

Oral History Interview of Harold Knowles

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Location of Interview: Recording Studio of the Student Radio Station, 90.9 The Light

Name of Interviewee: Harold Knowles

Name of Interviewers: Randy Miller and Lowell Walters

Transcriber: Jesse Ronda

Interview Length: (1:48:55)

Notes: Transcript edited by Abigail Sattler

Miller: (0:01) Welcome to this interview in the oral history project of the Liberty University archives. This interview is being conducted on April 23, 2010. Today we're continuing the second part of a two part series with Harold Knowles. My name is Randy Miller and I'll be conducting this interview today along with Lowell Walters. Greetings Lowell.

Walters: (0:24) Hello Randy.

Miller: (0:26) And good to have you with us again Harold.

Knowles: (0:28) Good to be here. Thanks for having me, I enjoyed it so much.

Miller: (0:31) And um...so yesterday, we kind of talked about your early life, your remembrances as far as Dr. Falwell, the starting of Thomas Road Baptist Church, and today you currently still work for Liberty University and we're going to get into that but Lowell had one follow-up question from yesterday.

Walters: (0:51) Yes, um...in Dr. Falwell's autobiography, it talks about the Whittemore family. Is that how you?

Knowles: (0:58) Whittemores?

Walters: (0:58) Whittemores, yeah.

Knowles: (0:59) Whittemores, yes sir.

Walters: (0:1:00) Did you know those folks...

Knowles: (1:01) I did.

Walters: (1:02) in any part of that interaction that he had in his spiritual development and what those folks were like and how they influenced him?

Knowles: (1:12) Well, yeah. They uh...I met Mr. Whittemore, can't think of his first name. His daughter was Ann; I knew Ann well. And the Whittemores lived down at Big Island, Virginia on a farm and we'd go down there with the young people. They came in from, I believe, I'm not sure if they were Canadians but um...they came into Thomas Road with a mission group and Dr. Falwell sort of latched on to them and, in my thinking, they were, what I would think, they were called the Deeper Life people. A doctrine which was a little different than Jerry and Thomas Road. But then Jerry got involved with the Deeper Life and he preached...in fact, he named his radio station the Deep Things of God at one time. And um...Jerry, to me, was getting off of the main, main subject of what he had been teaching and preaching in the, in the past. I remember one night in, in a sermon that he preached one time that we ought to take the word "work" out of song book, *Work Till the Night is Coming*. Ought to take it out of the song book because you don't work for the Lord. But evidently, God must have spoken to him because it wasn't long that he was out of that trend with the Whittemores but they were great people. Mr. Whittemore was older, had been in, in that movement of his for a long time and he felt like this is something that he could come down and help Jerry with. And uh...but then later on, they, they moved on. But I think they still live in, I think Ann is still living here but no, they moved on out of the church and so Jerry went back to what he had always done.

Walters: (2:50) Now that's Big Island up the James River?

Knowles: (2:53) No, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. It's Long Island.

Walters: (2:55) Long Island.

Knowles: (2:56) Down near, I'm sorry, out of Rustburg.

Walters: (2:57) Ok.

Knowles: (2:58) Coming up through Rustburg.

Walters: (2:59) Ok.

Knowles: (3:00) I'm sorry, it's Long Island.

Walters: (3:01) Ok.

Knowles: (3:02) Little, little community there.

Walters: (3:03) Ok. Well I just wanted to ask you about that because Dr. Falwell spent a lot of time on that in his autobiography.

Knowles: (3:09) Yeah, he did, he did.

Walters: (3:11) Thank you.

Miller: (3:12) Ok, so, now we're into the late '60s, early '70s there, did you ever work for fundraising with the Old Time Gospel Hour before Liberty was founded or did they not bring you in until the college was already established?

Knowles: (3:29) No, I came in after the col...I came in 1978...

Miller: (3:32) Ok.

Knowles: (3:33) after the college. And we, our office building was over at Langhorne at the Old Time Gospel Hour complex building and that's where we operated out of. So, I came on in 1978 and started working for Liberty University at that point.

Miller: (3:47) Ok. Now, just fill us in to help us get the details here. Ok, so you were there with, with Jerry then, in those early days you got saved at Park Avenue Baptist, you went off to Tennessee Temple, you came back, you lived here in Lynchburg for a while, you were just working in retail after you got done with college there. For a time you went down to North Carolina.

Knowles: (4:12) Right.

Miller: (4:13) And so, what years about was it that you were gone, out of the area then?

Knowles: (4:16) I was gone out of the area probably from '72 to '78. I was gone for six years.

Miller: (4:23) Ok, so, so in those um...so did you come back specifically then to work for Liberty?

Knowles: (4:30) Yes. I had been in retail uh...the Best Products Company went out of business but they had transferred me to Rockville, Maryland and they started opening on Sundays, seven days a week. So I went back to Fayetteville and worked for Thalhimers and then I was...I came back to visit one day and right around...with Jerry Falwell, and he said, "You know, I need somebody. We just" We had a development department back in the '60s and it had, it had played out and he said, "I'm going to start development again." And once started it was a hiring people and he wanted to know if I wanted to come to work for him and live in Fayetteville and work out of Fayetteville. So that's what I did for five years. I worked out of Fayetteville for five years and, and uh...

Miller: (5:15) And so what five years would those have been?

Knowles: (5:17) They, excuse me, yes, let me go back. Yeah, they were uh...I started with, with Liberty in 1978 but I lived in Fayetteville until 1983. I didn't move back to Lynchburg until '83 when Jerry...when the PTL thing came about and Jerry went down to take over, we lost a lot of, of donors and a lot of donations so they laid off...in my department, we had sixty people, thirty men on the road, thirty men, thirty people in the office, men and women. And so it went down from about sixty people to about four of us. And Jerry called and said "I need you to move to Lynchburg if you want to stay with me because we're cutting out and all these people." And I moved to Lynchburg in '80 January of, I mean October of '83 and been here ever since.

Walters: (6:01) But the PTL scandal was in '87-'88, right?

Knowles: (6:08) Um...I'm not sure. I thought...I, I know I came here in '83, I know I came here in '83 and in the fall of '83 they, we laid off everybody. So I'm not sure to the dates on that. I...

Walters: (6:22) Ok.

Miller: (6:23) Ok, I...

Walters: (6:24) I'm pretty certain that...

Miller: (6:25) Are you sure you're not doing the '93s?

Knowles: (6:26) No, no.

Miller: (6:27) No, ok.

Knowles: (6:28) It had to be early '80s, '83-'84.

Miller: (6:29) Ok, early '80s.

Knowles: (6:30) It had to be...something, something happened where we were, we...everybody was laid off, you know, in '83 because I was at home and one of the guys I worked with called me and said that we're having to let everybody go and I called Jerry and Jerry said, "No, just hang in there. We got to...we're making some adjustments." So, I didn't, I didn't work for, I didn't work for him from October until January of, of '80, '84.

Miller: (6:59) Ok.

Knowles: (7:00) Came back to, I came back to work...

Miller: (7:00) You came back to Lynchburg then in, in...

Knowles: (7:02) When I was in Lynchburg in '83 and then came to...I, I, he gave me a three months sabbatical I guess it was [*laughter*].

Miller: (7:07) Ok [*laughter*].

Knowles: (7:09) Until things revamped and then I came on.

Miller: (7:10) Alright, let's, let's go back then. Before you leave the area, do you have any memories of those early days of Liberty University? You're working in retail in town here but you are friends with Jerry and all. Any memories of those founding days, you know, you had mentioned yesterday about that he had looked at Tennessee Temple and said, "One day we're going to have a great," kind of...that was a real model of one that was a combination of a church and a school together...

Knowles: (7:39) Right.

Miller: (7:40) That the school supported the church, the church supported the school. Unlike a Bob Jones where there wasn't a...

Knowles: (7:43) No.

Miller: (7:44) great, large church associated with it.

Knowles: (7:45) Church, right.

Miller: (7:46) So, do you have any memories of those late '60, early '70 days before the college was founded, maybe as a TRBC member or as a personal friend of Jerry's?

Knowles: (7:57) Well, ok, we'll go back, we'll, we'll come up to the, to when the school, right before the school was started but in the late '60s, the relationship with Jerry when I was here, we were, as I mentioned yesterday, we was doing that traveling with for Faith Partners and Doorkeepers for raising funds for TV. And so we were going all over the area through Roanoke and Danville and all the little towns within...we could go out within a hundred miles in the afternoon and come back.

Miller: (8:29) So, so you had your day job but this is what you were doing on evenings and weekends?

Knowles: (8:32) Evenings, evenings and weekends with Jerry and, and going as support maybe to help them, help them to drive or maybe sing or just be there and traveling out to these churches and helping, talking to people about Thomas Road and, and the Old Time Gospel Hour TV program, basically.

Miller: (8:50) Do you remember at what point he started, “Hey, I’ve got in my mind a vision for the new college?” Was, was it already decided before he started announcing it or did he kind of let some, was he sending up some trial balloons before hand?

Knowles: (9:06) Well, I...no. He, he had in his heart...I remember many times during the ‘60s he mentioned, “You know, we need to start a school. We need to start a, we need to, my...God’s speaking in my heart about starting a school, a university.” And you know the story of him flying over one day and seeing this property that we’re on now and how he acquired that. Well one day he called up, my wife and I were in, in Lynchburg on uh...gosh, it must have been in the ‘70s, ‘69, and he said, “I’m going to take you all somewhere.” So he put us in the station wagon there with his kids and me and my wife and I and my kids and drove up, up on Liberty Mountain. And, of course, it was, it had rained and the place was very muddy and he says, “This is the property we’re, we’re buying or we’re trying to buy and we’ll put a school here.” And he stood out on the mud and said, “You know, here’s my vision. I’m going to have the dormitories here and I’m going to have this here.” And if you look at it today, my wife can remember this too, everything he mentioned in his mind that day, that’s where it is now. The first dormitory, just all the buildings that he could vision in his mind, he said that’s where it’s going to be and it happened. And that was either ‘69 or ‘70 when we were, we were up here but then, of course, we started over at the church and then Treasure Island but he was buying this property and God was giving him the vision then to...”I’ll have a, I’ll have a school on this mountain, if God allows it to be.”

Miller: (10:37) Now, do you think you were kind of unique in that or was he taking other folks up to have...

Knowles: (10:41) You know I don’t, I would like to think maybe I was unique [*laughter*].

Miller: (10:44) [*laughter*]

Knowles: (10:45) You know, we came in and, and visit and, and would eat with him and, and go around with him and Macel was with us and, of course, Macel didn’t want to get out of the car and my wife didn’t either because it was muddy, but I, I feel like maybe I was unique, I don’t know.

Miller: (11:01) And, so, are there other things that, as you’ve been with him through the years, that you’ve just seen him be visionary about? That, that he, he’d get something in his mind and then the Lord brings it to pass.

Knowles: (11:16) Yes. Well, you know, going, starting back of Park Avenue Baptist days when he accepted Christ and they made him youth pastor, you could see the vision of then in his mind that all the young people that, that God allowed him to bring in. And then starting the radio program daily from his, well, he did it from his house for a while. And then starting the TV

program right away and the vision to do the Elim, Elim Home and later to do the Godparent Home. The man just had...once he got something in his mind, he didn't let it go. He, he either went for it and accomplished it or he didn't think it would work and he would drop it. But he was a real visionary.

Walters: (11:56) I seem to remember him stating at times that he was a youth pastor at heart, even when he was a senior...

Knowles: (12:02) Right, right.

Walters: (12:03) so to speak. Can you expand on that any more? Did you see that play out in...

Knowles: (12:08) I saw that play out many time with the youth. I, and, and, I don't know the dates, but one time I was a youth pastor at, youth director at Thomas Road, back in the early '60s, he would come down, speak to us and go on outings with us. He would uh...he was a one pastor that not just figured he was the adult pastor but he was the young people's pastor. He loved young people and I think in his mind, "I'll start a college and I'll bring in young people and train them for the Lord." And uh...yeah, he was, I always felt like he was a youth pastor in, in mind, yeah.

Miller: (12:43) Now, one thing that you mentioned yesterday was, as far as the college goes, he was going to be a little bit different than Tennessee Temple that right from the start he was planning for it to be a Christian liberal arts college rather than a typical Bible college.

Knowles: (12:56) Right.

Miller: (12:57) But, there was a little bit of the pattern, it seems to me just in looking back at the history that um...the idea of a Bible college is that everyone is training for fulltime Christian service and, in a sense, he had the motto of training champions for Christ so, but, he, I'm sure that even if someone was going to be an engineer or a doctor or a lawyer, he wanted them to be actively involved in the church.

Knowles: (13:24) Right.

Miller: (13:25) How, how did that play out when the students first started coming to this fledgling college here? It, it seems as though there was more of a tie in with the local church in those early days, that it was just a really pioneering spirit...

Knowles: (13:38) Sure.

Miller: (13:39) than maybe you're seeing in 2010.

Knowles: (13:41) Well, you know, what, what Jerry went after with through uh...his idea, like, you were right. His idea was that, "I'm not going to just have a Bible college, I want to have a," and later in life, later on he would say, "We want, we want political students. We want people in Washington. We want doctors and lawyers in the business world. We want to uh..." he always...one of his famous sayings was that we don't want to, don't want to have a ball team that's going to play Mount Pisgah Baptist [*laughter*], you know. And he wanted to make sure, you know, he talked about playing Notre Dame and Jerry always had big ideas and went after those and felt like that nothing could stop me and then, of course, he, with, for Dr. Towns and Dr. Guillermin coming in, Jerry went after people that he felt like they could help him accomplish this goal of not having just a Bible college but having a great liberal arts where we could have people at, students in Washington and working for the government. We could have doctors and lawyers and he just said that a Bible student is, is good and we'll have Bible schools here but his main thrust was to put these kids out into the world to work in other things than just fulltime Christian services.

Miller: (14:54) You'd, perhaps, be a unique one to ask this kind of a question, but was there anything that was Jerry Falwell's "New Coke?" You remember when the Coca-Cola Company came out and they were going to have the New Coke? Well, it, it didn't work and so they silently went back to the old...and, and it became Coke Classic then and now you don't even see Coke Classic or whatever...

Knowles: (15:13) No.

Miller: (15:14) Was there anything with Jerry where he had something in his mind, he was going to do this and then it just never really panned out or it didn't work out the way that he wanted it to work?

Knowles: (15:24) Well, you know, not really. I don't know, I, I think PTL probably would maybe be one that his mind, he saw uh...I think he saw the satellite, the TV thing that this would help. I don't think he went after that for his, for his personal gain. I think that was, was a failure for him and I think it hurt him physically, mentally maybe. I know financially it hurt us here at the school. But I think that was, that was something that he went after and it didn't, wasn't accomplished. But then you, then you got to realize too that these things are in God's hands. That, that, if, if he went after something that didn't, didn't accomplish it, he just felt like that it was not God's will to do that.

Miller: (16:05) But you're not thinking of something like, ok, we're going to establish a monorail around campus, you know, to transport the students...

Knowles: (16:11) [*laughter*]

Miller: around campus, that, that there was something that...well, I, I guess just within the past couple of years, we had talked about maybe having an IMAX theatre over at campus north and they looked at it and it didn't end up coming...

Knowles: (16:21) Right.

Miller: (16:22) so there were some of those kinds of things. I was just wondering if there was some of those other early plans that you can remember that, that, yeah, there was lots of talk about that. That never quite came to be.

Knowles: (16:30) No, you know, to be honest with you, I can't remember anything like that at all. Basically, you know, he went after small, I mean, he went after the Elim Home and that worked and Godparent Home worked. But then as he got older and more accomplished with students, he went basically, "I'm going to do what's good here for the school." And, and whatever...I'm not sure to answer you truthfully. I don't, I don't know of anything on that question, yeah.

Miller: (16:57) Ok.

Walters: (17:00) Ok. Well, let's, let's talk a little bit about Old Time Gospel Hour.

Knowles: (17:04) Ok.

Walters: (17:05) How did, how did it support the ministries of Thomas Road or the outreaches or the University even? Tell us a little bit about that as far as its mission and its role and all that sort of thing.

Knowles: (17:19) Ok, well, Old Time Gospel Hour was...I think Jerry got the name from where he was, where he first heard the radio program on Charles Fuller, Old Fashion Revival Hour. And I think it's where he got the name of Old Time Gospel Hour. But Old Time Gospel Hour basically was for the school. We don't, we didn't do anything for the church, support the church, because most donors that we deal with have their own church. And so Old Time Gospel Hour in itself functioning was for strictly to build a college. Plus, Jerry was, in those early days, Jerry was on TV tremendous, tremendously, I mean, everywhere and continued offer the, gift offers where we had the tape ministry. We reproduced tapes, DVD's in those days, maybe later CD's. But Old Time Gospel Hour, basically, was for the college, fundraise for the college.

Walters: (18:14) And then did it...when you went to work, did you go to work at the original church? Did you have a facility downtown near what was called Pittman Plaza, the Plaza now? Where, where were the facilities at and...

Knowles: (18:30) The facilities I came to in '70, when I came to work in '78, was over on Langhorne Road. It was the, it was a...I, I think it was called not Value City but it was like a

Big, Big Lots or like a small K-Mart store that went out of business and we took that building and in that, in those days it was, the employment office was there. A lot of other...since Liberty wasn't that large at this time, a lot of facilities that...I know the personnel department was there. A lot support offices were over there and most of it was tape ministry, missions for, for Liberty missions was there so we worked out of that building. But we traveled, all the people that worked there really traveled out.

Miller: (19:21) One thing that I saw is, looking in an old record, the *Fundamentalist Journal*, was that published out of there?

Knowles: (19:27) Yes, that was out of there. The first early stages of the *Journal* was more of a large newspaper looking.

Miller: (19:33) Do you remember when they shut down that facility and moved everything somewhere else?

Knowles: (19:39) No, well, yeah, well, not really exactly. I remember we moved out, they moved us out, my department out over to Liberty and we had a double wide trailer back in the back here where we moved out of Old Time and they were moving everything out of, out of the Old Time building because they wanted to get rid of it. And, and we, we were established over here with, with all other personnel came over...all other supports groups were finally moved over here in the, in the area, yes.

Walters: (20:09) Now, I remember when I was a kid and watching my parents support the ministry, seems that sometimes people do malicious things like set computers to dial the toll free number and do malicious things like that. Can you remember any other instances?

Knowles: (20:29) No, not, well, not really. I know, I know that when, when we sent mail out...Jerry's tremendous...you know, I met one donor on the road that his wife died and he said that he was never lonely after that because he got a letter everyday from Jerry. But I do, I do know that one thing that we used to get back when we were at Old Time, the mail room was over there too with all the mail came into Old Time. People would send pictures of *Playboy* magazines and pornography in them. They would, Jerry would send out a returned envelope that postage paid. They would send back stuff stuffed, they would stuff that envelope as big as it could so that it would cost us more when we, when we got it back in. A lot of plank...a lot of, of pranks, is what I want to say, happened. They send all kinds of trash back in those envelopes that when people would open them in the mail room, it got so that, that some of, a lot of the women didn't want to open mail. A lot of the men opened mail and if it's, if it was something for a, a legit thing, they would hand if over to a lady that was in charge of that. But yeah, a lot of those planks came in those days.

Walters: (21:36) Now, it's my understanding too as, as Dr. Falwell got more politically involved in things, he got more and more death threats and things like that. Did you ever feel insecure in some way physically going to work or anything like that or what...nothing like that?

Knowles: (21:52) No, nothing, nothing on my part. No, I do know that one time he came to Fayetteville to do a, to do a one night stand, a one night rally and I was living there and we, I had my car and I printed up a poster up and, and, several, and had put it on my car and was driving all over town and I know one of the security people called me and said, "You know, you need to take that poster off of that car because Jerry's gotten some threats here in Fayetteville." And I didn't know, I didn't know what they were and um...but I do know that when he left there, the newspaper put an article in there that with me and with Jerry together and said we have a local man that works for Dr. Falwell. What about two weeks later I get a knock on the door and this guy that had the Army, Fort Bragg was there, they put him out of the Army and he was schizophrenia, schizophrenia and he had bought in a bunch of rocks to me that he had gotten from Arizona and they were from Superstitious Mountain and these rocks were going to run all the generators here a Liberty. And I got tickled and he, he got angry and said, "I'm not joking." Well, then I went to, the church I went to, I went up there one day and he, he comes riding in, in his Volkswagen and hanging out of the Volkswagen was a cross and hanging were the five commandments on one side and five on the other and he wanted to go see Jerry and I said, "Well, I can't set that appointment up. What do you want?" He said, "Well, I'm going to take these rocks up there and some other ideas." So he drove off so I called security and told them to be on the lookout for him but he never showed up. And then, then right after that uh...I don't know how they got my name, but the military police called me from Fort Bragg and said, "I understand this guy's coming by and he's pretty dangerous. Do you need some protection?" And I said, "No, I don't think he's going to hurt me." And, but they said, "We'll come by" and, and they came by and interviewed me about him and I found out later they did pick him up and put him in a lockup somewhere. He was crazy. But I don't think he ever showed up here. But other than that, I've never gotten any, any threats or anything.

Walters: (24:04) Well, that's quite a unique gift in kind.

Knowles: (24:06) *[laughter]*

Walters: (24:07) What are some of the other unique gifts in kind that you got?

Knowles: (24:11) Well, we've got all kinds of things. I had a lady in Atlanta call me one time and said that she's got a real money maker for us and if I'm down that way, don't make a special trip, but come by there. And I went to Atlanta and, and, I had other visits, and she had a worm farm and it was huge. And she had thought with all this property we could grow worms and sell them, kids could sell them and we could make a lot of money selling worms but that didn't work either. And then, of course, we've gotten Amway people want to sell Amway uh...lot of stuff...I had a guy down in Atlanta call me and said that he had several millions of dollars he

wanted to donate. And so I went down to see him and I was driving around in what was supposed to be his address, and I didn't see a house but right in the middle of Atlanta, Georgia where Interstate 85 came in and 29, from here, crossed in so...they probably got rid of it now. That's been about 20 years ago. He had a piece of property and I drove up on the driveway and it was no house and he comes in from behind some trees and he said, "Are you Harold Knowles?" And I said, "Yeah." And he said, "Well, I wanted to tell you, I don't have a house. But I have a...I'm, I'm living underground." So he opens up this wooden door, like a, like a trapped door. We go down inside, down steps, into a tunnel and he's got this huge room that he's living in. And on the wall, I noticed on the wall, he is, he does have, he does have degrees as an engineer. And what he, what happened, the...when 85 was put through Atlanta, they took his property without paying him what he thought. So...and I did notice there's a guy sitting out in a chair when I got there. And he has a clicker and he's counting cars on one piece and he's counting trucks and big buses and this crazy guy is charging the sta...the federal government so much for a car coming over his property. And there...really it's 85, it said 85. So I really want to get out of there but he kept me in there and talking and talking about he's got five billion dollars coming to him from the federal government and he showing me the sheets of paper where he had added up all these cars and all these buses and

Miller: (26:35) [*chuckle*]

Knowles: (26:36) all these...and he wants to help Jerry with his billions of dollars and he wants Jerry now to help him supply money for the, for the lawyers.

Walters: (26:45) And I assume he never got the check from the government.

Knowles: (26:46) No, he never got the check and I think this guy...they finally, probably, finally moved him out.

Walters: (26:51) Now...

Knowles: (26:52) And that was crazy, I mean, I, that was a scary situation [*laughter*].

Walters: (26:56) Sure. Now we, it seems that we know that the uh...well, the, the collection of animals up at the...

Miller: (27:06) Taxidermy.

Walters: (27:07) Yeah.

Knowles: (27:08) Yes.

Walters: (27:09) The taxidermy collection up at Snowflex was a gift, correct?

Knowles: (27:12) Right.

Walters: (27:13) Do you know anything about the story on that?

Knowles: (27:14) I just, no, I just know that that's from Dr. Barrett. Andy, remember Andy Barrett? He used to be the head of alumni, his dad donated those.

Walters: (27:25) And he, he was a hunter...

Knowles: (27:27) Hunter. I don't know him personally. I, I wasn't involved in that, that particular um...

Walters: (27:31) Ok.

Knowles: (27:32) But I know that he donated those. And it, and it works up there really well. But a lot, a lot of people in, in my job, wants...when they say that they're going to do something for the school, in my feeling, it's always strings attached. You know, "I'm going to give you this but I need this" and you've got to watch out for those. You've got to weigh those into...do we want to take this and then do this for this family? So we are very careful.

Miller: (27:58) Is there a distinction between the regular monthly support fundraising area and the long-term, kind of, development, we're looking for gifts and bequests and things? Do we run those as two separate departments or is that all done with the same people in the same base camp?

Knowles: (28:15) Done all by the same, all the same. We all do the same. We do uh...we, of course, we know, you know, we love cash [*laughter*]. But we do what's called charitable gift annuities which is upfront cash now but it's the long range as far as we give them an income back for, for their life and an annuity. And the rate's based on their ages. We do wills and trusts for long term. And I always tell people when in their home, if you do proper planning and, and include the Lord's work in your planning, God will bless the 90%...if you, if you use ninety and ten, God will bless the 90% better than he will bless the hundred for you. I've had people tell me since they left Liberty in their will, God's blessed them with finances better, their health is better, even though we don't have anything from that estate yet, but I've had tons of testimonies that God will bless them. And I always encourage them to give to their church also when we plan for them.

Miller: (29:11) Now, there was some concern, while Dr. Falwell was alive, that he's the primary fundraiser for Liberty University and they even put the key man insurance on him, but that, there hasn't been a decline in giving since he's left and since he hasn't been out on the road and, and been as active in the television ministry. Could you talk about that for a moment?

Knowles: (29:34) Right, we, we thought about that. You know, my leads, my department leads came basically from television. We get a donor, well, a potential donor would call in, "I saw

Jerry on, on TV mentioned estate planning wills. I need some help.” When he died, right about, well, maybe a year before he died, the TV stations were being dropped it was, it was becoming very expensive and they were trying to do a lot of cable and a lot of, get on a lot of cable stations where it would reach...

Miller: (30:08) Or the dish with the Sky Angel...

Knowles: (30:11) Dish, Sky Angel and that thing. But the, the income is, is still pretty good coming in. We do a lot of mail out letters for my department. We're asking for donations...well not donations, basically bequests. Let us help you make a will, let us do estate planning. TV was a major prospect list. I mean, people would call in and...

Miller: (30:37) In, so, you've really had to kind of change your approach now with him passing along.

Knowles: (30:43) Right, right. What we do, what we've done in our department, with our men, we keep up with all our donors...if anybody's given uh...whatever they've given over the past, if it, if it's just cash or whether we've done annuity or wills or trust, we keep up with those folks. And uh...with letters and with birthday cards with types of gifts. The guys go on the road, they try to see as much, as many people in a year as they can that are, that are already donors plus pick up the new ones. So we kind of keep a good donor base there and usually someone that we visit in a certain city will know someone else that started giving to Liberty and will give us prospects and names but yeah, we've had to do a lot of changing since Jerry died.

Miller: (31:27) Now, it...another kind of a big overarching thing is, I recall my great Aunt Mary, I went to visit her one time and she was on Jerry Falwell's list. And so, “Oh that guy, he's such a beggar. He's always...” but she would faithfully send him...

Knowles: (31:41) Send him money.

Miller: (31:42) you know, she'd faithfully send him 15 dollars a month or twenty, 25 dollars a month. Now she, of course, has, has passed on that she was old enough...it seemed like you had a lot of 25 dollar a month donors in those early days. Has it, is, is the fundraising, external fundraising effort still built on the back of those 25 dollar a month checks or are you looking for two million dollar wills and you don't really solicit those small time donations anymore? Talk, talk about that if you would.

Knowles: (32:14) No, no. Ok, no, we still, no. We, we feel like, you know, we, we feel like someone that's giving 25...if someone gives 25 dollars a month steady, every month, to me that's a, that was a, that's a better prospect than somebody that gave a large donation. We found out that a person that's steady here is a best prospect, prospect for doing a will or doing a future gift when they die than someone that dropped in a big half a million or a hundred thousand

dollars in one whack. We found out that they're not a, they're not a really, really good prospect to, to, for future...

Miller: (32:52) They're, they're not a friend...they've given what they're going to give and, and I wanted a tax write off or something like that so, you know, ok, I'll just, I'll just, I'll write you a check for fifty thousand but the, the mom and pop type donors that are just interested in sending you the money, those, those have been some of the most fruitful.

Knowles: (33:10) Right. And I just visited, I won't give the name of her here but, I just visited a lady in the last few months up in Gainesville, Virginia. She and her husband have been giving real steady for a long time. We made, we made her, helped her make out her will in '82 and then her husband died in '92 and she had been wanting to change it and she'd been writing us letters saying I need to change, I need to change. I've been going there. And finally, in the last six months, I finally got her to change it. She lives in a modest house up in Gainesville uh...you think all the homes up in that area, in D.C. area are, are huge but she lives, she lives in a little modern home. She uh...her husband died. He worked for Exxon. And she's, and when he died she's, she had a lot of stock. She just kept it in there and it split. To make a long story short, when I finally got into her home to change her will...cause he had died and a lot of people in the will had died, she's, she's 85 years old. And she's showing me her Wells Fargo bank account. She has four million dollars in her bank account, I mean, in this Wells Fargo thing. But you walk into her home and you see this little housing and you think, "These people don't have anything." And she's leaving it all to, not here, but she's leaving half of it to Liberty and half of it to other ministries but she was a steady giver over the years. She gave a hundred dollars here, maybe fifty there and so did her husband. And so you look at those...that's what we look at. Someone that's given steady over the years.

Miller: (34:40) Someone whose heart is in the ministry, someone who's a friend of Liberty so to speak.

Knowles: (34:43) Yes. And they might complain when you go into her home and say, "Boy, I get mail from him everyday. And I get phone calls." And you'll say to them, "Well, I'll take you off the mailing list." "No, don't do that. Let me, I'll talk to you later." And then they never do. They, they don't mind getting the mail, they just wanted to unload on you a little bit.

Walters: (34:59) *[laughter]*

Miller: (35:00) Now, talk a little bit, if you would, about what I'll call naming opportunities. If I walk right across this courtyard over here, we're recording in the student radio station today, if I go over to the Schilling Center, there's bricks with names on them. Given in memory of Mrs. Smith by her husband, you know, or...

Knowles: (35:19) Right.

Miller: (35:20) or whatever. It doesn't seem as though we do as many of those small time naming opportunities. I know they're building the theatre over here and so if someone wants to buy a seat

Knowles: (35:32) Seat, new seat.

Miller: (35:33) in the new theatre, you know, that, that they're doing that but it seemed like they used to do more of like the buy a brick or buy something small. Could you talk about that for a moment?

Knowles: (35:39) Well, you know, that was, that was, was Jerry Sr., Falwell Sr.'s vision. We did the bricks which was a, which was a great idea. I mean, everybody I visit, older people even have...they'll show me their brick up on their mantel or, or show me a brick on their coffee table. That was Dr. Falwell's. He had, he felt like that if somebody donated a, made a good donation and we put their names up and they're here, they see their name on something, he felt like, like Mr. Schilling. Mr. Schilling gave a, several, several thousands and thousands of dollars and as a courtesy, Jerry said, "Let's name that building after him." And he loved it, Mr. Schilling loved that...he was from Ohio. He wanted to see his name up on lights. And some people don't. I know Dr. Falwell never did. But I went one day, years ago, I went to city council to see if we could name the street from Hardy's, coming into Liberty, Jerry Falwell and they, they accepted it. They said, "That's fine, there's no houses on there." See, you would have to get permission. So they ok'd it. I came back and I had to tell Jerry and he said, "No, I don't want it. You got to go back to city council and cancel that." So I did. I had to call city council people and make an appointment, go back down there and say he doesn't want it. And, of course, the street wasn't name here until after he had died. But he didn't want his name on anything but he thought other people would love to see their names in the bricks and Jerry Jr....we are naming certain things. We have the softball field here right out by the Ericson Building of the north campus. We have the baseball, baseball or softball field named after a man. And we're naming things, small things. A lot of the...you go through north campus, a lot of the doors have plaques on them, donated by Mr. and Mrs. Smith or Jones and we still doing that on a small.

Miller: (37:36) So if somebody came through with a five or seven million dollar gift for the, for the Tower Theatre, it...

Knowles: (37:42) Would name it.

Miller: (37:43) wouldn't be, it wouldn't be the Tower Theatre anymore, it would be [laughter], you know.

Knowles: (37:44) It would be, yeah, it would be their name, yeah, yeah. And in fact, in fact, I know Jerry Jr.'s looking for somebody that would do that. That would give that amount of

money, couple million, that we would name the tower after them. Of course, then we're doing the seats but there's a list of things we're naming, I mean, you could name the dressing room, you could name the lighting...

Miller: (38:06) The green room.

Knowles: (38:07) The green room and I don't know if you've seen that list or not but there's a list out there that if you purchase, you know, if you want to give so much we'll name this room after you. And, and we're having, we're having some takers.

Miller: (38:16) So now here's a curiosity question, ok, my Aunt Mary that lives up in Wisconsin um...is it such a big operation that...did, did Dr. Falwell know a lot of the individual 15 and 25 dollar a month people? If he was going to be going to speak in Milwaukee, Wisconsin would he get a list of all of the donors in the area? How did that work with him on a personal basis? It seemed like he had a tremendous memory for names...

Knowles: (38:44) He did.

Miller: (38:45) for names but, could you talk about that?

Knowles: (38:46) Well, you know, I know, I know, yeah, I do know that when he went to a city that Kathy Rusk, was his secretary then, Kathy would pull in not a long list of names but prominent people that would be in St. Paul, Minnes...somewhere. Or in some city that, that had given a lot of money that might, maybe would come up and see him and, and she, she always made him aware of certain donors in that city. Now, probably not a long list of 15 to twenty donors would be too many but if someone had given a pretty substantial and was a good giver here, Jerry would know their names when he got there. And it was, that was, that was a smart thing because if you walked up to Jerry and Jerry would say, "Oh, well I know you," and, and spell out your name, you, you were a friend for life.

Miller: (39:31) [*laughter*]

Walters: (39:33) Would he go and do a funeral for somebody like that, that had been a donor or how would that...would anything like that? Would he send flowers to the family or anything like that?

Knowles: (39:43) Yeah. Well, there's a story there, for me, uh...you know, he would send flowers, the school would. We had, we met a doctor down in Knoxville, a surgeon, he called me one time in Lynchburg and wanted to know if we would take an airplane for a donation. And I said yes. But he said, "Can you do an annuity for me?" And I said, "Well, I got to get it ok'd from Dr. Falwell." Well it ended up, I went down there, and the, we had to have the plane appraised. It was a million and two, appraisal. So, you can't give him a million and two for it but you can give him close to it cause the computer's going to put that amount in there and it's

going to say well, you know, this is what the IRS is going to allow. But Dr. Whittington, they brought the plane here. It was a single engine Piper, beautiful plane. But eventually, Macel didn't like Jerry flying around in a single engine so they sold it. Then, then, a couple of years ago...well, Jerry's been dead, what, three? Two weeks before Jerry passed away, Dr. Whittington died. And I was down in North Carolina and his daughter called me and wanted to know if Jerry could do the funeral. Well I called Jerry and he had made a statement that I thought was very good. He said, "You know, we're always asking for things. But let's give back this time. I will do it if you'll, if you'll pick me up." Well, I was far down in North Carolina as you could go and have to get, soon as I could, get to Knoxville and have to rent a van because I was in a smaller car and couldn't get him in there. So he did Dr. Whittington's funeral but in that, in that funeral was the president of, president of UT, the University of Tennessee, the mayor was there, a lot of doctors, a lot of lawyers. This Dr. Whittington helped start one of the biggest hospitals in Knoxville. And he ended up giving, not only did he give the plane, he ended up, right before he died, giving...he sold some property for two million and gave us the tithes on it which was two hundred thousand. And he became a super, super donor and he flew here right before he died and met with Jerry and we went to O'Charley's and Jerry just had a one on, basically, one on one, I was talking to some other people. And we had a great funeral, as funerals should go; I shouldn't say a great funeral. But as, as funerals would go...but, but we was, real quick story that I, that's close to my heart, when we were setting the funeral home in the yard waiting for the precession to start out and Jerry was sitting in the car with me and he saw this carriage, this old funeral carriage, like he was buried in here. And he said, "you know, you wouldn't know it, but," he said, "that would be good to be buried in." And I said, "Well, you wouldn't know it, you'd be dead." He said, "Well but wouldn't that be fun to have a horse to draw that." I never told that story to anybody but I don't...they decided to pull him if you remember...

Walters: (42:29) But that's what they did here when he passed.

Knowles: (42:30) He pulled that...huh?

Walters: (42:31) That's what they did here...

Knowles: (42:32) They did here, they, they, yeah.

Walters: (42:33) when he passed.

Miller: (42:34) Had, had a horse drawn carriage.

Knowles: (42:35) Had a horse drawn carriage.

Walters: (42:36) Right.

Knowles: (42:37) And he thought that would be great to be buried in that. And then he hit me with his Bible like he always hit people. And I mentioned to him, I said, “You know, you better stop. I wouldn’t do that if I were you because I’ll probably be the only one that’s going to around to wheel you in a wheelchair and a rest home.”

Walters: (42:50) *[laughter]*

Miller: *[laughter]*

Knowles: (42:51) And he said, “Oh no you’re not either.” He said, “I’m not going to a rest home. I’m not, I’m not going to a wheelchair. I’m going to die in my office.” And in two weeks, he was gone. And I remember that story about he, he felt like that, “No, I’m not going to be in a rest home.” But going back to the original question, we, yeah, they would send flowers to people and, and when Dr. Whittington did the um...died, he did the funeral there. And made, we made several friends out of that, some lawyers and some doctors that I visit now in Knoxville that were prospects when we came out of that funeral.

Walters: (43:21) Well I know that like, for instance, the dorm that I first stayed in here as a student is still called the Timothy Residence. Do you, do you have any stories about any unique, well, any unique stories about the people that donated or what precipitated a donation and...

Knowles: (43:40) Well, I do. Since you brought it...the, one of the dormitories here is named [Ibrahim] Dormitory, one of the first buildings here. I had a visit one day in Pinehurst, North Carolina and I had taken a list of names of people in that area that I was just going to knock on their doors. I wasn’t going to call them, I was just going to show up. And normally when you do that, you open the door and you’re there...they don’t ever see anybody. They, they get phone calls, they get letters. And so I had a, I had a visit by a lady named Melba [Ibrahim] and it was a Post Office Box. And I searched all day long and I thought, “Ok, I’ve got it,” because you can’t go to the Post Office, they’d never give you that name. So I went to the water company and, down there in Pinehurst, and they gave me the address. And I went and knocked on the door and Melba came to the door and uh...big house. To make a long story short, her husband, first husband, was, had helped with atomic bomb. He was over in the islands. I don’t know the whole story, she never told me the whole story about how he was involved in the, in the crea...maybe the creation or the movement but he was stationed in the Phil...in the uh...

Walters: (45:00) South Pacific?

Knowles: (45:01) Yeah. I’m trying to think of the, of where Melba...and Melba met...gosh, I’m, my mind went blank. Melba had met...he had died and before he died, Melba had met the uh...Sultan of Indon, of uh...gosh, of Indonesia, not Indonesia, of Malaysia, excuse me. He was a Sultan of Malaysia. This man she met, his dad was the prince or king during the World War II, when the Japanese came in and destroyed a lot of Malaysia. Well, Melba was over there and was

a nurse and when her husband died, she had...was taking care of, of the guy she married. His name was Tunka; T, U, N, K, A, [Ibrahim]. And he had gone to Oxford and had studied in England and accepted Christ through the Salvation Army. Here's a prince that...Melba married him and he said to her that, "I'd love to move to America. If you'll bring me over, we'll take all we can out of here and we'll, you'll have a great life in, in wherever you want to go." She picked Pinehurst, I don't know why. And so, when I got there and met Melba and went in and Tunka was sitting...sweet man, Indonesia looking fellow from Malaysia, she sat in there with his turba hat on, or whatever you call those round hats, in his, his native clothing and he had been, he had ordered a tremendous amount of cassette tapes from Jerry. And he had studied the Bible and listened to Jerry and when I walked in, it was like I was Jerry. I mean, he couldn't believe that somebody would come down and see him and he donated enough money to build this first building, this...well I don't think, maybe, maybe it wasn't the first building but that was a very unique situation. Tunka and Melba, they gave over a million dollars here. And right after they did that, the embassy from D.C.... they had a, when you walked into their house, they had a, they had a huge picture, an artist drawing of her, of his dad. It was full length. And it had been, you could see where it had been split and repaired and when the Japanese came into the palace, they tor...they ripped that painting apart but they left it hanging and Melba and her husband brought it to America and, and repaired it. The embassy offered him a million dollars for it. So she, they had given a million but then the embassy came in and gave them a million they sold it to the embassy, Malaysia embassy. So the, the story there, Melba said, "You know, you really cannot give the Lord..." now he died and Jerry, they wanted Jerry to do the funeral but then some other family members came over and didn't want, didn't want...

Walters: (47:49) Sure.

Knowles: (47:50) their religion was different. But he had been saved and he knew the Lord. But that was, that was a unique situation with Melba building this building...

Walters: (47:56) Right.

Knowles: (47:57) Dedicating that building to the Lord and then when Tunka died, we knew where he went. You knew he went to be in heaven.

Walters: (48:03) Right. Any others like that? This is all quite interesting.

Knowles: (48:07) No, right now I can't think, my mind goes. But we've had, I've had a lot of folks on the road that are, that are unique. I met, I met a guy down in Baton Rouge, Louisiana called me up and said, "I've got three kinds of cancer and I've called you all and I've given money here and nobody's ever come to see me." Well I went down to see him in Baton Rouge and Jimmy Swaggart Ministry had made his will out and Liberty was in it, Billy Graham was in it, and Jimmy Swaggart was in it. It was three, it was three distributions. And went into his house and it was a shack. I mean, it was so bad that...he had saved everything. He just piled

stuff all up and everything. You couldn't even get in his house and uh...but I go to took him to McDonald's to eat, he wanted to go McDonald's, he would take the sugars packs and put them in his pocket...

Walters: (49:00) [*chucke*]

Knowles: (49:01) and pick up the newspapers and take them. Well, to make a long story short, he died with five million in the bank but he, he never did, he always, he said, "Well, I don't have any children. I, I never been married." But that was wrong, he was, he was not telling the truth. He had married and his wife, they had a, a child and the child had had twin boys. And by this time, these boys, twin grandchildren, were lawyers out of Texas. And they had worked on Howard Hughes' will. They found out about that money going to three ministries, they came in, flew into Baton Rouge, took that thing to court, and broke it. And we, the three of us, Billy Graham, Swaggart, and Liberty got zero. They, and they...so that's why today...we learned our lesson. We're, you know, we're trying to do stronger, we're telling people to do some things that's irrevocable. You know, give us something. You can get the income from it but give us the million and we'll give you the income but then when you die, the million belongs to Liberty and you get the tax break for it. But those boys came in and, as smart as they were, they knew how to handle that and broke that will.

Walters: (50:12) Now, why do people give to Liberty? I mean, is it to, is it because they're looking to the young people coming through Liberty University to build a revival in the country or they just admired Jerry? Speak to that, if you could.

Knowles: (50:29) Ok. Well, at first they admired Jerry, they gave because of Jerry. And then as the school got bigger and a lot of folks...we, we have a tremendous amount of people that give here that's never been here; never put there foot on, on this soil. Now, since the school is as large as it is, we have people giving to specific...sports departments or, or the theatre. But we have also people that, they don't want their money going to sports at all, I mean, if we, if I'm going to leave you money in my will, you know, I'll come back and haunt you if you put it into the sports department. Or we have people that want to strictly go to...this lady I talked about in Gainesville, she wants half of her money going to, that she's giving us, going to scholarships and the other half to general funds, which is anywhere, but she wanted to make sure that the students, they could get a scholarship through her money. We have some people that strictly wants the law school, nursing, we have a lot of people that want to do the nursing school. They, they pick and choose what they want and, and we do that. We, we, in their wills, if they say I want it to got here, then we, we honor that and give them. But basically from the beginning it was because of Jerry and his stand politically. His stand that he wanted to have a school of young people that was going to make a difference in the world.

Miller: (51:53) Now this is something that I found with my little experience with fundraising and all is, and that surprises people, is that really, in most cases, it's the women who decide where the money in the end is going to go because often they outlive their husbands. Can you...

Knowles: (52:06) Right.

Miller: (52:07) Could you talk about that?

Knowles: (52:08) Yeah, that's true. We, we did a study on, a couple of years ago, average, average donors that, that makes, that we do a will for is in their seventies, early seventies. And what we find out that if we make a will for a husband and a wife and the husband dies, she has the right to change it. A lot of them, a lot of them haven't changed it. In fact, they've increased it. They'll say, "Well my children got money. They don't need what I've got." So they give more. But it is the women that, that I found out, like Mrs., well I shouldn't, I won't mention her name, but the lady in Gainesville I've met, and then Melba [Ibrahim], that was her idea of giving money to build this building and most of, a lot of our donors that I meet out on the road are women that are great, great givers and see that, "I want my money when I leave here going to Liberty to serve the Lord."

Miller: (53:02) This isn't really the purpose of this recording but incase someone were listening today or just for the historical record, if I wanted to have Liberty draft my will, do you pay for the lawyers to do that or what, what is deal that you have as far as...with wills, you say Liberty prepared their will...

Knowles: (53:21) Wills for them.

Miller: (53:22) You mentioned that...

Knowles: (53:23) Yeah.

Miller: 53:24) You mentioned that a few times, how do...

Knowles: (53:25) We go, we go in with a, with a disclaimer that we're not a lawyers. We, we prepare, quote, a sample. We will, we will do what's called a data book. We will, we will question them and take down all their information like an attorney would about who they, who they are, their family members, how they want it to go, and we try to do a little inventory of what they own. Some people can do, can do just a simple will but we like to, if, if they have a lot, we like to try to do it in the trust situation. Then we do a sample and then we have an attorney in Lynchburg, that doesn't work for Liberty, he's a private attorney, we send him the documents for him to look over. And then he sends them to the donor for us. And then, what we do, the donor looks it over, and then we'll, we'll find them a, an attorney in each state. We can't send them a will in, from Lynchburg to North Carolina have them sign it and, and notarize it and then, because they'll say we're practicing law without a license, we can't do that. So we get an

attorney in every state that we deal with and sometimes they charge pretty much...but we don't pay for their, no. That would be too much of um...they would say you're influencing them or...they pay for their own...

Miller: (54:41) Ok, so, so it's not something that, that Liberty provides the will or anything?

Knowles: (54:44) We'll provide the sample and many times if we do that, an attorney would look it over and say, "this if fine, I'll draft it. I'll take it off of your sta..." because we stamp on there, not for execution. So they'll put on their paper, have a people sign it, they'll charge a little less because they didn't do a lot of the work and that's, that's a plus for our donors; they don't charge an arm and a leg for finalizing that.

Miller: (55:08) One thing that I, I, as a I look back over the ministry with, with Dr. Falwell, that is perhaps different when compared to other ministries is, did some of the folks kind of consider Jerry to be their pastor? Maybe they were sick or shut-in...

Knowles: (55:22) Yeah.

Miller: (55:23) Maybe they were in an area that didn't have what they considered to be a good gospel preaching church or something like that. I know that some of those premiums were just a gift of appreciation, but some of them were really to help either baby Christians or people that didn't have a local pastor and so they were listening to the cassette tapes. Their watching of the television program was their church service. Can you talk about Jerry being a pastor to donors across the United States and the world?

Knowles: (55:54) Sure. I visit, I've done this job for 32 years. I would say, well I wouldn't guess the number, but yes, thousands of them that I visit are, are older people. They don't have a good gospel church, they felt like they were, they were not being, you know, given the word and Jerry became their pastor. I mean, they would do the gift offers for study but he would become, they would call him, "My pastor's Jerry Falwell." And they would live, I mean, in California or Arizona or Texas and they would call him..."I go to Thomas Road Baptist Church," you know? I mean, and then we also had it where if they wanted to be a church member, a lot of people ask me, "Can I be a church member at Thomas Road?" And we would do it through correspondence. Jerry would write them a letter and they would write back and say, "I, my desire is to join Thomas Road by mail." And we, they would be an honorary church member of Thomas Road and he'd give them a certificate. Yeah, that's happened so much that I, I, it's, and they...I have people today, I have three people in Johnson City that, well two now, one died last year, they're in their nineties. She's 97 and her brother is 94 and they, they do, there's a, they do pick up one of our television stations programs from there but I give them cassettes, CD's I mean, that, of the, of Thomas Road. They listen to that on Sunday morning now because they don't drive anymore and they said this is their church and Jonathan is their pastor now and, yeah, I've had hundreds and hundreds of people do that.

Miller: (57:29) If we could follow up on that then, how have you seen things change in the three years now, it's nearly almost, we're at the end of April. It'll be the first part of May then of 2007, so when we're recording this today, about three years. How has the ministry changed as far as that ministry aspect towards the donors and towards a national audience? How have you perceived that being out on the road?

Knowles: (57:53) Well, ok, a lot of people are very complimentary. They, they think that Jonathan, the transition was great. That Jonathan is doing a great job. A lot of them wish he would be a little more political, you know, and uh...but, you know, that's his calling. We're not on TV that much anymore. Jerry was, when Jerry was alive, he was the, he was the church and the school. The fundraising arm was the TV, for the money from TV went to the school. Jonathan speaking, Jonathan's looking at, "I need to take care of my side," you know, and Jerry Jr. takes care of his side now. And I think, I'm not saying they're clashing, I don't mean that, but the TV, if we were on more TV stations, the idea was, who's going to pay for this? And is Liberty going to pay for it or is Thomas Road going to pay for it? And who benefits? Well, through the television, Liberty benefitted, a hundred percent, because a lot of people didn't give to Thomas Road from another state because they had their own churches. But they have accepted, those that watch TV, and they have, they have accepted Jonathan really, really well and a lot of people call him, like the folks in Johnson City, they say that, you know, "Jonathan is my pastor now," because they don't go to church. But a lot of them miss Jerry and his political stand. That they feel like that helped them in their lives and their realm of politics.

Walters: (59:24) Now, back in the earliest days we had the radio and then we went to televangelism through the television, how has the internet affected things lately with fundraising? Have you seen any of that? I suppose you're appealing to a population that, you know, they weren't reared on the internet and that...

Knowles: (59:42) No, no.

Walters: (59:43) sort of thing, so how do you anticipate that?

Knowles: (59:45) Well, we have a website on our uh...we have a website out there for LU, LU, well, Liberty does and in a section that, we got "Giving to Liberty." A lot of older people I deal with don't even know how to turn a computer on.

Walters: (59:56) Right.

Knowles: (59:57) And so they don't deal with that, so we do letters. And uh...but we've gotten, we've gotten some great prospects through people that have pulled up the website of Liberty just to see about Liberty about either enrolling or either see what's going on here and then see that, that part that says "LU Giving" and we list all of it down there with, how you can give to Liberty. And we've got some great prospects through the internet. And if somebody wants, if

somebody wants to, but the gift annuity program is a great tool for us. And you do a proposal. You say, "You, now, you give ten thousand dollars." You'll rate our interest, we don't call it interest, we call it income but for the sake of explaining it, "your interest is six percent. You'll receive this per this month, every quarter you'll get this tax deduction." Once we print that out, we can put it on the, on the internet and, and zip it right to them overnight, I mean, within, within seconds. They'll have it right away. Normally, we'd do a real proposal and goes in the mail and goes out and get it in three or four days. By then, they might have think, "Well I don't know. I don't know if I'm going to do this or not." But with internet, if they request any information, we can, our girls can type it up, put it back on the internet, and they've got it that afternoon and it's great.

Walters: (1:01:17) Now have you seen a trend anywhere...now you've done this for a long time. The folks who are from their 40's and 50's, they're in, about that old right now, are you seeing any trends that...are they as giving as the people twenty years ago? Are, are you able to see any trends with the middle aged folks or?

Knowles: (1:01:39) Yeah. Well, I see, no, I don't see any other than what we're starting to do now with really go after the alumni, the older, older, quote, alumni; 40's and up, 50's. Now, let's see, close to fifty now and we're, we're doing some, well, they really revamping the alumni base and finding, finding them that...here's somebody that's 45 years old, encouraging them to start thinking about giving, thinking about their future plans. But somebody that's in their forties, maybe even fifties, early fifties, if they make a will out to Liberty, there's a possibility they'll change that two or three times.

Walters: (1:02:18) Right.

Knowles: (1:02:19) But, in my visitation over the years, I, I haven't visited anybody under, under sixty.

Walters: (1:02:26) I see.

Knowles: (1:02:27) Very, very rare. And in that gift annuity program, the rules are you have to be sixty years old and above so...

Miller: (1:02:34) And so what determines...I see that the interest income is like six to 11 percent if I remember right. Who determines what, who gets six percent and who gets 11 percent?

Knowles: (1:02:43) Age. It's by their age. We start at age sixty. There's a gift annuity council out of D.C. All schools do the same thing. Hospitals sell annuities. If someone is sixty, the rate now is 5.5. and if they're, if they're above, if they're ninety and above, their rate is like 10 percent.

Miller: (1:03:09) Ok.

Knowles: (1:03:10) And, and it's broken down into percentages like that.

Miller: (1:03:14) Per year because how much longer are you going to have to keep putting out the money is kind of the idea...

Knowles: (1:03:16) That's what it is and, and the thing about an annuity is to great...they can donate it to Liberty but the money they earned from it's going to be partial tax free for them. They don't report all their money on income tax. And the way the computer works it out, if your rate is six percent, the information we send to you, it says...that's like earning seven or eight out in the world because if you, if you put that money into the bank or stock somewhere, you're going to pay taxes on all you earn. So the computer's going to spit out...even though we're paying you six, it's like you got seven...

Miller: (1:03:50) Here, here's the effect of income rate.

Knowles: (1:03:51) Plus, if someone gave ten thousand dollars based on their age, they're going to have a partial, next April, they're going to have a partial tax deduction on their 1040's like they wrote a check to the church.

Miller: (1:04:03) What's the minimum amount somebody can put into an...

Knowles: (1:04:04) Five thousand....

Miller: (1:04:05) Five thousand dollars.

Knowles: (1:04:06) or more and we're thinking about dropping it to maybe four, three or four. Somebody asked, people been asking, "Well if I give you three now can I add to it later? Well, we, the, they don't, they don't really add to it. They take out a new annuity because down the road they're older and their age is a factor. They, they get a little higher income.

Miller: (1:04:29) Distinguish in my mind here for me the difference between Jerry Falwell Ministries and Old Time Gospel Hour. Can you, can you talk a little bit about the acronyms and what, what each thing uh...is, is it just a different name for the same thing or does each one have a specific function and purpose and?

Knowles: (1:04:47) Well, it was probably go, yeah, it would probably...even though it had Jerry Falwell Ministries, Old Time Gospel Hour, it was basically the same but Old Time Gospel Hour basically was for Liberty. Jerry Falwell Ministries was his other, other things that he was doing, uh...

Miller: (1:05:06) The Elim Home and Godparent...

Knowles: (1:05:07) The Elim Home, the Godparent Home, uh...what's the other name, Liberty Alliance. Political realm, you know, where they don't get a tax deduction for that. But his, Jerry Falwell Ministries was his books helping to, you know, pay for printing books and printing pamphlets and, and not, not putting the load on Liberty or Thomas Road but they basically were the same. Money came in, it was put where it was needed [*laughter*] at that time.

Miller: (1:05:40) And, now, when did, when did them, when did Liberty having an endowment fund start? I, I kind of get the idea that um...has there always been an endowment but it's just been small or did they not even start the endowment fund until around the time of Dr. Falwell's death?

Knowles: (1:05:58) Well no, there's, there's always been an endowment fund because, basically, on, on accreditation, Southern Association with Liberty is accredited by it. We have to have an endowment program. It hasn't been very large. Now, what we've done in the early, early stages of building Liberty, with Jerry, when money came in for whatever, if money came in for annuity, we're allowed so spend some of it now and Jerry would do that. We're supposed to vest the other part to make the payments, which we did. But since Jerry has died, the last three years, we've put it all in savings or endowments. We've put it all out there and the, and the income of the payments that are coming in from the general fund here. So our endowments are, really have grown in the last three to four years because we're not spending any, any of the annuity money that's coming in and uh...or the bequest money that's going into endowments so, so we've always had endowment but it never has been that large as it is now.

Miller: (1:07:06) And is there a goal in mind? It seems like everything else around here, we have a goal of fifty thousand students and that type of thing, have they established a goal? We would like to see the endowment reach X million dollars by this date?

Knowles: (1:07:20) Yeah, I don't know the actual figures. I know they talk about they would like to see a hundred million in there soon and I think it's close. But I haven't heard any figures, any dates. It think that Jerry Jr. through Life Long Learning is doing well, you know, online is doing well. The money's there, coming in and I think Jerry's just using that, a lot of that for, for endowments. We have to have endowments for accreditation, yeah. But I haven't seen any figures on that recently. Goals, I think they don't have, I don't think, I don't think they're shooting for a particular goal, I think they just want it built, make sure it's being, it's being built.

Miller: (1:08:00) So how have things been in your office, in your area in the three years since Dr. Falwell has died?

Knowles: (1:08:06) Well, I'm a little different than the rest of them maybe because of my relationship with him. I really miss him, being out there on the road because you go into a home it's like, "What's Dr. Falwell doing? If you...did you speak to him recently? Tell me about him." And, and even the donors out there are sad, saddened cause he's gone because he made

such an impact on these people that I see. We, we've having, the last few years we've having quite a, not a lot of people but, people are dying out. Older people that we, I've dealt with thirty years ago are dying out on me. And, but, and they don't see...Jonathan is not that, Jerry Jr.'s not that visible as Jonathan is because of the, some of the TV programs. We send out letters in Jerry Jr.'s name and he'll, he'll write a letter out, how well we doing and they like that. They want to know what's going on. And we try to keep up with them and people will call in first thing and they'll say to me is, "Boy I miss seeing him. I miss him," you know. And, but they still give, they realize that I need to give...and the reason I think, you asked earlier, the donations have been really good because people feel like they need to give more since Jerry's gone. They need to do a little bit better. A have people telling me, "I need to do better than I've done."

Miller: (1:09:25) Let's talk about publications for just a moment. At one time we had the *Fundamentalist Journal*...

Knowles: (1:09:30) Right.

Miller: (1:09:31) ok, there was the *Moral Majority Report* that had a connection to Liberty but wasn't totally Liberty and Thomas Road...

Knowles: (1:09:39) Right.

Miller: (1:09:40) but there was the *National Liberty Journal*...

Knowles: (1:09:43) *Journal*, which is now.

Miller: (1:09:44) Ok, and, and then well, there was the, there was the newspaper version and then now there's the slick three color version here.

Knowles: (1:09:52) The magazine.

Miller: (1:09:53) Now, many colleges, when they put out their mailing, and maybe it's just a little four page color insert that they put in the mail, I know that a lot of them include a reply envelope and, and it's almost like this is our mainstream...when, when we tell people what the ministry is and the needs of the ministry then the money comes coming back, is that true with the, the *Liberty Journal* new, uh...magazine. Is it, every time you put out an issue that you see money coming in or?

Knowles: (1:10:22) Well, well, we try to do a, we try to do a, an advertisement in every one of them in my department. This last one we have a lady's picture there talking about gift annuity. Well next issue, we might have someone talking about doing wills and trusts. But we do get responses back because I think the, the mail out is like several hundred thousand of that, I don't know what count it is now, but anybody that does an annuity with us or any new people come along, when we send out a proposal we send out an issue of that and asking them, you know,

look this over and, you know, we'd like to get you on the mailing list if that's ok for this magazine. But, we do get response for that and that's, that's a good magazine for us because we're not on TV that much and as much as that magazine, that magazine does very helpful to us.

Miller: (1:11:18) They say it takes money to make money. Do you have any idea, you know, what they spend versus what they take in, you know, as far as what it costs to do the fundraising here? Is it, you know, that ninety five percent of every dollar that's given goes to the ministry or anything like that? Do you, you don't have any, have no idea?

Knowles: (1:11:34) No, I don't have that figure but I do know that my, in my travels, my expense to raise a dollar is very cheap, you know what I mean? You know, I'm very conscious of spending. Where we stay, motels, where we eat, what I do. I'm very conscious of spending. I'll tell you all the, all the guys are but that's just a small part of fundraising, what we do. But I can't, I couldn't answer that but I, I think, I think we don't spend, I think, I think the income is bigger than what we spend to get it in, you know.

Walters: (1:12:10) Now, as you've talked about, you know, basically the generations passing here, Dr. Falwell passing and the boys taking things on...

Knowles: (1:12:18) Yeah.

Walters: (1:12:19) I, Billy Graham's organization comes to mind, realizing that Billy is still around, do you ever looking at the, the organization, other organizations like that and do you communicate with each other as to how to approach things or is that considered the competition so to speak?

Knowles: (1:12:34) Well no, we, we, I've done a lot of wills, I've, I've helped a lot of people that leave Billy Graham in their wills or other ministries. What I, what I, what I like, my main thrust is Liberty. And when uh...when Billy Graham died or, well, Franklin has taken over. Franklin's thrust is not like Billy Graham's was. Billy Graham was the, was the huge evangelistic...

Miller: (1:13:03) Mass campaigns.

Knowles: (1:13:04) Yeah. And Franklin is basically missions. Going...when he dies, to me, what are you leaving it to, you know? I don't, I don't put them down. I don't mean to say that but when, when these leaders die...that Jerry died, you got the college is going to go on and you give to the college, you giving to a college. Billy Graham dies or Franklin dies, to me, that's over. Fran uh...I'm trying to think of some other ministries that, that had a leader like that and would die. What, what are you going to be giving to when that leader dies?

Miller: (1:13:46) Is there, is there a legacy that lives on or is it kind of like the...I use the expression, some ministries are the lengthened shadow of a man and...

Knowles: (1:13:55) Yes.

Miller: (1:13:56) and when the man is gone, well, then the ministry is just...

Knowles: (1:13:59) Is gone.

Miller: (1:14:00) you know, kind of rolls up and...

Knowles: (1:14:02) Right.

Miller: (1:14:03) and maybe it fades off the scene slowly but they were the ministry and I just think it's great how Dr. Falwell had it planned and prepared and the Lord worked all that out that...

Knowles: (1:14:13) Right, with his school.

Miller: (1:14:14) it's carried on. Now, one thing that's interesting to me is the fact that it took two people to replace him basically

Knowles: (1:14:19) [*laughter*]

Miller: (1:14:20) because he was working, you know, twenty four hours a day [*laughter*]...

Knowles: (1:14:23) Hours a day, yeah, he was [*laughter*] right.

Miller: (1:14:24) seven days a week there. Now, as far as...were you close, personal friends...it sounds like you'd call him up and talk with him about that, about a donor or something, would you come and do the funeral or something.

Knowles: (1:14:37) Right.

Miller: (1:14:38) It sounded like, at least in the early days of the ministry, that, that you were friends going way back. Do you still maintain a relationship with members of the family, either Dr. Falwell's children or Macel?

Knowles: (1:14:49) Macel we do. Macel, I call Macel a lot, just check on her. Jerry Jr. is, is only a few doors down from my office. When, when Senior died, a couple weeks later I wrote, I emailed Jerry Jr. and Jonathan and gave them that scripture about, about taking care of my father's friends and I sort of joked with them and said, "Don't forget, don't forget me." Jerry Jr.'s given me an open door to him, you know, if I need him. I go through the secretary, I don't go knock on the door and walk in. Jonathan, same way with Kathy Rusk. I don't know if you know Kathy or not, Jonathan's secretary. I make appointments with them and if they can see you, they will but the relationship is still good. And I need that, I need that with Jerry Jr. more than Jonathan because of my trip on the road. I'll get, I'll get, when I'm on the, when I'm on the

road, if somebody...well, let's go back to Sr. If I'm on the road and I'm in a home, well, I was down in Morristown, Tennessee one year and one of our donors was a, was a milk farmer. He had a milk cows. He had a farm, dairy farm and I drove up to see him. And he didn't know I was coming but he was out in the mud up to here with his, with his boots on. And I didn't walk all they way to him, he walked up to me and for my, for my first visit there because I had been trying to see him a long time and he said to me, "You know, I've given to Liberty for a long time and I have never been to Lynchburg, never met Dr. Falwell, never spoken to him. I would love to do that some day." Well, at that time, we had just gotten ourselves our cell phones. And I called Kathy and I said, "Is there any way in the world you can let him talk to this guys?" Macel said, "Wait a minute." I mean, Macel, Kathy said, "Wait a minute. He's in the office, let me ask him." Well, I never heard back from her; the next voice was his. "What do you, what do you need? What can I do for you Harold?" And I said, "This Mr. Jones," and I told him as I just told you. Jerry said, "let me, take the phone." So Jerry...he took the phone and you could see this facial expression at first he thought I was lying. He didn't think this was Jerry. And they talked and this guy sent a great donation in after that. And Jerry would do that. He would talk, if he had time, he would call donors for me and that, that helped me tremendously. My relationship, you know, what's, what's helped me recently, you know, I had an article in the *Liberty Journal* on, a story on me and Jerry, I don't know if you saw that last one where the governor of Virginia is on the front.

Miller: (1:17:21) Ok.

Knowles: (1:17:22) Well, you should get a copy [*laughter*].

Miller: (1:17:25) I, I remember seeing the issue but I don't remember reading the article.

Knowles: (1:17:27) Well, it, it's a two page, two page article on Jerry and I and that went on a lot about our donors and states I do and I've got a lot of calls from people on that that saw that. And the relationship is even, it's even made me closer to donors that I know because of that article in there, in that, in that thing. But Jerry would call and the guys today, well you know, we miss that a little with Jerry Jr. You give him a name and he'll call, but it'll be a few days later. But Jerry Sr. was right on the button. You give him a name today and [*finger snaps*] and he's right on that phone when he could and calling that donor. That, that helped tremendously. But the relationship is good with us and the family.

Miller: (1:18:08) Now, [*clears throat*] there was a time when things were really tight financially. You talked about it and we just kind of skipped over it briefly here. Is, during those really lean, tough times, can you give us some stories about what, what it was like when we didn't know whether we were going to be able to open the doors or pay payroll this week or...

Knowles: (1:18:34) Right, right.

Miller: (1:18:35) Could, could you, could you remember some stories about that era?

Knowles: (1:18:37) I remember that, yeah. I remember, well, no, I know, I know in that time came, we were, we were asked to, I don't know if ya'll were working here then maybe, we were, we were without of salary for several weeks. But we're still here and Jerry, Jerry said, "I will, you will be paid later." And even travel expenses, we were not getting them. We were using out own money for, for weeks. But we knew that if we got out there, and, and keep doing what we're doing, that money was going to come in. And there were some lean times when we would send letters out saying that we might have to close the doors. And sometimes that worked great and sometimes that worked bad because people thought, you know, if you're closing, I don't...

Miller: (1:19:17) I don't want to put money down...

Knowles: (1:19:19) I don't want to put money into something that's closing.

Miller: (1:19:20) A sinking ship.

Knowles: (1:19:21) So we encouraged Jerry later on to write a letter back and say, "Thank you folks, we're, we're better off now. Money's coming in..."

Miller: (1:19:27) The crisis is averted.

Knowles: (1:19:28) "The crisis is over. Thank you for helping us." But there were some lean times that, that we were out there.

Walters: (1:19:34) Who, who wrote the letters typically? Would Dr. Falwell usually write it up or would someone write something...

Miller: (1:19:40) A ghostwriter.

Walters: (1:19:41) up and he would...

Knowles: (1:19:42) Well, basically, Darryl Edwards. I don't know if you know Darryl or not. Darryl works now for the law department, law school. Darryl Edwards was his writer. Basically, Darryl would write the letters, Jerry would write out the ideas, what he wanted, and Darryl would put it together and send them out.

Miller: (1:20:01) Do the actual grammatical [*chuckle*].

Knowles: (1:20:03) Do the grammatical, right, right. And they had proofreaders, people that went over them for Jerry. But Jerry would write, I know, I know a couple of times I've flown with him on the jet and he would be writing out notes that when he gets back he would hand to Darryl and say, "This is what I, I need this letter out as soon as I can." And he would put down ideas that he wanted and Darryl would take those ideas and, and...Darryl is still writing for, for,

he's, even though he's in the law school, he's written a lot for Mat, Mat Staver. But he's also written them for Jonathan and also for Jerry Jr.

Miller: (1:20:35) Now, keeping the distinction between the Moral Majority and the ministry of Liberty University, did you have to be real careful that, ok, is this money coming in for...how did you distinguish that? Was Moral Majority totally off...I know that Dr. Falwell, you know, was their spokesman and everything like that.

Knowles: (1:20:56) Right.

Miller: (1:20:57) Could you tell us about the maintaining the distinction between the two in the fundraising efforts?

Knowles: (1:21:00) Well in, ok, in my, my situations, if I was in a home, I didn't do anything actually for the Moral Majority because any donations to that was not tax deductible. And if somebody wanted to write a check out to Moral Majority, they did. And I encouraged them to mail it back, not, not for me to take it in. And what Jerry tried to separate us visiting out on the road from Liberty and the Moral Majority that that be a separate...but people would ask you about it. And we would, we would try to keep up with it. But, and if they wanted, they wanted to donate to the Moral Majority...

Miller: (1:21:32) It was, it was always kept very distinct and very separate.

Knowles: (1:21:34) Kept very separately, definitely.

Miller: (1:21:36) And, now, here's a question somebody asked me and, and I don't know whether you'd know the...I'm just going to go ahead and ask the question here is that, is there anybody in the history of Liberty that...let's say that you gave a thousand dollars in a gift annuity or you bought a bond or something like that and they went through the tough times and so that money wasn't there for a bond anymore. And so, did, did people lose money at any point in the history of Liberty during the tough times?

Knowles: (1:22:07) Well doing, well doing the bond programs, with a bond situation, when, when it bottoms up and...that's when the SE, 1973 when SEC, Security Exchange, came down and came down on Jerry and that's when things started to sort of change. We used to have a CEO here name George Rogers. And George was put in by the court system. The people did, they didn't, they didn't lose it all but Jerry paid back, before he died I heard him tell somebody that we didn't, we owed zero to these bond holders, we paid them all back. Now maybe not the whole thing on the one hundred percent but...

Miller: (1:22:51) Of all the interest and principle but...

Knowles: (1:22:54) Principle. But he paid back a lot of the principle to them. And I, I've never met anybody on the road that had had a bond that was not pleased with what he gave them. I don't know what he gave them but I, I've run into a lot of bond holders on the road.

Miller: (1:23:09) And, and so there's not disgruntled people out there that, you know, "I invested in Liberty University and in 1990 I lost all my money," or "I had to settle for pennies on the dollar," or anything like that?

Knowles: (1:23:17) I haven't run into...

Miller: (1:23:18) You've never...

Knowles: (1:23:19) I have never have ever ran into anybody that ever said anything like that at all, no. And I've had people that, I've had people, recently, that, when I say in the last few years, that, that a mom and a dad were given an annuity and the children wouldn't know about it. I'm saying children, I'm talking about people that are children that are thirty, forty years old. And mom and dad dies and they see this certificate, not certificate, but this contract that you gave ten thousand dollars to a gift annuity and they call and they want it back. You know, "My mom, dad, they shouldn't have done this. They should have done this." They want ten thousand back but they don't have a leg to stand on because mom did sign papers plus we've given them income plus we've given them tax deductions and we tell them the IRS would frown upon me giving you ten thousand back when your mom took a five thousand dollar deduction.

Miller: (1:24:15) When they gave it, it was not longer their money and it's now...

Knowles: (1:24:20) It's irrevocable.

Miller: (1:24:21) it's now the ministry's...irrevocable trust and, and so we, we would actually be committing fraud to, to give the money...

Knowles: (1:24:29) To give the money back. Now, I do know there's one lady down in Lumberton, North Carolina that I was down, this was years ago, that once we started doing the annuity program, the big, when, when we started to do, when the annuity program became very big at Liberty about ten years ago, or less, there was a lady, an older lady gave ten thousand dollars. She was very...that's basically all she had. Some, some family members found out about it, hired an attorney in that town, and that attorney in that town had been a former ACLU attorney. Well they saw this as, as boy I'm going after them. And so, to keep from doing the publicity stunt, Jerry gave it back to them but he gave out of like, not out of his pocket but he gave it back so the IRS wouldn't come on us. He gave it back out of another fund or, or personal thing, maybe from the church or somewhere. But that's the only one I remember ever, ever being paid back because he didn't want the publicity. He didn't want the nasty, he didn't want

people saying, you know, “Jerry took money from a little old lady and, and she didn’t have money for food...”

Miller: (1:25:36) Her whole life savings and everything.

Knowles: (1:25:37) No, and it wasn’t true, you know. It wasn’t her whole life savings, it just was her family wanted it back [*laughter*].

Miller: (1:25:42) Right. As you are out on the road and you hear from donors, from alumni and so forth, can you just share some stories? What impact are you seeing...we’re a little bit isolated and insulated here in Lynchburg, Virginia but just out there on the road, what is Liberty known for and what’s the word on the street so to speak with the impact that graduates are having, with the impact that the University is having in the nation spiritually, politically, whatever it may take?

Knowles: (1:26:21) Well, recently one of, my daughter graduated from Liberty and her close friend here was a girl named Penny Young. And she’s married now and her name is Penny Nance. About a month ago, Penny was appointed head of Concerned Women under, under...

Miller: (1:26:39) Beverly LaHaye.

Knowles: (1:26:40) Beverly LaHaye. So they, they retired out of it and Penny became the spokes mother head of it and that’s a Liberty student. And they’re...up in D.C. where my daughter lives, there are a tremendous amount of Liberty students working in Congress, running for office, they’re politically there and...yeah, Liberty’s known now for its...I mean, you can’t go anywhere within my three states, I got North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. You don’t go anywhere in any restaurant or motel, when you check in or when they see my Liberty card, my charg Liberty card, they say, “Liberty! Oh, I know Liberty. I got somebody,” I don’t...I’ve checked into motels in the last year, I don’t know how many. Maybe dozens of motels, well I know, “I’ll have a child going there,” or “My, my uncle goes, been there,” I mean, it’s like spread out all over. Everybody knows Liberty University. And they know, they realize we’re here to take a stand even though Jerry Jr.’s not political like his dad was but they know we’re putting out students through the law school, through what Mat Staver’s doing. Mat’s, Mat’s, I appreciate what he’s doing fighting a lot of this first amendment law stuff in school where you can’t say Jesus Christ in a, in a speech from school. You can’t take your Bible and all that which is wrong. But Liberty’s making an impact not only in the religious world but also in the political world and out of the business world also. There’s, there’s young people out...my, my daughter, Angel, she graduated with through communications. She went to work in, in D.C. for radio stations but now she’s working at the large church up there with Lon Solomon, I gave you her CD. They, they run about six thousand on Sunday morning in one service and they have two of them.

Miller: (1:28:26) McLean Bible Church.

Knowles: (1:28:27) McLean Bible Church. And, and she's, I mean, a lot of political people come to senators and congressmen come to that church and Angel's met a lot of them. We have got Shannon Bream. You know, Shannon's on...

Miller: (1:28:43) FOXNews?

Knowles: (1:28:44) FOXNews, which is unbelievable. I mean, she's there a lot now and she's a Liberty student and we've met her many times. She goes to McLean Bible with Angel and she'll be there when we're there and she'll, she'll say, we'll say to her, you know, "We see you on TV and how do you get along with those people." And she says, "I take a stand. They know, they know how, how I am." So we've, we've made, Liberty's made an impact all over the United States. It's great.

Miller: (1:29:10) One thing that's, that, that was good news to hear is that when we had the great recession, as some folks are calling it here at the end of '07, throughout '08 there, that Liberty didn't take as bad a hit as many other places did because we weren't heavily involved, invested in the stock market...

Knowles: (1:29:30) No.

Miller: (1:29:31) But who decides...if all together...if, if I was to write you a check for five million dollars today and I, I came and handed it to you, who's making the decisions as to where that's invested? Is that done in a financial office or Jerry Jr., is he deciding on that? Who decides the investment strategy of Liberty.

Knowles: (1:29:51) Well, Jerry Jr. does a lot of it through, through the accounting department, through the investment, through Don Moon office. They try to invest in things that is not questionable. I mean, you know, it's hard to say when you buy a stock in something, you know, you know, like, like I know one time Hershey chocolates owns, now owns some of the liquor and some cigarette things. They've branched out. You know, when you buy stock and you think, "I'm not, I'm not investing my money in something that's not questionable..."

Miller: (1:30:25) Nothing, nothing wrong with chocolate bars but...

Knowles: (1:30:27) Right, but, you know, yeah. But Jerry Jr. probably does that, has a great handle on that. That where he...and, and we'll, we're doing, we're doing un...we got a guy named Ally Molina that works for one of the, one of the brokerage, brokerage companies here where he's watching for us where they money is being invested, where it's going. And if it's not making what it should be, we can, we can move it to something else.

Walters: (1:30:54) What do you think of the future of Liberty University as far as fundraising is concerned? Do you think we've reached Jerry...the , the dream that he had in the beginning, where are we at on that?

Knowles: (1:31:07) Well, yeah, ok, I think, I think we've reached the dream. I think, I think the school is where he would like to see it right now. I think for the future, it's going to definitely depend on the alumni. I went to Tennessee Temple schools. I graduated in the sixties. I've never once received a letter as an alumni for fundraising. Right now Tennessee Temple probably is going to close. I'm not saying that out of guessing, I know of the facts down there. They didn't do, they didn't go after the alumni. They, they have to have thousands of alumni. But our, our goal now is, we're starting going after the alumni. Encouraging them to give now, encouraging them to look for the future for wills and trust endowments. The older people that were, quote, Jerry's people are, will die out, are dying out. And the people coming up, they don't see Jonathan on TV. There's no TV anymore.

Walters: (1:32:17) Right.

Knowles: (1:32:18) So, so the, the bread and butter of this ministry, of this school is going to depend on the alumni.

Walters: (1:32:21) Ok. And then switching a little bit here, going, kind of reflecting on Jerry's legacy and that sort of thing, what's your favorite quotation from Jerry? Or do you have several you could share with us?

Knowles: (1:32:32) Oh, well I don't know. You know, I always like...one thing we used to use, we used to take in a flip chart, we had a little booklet showing the pictures of the school and where it started and, and pictures of Jerry and pictures of his family and one quotation he had that nothing is ever accomplished apart from prayer. He always, he was a great prayer warrior. It's just so much, I couldn't...

Walters: (1:33:03) He used to say never quit for the kids.

Knowles: (1:33:07) Well, yeah, yeah. That, that, and you know, and right before here graduation, he would preach that. In fact, they showed that, I think, last graduation, they showed during the graduation some time during that week of him preaching that sermon, don't quit. Yeah, and uh...he had a lot of stuff that I just can't put my finger on.

Miller: (1:33:27) Well, speaking of that, just if you could elaborate just a little bit here, the whole spiritual emphasis with your department. Now, you could be, you know, you could be collecting money for the University of Phoenix and obviously they're, they're just a for profit company so it's money in, money out but this is a ministry. This is the Lord's work here.

Knowles: (1:33:44) Right.

Miller: (1:33:45) Did you have regular prayer meetings with Jerry or, or what about the spiritual aspect of, of prayer. You've already a little bit about how folks considered him to be their pastor and how he would preach their funerals sometimes, but um...you know, when you're out on the road, do you ever read the Bible and, and just have a word of prayer with folks as, you know, as someone is sick or something?

Knowles: (1:34:10) Right.

Miller: (1:34:11) If you could, just talk about that both departmentally when you're here on campus with your fellow workers and then when you're out on the road.

Knowles: (1:34:16) Alright, we'll start with, we'll start with my, my department. Every morning we, we're there eight o'clock. We have devotions every morning with Gary, with Earl Sergeant. And for about, for about half an hour or forty five minutes, we devotions, we, we give out prayer requests, each, each man that's in, we, we don't have a full crew every day because some are on the road but we give out prayer requests. We name donors that people called in that might, that are sick, that are hurting financially maybe, physically, but we have devotions every morning. Been doing that for years. When Jerry was alive and, and here on the campus, he has come down with us to pray with us and see what needs we might have. What we could talk to him about uh...we've gone to his office, a lot of us, many times as a group and said, "Look, here's what we have to need and have," and let him know but when I'm in a home, we would pray with him, read the Bible with him. Bring, I keep a literature in my trunk. Books, his books, Macel's books, Jonathan's books, Jerry Jr. hasn't written a book yet but a literature, other things different from phases of the Ministry, Harry Wilmington's stuff he's got. We make sure that there got some stuff, some good biblical stuff. If they don't go to church anywhere, we will give them some good Bible studies to do and pray with them and their Bibles. There was one lady up in uh...when I had New York, we visited a lady years ago, my wife went with me, she was a retired lawyer for John Wanamaker's department store years ago. She never married and fell in love with her priest and tried to get him to come out of the priesthood and marry, marry her. And when he didn't, she always let that bother her. That she tried to entice him to come out of the, but my wife lead her to the Lord and then we went back another time and she had heard about having communion. She couldn't be baptized anywhere. So she wanted to know if we could do communion for her so we went out and bought some bread and some grape juice and we had communion. We read the scripture and did communion for her. And little things like that, when they can't get out, we were there, they know we're there for them. Now, we've talked about, we're older and, and been in the ministry here a long time and have the, the spiritual part. As we fade out and younger guys come in, I'm not, and this might sound like criticism, I don't think it is, but we're, we're concerned about all these younger people coming in, these younger men coming in, are they going to pick up the torch and be the, and, and look at...

Miller: (1:37:04) And have that same spiritual emphasis.

Knowles: (1:37:06) Yeah, yeah, and to me, this isn't just a job. This is a ministry, you know? That's how I look at it.

Walters: (1:37:11) Speaking of, speaking of that, it sounds like if, Randy touched on this in a question earlier but, taking it to a more personal, private level if I could...

Knowles: (1:37:22) Alright.

Walters: (1:37:33) you know, it sounds like you have the life of a salesmen except you're selling a school, you're selling a future in an institution. How do you balance all of these travels and things with your family life and, and to keep from becoming a company man that, that loses his family over it so to say?

Knowles: (1:37:42) Now, of course, my children are older and married and gone. My wife had worked for Dr. Alberts. She was office manager for him for a few years and then her mother became ill in Chattanooga and my wife quit to go down and look after her mom for, till her mom died travel off and on. So for the last ten years, my wife goes with me. I go out every other week, she's there in the car. Now, I don't take her in a home the first visit. In other words, if I go I'll drop her at a mall or drop her shopping or leave her at the motel. I go in a home alone because I don't want to, I don't think it's right to take two people in there and when I'm dealing with their financial stuff and their stuff. But once I get acquainted with them and we're going to take documents back, then she'll go in with me and we'll go out to eat. And she's...so I keep her with me. And so, we maintain that. Plus, my son lives in Memphis, which I travel to Memphis. My daughter lives in Gainesville, which I have that area, all that D.C. area. And then my one daughter lives here which I see. And by going out every other week, we're able to maintain uh...my office work that I do, paper work. But as far as family is concerned, she's traveled...now, if she didn't travel with me, that would be, that would probably be a hard situation. Where I'd get up every morning, I mean, on Monday morning get up and leave and don't come back till Friday, and I did for twenty years.

Walters: (1:39:15) So, when you're within driving distance of Memphis or some such place, you, you stop in and...

Knowles: (1:39:21) I stay with my, I stay with my son and, just a little side thing, with Liberty, when you, like if I stayed with a donor, now when I go to D.C., I'm going up tomorrow to visit Mrs., this lady, to close out some other stuff. The, the expense thing, when you stay with somebody, you can take them out to eat...

Miller: (1:39:43) In lieu of the meal...

Knowles: (1:39:43) In lieu of the hotel.

Miller: (1:39:44) Yeah.

Knowles: (1:39:45) So I take my, I could take my son out if I stay with my son. If I stay with Angel...and we take them out. Now, the motel up in that area is like a hundred and thirty dollars. I'm not going to spend a hundred and thirty dollars for a meal for them that night but that's...

Miller: (1:39:58) So Liberty makes out and you get to be with your...

Knowles: (1:40:00) I make up and yeah, Liberty, Liberty saves some money and I get to be with my family and I get to go to Memphis and stay with my son. I work out of his home and travel like Germantown and, and different areas throughout Memphis. And, and then I can come back at night and take them out to eat and it works out great. But my family life has been...and also in, to interweave that into my prison ministry. I've been doing hope of globe prison ministry for about fifteen years. And we do the big prisons in Richmond. I can leave early Thursday morning and go down and knock on about three, three doors of donors and then go in that night at 6:30 and sing and for, and for three hundred prisoners. That's a great ministry for me.

Walters: (1:40:46) Now, looking at the, looking at the University in the future here, um...well, for instance, in the business world they do a S.W.O.T. analysis; strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. What would you see as the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the University right now, in general?

Knowles: (1:41:07) Well I think the, I think the strengths are that Jerry Sr., working with his boys, working with Jerry Jr., and Jerry Jr. realizes the heart, well, Jerry Jr. worked with his dad for, I guess, about fifteen years probably, somewhere right in there. I guess the strength would be that Jerry Jr. knows that we've got a great faculty, a great staff, and, and keeping the finances down, the tuition down. The disciplines that are here. I think that would be good strength. Say the other, give me that other...

Walters: (1:41:47) Weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Knowles: (1:41:48) The weaknesses. I think the weaknesses probably would be, is, is getting to, is like the, someone once said one time, it's like when you cook a lobster, you sort of put him in cool water, he doesn't know he's being cooked. I think sometimes we can be complacent and don't realize, maybe we get big and don't realize where we came from. I think that's, that's a good thing. I believe that if Jerry hadn't have had two boys that came right along that have his heart, we'd have to have a new president and a new pastor. I think we would have been in trouble. I think the, I think they wouldn't have had the heart of um...we've had a couple of past presidents that didn't have really the heart, I don't think, of Liberty. I could see it going nowhere with these leaderships. And, but with Jerry Jr. and Jonathan here, knowing that they want to carry on their dad's dream of ministry. And, of course, Jerry always says, you know, "It's not mine, it's God's," but I know what he meant. I mean, God used him to do this. And his dream was what you see here.

Walters: (1:43:00) Then, looking to external influences, to opportunities or threats that we may have externally, um...

Knowles: (1:43:09) I think we need to be careful on, I think we ought to be careful on people we bring in, music, or speakers, commencement speakers, and people that we bring in. The outside people look at it different when we brought in uh...last year when we brought in uh...

Walters: (1:43:31) Ben Stein?

Knowles: (1:43:32) Yeah, I got a lot of complaints on that from donors, you know, who, you know, they see that as not...

Miller: (1:43:37) You're an evangelical Christian, he's a Jewish person. It, it ought to be that someone who comes to graduation should be able to hear a salvation message or something.

Knowles: (1:43:45) Or either something, something close to what we believe in. But Jerry Jr.'s thought, in fact, Jerry Jr. asked me afterwards had I gotten any flack on him. And I said a lot. And he said, "Well my thought is, I wanted to bring people in to speak that have, that students could see there's another side to," you know. And I think we ought to be careful who we bring in. How the music people, you know. I got a lot of flack there on the group coming called The Fray. I've got a lot of donors, people heard about that they're coming...

Miller: (1:44:20) It's coming up this Monday night.

Knowles: (1:44:21) Abigail would probably know about The Fray coming.

Miller: (1:44:22) *[laughter]*

Knowles: (1:44:23) And they, they, it's very questionable who they are, what they stand for.

Walters: (1:44:26) Sure.

Knowles: (1:44:27) I don't know them. I have never heard of them. I don't even know what they stand for. And so I can't even defend either way. I'm saying I don't know them.

Miller: (1:44:35) They're, they're not a contemporary Christian group, they are a secular rock group that is, you know, perceived as being, kind of like U2 would be, that they're, that they're conservative but not, not Christian.

Knowles: (1:44:48) Right. And you know, a lot of people would laugh at me and say you know, you're an old fogey but you've got to be careful if you're going to maintain a Christian, I mean, this school was founded on the Lord Jesus Christ. It was founded on biblical principles. Just like, just like the Constitution was and people say that we're not a Christian nation anymore. I won't quote who said that but, but you know, my thought, I think the weaknesses, we got to be

careful who we bring in here. I know when they bring a professor here, I understand Jonathan interviews them. That's good. You got to be careful of who, who we have teaching here, yeah.

Walters: (1:45:28) Right. And then, even as we get large and deal with those tendencies or erosions, what's our greatest opportunity even as we get larger and look forward to, to the next years.

Knowles: (1:45:41) Well, I, my, my thought would be what Dr. Falwell's phrase was. Let's bring them here and train, train champions for Christ and send them out there. Not only, I don't mean, as far as my, I like the idea of here that we don't have a school just for preachers and missionaries. We have them here for everything. Lawyers and engineers and school and started and we've got them here for nursing and doctors and lawyers. They're all over the world and I think we could do a survey through computers. We've got students all over the world out there somewhere now. And I think our strength would be to keep, keep it solid, Christian and, and whether you're a doctor or whether you're a lawyer that you maintain a biblical standards.

Miller: (1:46:26) Do we have many or any donors that are giving to Liberty because it's a politically conservative place rather than a Christian place? It's...from everybody that we've been talking about so far, it's they're interested in the Christian mission of Liberty University. Are there any that are interested in it as a politically conservative school? Forget about, you know, any...do we have any Muslim donors that are politically conservative that, that you know about?

Knowles: (1:46:54) No, no I don't. Not, not, well, to answer that question, no, I don't know of any Muslim donors. I don't know of any, I don't know of any...

Miller: (1:46:59) Or, or let's say like...

Walters: (1:47:04) Mormon maybe.

Miller: (1:47:05) Mormon, you know, somebody like uh...who was the one that ran for president?

Walters: (1:47:09) Rolmney, Mitt Romney.

Miller: (1:47:11) You know, a Mitt Romney type supporter that, that would, you know, I don't share your evangelical beliefs but I like what you're doing at Liberty University.

Knowles: (1:47:18) I, I advise...no, I don't know of any. I haven't been involved in any but I know of people, of donors that give because of the political stand that Jerry took. They, they knew that this was the only way to save this nation and they, they gave here for that purpose, political, yeah but. I don't have anything on the Muslims or the Mormons or...

Walters: (1:47:37) Do you, do you see anybody out there on the horizon that may start filling the shoes?

Knowles: (1:47:45) Well, yeah, we're talking, I'm asked that a lot. No I don't. I don't see anybody that's coming along. I get angry with people out there, pastors that said, you know, "Jerry should never have preached politics." I always said to Jerry and I've always said to people and the pastors, "If you didn't," I might have shared this yesterday, "If you don't do something politically in your pulpit, you're not going to have a pulpit to preach in." They're going to, your freedom's going to following its way out somebody out there. You know, Jerry could make a statement today about political and it would be on the news tonight and people would hear that all over the United States through CNN or FOXNews. But Jonathan or Jerry Jr. could say something and it's not going anywhere right now because they're just not that political. I don't see anything, no. On the, I wish there were somebody coming up that, that was strong like Jerry was and that wouldn't be afraid to speak out and not call it a hate crime.

Miller: (1:48:41) Well, it's been so good talking with you and we just really have enjoyed our time and with that we'll conclude today's interview with Harold Knowles. This interview has been conducted as part of the oral history project of the Liberty University archives.

[end of interview]