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ABSTRACT

Since the advent of cable television in the early seventies, the success of television evangelists including Oral Roberts, Jim Bakker, Robert Schuller, and Jimmy Swaggart has grown, both in terms of finances and in conversion of souls. Although many television preachers use similar strategies for getting donations, their backgrounds and messages are largely different. These preachers can be classified as evangelicals, fundamentalists, Pentecostals, or charismatics. Jimmy Swaggart, the television evangelist with the strongest following in America is, in religious terms, a charismatic, or neo-Pentecostal leader. When analyzed according to Max Weber's definitions of political leadership, Swaggart's leadership style is also charismatic. An analysis of three of Swaggart's speeches using Theodore Windt's characteristics of political leadership gives further insight into Swaggart's charisma. In Windt's analysis, charismatic leaders: (1) possess unique gifts that other men do not share; (2) are perceived as extraordinary; (3) arise in times of turmoil; (4) are part of a messianic movement; and (5) are part of a movement that contains contradictions that only faith in a leader can resolve. Swaggart's rhetoric contains many examples of all but the final of Windt's characteristics. This calls into question the idea that contradiction is an important aspect of charisma. (ARH)

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CHARISMA AND CHRISTIANITY  
IS JIMMY LEE SWAGGART A CYNIC?

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It is too early, it seems to me, to send the firemen home. The fire is still burning on many a far-flung hill, and it may begin to roar again at any moment.... Heave an egg out of a Pullman window and you will hit a Fundamentalist almost anywhere in the United States today. They swarm in the country towns.... They are thick in the mean streets behind the glassworks. They are everywhere that learning is too heavy a burden for mortal minds.

H. L. Mencken

### TELEVISION PREACHERS

A quick glance at the popular magazines shows that television preachers, such as Oral Roberts, Jerry Falwell, Robert Schuller, and Jimmy Swaggart, are doing quite well, both in the financial and the conversion of souls departments. Since the advent of cable television in the early seventies, these preachers' ministries have grown from tent shows to multi-million dollar businesses.

#### Grabbing the Money:

Tactics for receiving donations (mostly from older, retired women) have also become more complicated. For example, Oral Roberts has tried many unique strategies and found great success. One strategy is to send a gift on a regular basis, so that the "partner" will feel obligated to at least "cover the cost" of the item. Oral has sent prayer cloths that contain a print of his magic, healing hand. He has sent tiny bags of cement, so that partners can send it back, with a donation, and mix their cement with other partners--symbolizing "cooperative faith" when constructing new buildings.<sup>1</sup> Another tactic that Roberts uses

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<sup>1</sup>Gardner, Martin. "Giving God a Hand," The New York Review of Books. Vol. 34, No. 13, August 13, 1987, pp. 17-23.

is "seed-faith." This principle suggests that if you give money-- only to Oral Roberts--God will multiply your investment and you will receive many times over your initial contribution. It seems as though Oral has found a way to help his partners find salvation and become rich at the same time.

#### Preachings:

Although many of these television preachers use similar strategies for getting donations their backgrounds and messages are largely different. For example, Roberts emphasizes the "healing" power of faith in Jesus. This means that Oral can cure cancer, sore arms, headaches, and a host of other ailments by "rebuking the devil" and "praying to God." Robert Schuller, on the other hand, cares about "positive" or "possibility" thinking. Here, members are told that if they keep a positive outlook on life, they can overcome their problems.

#### Evangelicals, Fundamentalists, Pentecostals, and Charismatics:

These preachers and the messages they preach can be classified into four groups: Evangelicals, fundamentalists, Pentecostals, and Charismatics. Evangelicals are born-again Protestants who "stress conservative doctrine and morality, a traditional or even literal interpretation of the Bible, missionizing, and individual commitments to Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup> Preachers from most main line Protestant denominations (e.g., Baptist) fall into this category. Fundamentalists are militant evangelicals, who regard the Bible as free of all error (e.g.,

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<sup>2</sup>"TV's Unholy Row: A Sex-and-money scandal tarnishes electronic evangelism," Time. April 6, 1987, Vol. 129, pp. 60.

Jerry Falwell). Pentecostals are fundamentalists, "who believe that the gifts of the Pentecost (Acts 2) were given for all time,"<sup>3</sup> not just a few days. "On the Pentecost (Greek for fifty), which occurred fifty days after the Resurrection, the Holy Ghost descended on Jesus' disciples, taking the tongues of fire."<sup>4</sup> Pentecostals, such as Jimmy Swaggart, believe and use this gift of tongues, or glossolalia, which sounds like nonsense syllables strung together. Linguists, who have studied tongue speaking, "find nothing the tongues have in common except the sounds and rhythms of a natural language."<sup>5</sup> However, if you attend a Pentecostal service you are likely to hear one person speak in tongues, followed by another person with the "gift of interpretation" who will explain what has just been said. The final group of television evangelists are the Charismatics. "Charismatics, sometimes called neo-Pentecostals, are evangelicals, not necessarily fundamentalists, who accept the gifts of faith healing and tongues."<sup>6</sup> In other words, Charismatics, such as Oral Roberts, are preachers of "Pentecostal-style faith within non-Pentecostal denominations."<sup>7</sup> Even some Catholics and Episcopalians are members of this group.

Top Dog:

Among these television evangelists, only one has been called the "the most effective speaker in the country" by Dan Rather.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., "Giving God a Hand."

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., "TV's Unholy Row."

<sup>8</sup>Current Biography, October 1987, p. 51.

Only one has consistently condemned secular and religious conventions. And, only one claims that the "polity and structure of Catholicism" is derived from "Satanic practices in Babylonian paganism."<sup>9</sup> That one preacher is Jimmy Lee Swaggart, cousin to Jerry Lee Lewis and Mickey Gilley. That one preacher has also developed the strongest following in America, with donations coming in at over \$140 million per year. And that one preacher has come under fierce attack by some critics, who claim his preachings and style are strongly persuasive.<sup>10</sup>

Is Swaggart as calculated as his critics claim? Does he have a rhetorical strategy? Why does he condemn other religions and practices, even the ones that are extremely similar to his? Is he an outsider? These questions will help guide the remainder of this essay. To begin to find answers, I shall use a method of critiquing three of Jimmy Swaggart recent speeches (i.e., broadcasted in the month of November, 1987) that is based on the separate works of Weber and Windt. Weber discusses three unique types of political leadership (traditional, bureaucratic, and charismatic) and shows that people follow these leaders for different reasons. After I provide a brief summary of these leadership styles, I shall then use Windt's work that develops the

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<sup>9</sup>Stahel, Thomas. "Opinion," America. April 11, 1987. p. 293.

<sup>10</sup>See, for example, "In Sight: Back-Handed Endorsement," America. January 3, 1987, Vol. 156, p. 2. "Swaggart Column Nixed," The Christian Century. June 17-24, 1987, Vol. 104, p. 552. "Hall of Infamy," The Christian Century. February 25, 1987, p. 185. Lacefield, Patrick. "Swaggart Swings Through El Salvador: Saving Souls and Casting Out Demons," Commonweal. May 8, 1987, p. 279. And, Garvey, John. "Truth Flashes: What's Right about Jimmy Swaggart," Commonweal. December 26, 1986, p. 677-678.

characteristics and rhetorical strategies of charismatic leaders. Even though Weber and Windt's works concern political leadership, the theory can help explain how and why Jimmy Swaggart speaks as he does.

#### MAX WEBER ON LEADERSHIP

To begin to develop a critical method, it is best to first examine the work of Max Weber, who is famous for suggesting the three types of leadership: traditional, bureaucratic or legal, and charismatic.

##### Traditional:

Traditional leadership is "best exemplified by royalty, wherein a single family or class passes authority to rule from generation to generation."<sup>11</sup> Weber argues that "obedience is owed to the person of the chief who occupies the traditionally sanctioned position of authority and who is (within its sphere) bound by tradition."<sup>12</sup> Further, the "obligation of obedience is not based on the impersonal order, but is a matter of personal loyalty within the area of accustomed obligations."<sup>13</sup> In other words, the traditional leader is successful because followers believe that he has the "divine right" to lead.

##### Bureaucratic:

Within the bureaucratic or legal leadership style, the person in the "office" has the authority. There are established rules which the leader is expected to know and enforce. Here,

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<sup>11</sup>Windt, Theodore. "The Rhetoric of Charismatic Leaders," Speech Communication Association of Pennsylvania. October, 1971.

<sup>12</sup>Weber, Max. The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations. 1947, p. 328.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

"obedience is owed to the legally established impersonal order. It extends to the persons exercising the authority of office under it only by virtue of the formal legality of their commands and only within the scope of authority of the office."<sup>14</sup> In other words, the bureaucratic leader "rationally" follows the "written" rules when he governs.

#### Charismatic:

The final type of leadership that Weber discusses is charismatic, derived from the word "charisma" (the gift of grace). Weber states, "it is the charismatically qualified leader as such who is obeyed by virtue of personal trust in him and his revelation, his heroism or his exemplary qualities so far as they fall within the scope of the individual's belief in his charisma."<sup>15</sup> Charisma is a "value-neutral" term which means that you do not have to be liked to be charismatic,<sup>16</sup> rather you have to be believed as "the way to salvation" by your followers. This type of leader is clearly an outsider, when compared to the traditional and bureaucratic leaders.

### **SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CHARISMA**

#### **APPLIED TO JIMMY SWAGGART**

Windt has identified five specific characteristics of charisma and applied these characteristics to political leadership. After I provide a brief description of the theory, I

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., Weber.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Tucker, Robert. "The Theory of Charismatic Leadership," Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences--Philosophers and Kings: Studies in Leadership. (Daedalus) Summer, 1968, p. 735.



shall then discuss how Swaggart's rhetoric applies to these characteristics.

The charismatic leader is one who possesses unique gifts that other men do not share.

As Windt states, these gifts are gifts that:

sets a person apart from other men and causes him to be treated as one "endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or ... specifically exceptional powers or qualities." He is a unique human being, often a mystic who performs acts that other men cannot or who has a sense of destiny others can devote their lives to. He is a peculiar product of our secular, anti-mystical society.<sup>17</sup>

An example of a political leader who possessed this trait is Robert Kennedy, who went into the gettoes of Indianapolis after Dr. King was assassinated and convinced an audience not to use violence. No other man running for the Presidency could have accomplished this.

Much of Swaggart's influence comes through his speaking style. He is able to work crowds into a frenzy with apparent ease, some might even argue that he does this because he is "endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or ... specifically exceptional powers or qualities." However, he never performs the supernatural. Rather, he relates stories of how Jesus performed, is performing, and will perform the unbelievable. Statements such as, "if he can raise the dead, he can change your life"<sup>18</sup> or "in

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., Windt.

<sup>18</sup>Swaggart, Jimmy. "What Manner of Woman This Is." Asuncion, Paraguay, November, 1987.

God, all things are possible,"<sup>19</sup> are not uncommon in his messages. Therefore, Swaggart's strategy is to recognize the supernatural and its impressions on people, but only through the works of Christ.

Sometimes, however, Swaggart becomes overwhelmed and actually says that he, not Jesus, can work miracles.

Jesus didn't come to be a part of the religious establishment. He didn't come for the righteous. He came to call sinners to repentance. He invited the sinners. Touch me. And your life will be changed. Touch me. And you'll never be the same again. Touch me. And I'll preform a miracle for you. That's why I'm here. That's why were here. That's why we have these mobile medical units. To take them out to those who have needs. That we may touch them. Because we love you. God loves you.<sup>20</sup>

Perhaps, just a slip of the tongue for Swaggart.

The second requirement is that the charismatic leader have a sense of destiny. In other words, what is going to happen and how shall we prepare ourselves? Swaggart's destiny is similar to most "born-again" Pentecostals and is in two parts. First, his message is that you are a sinner, you must realize you are a sinner, you must ask God for forgiveness, then, only through faith, can you get to heaven. Second, his message says that Jesus will be returning to earth very shortly, and you had better get ready for him. Swaggart's mission is to tell everyone he can (by speaking

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<sup>19</sup>Swaggart, Jimmy. "Shields of Gold and Shields of Brass." Washington, D.C., November, 1987.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

in public) these two messages and ask them to devote their lives to Jesus. He offers this justification:

I wanted to be a missionary so bad. But the Spirit didn't say, "you will go and be a missionary." It said, "you will preach in Japan, you will preach in Africa," and reeled off country after country after country after country.<sup>21</sup>

Here, Swaggart is implying that "other men" cannot do what he does, because the Spirit has not called them as the Spirit has called Jimmy. Clearly, then, it seems as though Swaggart, by relying on "the power of Jesus," is able to appear the "prophet" of the supernatural. In addition, it is also clear that he has a sense of destiny--the world is going to hell, he and his followers are going to heaven. This sense of destiny is consistent in each of his three speeches.

**Charisma depends on men perceiving a man as extraordinary.**

The second characteristic of a charismatic leader is the ability to make others perceive that they are extraordinary. The focus is between leader and followers. In order for the leader to be successful, the followers must perceive that he is charismatic.

Like power, charisma is not a property, it is a relationship; of an individual to others, of an individual to his environment. In an established society, what would pass for a frenzied agitator would in another milieu represent a

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<sup>21</sup>Swaggart, Jimmy. "And the Spirit and the Bride Say Come." Baton Rouge, November, 1987.

prophet or an empire-founder. Think of Marat under the Second Empire, Hitler in the Germany of 1880...."<sup>22</sup>

The point is that in order for a man to extraordinary, he must overcome existing, bad conditions or he must create and make followers believe that bad conditions exists. After this state is present, he can then act to solve problems, to lead his followers out of troubled times.

It is difficult to gage what Swaggart's followers think of him and whether they believe he is charismatic. They certainly contribute substantial amounts of money to his ministries. The only glimpse of this phenomena is in the stories Swaggart tells of how he saves the souls of difficult, almost impossible, people.

It was a Saturday night. I was in a meeting in west Texas. We had gone, I don't know, three or four weeks. It had been a good meeting. An elderly woman come up to me after, or rather that Saturday evening. We didn't have church that Saturday night. And for some reason we came back by the church rather late, with a pastor. And she was there. Her hair was a white as snow. She was some where between seventy and eighty years old. She had been praying. That's the strength of our churches. She came up to me. And she was weeping and she said, "please, please, don't close the meeting tomorrow night." It had been announced that we would. I said, "sister, unless God would specifically say differently, I ... I feel I have no choice. I'm open to Him,

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<sup>22</sup>Lacouture, Jean. The Demigods: Charismatic Leadership in the Third World. New York, 1970, p. 21. Quoted in Windt.

but why are you requesting this, this strongly?" She said, "it's my husband." "We've been married," she said, "for over fifty years. He's led the most sinful, wicked life a man could live. Only God knows the nights that I would go to church and come back and the house would be locked. And ... I wouldn't be able to get in. And I would have to go to a friend's house and stay all night. Only the Lord knows the times he's beat me. He's cursed God. Only God knows how many times. And for the first time in his life, he has come to church. And in this meeting, I see a change in him. He ... he is close. And I'm so afraid. If we close he will miss it."

That Sunday night, twenty-four hours later, I preached the best I could. And it was one of those nights when mighty, Holy Ghost conviction swept the place. The building was packed. It wasn't large, but it was filled. He was sitting, I didn't know it, but I knew it later. He was sitting about the third row on my right hand side. And I looked at him and I recognized him. And all of the sudden, God the Holy Ghost, the high sheriff of heaven, laid a hand on his heart. He was at least seventy-five years old. I watch him put his head on the pew in front of him and sob and weep.<sup>23</sup>

In stories similar to this, Swaggart sets himself up to be the hero, the man who got God through to an "old soul." Perhaps, through these stories, the audience will be led to believe that

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., Swaggart, Washington, D.C.

Swaggart is extraordinary and, therefore, say that he is charismatic.

Charismatic Leaders arise in times of turmoil.

The third element of charisma is that these leaders tend to arise in time of real or apparent turmoil. When the governing of the traditional or bureaucratic leader is not working, the charismatic leader often arises, because he can break the rules and lead his followers out of danger. Specifically, for the charismatic leader to arise, two conditions must exist. First, "charismatic movements are more likely to emerge in societies that have a revolutionary tradition than in other societies because they are accustomed to radical change and are susceptible to heroic leaders."<sup>24</sup> Second, "if people have no revolutionary tradition, they must feel--or be made to feel--so alienated from the current government that they are willing to resort to radical change."<sup>25</sup>

In Swaggart's case, he attempts to persuade his listeners that these are the worst of times in five ways: 1) other churches are ignorant of certain sins (and are really leading souls to hell), 2) other religions are led by liars, 3) socially, these are the worst of times, 4) personally, these are the last of times (people are great sinners), and 5) evil is gaining strength and trying to kill him. These five points make up the core of Swaggart's theme that the end is near.

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., Windt.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

Other Churches are Ignorant:

For Swaggart, the devil is a tricky person, who knows how to get people to "sell their soul." In fact, the devil is so tricky that he had duped other organized religions. Swaggart states:

Every single church, basically has a discipline against these two terrible sins of hell: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye. If a member of the congregation commits one of these sins, we know how to deal with it. Be it Pentecostal, Charismatic, or Denominational, we have disciplines in the church to deal with these two sins: lust of the flesh, lust of the eye.

But that third sin--the pride of life--we have no discipline for that ... It's what Satan proposed to Eve in that garden of Eden. He used it all, but this was his power play. This was the clincher. This is what he used to spring the trap. And it's what he's using today in Pentecostal and Charismatic circles. He said if you do this which I suggest unto you, you shall be as God.<sup>26</sup>

By blaming the devil, Swaggart can begin to show that the present religions have been subverted. Because they have been duped, doom is forth coming.

Other Religions are Led by Liars:

The second method Swaggart uses is to shock his listeners by interesting phrases about other religion, most of which claim that

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid. Swaggart, Washington, D.C.

those other religions are led by liars. Here are a few examples:<sup>27</sup>

- \* He views the Roman Catholic mass as a "liturgical religious monstrosity," and in condemning Catholicism itself as "a false cult" based upon the "doctrines of devils" has beseeched born-again Catholics to leave the church.
- \* Swaggart has suggested that even Mother Teresa of Calcutta has no promise of salvation, apparently because she emphasizes good works at the expense of spreading the Word of God through the interpretation of Scripture.
- \* Says that he loves Israel, but implies that the Jews brought the Holocaust upon themselves, because of their refusal to "accept Christ as their redeemer."
- \* "In Swaggart's view," wrote Lloyd Grove in the Washington Post (April 8, 1987), "the world is rapidly accelerating into 'moral and spiritual dissolution,' the church is 'falling away,' and the Second Coming is imminent: Jesus will soon 'rapture all believers into Heaven, setting the stage for the reign of the Antichrist, the Battle of Armageddon, and 'the terrifying Great Tribulation.'"

These four examples are just a few of what the statements made by Swaggart, but the message is clear: the religion you practice is no good for you, because they have lied to you. Again, Swaggart is trying to create a picture of gloom and doom for his audience.

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., Current Piography, p. 52.



Socially, These are the Worst of Times:

A third method that Swaggart uses to convince his audience that these are the worst of times is to show the decadence that exists. Here is an example:

The lust of the flesh consists basically of adultery, fornication, works of the flesh, perversion, homosexuality, lust, and on and on and on the scenario goes.<sup>28</sup>

Another example shows that the conditions in the United States are worse than around the world:

Much of the church today is praying "come Lord Jesus," because of persecution, because of hardship. But I'm concerned that the church, too much in western civilization, is praying for Cadillacs and Mercedes and money and bank accounts.<sup>29</sup>

Regardless of whether these behaviors existed in previous times is irrelevant, what counts is that now they are eroding our social fabric. Therefore, these are the worst of times.

Personally, These are the Worst of Times:

The fourth strategy that Swaggart uses is to tell his audience that they are sinners. Their lives are in turmoil. He states:

You are a great sinner. You are away from God. All have sinned. All have sinned. You've got to see that. You've got to admit that. The word of God drives it home. All have sinned. And come short of the glory of God you are a sinner. You deserve hell. I am a sinner. I deserve hell.

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., Swaggart, Washington, D. C.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., Swaggart, Baton Rouge.

The whole world lies in darkness. It deserved to go to hell.<sup>30</sup>

Again, these comments help create turmoil, only this time it is on a personal level.

Evil is Gaining Strength and Trying to Kill Me:

The final strategy that Swaggart uses to show that these are the worst of times is to show how the devil is trying to kill him. He states:

I've never in my life experienced the pressures of darkness that we are experiencing now. No, I'm not asking for sympathy. I'm just trying to get a little point across.

I've never, never in my life experienced it. I'm going to tell you some things I've never told anyone.

Demon spirits of Hell. There are times at night that I can actually hear them screaming--"you can't do it, you can't do it, you cannot do it."

In Costa Rica, the other day, the powers of darkness ... I don't think I've ever sense them so strongly.<sup>31</sup>

Again, this strategy helps create a sense of turmoil.

A charismatic movement is messianic.

The fourth characteristic of charisma is that a charismatic movement is messianic. As Windt states:

The charismatic leader scorns liberals who extoll the virtues of evolutionary change as well as conservatives who call for a return to traditional values. Instead, he

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., Swaggart, Asuncion, Paraguay.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., Swaggart, Baton Rouge.

preaches secular salvation from earthly woes through his ascension to political power. The greatness of his people will be realized through the greatness of his regime. Those who commit themselves to charismatic leaders must think more about their ultimate destiny as a people than about their future as a person.<sup>32</sup>

Further, the leader cannot be separated from the movement, because he is the source of salvation, he is the way.

This characteristic of charisma, as well as some of the other characteristics, is taken from Biblical thinking. Swaggart, with the help of Jesus, is the one leader. His son Donny, much like Oral Robert's son, Richard, is no where nearly as persuasive as Swaggart. If Swaggart were to die, in all probability, the movement would quickly pass away. Does Swaggart score both liberal and conservative values, beliefs, and thoughts?

Absolutely. Here is an example:

The pride of life--possibility thinking, power of positive thinking--upward sins--positive mental attitude, Christian psychology (so called), inner healing....

Some new fad or philosophy that comes your way is not your answer. Your answer is the cross of Christ. Totally, absolutely, and completely.

This new wave of mind science--that thinks it can mentally adjust its way to victory and power and freedom--is

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

from hell, just as much as adultery, or fornication, or perversion, or homosexuality.<sup>33</sup>

In addition to these scorning statements about other religions ideas, Swaggart states quite clearly that the only way to heaven is "through Jesus Christ." Swaggart states:

Buddhism wont take you to heaven. Being an evangelical wont take you to heaven. You can join their church and it wont take you to heaven. You can join my church and it wont take you to heaven. There is only one way. One way. One way. And that's Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus.<sup>34</sup>

**A charismatic movement is a collection of contradictions that only faith in a leader can resolve.**

The final characteristic of charisma is that the movement contains seeming contradictions that only faith in the leader can resolve. Windt states:

The charismatic leader contends that he alone can change the course of history, while maintaining at the same time that he is only a product of historical circumstances. He urges others to revolt against the impersonal forces of life while maintaining that he acts only because impersonal, higher forces demand that he act. He denies any pretense to eloquence, even as he speaks eloquently. He demands rule by the people, even as he says that he--and he alone--is qualified to rule.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., Swaggart, Washington, D.C.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid. Swaggart, Asuncion, Paraguay.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

These contradictions, it seems, can only be resolved by understanding the "faith people place in the charismatic leader."<sup>36</sup> Because of his exceptional ethos, he either resolves or eliminates the contradictions, therefore, people believe and follow him.

Contractions, of the above sort, are somewhat difficult to find in Swaggart's preachings. In fact, none exist in these three speeches. Perhaps, by examining a larger number of speeches, contradictions could be found. However, we need to ask ourselves if this element of charisma is really important. So what if he doesn't contradict himself? What is most important is that he both attack the existing system (by scorning and creating a sense of doom) and suggesting that he is the way to salvation (through Jesus). Therefore, this element of charisma may be of little importance, even if it is found in other speeches.

#### CONCLUSION

In this essay, I have attempted to show that Jimmy Swaggart has both similarities and differences with other major television preachers. I have also attempted to show that Weber's classification of leadership styles can be helpful in understanding the rhetoric in three of Swaggart's speeches. His attacking other denominations, painting an urgent picture of gloom and doom, and telling his audience that he (through Jesus) can lead them to salvation is clearly seen when using Weber's system. This system of criticism helps the partly understand one of the "most effective speakers today."

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid.