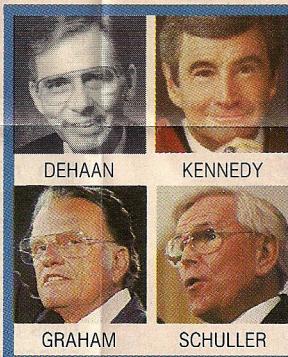
BAKKER

PRICE

ROBERTS

SWAGGART

ROBERTSON



DEHAAN

KENNEDY

GRAHAM

SCHULLER

■ Evangelicals Conservative Protestants who profess a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, view the Bible as the only authoritative basis for faith and Christian living and emphasize the winning of new converts to Christianity. In all, there are some 50 million in the United States.

■ Fundamentalists A conservative branch of evangelicals who tend to shun involvement with other church groups and who particularly stress the doctrine of the Bible as the literal and unerring word of God.

■ Charismatics Evangelical Christians who adhere to Pentecostal traditions emphasizing the need for a postconversion "baptism in the Spirit"—an experience evidenced by "speaking in tongues" or episodes of ecstatic, unintelligible utterances.

Fundamentalist

Jerry Falwell

Charismatics

Jim Bakker
Frederick Price
Oral Roberts
Jimmy Swaggart
Pat Robertson

Other Evangelicals

Richard DeHaan
D. James Kennedy
Billy Graham
Robert Schuller

preachers is overestimated. "The strength of the evangelical movement does not rest on one or two TV programs," says the Rev. Billy Melton, executive director of the National Association of Evangelicals. "It rests on denominations and churches that have history, doctrines, order, accountability and structure."

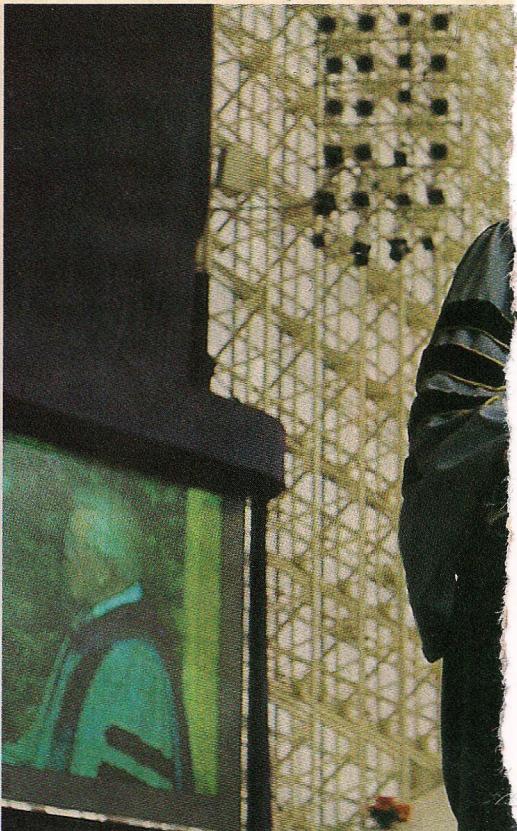
The political scene

Few deny the growing impact of televangelism on politics. Little more than a decade ago, fundamentalists and evangelicals were considered "apolitical," having sat out the civil rights, antiwar and antipoverty movements of the 1960s and early '70s. Falwell, in a 1965 sermon entitled "Ministers and Marches," declared: "Nowhere are we commissioned to reform the externals [of society]." In this decade, the "religious right" is an everyday term, a continuing source of support for Ronald Reagan and a still-to-be-determined factor in next year's White House race.

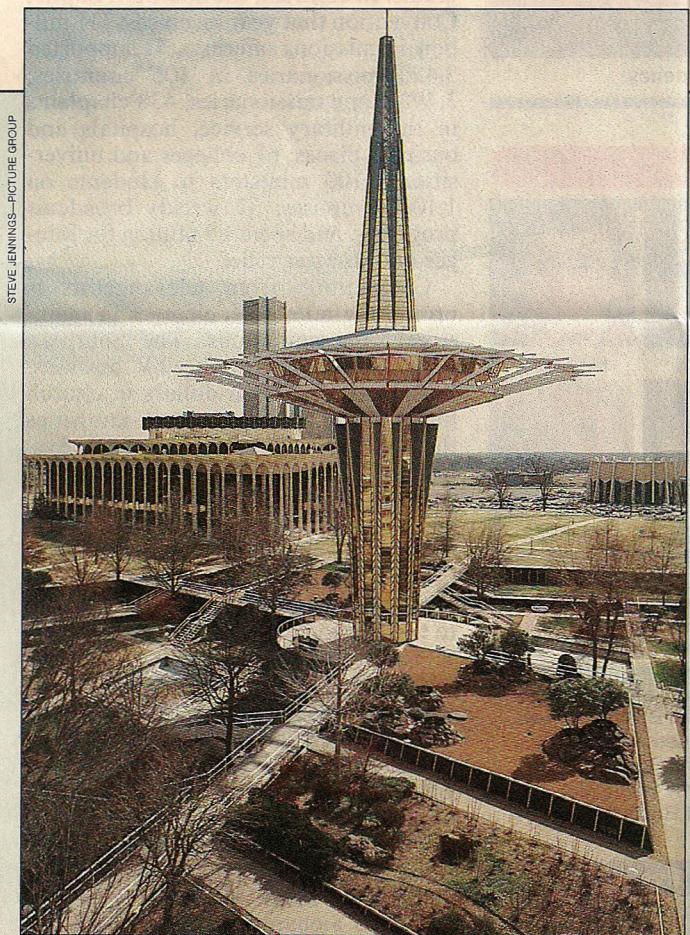
Organizers for Pat Robertson gamely declare that the strife over television preachers hasn't altered his presidential

campaign. "Pat has been labeled a TV evangelist, but he's not," says his communications director, Connie Stapp. "He hasn't been a pulpit preacher for 25 years. He's a religious broadcaster, a businessman, a newscaster. There is a subtle difference." As many as one third of the delegates to next year's Republican national convention may be religious conservatives of various denominations. But that doesn't mean automatic support for Robertson. Instead, the Christian conservatives appear united more by issues than by candidates. In a recent *Atlanta Journal* and *Constitution* poll of 2,000 likely Republican voters in a dozen Southern states, 3 of every 4 favored a constitutional amendment authorizing public-school prayers. But 69 percent said that they would not even consider voting for Robertson in next March's Super Tuesday Southern primary.

Hardly any political pro gives Robertson a chance of winning the nomination, but many admire his style. "Pat is not a Jesse Jackson," says one. "He comes across 'cool' on TV, which is a cool medium. Swaggart and Bakker



Robert Schuller dispenses optimistic messages



The prayer tower, focal point of the Oral Roberts University campus in Tulsa, Okla.

STEVE JENNINGS—PICTURE GROUP

WHO THEY ARE, HOW THEY OPERATE

The electronic church

■ **JIM BAKKER**, 47, Fort Mill, S.C. Former chairman and host of the PTL ("Praise the Lord") television ministry, which grossed \$129 million in 1986. Resigned post and Assemblies of God ministry this month in sex scandal. His Merv Griffin-style talk show was broadcast on 180 stations to hundreds of thousands of homes. The PTL network is also carried by cable to 13 million homes. The 2,300-acre, \$172 million Heritage USA complex includes a Biblical theme park, visited by 6 million people last year, just behind Walt Disney World and Disneyland.

■ **JIMMY SWAGGART**, 52, Baton Rouge, La. A cousin of rock-and-roller Jerry Lee Lewis, Swaggart is an old-fashioned revivalist whose organization took in \$142 million last year. His empire: Two TV shows that reach a national audience of 9 million, including

cable, a 1,000-student Bible college, a 7,000-seat church. Has attacked Roman Catholicism, derides Bakker's "PTL Club" as "soap opera." Denies charges he sought to expose Bakker's sex scandal or conspired against defrocked minister Marvin Gorman, who filed a \$90 million suit against him and the Assemblies of God denomination for forcing Gorman from the ministry in another sex scandal.

■ **JERRY FALWELL**, 53, Lynchburg, Va. Although he stepped in this month to run the PTL organization, his Baptist fundamentalism is at odds with the charismatics in Bakker's following. He runs a \$100 million empire, including "The Old Time Gospel Hour" (carried by about 190 TV stations plus cable networks), Liberty University, the Thomas Road Baptist Church and the Liberty Federation (for-