## **Oral History Interview with Duke Westover (Part 2)**

Date of Interview: August 6, 2009

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

Interviewee: Duke Westover

Interviewer(s): Randy Miller, Dr. Cline Hall

Transcriber: Joannah Johnson

Interview Length: 03:00:40

Notes:

Miller: (00:00) Welcome to this interview in the oral history project of the Liberty University Archives. This interview is being conducted on August 6, 2009. Today we are having the second part of an interview with Duke Westover. My name is Randy Miller and I'll be conducting the interview today along with Dr. Cline Hall.

Hall: (00:21) Good afternoon.

**Miller**: (00:24) And Duke, good to have you back with us today.

Westover: (00:25) Thank you so much.

Miller: (00:27) As we pick up the recording today, there was one incident that we didn't get on the tape originally; tell us about your being kidnapped?

**Westover**: (00:35) [laughter] I was talking earlier about my, the time that my mother and father got a divorce and the judge gave me to my grandmother, this is the grandmother who had been married five times, incidentally. And so while I was living with her, my mother kidnapped me from the playground of the school after three, four, five months, I don't remember exactly how long and so she and I went to live in Port Arthur, Texas and about four or five months later, my father kidnapped me back and that's what, that's what...

**Miller**: (1:21) [unintelligible]

**Westover**: (1:21) Lawyers OK, uh, the lawyers getting together and say we've got to solve this and that's when the lawyers put my mother and daddy in the room and that's when they came out and said that they were going to married again.

**Miller**: (1:35) OK, well that's an interesting... [laughing].

**Hall**: (1:36) interesting story.

**Miller**: (1:38) Kidnapped twice, alright. As we start today then, one, one of the real fertile sources you can be for us is to let us know about Jerry Falwell, the busy world traveler. We have other people talk about the relationship; we've had Dr. Jim Moon on the program and talking about what was happening here in Lynchburg, Virginia. You really were out on the road with him an awful lot, now when he would go to other places did he always travel by plane or sometimes drive, talk about his, his transportation.

**Westover**: (2:15) Almost always it was by plane if it was within an hour – hour and a half drive we would generally drive, but almost always we would go by airplane.

**Hall**: (2:27) Now I remember one occasion the church did own a plane, I don't know if it was the church or the Old-Time Gospel Hour, is that true? I mean...

**Westover**: (2:36) Yes...

**Hall**: (2:36) What type of plane was it?

Westover: (2:36) Well, there have been a number of planes down through the years. In the early days, before the days of the Moral Majority, the church or somebody, Old-Time Gospel Hour maybe, I am not sure who owned it. It was a small Cessna, Cessna 421 – which was a four passenger plane plus the two pilots. Then we got an aero-commander, a jet commander; I always called it the "lead sled" because it didn't hold enough fuel to go a long way. If you took off in probably two in a half hours you would be on the ground someplace, because it didn't have enough fuel and then as the Moral Majority kicked up, I think it was the Old-Time Gospel Hour and it might have been the Moral Majority, I'm not sure who actually owned the airplane, but we got an Israeli built, Westwind 2, which was a very great, a good airplane had "good long legs" we would say, it could stay in the air a long time. And from about 1979 to about 84-85

somewhere along there Jerry spoke someplace outside of Lynchburg every, at least once every day. Many times we would do a pastors breakfast in one city a pastor's luncheon in another city and a pastor's dinner and a rally in a third city and then fly back to Lynchburg and start all over again the next morning and we were averaging somewhere between 350-400 thousand miles a year on the airplane.

**Miller**: (4:25) And so did he have someone who was his own pilot, so to speak?

**Westover**: (4:28) Oh yes. There were a number of them along the way. Dave Davison was one that was there for a long time; Tim Vaughn was with us for a long time, um, the last one was also Tim, from Texas, Tim, I will think of his name in a minute.

**Miller**: (4:52) OK, now did he ever fly out of the Lynchburg General Airport or did he always do the Falwell Aviation? What is the relationship of Falwell Aviation to Jerry Falwell?

**Westover**: (5:02) OK, there actually is no relation other than the fact that Falwell Aviation is owned by two of Jerry's first cousins Calvin and Laurence Falwell. And their airport out on 460 has a very short runway and it is all uphill and so rarely did we fly out of there, almost never so it was always out of the Falwell, excuse me, Lynchburg Airport.

**Miller**: (5:36) The Lynchburg General Airport out there, now you were saying before we turned on the recording here today, tell us about at the end of the day what Jerry Falwell would do when he would get on the plane, maybe it's really late at night, he has been at a church preaching or something like that and so he even stopped and signed bibles and shook hands and thing like that afterwards, what would it be like to get back on the plane?

Westover: (6:02) The first thing you got to understand is that Jerry had more energy than any three people that I ever met and it was tough on me because I had to stay in front of him. But at the end of the day he would finish preaching someplace and it would ten or eleven o' clock at night and after signing bibles and maybe going out to eat with a group of pastors and all and we would get on the airplane and we would sit down and he would say "Well, I think I've done all I want to do today." And then he would look at me and say "Duke, if you've got something to talk to me about you've got about thirty seconds and that's it."

**Hall**: (6:37) [*chuckles*]

**Westover**: (6:37) He would close his eyes and he was asleep and he would sleep all the way home until the wheels would come down and then he would wake up and he would call Macel and he would say "Macel, I am on final, be there in a few minutes."

**Miller**: (06:54) And now he drove his own vehicle, so did he drive that over to the airport generally?

Westover: (7:00) Yeah, yes.

**Miller**: (7:01) And um, now, he tried to be home to her every night but some of those got to be pretty late in the morning.

**Westover**: (7:09) That's exactly right. And that was the idea, Macel always either wanted him home or on his way home every night and so he tried his best to accommodate her and it was rare that he would be away from home overnight in the last five years anyway.

Hall: (7:26) Who usually travelled with him?

Westover: (7:27) I did, always.

Hall: (7:28) And, any others on the staff or...

**Westover**: (7:31) Well, every now and then Ron Godwin would go with us because there would be things that they needed to talk about business wise and if we were going someplace that was an advertised event, that, that there is a possibility of some controversy and all I might get a security man to travel with us and that would be Randy Smith sometimes, Don, Don Sloan sometimes, sometimes we would take a photographer which would be Todd, Todd Hunley and so Todd was also security every now and then.

**Miller**: (8:13) Now did the Falwell children often travel or ever travel with their dad. Every now and then they would. They were always involved in a lot of other things in the ministry and just to travel now to hear him speak was not a big deal for them anymore and so unless there was a real reason for them to go, they didn't go much, now in the earlier days they did, you know? They were children and Jerry wanted to take them some place, they would travel with him.

**Miller**: (8:44) Now did he get fogged in or rained in or ordinarily that effects commercial flights, I suppose maybe he could make it through places that others couldn't and that, did, did he very often get weather problems?

**Westover**: (8:57) Occasionally, it wasn't a big issue most of the time, every now and then. If there was a thunderstorm in the area we would have to wait for a little while, while it passes and then go behind it. If there were thunderstorms in the area here, sometimes we would have to land in Roanoke and rent a car and drive over or Greensboro and so on, but actually it didn't happen much.

**Miller**: (9:22) Now [*cough*] I, I had asked you again before we started the recording started rolling here, did Jerry Falwell like to be on time, early, was he always running a few minutes late? Talk about his punctuality [*chuckles*].

**Westover**: (9:37) No, Jerry always thought that everybody else's time was just as valuable as his and so Jerry was rarely late. Every now and then there were some things that happened that would make him a few minutes late, it was rare.

Miller: (9:54) And, OK, let's then go to another area here, The Old-Time Gospel Hour, Jerry Falwell Ministries, Thomas Road Baptist Church, Liberty University, can you talk a little bit – and then the Moral Majority in its day there, as far as how money came in, money handled, you know if somebody just sent a check for fifteen dollars and put "Jerry Falwell, Lynchburg, Virginia", where would that go? Can you talk about those different ministries and how all the division of that worked?

Westover: (10:31) I can talk about the ministries themselves as far as the, how the money flowed. I'm not really sure I can talk about that, but the church virtually was the mother of everything, Jerry felt that everything he did, everything that he was allowed to do through God by God needed to go through the church because the church was the vehicle that God set aside for the propagation of the gospel throughout, the whole world. Now it was a little bit strange though in the sense that all these years, the state of Virginia would not allow a church to be incorporated, up until just a few years ago whenever Jerry Jr. sued the state to overturn so that the church now could be incorporated.

**Miller**: (11:33) Now that goes all the way back to the time of Thomas Jefferson...

**Westover**: (11:34) Thomas Jefferson, that's right. And in fact the newspapers said that Jerry Jr. was suing Thomas Jefferson over this...

Miller and Hall: (11:41) [laughing]

**Westover**: (11:43) [laughingly] and so, and at the end the newspaper said "Jerry -1, Tomnothing"

Miller, Hall and Westover: (11:50) [laughing]

Westover: (11:51) Anyway, the university itself was incorporated as a 501(c3) like it should have been and so they had their own corporation, the other parts like the Godparent Home and the Elim Home for Alcoholics and everything, I believe that that was a part of what we call Jerry Falwell Ministries, it was also incorporated, The Old-Time Gospel Hour was incorporated also, that was done, as I remember it so that somebody other than the church could actually own land like, uh, the acreage that the university was on to start with, because once again in that same, same law that said "a church could not be incorporated", it also said that "a church could not own more than fifteen acres of land" and so that included the parsonage and so, so not to get around those laws, just, just...

**Miller**: (13:04) The practical purposes...

**Westover**: (13:06) For practical purposes, The Old-Time Gospel Hour owned a lot of the land and then there, there was some controversy then whether there should, the land should be taxed and so, and so the ministry had to put a certain amount of money into escrow for a long time until that was all solved and with the lawsuit, I think that was solved also, but it was not necessarily solved in our favor, I think all the money that was in escrow had to go to the state then, that's the way I remember it, anyway.

Hall: (13:46) So actually The Old-Time Gospel Hour owned the campus at one time...

Westover: (13:50) At one time, yeah.

**Hall**: (13:53) I think that got us in problems with the accrediting people too.

**Westover**: (13:57) Yes it did, but it was all solved and everybody walked away happy.

**Miller**: (14:03) Now were you here when the University started? Were you close to Jerry and working with him on a day to day basis when the, the Lynchburg Baptist College got started?

**Westover**: (14:14) I was, but I was not working on a daily basis, that's the times I was involved with special projects. I would do a project here and a project there, but I spent a lot of time in Lynchburg with Jerry to but say it was on a day to day basis, no.

**Miller**: (14:31) And were you up on that meeting on the mountain then?

**Westover**: (14:33) You know, I was not, I was in Atlanta and I saw the film clips but I was not there that day.

**Miller**: (14:43) You weren't there present. Now but that does remind me of something, we always see the pictures of Robbie Hiner singing "I Want that Mountain" in the film clips and all. Talk for just a second if you could about Dr. Falwell's relationship with some of his soloists, he had Doug Oldham, now did Doug travel with him at all?

**Westover**: (15:06) Yes, in the early, I say the early days, Doug probably started, started travelling with Jerry, probably 1970, somewhere along in there and it was an on and off again thing, Doug wasn't living here then, he finally moved here in the, in the mid-seventies, maybe late seventies – mid-seventies I guess. Then he moved away and was out of Lynchburg for a while and then when the PTL thing collapsed Doug moved back here, OK.

**Hall**: (15:42) So he was at a PTL for several years...

Westover: (15:44) Yes he was.

Hall: (15:45) He was.

**Miller**: (15:46) And how about Robbie Hiner, some memories there?

**Westover**: (15:49) Well Robbie was like one of Jerry's kids, Jerry just loved Robbie, I don't know any other way to say it and Robbie was so good at what he did, Robbie was great on the platform and whenever we would be out some times you know when Robbie would sing to some

of the groups, little old ladies would gather around Robbie and, and he was just like everyone's grandson and, and so Robbie just endeared himself to you, always.

Miller: (16:25) Now were you there the time we put the Vaseline in Dr. Falwell's pocket?

Westover: (16:29) Yes, I was there...

Miller and Westover: (16:31) [laughing]

**Westover**: (16:32) It actually wasn't Vaseline, it was shaving cream...

Miller: (16:35) Oh that's what it was.

Westover: (16:36) It was shaving cream, OK.

**Miller**: (16:37) And, and so, he said that, we heard that Dr. Falwell kind of got back at him for that [*laughter*].

**Westover**: (16:46) Jerry always gets back, he always gets even [*laughter*].

**Miller**: (16:54) [laughter] He plays practical jokes and, and receives them

**Westover**: (16:57) You're exactly right.

**Miller**: (16:57) and that. One note that you had in your biography; the church had a part in helping the boat people who were fleeing Vietnam after the U.S. left the country. Can you talk about that project for a moment?

**Westover**: (17:09) I really can't because I was not really involved in that, I was on the periphery and stood back and watched it but I really don't know, I know it was, it wasn't Vernon Brewer it was his uncle, uh, the other Brewer, anyway was working here at the time and he is the main one, he and Elmer Towns I think were mainly involved in that.

**Miller**: (17:35) OK, well let's go back to the Moral Majority...

**Westover**: (17:37) OK.

**Miller**: (17:37) We said in our first interview we talked a little about that first meeting of the Moral Majority there, and do you recall who kind of came up with the name, "let's call it this."?

Westover: (17:51) Paul Wyrick, from Washington and Jerry and some others were in a meeting as they were talking through the reasons for doing a organization like this, and Paul says "Well Jerry, there is really a vast Moral Majority of people out there that would be doing the right thing if they just knew what it was." And Jerry looked at Paul and said "Paul, you just named the organization; it's going to be the Moral Majority."

Miller: (18:29) OK so he came up with the name and Jerry latched on to that...

Westover: (18:33) That's right...

**Miller**: (18:33) and picked up on that, now were there state chapters then for the Moral Majority? How was it organized?

Westover: (18:41) It was organized in state chapters and there was a state chapter president, I don't know exactly how many states, but a number of them and so the chairman, state chairman, operated kind of independently and they were to organize pastors in their states in various chapters, and the whole thing once again was not to tell anybody how to vote, just to get their people registered to vote and get them informed on the issues and then get them out to vote, uh some of them I believe probably voted Democrat, you know? But it didn't make any difference, before then they just weren't voting.

**Hall**: (19:31) So this is sort of a loose organization, nothing from the national headquarters to tell the state chairman what to do or how to do.

**Westover**: (19:39) Well, of course there were always memos going out "This is what we suggest and this is what we want you to do." And so on and so forth, but the state chairmen were on their own quite a lot, you know? So I am not very sure how tight the rope was between the state and the national.

Hall: (20:01) So there was a national organization that had an office in Washington, that right?

**Westover**: (20:04) They did have an office in Washington, but their main office was here, the office in Washington was just a place where we could have a lobbying group there in Washington.

**Miller**: (20:16) So it was primarily a lobbying group and an educational group and kind of an organization that to have some strength for the pastors to say, "We are associating with this." There were no Moral Majority candidates as such that this is...

**Westover**: (20:31) No...

**Miller**: (20:32) Endorse this candidate, they had that as a policy that they...

**Westover**: (20:35) No, no, no...

Miller: (20:35) couldn't endorse any candidates...

**Westover**: (20:36) Well I don't know that they couldn't but they wouldn't because like I say, like you said, it's educational, that's what we were there for. The Moral Majority was not a 501(c3) it was a 501(c4) so that the money that went there I don' think could be written off as a tax deductible contribution.

**Miller**: (21:01) How did Cal Thomas come to be on the staff of the Moral Majority?

**Westover**: (21:05) You know I don't know the story totally, uh, Jerry couldn't be everyplace and so Cal was very articulate and so he came on as one of the spokesman because he was a former newsman for NBC and so, very articulate, and so there was just a place for a communications guy, Cal was it.

Miller: (21:38) And so know was he bordered in Washington on here in Lynchburg?

**Westover**: (21:41) No he lived in Lynchburg.

**Miller**: (21:42) He lived in Lynchburg, yeah.

**Hall**: (21:44) Yeah, and he, I am assuming that his national exposure, being a national journalist. Does it seem like he was able to get Dr. Falwell into some of the national exposure and campuses that, maybe that he would not ordinarily have an in-road into.

**Westover**: (22:01) No, I don't think that Cal had anything to do with that...

Hall: (22:05) OK.

**Westover**: (22:05) The things, there were two people who were around, Bill Faulkner, Bill Faulkner was the publicist and the guy who got Jerry into a lot of events and meetings and so on and then as Bill stepped down, Dwayne Ward came on and Dwayne was probably the best at that out of anybody I have ever seen, he stayed on the phone all the time, trying to get Jerry booked on this show, that show and he was taking questions from the media and all, Dwayne really was great at that and he was the one probably who was the most responsible during those days.

**Miller**: (22:54) So now did Cal Thomas work for Moral Majority or did he work for Jerry Falwell or...

**Westover**: (22:59) No he actually worked for the Moral Majority.

**Miller**: (23:02) And did, did Jerry Falwell have one vote on the board of the Moral Majority, how, did, did, he control them on a day-by-day basis? What was his level of control for the Moral Majority?

**Westover**: (23:16) I'm fixing to say something that is not going to sound exactly the way I want it to sound, but anytime Jerry Falwell was in a room all the oxygen left and Jerry Falwell was in charge so I don't care what room it was [laughter]. And that was just leadership, it wasn't dictatorship, it wasn't anymore than just what I am saying, it just leadership. Jerry, when Jerry walked into a room it was like the lights came on.

**Miller**: (23:49) Now do you recall Cal Thomas leaving the Moral Majority and kind of a follow up question on that, is he wrote a book, *Blinded by Might*, how did Jerry react to that book? Did he feel betrayed, talk about that if you would?

Westover: (24:07) Well, how he left Moral Majority, I'll let somebody else answer that one for you, OK? The book did disappoint Jerry, but now disappointments like that in Jerry's mind, they lasted maybe thirty seconds, Jerry got over things. Now Ed Dobson, who also was involved in writing the book, Ed, Ed came to Jerry and apologized and said, "Jerry, I was duped into doing that." He said "I was," he said "I can't say I didn't go into it willingly, but I really should not have done that and so I apologize." And so Ed apologized.

Miller: (25:02) And I noticed that he him back here surely before he died.

Westover: (25:07) That's right.

**Miller**: (25:09) Now it is interesting, Cal Thomas, they had him come and speak at a seminary banquet here a couple of years ago.

Westover: (25:13) Yep.

**Miller**: (25:14) The, the month there that Jerry died, he was at a seminary banquet and speaking for that, did, did Cal and Jerry ever mend those fences that you know of?

Westover: (25:26) No they did not.

**Miller**: (25:28) OK. As far as the 1980 Presidential election, if there is one thing that Moral Majority is kind of really known for now, how much of a factor was it that Jimmy Carter was the "Born Again" Christian and Ronald Reagan was this divorced guy, admittedly conservative, but you know he, he wouldn't have been the one if you were choosing pastor and chief that the people would have, would you talk about that for a moment?

Westover: (25:57) Well, you made a good observation there, the fact that Ronald Reagan was running for the Presidency as opposed to the pastor of the church it made all the difference in the world because the issues in the election were not pastoral issues, they were real issues. The unemployment was over ten percent, interest rates were over twenty percent, inflation was in the high teens and it was all caused by moves and lack of leadership on the part of Jimmy Carter, and so the fact that he was a born again Christian had nothing whatsoever to do with it. One way of the other, he could have been a Moslem and still have been exactly the same way, Jerry did not back Ronald Reagan because he thought he was a strong Christian, he thought that he was right, on the right moral issues which was abortion and family and so on and so forth, but strong National defense, which Carter was against and just pure leadership, Reagan had it, Carter didn't.

**Miller**: (27:16) And now did the Moral Majority, did they stick solely to what you might call moral issues, abortion, pornography and so forth or did they delve in economic issues for whatever reason?

**Westover**: (27:30) The economic issues were important because it effected the family and the family was the most important thing.

Miller: (27:40) OK, Tell us then a little bit about Ron Godwin.

Westover: (27:47) OK, Ron Godwin was the president of a small bible college down in Clearwater, Florida and Jerry met him and it was about the time that we needed somebody to actually run the moral majority and so Jerry offered the Job to him and Ron came. Ron is a very, very astute business man and is very good running the Moral Majority on a business basis, everything was done just by the book and so in the, so during the big years of the Moral Majority, Ron Godwin actually ran it and then he left to help start the *Washington Times Newspaper* which became the conservative voice on a national basis as far as the printed media and so Ron was very instrumental in helping it get started and once again on a business basis and then, probably eight or nine years ago now, maybe, maybe a little bit longer, not sure, time gets away.

Miller: (29:11) Right around the turn of the Millennium, right?

Westover: (29:12) OK, Ron came here one day just to hang out. He was in the process of leaving The Washington Times on his own and he had made some money doing some good investments and he just came here and so Jerry said, "Ron, Ron, why don't you come and work with us?" and the, the Jerry Falwell Ministries was kind of with nobody and so he made Ron the President of Jerry Falwell ministries, that really two various things around for the Jerry Falwell Ministries and through the merger and many other things to the enrollment of the University was going downhill a little bit and so, and so Jerry and Ron took over the recruiting for the University and it was just amazing, Ron is probably one of the most talented businessmen I know, he is a people manager like nobody you have ever see, he is not the greatest people person on earth because like Jerry said "He has a hide something like barbed wire fence." And so but he got things done in a business like form and so the year before even Jerry took over the recruiting class was freshman class was 160, the year that they took over the recruiting it was 2640 and that's whenever things started turning around financially and so Ron and Jerry grew the university out of its financial difficulties.

**Miller**: (31:20) Now that does remind me of a question that you were going to ask, when did you first remember Jerry saying, "We want 50, 000 students here."?

**Westover**: (31:27) Probably the day he started the university.

Miller: (31:34) So you don't remember specifically?

Westover: (31:34) No.

**Miller**: (31:37) [unintelligible] That's not something he dreamed later in life?

Westover: (31:39) No, Jerry was a dreamer, from day one Jerry was a dreamer.

Miller: (31:44) Now are you and Ron Godwin friends?

Westover: (31:46) Oh yes.

**Miller**: (31:48) And I am just wondering now, that n the day that he died Ron Godwin was with him. What's the difference between his relationship with Ron and his relationship with you?

**Westover**: (31:59) Well the only reason that I was not at breakfast that morning is that I was making, I was scheduling surgery for my spine, I had spinal surgery right after Jerry died and so I was at the doctor's office scheduling my spinal surgery at the time Jerry died or I would have been there. Virtually every morning and every lunch, Jerry and Ron and I were together, the three of us that was for breakfast and at lunch, the three of us plus Ed Hinson and so we were kind of a...

**Miller**: (32:38) The three amigos or the [*laughter*].

**Westover**: (32:41) We were kind of a club or a brotherhood or something, you know. No Ron and I worked very well together, just like brothers we had out our times, you know and every now and then we would throw things at one another, but Ron and I are good friends.

**Hall**: (32:57) Those luncheons became the board meeting in a sense, making...

Westover: (33:01) You are right...

**Hall**: (33:02) Making decisions to be made...

**Westover**: (33:02) That is exactly right.

**Miller**: (33:04) And so then what happened for supper? [*laughter*] I know that when I was here in town I would often saw him go out. Did he eat many meals at home or was he out eating most every night? Talk about that?

**Westover**: (33:17) Well if he ate meals at home somebody else cooked them because Macel stopped cooking a long a long time ago, in fact I am probably one of the few people who ate at Jerry and Macel's table years ago that Macel cooked for. She just doesn't like to cook and so, and so they ate out every night.

**Miller**: (33:40) And so breakfast and lunch was business and with you two but the evening, when he was at the end of his work day then that was with his wife.

Westover: (33:49) Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Miller**: (33:51) We, we, we had talked about especially in the days that he was travelling so much that, you know? He would get in late, call and tell his wife "Hey I am on the way." So we talked a little bit about the end of his days, or the end of his day, now tell us then about his morning and now we have heard some of that from sermons and things like that but after the days of the heavy travel with the Moral Majority what did he settle into for the last ten years or so?

Westover: (34:21) It was exactly the same as, as from day one. Jerry would wake up every morning around five-thirty, five-forty five and he would go down and he would read his bible and then he would pray, he had a list of folks and things he prayed for daily and then he read from *My Utmost for His Highest* and then every morning at seven o'clock I would get a telephone call and it would go exactly the same way, excuse the language but he said "Get your butt out of bed." And I would say "Doc, I have been up for minutes now." And he would laugh and he would say "OK, what's on the schedule?" so I would walk him through and say "OK, nine-thirty we got this." And he would say "OK who is going to be there? OK now what's that about again?" and I would walk him through it and then "OK, what's next?" we would go through the whole day and he would say "OK" now he had that on his e-mail from Kathy Rusk already, but he would ask me virtually every morning and then at the end of the conversation he would say, "Am I preaching someplace tonight?" And I would say "Yes, in St. Louis." And he

would say, "What time are we leaving?" and I said "At three O'clock." And he would say "See you there for breakfast." And he would hang up.

Miller: (35:40) And where would you go for breakfast?

Westover: (35:43) It varied, started, started, we used to eat at IHOP and then a lot of people figured out that we were going to be there and so people would want to see Jerry and ask him some questions, people at the church and so on and Jerry had a pastor's heart, without a doubt, anytime anybody wanted to talk to him about things, he would talk to him, but every now and then it would interfere with business and so we would change and so from IHOP then went to Cracker Barrel and we would at eight thirty every morning we were in Cracker Barrel and then from there we went to [Bon and Babbits], no, excuse me, excuse me the Courtyard by Marriot, we ate there for a long time and then they were remodeling and closing the kitchen for a while and that's when we started at Bon Babbits.

**Miller:** (36:38) OK, what about the security surrounding him? I am sure you were familiar with that, let's go all the way back to the days, Anita Bryant...

Westover: (36:50) Yes.

**Miller**: (36:51) Down in Florida, I mean there were a lot of protesters out for that, in the first place what did you think about protesters and *[chuckling]* and the crowds and that, I think there was a quotation about his funeral. They with Jerry Jr., he saw the protestors; he said "Dad probably would have hired some." You know? *[laughing]*.

Westover: (37:14) That was a, that was always a funny line and as we would go someplace, if it was an event that we knew. Where Jerry had been advertised for a long time, not just a church service but I mean, something, some event that he would say "We are going to have some protestors?" and I would say "Probably, but if we don't go hire some." [laughing] and it was always a funny thing because the one thing that the protestors did is that it brought out the media and during the Moral Majority days we especially wanted media there, he wanted media seeing and hearing everything that he was doing and so, now during the heyday of the Moral Majority, we were getting about 50 death threats a week on him, now, obviously a bunch of them were nuts, nutcases.

Hall: (38:08) How were they handled?

Westover: (38:10) The ones that were obvious nutcases we threw away, those that didn't look like they were nutcases sometimes we would turn them over to the local police and occasionally, occasionally we would have to turn them over to the FBI, you know? Because they, and every now and then something strange would happen; when Jerry still had his office over at the church for a little while a – I can't remember if it was a man or a woman, I think it was a woman that was caught coming up the outside stairs, she was caught, she was stopped and she did have a weapon on her, she did have a gun. Now what her intentions were, who knows? But anyway, one night, generally Saturday night Jerry was always at home, Saturday was the day for Macel, but in one time we were in Pigeon Forge for him speaking at a large group on Saturday night and Macel called him while we were there and she shared an incident, what had happened was that somebody had got over the wall at their house and knocked the security guard out and then got in the house, went in the house, the security guard woke up, ran to the phone and called Macel just as the guy was coming in the house and he told her to go hide in the bathroom, go lock yourself in the bathroom, and she did, and so there was evidence and I don't know exactly what the evidence was, but there was evidence that the person who was in the house had been fairly close to where she had been sitting just before she left and so, and so the person went out of the house, back over the wall, got in a car and as they were speeding down Sandusky, fired a gun three times in the air. Now who knows what that was all about? Generally you could expect Jerry to be home on Saturday night, you know? And he wasn't that night, so.

**Miller**: (40:37) When did they put that guard shack by the mansion there?

**Westover**: (40:41) The, when Jerry moved into the mansion, Jerry built the wall and the guard shack then, that would have been probably 91, excuse me, 81-82 somewhere along the way there.

Hall: (40:53) There is always a guard there to...

**Westover**: (40:55) Yes, still there...

Miller: (40:59) And...

**Hall**: (40:59) Did he ever wear a bullet proof vest?

**Westover**: (41:03) The answer is yes, not very often, he hated that thing but in the early days security talked him into doing it but he decided not to, you know?

Hall: (41:21) Just didn't want it?

Westover: (41:21) Just didn't want it. Yeah.

**Miller**: (41:23) And now, you hear about the lead lined pulpit but he kind of "pooh-poohed" that idea. Was that true or was that not true?

Westover: (41:32) That was true, that pulpit, they took it apart and lined it with lead, they being security people and so the idea was, if somebody started shooting, Jerry was supposed to duck down, that was the idea, yeah. That was, that came about from the White House, you know, we did number of events with Ronald Reagan and so they had different lead shields set up [coughs] and, and the place where he would stand occasionally was a lead lined thing that he stood behind, and so, and so our security guard guy said "We should duplicate that." And so, and so the old pulpit of the old Thomas Road Baptist Church, the reason it weighed so much was because it was full of lead [laughter].

**Miller**: (42:37) And, now his reaction or his interaction with security people, with a President it is kind of "Sir we have to protect you here." And so they would kind of hold him back, did he listen to the security or did the security people watch out for him because they knew wasn't going to stop talking to people and signing bibles and shaking hands?

Westover: (43:03) There were people who accused me of being Jerry's body guard, ok. I was, although I am licensed to carry a weapon I never would carry one because I never wanted to look like a body guard, you know and also I told him, right up front, I said "Doc, I'll take a bullet for you but I am not going to draw down on anybody." You know? "That would cause a lot more problems than you getting shot." And so we laughed about it but my, my job was security and I made sure that the, that the places where he went we got there, and the routes that he took to get there were all around security and so if we had security people with us who were armed as soon as we would get to a place for an event, we would get him in a green room where he was secure and then I and one of the security people would walk the route "OK, this is where we are going to go and this is where we are going to turn, we are going to come out and he is going to stand

right here until it is time for him to speak and so we were very, very security conscious although we never wanted it to look like an armed band.

Hall: (44:26) Did he ever have a, what do you say? A personal body guard and who was it?

Westover: (44:30) Well, like I say, every now and then we took somebody along and the places where we would be the most insecure would be after an event, there would be people lined up to shake his hand and to get him to sign a bible and so on and so forth and so I would make sure that we had a line coming up and the line was always on Jerry's left side and I would stand right by Jerry's left arm and we would have an armed security on the other side and so we were always watching for people's hands as they came around, if they were holding a bible, you know? And a pen and all make sure we saw both hands and if somebody was hiding one hand or another, if he had it in his pocket or is coat pocket or behind him or something, you know? The fact that I was on the left side, I would reach out and put my hand out and make them shake hands with me, you know? Generally because if a person had a weapon he would have it in his right hand and I would make sure that I got to see both hands and so the security man on the other side of him, obviously he was watching the whole crowd but he was also watching me and if there was somebody who I was suspicious of, there was another guy on the other side that was watching my eyes and I would tell them three or four down the line, you know. That one there he would pull him out of the line and talk to him.

**Miller**: (46:23) Just friendly like and so there is a way to shake hands with a guy and pat him down at the same time and he never knows it was happening, OK.

Hall: (46:33) Are they security people, like our police force on campus north or...

Westover: (46:38) Always, always our...

Hall: (46:40) OK.

**Westover**: (46:43) Always our folks, our guys knew not to look like Secret Service or Cops, you know? If you, if you hire security outside, you are hiring people who won't look like their security and those aren't the kind of guys you want.

**Miller:** (47:02) Now were our people ever trained by the Secret Service? Did we ever consult with them or anything? As far as VIP...

**Westover**: (47:10) Not necessarily trained by the Secret Service but every one of our guys are legitimate, trained police officers. I am one of them.

**Miller**: (47:24) So now, that was true if you were off in Cincinnati, Ohio or someplace away from campus here, but at Thomas Road on a typical Sunday morning, there were even people there who were watching and you wouldn't even know.

Westover: (47:41) That's right.

Miller: (47:42) He, he would have some folks there in the audience that were eyes and ears

Westover: (47:47) That's right. That's right and we always did things exactly the same way, I always sat in the same spot at Thomas Road where Jerry could look over at me and I was always watching his eyes and he was watching mine and If he needed something or if there was something that he needed, that he wanted to call my attention to, he could do it. And I was always on the left-hand side and we always had a security guy on the right-hand side sitting in such a way that you could see Doc but you could also see most of the audience also.

Miller: (48:30) Now was he nervous or worried about that, or was it just part of life?

Westover: (48:36) Just a part of life.

**Miller**: (48:38) And if he was driving the suburban to just got to breakfast that morning and people knew that he drove the big, black vehicle there with his "LUONE" license plate there but he, he wasn't always daily worried about some sniper coming out of the bushes, he just trusted the Lord in that.

**Westover**: (48:57) That is exactly right. Time and time again I heard him say that "God's man is invincible, until he finishes the job God gave him to do."

**Miller**: (49:07) Um, OK. So let's switch gears here a little bit, the PTL scandal, 1987, can you tell us a little bit about your version of that story?

**Westover**: (49:17) Well, I was not really that much involved in it. I was, that was during the time that I was spending an awful, I was spending more time building churches then and so I did not, I was up at PTL with him number of times, but to say that I was an insider there, I wasn't, a lot of the details, all I know is second hand stuff some of it is accurate, some of it is not [laughing].

Miller: (49:47) Before we leave that topic, and that was kind of before you became full time as a director there, what was Jerry's reaction to charismatic people, some of the Charismatics thought "Well OK, he is against us." And he didn't believe in tongue speaking, he kind of agreed to disagree, when we were in the time of the Moral Majority, these folks really agree with us on the moral issue and so he always would get alone with them, what was his viewpoint on the whole Charismatic movement and that particular...

**Westover**: (50:20) Jerry's viewpoint on all pastors, all Christians was exactly the same, he said "I can be friends with anybody who loves Jesus." And that was true, now Jerry was not Charismatic, obviously and he thought that there were friends of his who were Charismatic that he was very, very good friends with, there were people who were Charismatic that he thought were nutcases, you know? And I am not going to tell you which ones, [laughter].

**Miller**: (50:55) There, there probably are some Baptists that would fit in that category.

Westover: (50:57) That is exactly right, there were some Baptists that fit in the category too. So Jerry never really made an issue out of the Charismatic thing, the major problem at PTL was some of the people who caused the most problems for Jerry in the PTL were Charismatic people, you know? And so I don't know that they were part of the problem or the solution, but, but there was a lot of things that went on prior to Jerry getting involved in the PTL, financially, business like, all sorts of things that he tried to straighten out while he was there and there was just so much of it that he finally just threw up his hands.

**Hall**: (51:56) It seemed like some of the charismatic people there eventually turned against him...

Westover: (52:02) They did...

**Hall**: (52:03) Because of what he was trying to do.

**Westover**: (52:04) Yeah. Some of them came back a little bit later and apologized and said "Jerry you were absolutely right", you know, so.

**Miller**: (52:10) Or they accused him of ulterior motives and that...

Westover: (52:13) True, true...

Miller: (52:13) And so then the Larry Flynt situation, talk about that.

**Westover**: (52:22) Well, again that was one that I was not really all that much involved in. I met Larry Flynt a couple of times and I know that the trial here, the trial in Roanoke, that Jerry, Jerry, know let's see, did he lose the, he lost the lawsuit, yeah, ok.

Miller: (52:46) They said he was a public figure and so...

**Westover**: (52:48) That's right, yeah. That really, that's the one, that's the one time that I saw Jerry angry, he didn't really, that is one that he really did not agree with, but he decided "Well, that's the way it is." You know? And let's, let's make the best out of it. And, and so he met an attorney during that time that was actually working for Larry Flynt and Jerry and the attorney got to be real great friends and so Jerry used the attorney a couple times after that.

**Miller**: (53:29) Now when did Jerry Falwell get a cell phone? Did he carry one with him? Did you carry the cell phone? Jerry Falwell and communications.

**Westover**: (53:36) Whenever I met Jerry in 1968, Jerry had a car phone, then – 1968. It was, it was not a cell phone as we know it now...

**Miller**: (53:48) It, it, had the box in trunk [*chuckles*].

Westover: (53:49) That's right, that's right and that fascinated the daylights out of me and I said "Man I got to get me one of those." I am on the road all of the time, so about the second or third time that I was here I left my car one time to fly home, and I had to fly home to California and so on, like you say I was on the road a lot, so I left my car here for a couple of weeks and whenever I came back after that there was a cell, there was a phone in my car, Jerry got one and put it in my car for me and so I've had a phone ever since and Jerry has always had a phone, whenever it got time for a cell phone, when he could carry it with him, he always had it with him.

**Miller**: (54:34) Now but I don't imagine a lot of people had his private number? His private personal number he probably had a core so if, as I understand it there was some people who could kind of get Jerry's ear, if something happened to one of them, if his friends, like if Larry Flynt had a problem and wanted to call and get a hold of Jerry were there some people that you put the calls through and other ones, "Well, I am sorry aunt Mabel is going to have to wait." I guess that is what I am asking.

**Westover**: (55:08) OK that is a couple of three questions in one. Jerry gave his phone number to a lot of people.

Miller: (55:13) OK.

Westover: (55:14) And so about every six months or so we would change his cell phone number, OK. And I had a separate cell phone besides my own. OK I had another phone that I would switch numbers from the one that Jerry had to my phone, so in case somebody called Jerry's old number I would answer it and if it was something that needed to be done, you know, or if it was somebody that Jerry really wanted to talk to, then I would give them the new cell phone number and then, after six, eight months, the new number, Jerry would have given it to a lot of people and there were people calling him every day that he really didn't need to talk to and so I would switch the numbers again and so there were three numbers, that, that we kept switching, but now most of the people who knew Jerry and wanted to talk to him about business and so on, they would phone me. And I would say "OK, I will get him to call you and so on and so forth and so, so they all, even though a lot of them had Jerry's number, they had my number and they would got through me most of the time.

**Miller**: (56:43) Now how many of the Presidents of the United States did you ever meet or did Jerry ever meet?

**Westover**: (56:50) Well, good question. Jerry met Nixon, I am not sure before then, I guess Nixon was probably the first one that he met and then Ford of course, now, I am not sure if Jerry and Jimmy Carter ever met. I met Jimmy Carter a couple of times, but I am not sure if Jerry ever met with him and Reagan of course.

**Miller**: (57:23) Did, did he sense that Jimmy Carter didn't like him, obviously he helped Reagan win against Jimmy Carter, but also Jimmy Carter's position on Israel and that was quite a bit different than Jerry's would have been.

Westover: (57:36) That's right.

Miller: (57:40) So did Jimmy Carter ever speak out against Jerry?

Westover: (57:42) Oh, privately and I imagine he did publically also; he didn't like Jerry. Without a doubt, he didn't like Jerry. And as far as I know he still doesn't. [laughing] Anyway, the way that I met Jimmy Carter, Jimmy Carter was speaking at a event in Atlanta during the day, the next day, Jerry was scheduled to speak at that same event, and so Jerry wanted me to go and listen, what Jimmy Carter had to say in the case that Jerry was there speaking an Walter Mondale was there speaking too and so after they spoke and I took notes and he really didn't, didn't say anything negative against Jerry at the time and I took notes and afterward I went down and walked up to the president myself, I didn't say that I worked for Jerry Falwell, but I met him, so anyway Jerry of course knew Reagan and Bush very well, in fact Jerry, at least three of the four years that the Bush's were in the White House, Bush 41. Jerry and Macel to the family Christmas party at the White House so they were close. I didn't get to go with Jerry those. Always wondered why?

Miller: (59:26) [laughing]

Westover: (59:33) Anyway though, now Bill Clinton, while he was in the White House, I will bet at least twenty times Jerry was invited to the White House by Bill Clinton for various things and Jerry never would go. So while Bill Clinton was in the White House, I don't think that Jerry ever went to the White House and George W. now, by the time that George W. became President it was obvious that if there as any place publically where Jerry and George W. were at the same place that fact that Jerry was there was the issue more than any other issue that there was and so Jerry did not go to the White House much during George W.'s time and he, and it wasn't that he wasn't invited, anytime that there was, anytime that Jerry needed to talk to him about something, he was always available and sometimes he would call Jerry, to say that Jerry was a part of his process, stretching a point. You know?

**Hall**: (1:01:02) When there was contact between the two? They would call you to get to Jerry, what was your part in that?

**Westover**: (1:01:09) Well generally they would call me first, but now that didn't happen very often, rarely, not at all they would call me first probably, probably [Tim Gateline] would call and say "Would Jerry be available at such and such." Yeah, OK. But like I say, that didn't happen much because they, they kept an arm's length relationship, just to keep the media out of it.

**Miller**: (1:01:41) When did the Moral Majority officially, did they ever officially cease operation or are they still incorporated today or are they a name only or...

**Westover**: (1:01:50) OK, it started slowing down greatly 85-86 and so Jerry kind of, not washed his hands of it, but I mean, the University was starting to take more and more of his time and so he just decided "OK, it is time for me to get out of this and get back to the university."

**Miller**: (1:02:14) Didn't he have one point at which he said "I am going to devote myself more to the church and school." And so, I mean, he kind of made a clean break at some point there.

**Westover**: (1:02:23) That was about 80-85, 86 early 86 somewhere along in there and so they elected a new President and that was Jerry Nims and so Jerry Nims was the President of the Moral Majority for a little while and then it just kind of road off into the sunset.

**Miller**: (1:02:47) Now about five years ago wasn't there some kind of effort to bring that back up again, a little bit?

**Westover**: (1:02:54) Yeah. But it was never, the heart really wasn't in it. I mean the reason for doing it was still there and we would do, do pastor's policy briefings and do meetings for, to educate pastors still, you know on the voting issues and all, but that was always done specifically for projects, we would get involved back in 90, 93 and 94 we got involved in the, in the Texas Governor's race, and it ended up meeting over a period of fourteen months we met with and worked with about three thousand pastors in Harris County, Texas.

**Miller**: (1:03:56) That was the effort to try to get George W. elected as Governor of Texas and do you think that he, Dr. Falwell got involved with that because of his relationship with George W.'s parents? George H. W.?

Westover: (1:04:11) No, the answer is no.

**Miller**: (1:04:14) OK [*chuckles*]

**Westover**: (1:04:15) It started out George H. W. and the Bush's had nothing to do with it, Jerry, Jerry was speaking at First Baptist Church in Dallas on a Sunday night, and...

**Miller**: (1:04:29) Was Dr. Criswell still alive at that point?

Westover: (1:04:31) Yes, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And so Jerry spoke and we went back to the hotel and we walked in and flip the television on and Ann Richards, the Governor of Texas was speaking and, and so we sat and listened to her for a little while, spew venom, and as soon as she got through Jerry turned the T. V. set off and said "Duke, you know," he said, "what we should do, we should, we should make it our job for the next few months to make sure that this lady gets unemployed." [chuckles], and so the whole thing in Texas had to do with defeating her, not putting George Bush in because at that point we had no idea who the Republican nominee was going to be and all during the fourteen months that we were doing that George W. did do a video for us one time, but he never, ever once attended one of our events. Carl Rove came to a couple of them, just to see what we were doing and so Carl and Jerry got to be real good friends and Carl and I got to be real good friends as a result of that.

**Hall**: (1:05:55) What do you think, I mean Carl Rove of course is still somewhat controversial about his statement upholding Bush, do you think a lot of that is true or?

**Westover**: (1:06:08) I am not sure what statement you are talking about?

**Hall**: (1:06:08) Now Carl Rove, I mean, just his general position that he has in the conservative movement today.

**Westover**: (1:06:17) Now Carl is an operative, he is, I am, I am certain that Carl is looking for somebody else right now that he can get with that he will be responsible for putting in the White House. Carl is just a political operative, that's, that's what he is he is the best at that and he is a good guy, he really is.

**Miller**: (1:06:41) Well switching gears here, in Israel, you have quite an interest, you have taken many trips there, you have a travel agency that goes there and tell us about Prime Minister's of

Israel, you're personal relationship then and what did you have with Jerry dealing with the Prime Minister's of Israel?

**Westover**: (1:07:01) Well going to Israel as a tour operator in 1981 and my wife and I, our company Ducar is the company, Ducar International.

**Miller**: (1:07:15) And does that stand for Duke and Carlene?

Westover: (1:07:18) Duke and Carlene and so I have been to Israel about 56 times now and, and, and we have taken thousands of people there and as a result I have really grown to know Israel and love Israel and love the people. Jerry, Jerry formed his original opinion about Israel from the Scofield Bible that he studied, you know, as a young, as a young man, as a young student, as a young preacher and everything. And so Jerry grew up spiritually loving the Jewish people and then in 48 when it became a state, you know it, the state of Israel was something that Jerry fell in love with. And he was always the great supporter of Israel and when he started going over there, the, the Prime Minister was Menachem Begin and, and so Jerry was so conservative and so pro-Israel he and Begin got to be very good friends and in fact, Begin gave Jerry the [Jabotensky] Award which is the highest award you get from the Likud party in Israel. Jabotensky was the guy who started, started the organization that eventually became the Likud party and that's the reason for that. And so, and so Jerry and Begin were very good friends, the one who followed Begin, [Shamir], they were good friends but Shamir wasn't around that long and wasn't that's strong, but they were friends. Netanyahu and Jerry, they could be twin brothers in the way they think and they were, they were fun to be around in the same room together because they were very [cough], very strong personalities and who else. Shimon Perez, I am not sure that Jerry and Shimon Perez ever met, not that they were on the opposite sides of anything, Perez was in the Labor Party and so most of Jerry's people were in the Likud Party.

**Miller**: (1:10:18) Any idea how many times Jerry Falwell went to Israel?

Westover: (1:10:22) Probably around thirty, something like that.

**Hall**: (1:10:25) Now is this Begin and some of the others, what usually went on in some of those meetings?

Westover: (1:10:31) Oh they just, they just talked about Israeli politics mainly, not internal politics, but just the Middle East and there, there, there are so many misconceptions in Israel and the media here in America has, most of the time has no idea what they are talking about anytime that they report anything going on over there. Israel is a tiny country, it is about the size of New Jersey and only about half of it is even occupied, there is six million people in Israel and there are more Jews in New York City than there are in Israel, I think, I mean it's and, but the fact that there are between five and six thousand foreign newsmen stationed in Israel all the time means that Israel is always in the media and, uh...

**Miller**: (1:11:40) If, If someone kids come and throw a rock on the street corner, ok now we've got a major protest, they need something to report [laughing].

Westover: (1:11:47) I will give you an example of that. I was in Israel and left to come home and the day that I got to New York, I had to spend the night in New York that night, that was the day that a man on a subway in New York City pulled out a gun and shot and killed six people that day, now also, the same day a disgruntled Jew, he was disgruntled over taxes, burned four tires in the middle of the street in the road between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem and of course it shut down the road, he set these tires on fire and I mean there was smoke everywhere. That night New York news, both of those stories, the man killing six people on the subway and the Jew burning a tire, burning four tires, both of them got exactly the same amount of time on television.

**Miller**: (1:12:46) No one was hurt in the tire incident?

Westover: (1:12:47) No, nothing.

Miller: (1:12:48) But it was an international incident

**Westover**: (1:12:50) It was an international incident only because it happened in Israel, you know?

**Miller**: (1:12:56) Now Dr. Falwell took some criticism because at one point he said "Since the Jewish people are going to accept the Anti-Christ as their Messiah" He believed that he was Jewish and I would agree, I've always believed that and would agree with that but when that was said on the national media, then Jerry was accused of being Anti-Semitic, I don't know if you

could find anybody who was least, less Anti-Semitic than Jerry Falwell but what was the reaction to that incident?

**Westover**: (1:13:26) Oh it was laughable, it was laughable. The man who heads up the Antidefamation, the Anti-defamation league, his name is Abe Foxman, for some reason Abe Foxman just detested Jerry, no reason in the world why, but anytime that Jerry said anything, Abe Foxman was all over Jerry and it was mainly out of fundraising; see if Abe could say somebody was doing this, that and the other thing, he would send out a letter and they would send him money and so it was all over fundraising.

**Miller**: (1:14:07) And now, as far as you know, were Jewish leaders, Israeli leaders offended by that comment?

**Westover**: (1:14:16) No. No, not at all; the leadership in Israel know beyond a shadow of a doubt that their greatest friend, that the nation of Israel has is the evangelical Christian in America and anytime that I am over there we are welcomed with open arms, given a red-carpet treatment and all because they know that I bring evangelical Christians over there.

**Miller**: (1:14:46) And, and so they know the difference even between that and Catholic Christians, it's not just a Christian is a Christian is a Christian to them...

**Westover**: (1:14:53) No.

**Miller**: (1:14:53) They, they...

**Westover**: (1:14:55) No they understand the difference.

**Miller**: (1:14:57) I, I was over on the Holy land tour and they even knew the difference between Catholics, normal Protestants and the Charismatics for instance, you know so they make a bigger deal on the tour for the upper room, "well this is where Pentecost came" and so they knew that that would really play well to the Charismatic ones...

**Westover**: (1:15:14) That's true, that's exactly right.

Miller: (1:15:15) Whereas it wasn't as important to a Catholic Tour group or...

Hall: (1:15:21) Tell us about the Jerry Falwell Forest.

Westover: (1:15:23) Well, you know the Jewish National Fund, they're the oldest and the largest charity in Israel and one of the things they do is to plant trees in honor of people and so they honored Jerry by planting some trees and there is a sign out there "Jerry Falwell National Forest" now I am positive it is someplace there but I have never seen it. [chuckling] see in the fourth century the Turks, the Ottoman Turks came and they, they took down every tree and burned every building in Palestine, they called it then. The only thing that was left standing were the churches, the Catholic churches and the, the Greek Orthodox and so on and so forth and so, and so when the Israeli's started coming there in the late 1800's they started planting trees and every tree that is in Israel today has been planted there and so they, they take pride in planting tree after tree and naming it after people.

**Hall**: (1:16:44) Did Jerry Falwell have anything to do with the mediation between Israel and Egypt and the Camp David Accords with...

Westover: (1:26:51) Good question and the answer is I am not absolutely sure, but it's possible. Jerry went over there to see Sadat, just to, just to meet him. I was not on that particular trip but I helped line up some of the things, and so, and so Jerry spent the night at Sadat's home down in [Aswan] and Sadat flew Jerry and his team from Aswan to [Amman], Jordan on one of his airplanes and, and knowing that Jerry was going to see Begin, Sadat gave Jerry and envelope and said "Give this to Begin." I have no idea what was in the envelope, he might have said "Now whenever I get there have me bacon and eggs." I don't know [laughter] but anyway he did and so, so who knows what was in the envelope.

**Miller**: (1:17:52) Did you ever hear him say anything about Anwar Sadat possibly being a Christian?

Westover: (1:17:58) Yes, in private talks with Jerry, the night that Jerry, the night that Jerry spent at his house, Sadat was very open, this is what Jerry said, you know? Very open to the gospel and he told Jerry that he had had some real good friends who were Presbyterian missionaries whenever he was a teenager and he would not go so far as to say that he believed what they had to say or anything you but he was very, very kind to Jerry, kind to these missionary friends in words and so on and so forth with him so, Jerry kind of got the idea that he might have been a closet Christian, but, but you would have never heard him say it because he

was the President of the largest Muslim country in the world, you know and so that would have been...

**Miller**: (1:19:10) So probably it had nothing to do with bacon and eggs because it neither one of them could...[*laughter*]

Hall: (1:19:16) Was there anybody else, Egyptian leader that Falwell met besides Sadat?

**Westover**: (1:19:21) Yes, he met; I was with him now when he met the king of Jordan. I met the son of the king of Jordan, who is the king now, King Abdullah, I met him in Washington one time, Jerry wasn't with me then, but he was the King then and so, and I think that is probably the only one.

**Miller**: (1:19:48) Did you ever met Yasser Arafat?

**Westover**: (1:19:49) I did.

**Miller**: (1:19:51) Was Jerry with you when you?

Westover: (1:19:52) No.

Miller: (1:19:53) So you have met him personally but, and any thoughts from that meeting?

Westover: (1:19:50) [chuckles] The way the meeting was, what caused me to have the meeting was while Jerry and I were in Israel a few years ago, through a friend who was a vice-mayor of Bethlehem at the time, his name is [Nicola Canavati], Nick asked Jerry, he said, "Jerry, if you want to be a real friend." No, that wasn't the world, what he was saying was that education in the Palestinian areas was almost non-existent and he said "If you want to help straighten this place out, why don't you give scholarships to some Palestinian students?" And so Jerry and I and Nick sat down and we talked and it ended up that Jerry, for a number of years, Jerry gave scholarships to Liberty University, every year, full scholarships, room, board, tuition, everything to five Palestinian students every year and after about the second year, I got a letter from Yasser Arafat, thanking us for this.

Miller: (1:21:22) OK.

Westover: (1:21:23) OK, so from 1998, well, excuse me, starting in the mid 90's Nick Canavati and I put up a living singing Christmas tree lie we do at our church in Manger Square and so on the 6 of January every year I would always have a group there, and it was a large group generally and the tree that we built had a hundred, had spaces for a hundred and twenty people [cough] there was a hundred thousand lights on it that were computerized, John Daggit from the church hooked it all up for us and so every year on the 6 of January, which is the Orthodox Christmas eve, we would be there and we would do a program in Manger Square and I would put one hundred and twenty of the people in my tour up in the tree and we would play a tape from our tree at the Thomas Road Baptist Church, you know? Some of the music from that and of course you the lights were all...

Miller: (1:22:35) Coordinated and...

Westover: (1:22:35) coordinated and so we would have anywhere from fifteen to twenty thousand people every time in Manger Square and so it was all done for one purpose, after that, you everybody enjoyed the music and the lights and everything and I would get up on the stage and we had, which was up on the back of a truck and through an interpreter, I would always welcome the people, thank you for coming and we appreciate all of you being here to see and hear the music from the living singing Christmas tree and I'd like to explain to you why Bethlehem is so important to us as Christians and I would go ahead and talk about Jesus being born there and the reason for his birth was, was, was very important and all but the really big deal about Jesus was his death, you know and I walked them through and I would do the plan of Salvation there and at least half the people now were Moslems there and so Nick, my friend, he was always in my ear and whenever I would say something he would say "You are going to far now, don't go any further, don't go any further, nope, stop there." You know, so he was coaching me to make sure that I don't get in a serious problem, you know. Well anyway though, in 98, we were there and we were going to a Christmas tree thing on the 6 and that morning I got a telephone call from Nick, saying that Arafat is in Bethlehem and wanted to meet you, and thank you again for the students, you know? And so I said "OK" and so I went over there and met him and we spent probably fifteen minutes together and, and so our discussions were not serious discussions, I asked him how he was feeling, you know? And...

Miller: (1:24:28) Exchanging pleasantries.

Westover: (1:24:28) Exchanging pleasantries [laughing] and so just before I left I said "Mr. Chairman..." his office incidentally was on the third floor of a building that was facing Manger Square, so he was facing where we were going to do the tree, and I said "Now tonight were going to do our special program we do every year at this time and I would love to invite you to sit out on your balcony and watch and listen to the tree, you would enjoy the music." And he said "OK I will." And I said, "Now, stay for the whole thing because I am going to have some things to say afterwards I would like for you to hear." And he promised me he would, so at the time that I was on the platform, looking up, he was sitting on the balcony listening to me, so I actually preached the gospel to Yasser Arafat and I would love to tell you that when it was time for the invitation that he came down forward, you know, but it didn't happen that way.

Miller: (1:25:29) Now was it translated into Arabic or Hebrew?

Westover: (1:25:31) No, Arabic.

Miller: (1:25:31) Into Arabic.

Westover: (1:25:33) Into Arabic, yeah.

**Miller**: (1:25:34) For that area there, and now, it is interesting that you should say that, I heard you speak at Dr. Falwell's funeral and now you've just mentioned that you spoke here, do you speak much, or is it usually Jerry Falwell is the speaker and your just in the sidelines, but are there other occasions where you have spoken in public?

**Westover**: (1:25:52) Oh yes, many times, in fact I, anytime anybody wants to hear me talk, all they have to do is say so [*laughter*] Now I do my personal testimony a lot in churches and, and I speak a lot, yeah.

Miller: (1:26:11) OK, let's talk for just a second about just the whole protocol of meeting with VIP's and international leaders and things like that, one question that came to mind was, it sounds as though George Bush senior invited him to the White House, you know. I don't know if that was Dr. Falwell's choice not to bring you along or if that was your choice but, how, how many people typically get invited in an entourage when a VIP is invited to a place, you know, do they have the personal assistant, wife, the children, could you talk about that?

**Westover**: (1:26:51) Well, it varies, there is no, there is no rule of thumb, most of the time when Jerry was invited to places as Jerry Falwell, I would go with him as his personal assistant, chief of staff...

Miller: (1:27:09) Personal assistant...

**Westover**: (1:27:10) And so on and so forth, no one personal things like the George Bush thing, that was a family deal, see the Bush family invited the Falwell family, and so, but now most of the time, anytime that there was a, a somebody a foreign leader or somebody who Jerry was going to meet with I was there most of the time.

**Miller**: (1:27:39) Now was there anybody advising you as far as just cultural and protocol things, you know "Don't cross your legs in this culture." Or something like that?

Westover: (1:27:49) Not really, not really I was always bringing Jerry up to speed on some of the people that we was meeting with, Jerry was not real big reader, Jerry did his study for his sermons and so forth but he relied on me a lot you know to keep him up to date on who we were meeting with, in fact, this morning Carlene and I were talking about something that lead me to a point where, we were in California and we were doing a T.V. show and one of the guests that was going to be on a show behind Jerry was already there and I walked out in the hall way while Jerry was in his dressing room getting made up, you know, for the television, I walked out in the hall way and I saw [Vincent Builiosy] who was the prosecuting attorney for Manson and so, and so I read Builiosy's book, and I am a reader, now, I read, thirty to forty, fifty books a year sometimes you know? And so a lot of things like that and so I went back inside and said "Doc, Vincent Builiosy is here and, and so you need to meet him. And he says "Who's Vincent Builiosy?" you know? And so I had to explain it to him and so oh yeah, OK. And I said "Now he got a conviction on Manson, first degree murder and Manson got the death penalty as a result of it, and it is strange because Manson wasn't even there when the people were killed and he did not kill any of them, but Builiosy was a good enough prosecuting attorney, that he got Manson on that." And so Jerry walked out there "Ah Vincent, good to meet you brother" you know and he went through and he just talked to him like he had known him forever, and you Jerry was the quickest read of anybody you have ever met in your life, all you have got to do is just give him a little information and he will take it and run with it.

**Miller**: (1:30:15) I know my son met him one time and told him what college that he attended and he knew, OK well, denomination, everything lines up.

Westover: (1:30:24) Absolutely.

Miller: (1:30:25) And, and so he seemed like he had, almost a photographic memory.

**Westover**: (1:30:31) He did, he did have a photographic memory.

**Miller**: (1:30:34) You know for names and places and people and he would remember your uncle and [*laughing*] and...

**Westover**: (1:30:40) But now if he met, now a huge country and music star someplace he would have no idea who he was, you know and I would be whispering in his ear, you know "OK this is so and so and this is what..." and so and so forth and it wasn't that he didn't care, he just wasn't, Jerry put himself in a little box, you know?

**Miller**: (1:31:11) and so if he was going to read something for pleasure, did he read fiction, did he read nonfiction?

Westover: (1:31:16) Yeah. Always nonfiction, if he was reading, it was study material.

**Miller**: (1:31:25) For his sermons and...

**Westover**: (1:31:27) Now Macel is a big reader also, so a lot of times, you know, if there was something that she thought that Jerry ought to know about she would read to him.

**Miller**: (1:31:38) And then, we have a list of names that we would like to, you know, get some impressions and I would like to just talk for a second before we go over the list of names about some broad groups.

**Westover**: (1:31:55) OK.

**Miller**: (1:31:55) And, and so people that, and there were some people that Jerry Falwell knew that were kind of strange bedfellows I would call them, people like Larry Flynt and Ted Kennedy. Are there some other people in that category that you can think of that just, normally

these two people wouldn't have been friends because of their beliefs but they came together over some issue?

Westover: (1:32:30) Well Ted Kennedy of course is one of them and it started almost as a lark because when the Moral Majority was at its peak there in Washington, you could write into the Moral Majority and send them a donation and say "I would like to be a member of the Moral Majority." And so if, they would, they would fill out an ID card and send it to them, well somebody sent in Ted Kennedy's and so Ted Kennedy got a Moral Majority card and I don't remember by the venue but Ted Kennedy said, "Even I've got a Moral Majority Card." You know? And so that started kind of a back and forth friendship and then while I was working with the National Religious Broadcasters event and I put together a debate between Ted Kennedy and Jerry Falwell and so they got to be fairly decent friends and one time, when we were down in West Palm Beach, I got a phone call, no I better not tell this one, OK, anyways, anyway, so they got to be fairly good friends and so Jerry invited him to Liberty University to speak at Chapel, Convo, you know? And so Ted, and so Ted was terrified, he thought that the people here were going to throw rocks at him and...

Miller: (1:34:17) That he would be facing a hostile crowd.

Westover: (1:34:17) That's right,

Miller: (1:34:18) And they certainly were civil, even though they disagreed with it.

Westover: (1:34:19) They were, they were and in fact to set up all the stuff, I met with him and his advance people and all and I assured him that hey, they will be just a civil to him as he walks in, they will stand up and applaud because he is a United States Senator and sure enough, that is what happened. The other one, that is, that is really, I might have told you all last time about Jesse Jackson, you see Jesse Jackson and Jerry were dear friends, now they would get on television programs and they would fight like cats and dogs and throw things and stuff you know, but they were dear friends.

**Miller**: (1:34:59) I, I heard him get after him one time "Now you used to be against abortion and Jesse you ought to go back and listen to one of your old tapes" or something like that. OK here is

another broad group those who had a moral failure but then repented, it seemed like, I heard a few people say that Jerry Falwell was the man of the second chance.

**Westover**: (1:35:23) Absolutely. I can give you an awful lot of names, which I won't but Jerry would always, if the guy truly repented, Jerry, Jerry, Jerry would do his best to bring them back.

**Miller**: (1:35:40) So were there some folks, that in that category that others would have just written off. Did Jerry get criticized for befriending those who...

**Westover**: (1:35:51) Sometimes he did, but most of the time he didn't.

**Miller**: (1:35:54) How about those who had a moral failure and didn't repent, was he, did he have some real disappointments?

**Westover**: (1:36:02) Yes

Miller: (1:36:03) Couldn't believe that, and so there is some in that category?

Westover: (1:36:06) There are, yes.

Miller: (1:36:07) What about his relationship, here is another really broad category then, of the old time fundamentalist's. I am thinking of guys like John R. Rice and Lee Robertson and some of those types of things. He kind of, through the years, somewhat distanced "I am a conservative, evangelical, even though he had the fundamentalist journal at some point, he would say, well I don't really go by the title of Fundamentalist, now compared to other people I am more fundamental, I need to believe in all the fundamentals of the faith, but what did he feel about those old time fundamentalists folks?

Westover: (1:36:40) He, well he always looked at them as mentors, they were the people who paved the way for him in the first place. Jerry took their paving to a specific place that they stopped and so Jerry moved on from there. Jerry was always forward looking and he was always trying to be on the cutting edge, Dr. John Rowlings, now Dr. John is still alive incidentally, at 95 years old and still he is one of the most forward thinking people that the world. And so Dr. John and Jerry, they talked almost weekly, and so jerry looked at guys like that as his mentors and the ones who went before him and paved the way.

Miller: (1:37:33) Now did you know B. R. Lakin?

Westover: (1:37:34) I did as well.

**Miller**: (1:37:36) Ok, and I noticed that he is buried up there by the Chapel here on the campus there. If Jerry had to name just one person as his number one mentor would it be B. R. Lakin or who else would you...?

**Westover**: (1:37:50) I think it would be Lakin and Dr. John Rowlings.

**Miller**: (1:37:50) Dr. Rowlings. What about fundamentalists who opposed him, I am thinking of people like the Bob Jones's of the world.

**Westover**: (1:38:02) Jerry, I started to say, it disappointed him, I don't know. Jerry understood where they were coming from and he said "They feel like they need to be exactly where they are and if a part of where they are is they must oppose me, so be it."

**Miller**: (1:38:25) I think I one time heard him say "Some people are more interested in shaving them than saving them." [*Laughter*].

**Westover**: (1:38:32) That's exactly right.

**Hall**: (1:38:34) Then over the years he changed attitude I guess, like Billy Graham, one time he would not have anything to do with Billy Graham Crusades and then they became close friends, is that right?

Westover: (1:38:46) Yes, the, the history of all of that goes back to the fundamentalist Baptists in the first place. The Bible Baptist Fellowship in the World Hope Baptist Fellowship all of those organizations were put in place, actually act as a, they were fighting the liberalism in the Southern Baptist Convention. J. Frank Norris started this, 1909 he became the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Fort Worth, which was, probably at the time, the largest church in the world maybe and got into a real disagreement with the theology department of Baylor University which was the big southern Baptist school and they were not teaching the fundamentals of the faith, they were not teaching anymore that the Bible was inerrant and that Jesus was deity and so and so forth and so, and so he broke away from the Southern Baptists and he really started the Fundamentalist, or the Independent Baptist movement and that movement is the thing, they

started their own schools then there in Fort Worth and then in Springfield were Jerry went to school and so the background of all of that was they were actually fighting the Southern Baptist Convention and its liberalism and so as the independent Baptist movement grew and Dr. Towns then in 1968 wrote those series of articles on the ten largest Sunday schools in America and named them and eight out of the ten of those largest churches were Baptist and seven out of the eight were independent Baptist churches and the only one in the top ten was First Baptist of Dallas and he was just as fundamental as the rest of them, and some of the young turks in the Southern Baptist Convention started to look at the rest of them, these churches are growing because of and they gave the list of things and those were the things that the independent Baptists had been advocating and that's why they were growing and so some of the Southern Baptists guys like Jerry Vines and Paige Patterson and [Judge Pressler] and all of them and Adrian Rodgers they decided either to take over the Southern Baptist Convention and bring it back out of apostasy or start one of their own and so that's when they started and the first conservative real fundamentalist to get elected as president of Southern Baptist Convention then was Adrian Rogers in 79 I think it was. So anyway I said all that to say that that's the reason the independent Baptist movement turned their back on Billy Graham, because they, they saw him as an arm of the Southern Baptist's and the fact that in his crusades, every church that was involved in his crusade and so the independent Baptists were separatist and even some of them secondary separatists and then that's why they turned their backs on Billy Graham and that's the thing that Jerry grew up in spiritually and so after a while though, Jerry saw, saw the fallacy of that and so he, he supported Billy Graham in a real controversial issue one time that Billy personally thanked him for.

**Miller**: (1:42:57) Now do you think that Jerry was ever a secondary separatist?

**Westover**: (1:42:59) No, no.

**Miller**: (1:43:02) And while I am thinking of this right here, the other accusation was Jerry Falwell used to be a racist but then he came to a different position, could you just talk about the race issue for just a moment?

**Westover**: (1:43:13) I don't think that Jerry was ever a racist because when Jerry got saved, Jerry got saved all the way and, and so a black man then, his soul is just as important as a white

man's soul, although Jerry was born and raised in Lynchburg, Virginia, which, I don't know if it was racist, but it was definitely integrated, excuse me, segregated. Yeah, segregated.

**Miller**: (1:43:43) It was in the south [*laughter*]

**Westover**: (1:43:44) It was in the south, that's right and so whenever you pastor a Baptist church in the south it was a segregated church, that's just the way it was, you know and so, so there came a time in Jerry's life though, his spiritual life when he said "Hey, that's got to stop." And so I don't know that Jerry was ever a racist.

**Miller**: (1:44:07) And he would invite people like Dr. E.V. Hill and that and so, well enough said about that, one thing before, I've got this grocery list of names here, but we didn't talk about the leaders of South Korea, the Philippines, Australia, can you talk about those for just a second and then I've got a list of names that I want to get your impressions about.

Westover: (1:44:32) Jerry would be invited to speak at conferences for something in Australia and the Philippines and South Korea and while we were there we would always meet with the leaders of and we met with the President, excuse me, the Prime Minister of Australia, I cannot even remember his name on the same day we met with the President of Korea and, I could back in the recesses of my mind and get his name, in the Philippines we met with the Speaker of the House there, at the time, the President was [Akino] and she was out of town, I think she was out of the country. And so all of these people wanted to meet Jerry Falwell because he was news, he was a big thing.

**Miller**: (1:45:28) Now that reminds me of this, we are recording this program for our archives, were records kept of all of the travel itineraries and so forth on a week by week basis?

**Westover**: (1:45:40) Yes, Kathy Rusk, she kept a total, a total record hidden; it's in the computer someplace.

**Miller**: (1:45:47) Well that would be interesting to study sometime for a future researcher then, speaking of Korea [Son Yung Moon], Jerry, did Jerry ever meet with him.

**Westover**: (1:45:58) I would rather defer those questions.

**Miller:** (1:46:01) OK, so then let's start on my list of names here, Phil Donahue.

Westover: (1:46:07) OK, Phil Donahue and Jerry were dear friends.

**Miller**: (1:46:12) You would never tell by watching them, [laughing].

Westover: (1:46:15) Friends is probably a strong statement, but they both understood each other and Phil respected Jerry greatly. A story to show that, one time on a Monday I got a telephone call from Gail, who was Phil's producer, saying that there Wednesday morning guest just cancelled out on them and so they were scrambling and Phil had asked her to call and see if Jerry would come on the be the guest on Wednesday morning, she said "I know this is short time, but if there is any way he could make it we would appreciate it." So I said "I'll call you back." So I went in to see Jerry and Jerry said, "Yeah, let's do it." And so we flew up there Tuesday night, spent the night and got to the green room Wednesday morning and Phil said, "Oh Jerry thank you for calling, for coming I know it's on short notice and all and I apologize." He said, "Know I have to figure out what we are going to talk about today." And he said "Jerry, I don't have anything." He said "Is there anything that you have done or said here lately that has been controversial that we can talk about" [chuckles] and Jerry said, "Well, let's see, the other day..." and he gave an incident where he had said something and somebody had gotten all over it, he said "We could talk about that." And Phil said "OK, great, now which side exactly were the issues there so that you can give me the sides that I ought to argue on?" You know? And Jerry gave him his arguing points and so just before they went out to d the show he said "OK, give me a couple of zingers I can hit you with just as we go off the air to a break." And Jerry gave him a couple of zingers, you know? And so they went out there and fir an hour they just fought I mean and it was just, it was just awful, you know, the way they talked to one another and after it was over with you know, they went back and hugged and had a cup of coffee and we left again.

**Miller**: (1:48:24) Kind of like all star wrestling you know? [laughing]

Westover: (1:48:27) Right, and when Phil was doing a CNBC show, his ratings were absolutely in the toilet, and so as he was about to be fired from that, he called Jerry and said "Jerry, I need, I need some help." He said "Now you, you have been on the show a lot, be a satellite and I wish you would come here and be in New York with me and let's do a one hour show" he said, "I think we can improve the ratings enough, maybe, that they may keep me for a while." And Jerry said "OK Phil, on one condition." And he said "What's that?" and he said "That I am the only

guest, this is just me and you, I don't want to be shouting over this, that and the other thing, you know?" and so Phil said "That's the way it will be." And so Jerry went up there and it was the highest rated show that Phil had done in years and it was just the two of them and Phil would ask a question and sit back and let Jerry answer it, you know? And it was a great show, it really was and it pulled great ratings, it wasn't enough to save him, but it pulled him and so Phil thanked Jerry for that.

**Miller**: (1:49:43) Before we go to my next name, when you would see Jerry Falwell on a screen coming in by satellite, where did he go to actually, was it the studio here in this complex, just right over here, in the Road's television center?

Westover: (1:50:00) Yeah, that's right.

**Miller**: (1:50:01) that's right.

**Westover**: (1:50:01) And sometimes, some, some, sometimes something would happen where Jerry had to be up there on fifteen minutes notice and so we would call Joe Barry and Joe Barry would call and set up the team and so Jerry would run over here and by the time he got here everybody was already in place and everything, it was just...

**Miller**: (1:50:23) Now in later years with the internet, did that studio get used less and less with those emergencies, I think, I suppose...

**Westover**: (1:50:31) No, no, that studio was the studio.

Miller: (1:50:34) OK, Ted Kopple.

**Westover**: (1:50:38) You know, Jerry was on Ted's show a number of times, but I was only with him one time when he was on, and so Ted respected Jerry greatly but I don't know that much about Ted.

**Miller**: (1:50:55) Not much to share there, Rush Limbaugh?

**Westover**: (1:50:58) You know I am not absolutely certain that Jerry and Rush ever actually met, I would imagine they did, but there was no real interaction there, they were all on the same page but I...

**Miller**: (1:51:13) But they were both conservative, did, would, would Jerry ever have time to listen to Rush Limbaugh, his program?

**Westover**: (1:51:19) Oh yeah, oh yeah, he would listen to it.

Miller: (1:51:23) OK.

**Hall**: (1:51:23) Another major conservative is Sean Hannity, and of course he came here...

**Westover**: (1:51:26) Oh he loved Sean, Sean's a good guy, Sean loved Jerry he really did and Jerry and so Jerry really appreciated Sean. Jerry was on Sean's program a lot and so Sean came here a number of times and so I would go to New York a number of times and pick him up in our plane.

**Miller**: (1:51:50) OK, we've talked a number of times about Cal Thomas, will leave that one go, let's go for Newt Gingrich.

Westover: (1:51:55) Newt, Jerry always thought that Newt probably was the brightest guy alive and I was the one that actually brought Newt in to Jerry because I was living in Atlanta and I was a member of New Hope Baptist Church and Newt was in my church and so Newt and I got to be real good friends and I introduced him and then whenever Newt was Speaker of the House we would go to Washington every now and then and go to Newts office and the office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, that's the most impressive office you will ever be in. [laughter]

**Miller**: (1:52:35) And, and now this is a public record, so we are not gossiping here so we are not doing anything like that, but Newt at one point had a moral failure.

**Westover**: (1:52:43) Yes.

**Miller**: (1:52:43) Did he ever turn to Jerry as a pastoral...

**Westover**: (1:52:46) Yes he did, in, in Washington at the inauguration in 2001, Jerry and Newt hadn't seen one another for quite a while and so we were there and so Jerry was supposed to be on somebody's show on Fox News and so we went up to Fox News Station Headquarters there in Washington and as we walked in the door there were some people in the hall that said

something to Jerry and I opened the door and started in and they said something and Jerry stayed out in the hall to speak to them a second and I stepped inside the door there was Newt there and Newt said, "Ah, Duke where is he?" And so Newt was really afraid to see Jerry, I say afraid, he was just uncomfortable knowing what had gone on, you know? And I said "He's right outside." He said "Oh me." and so Jerry walked in the door about that time and Newt looked at him and Jerry looked at Newt and Jerry walked over and hugged him and Newt almost wept, you know and so they talked for awhile.

**Miller**: (1:54:13) Good, now this is kind of off the topic here but with Newt Gingrich, do you see him coming back into the political realm?

**Westover**: (1:54:22) Newt will always be in the political realm now because he is a policy person. Newt will never be president, now Newt would make a great President but you would have to anoint him as President, he's not going to run for it. He doesn't have the fire in the gut to run for it.

**Miller**: (1:54:49) So you knowing him as well as you do, you do not predict him 2012 or 2016?

**Westover**: (1:54:54) No, I don't.

Miller: (1:54:55) Let's go Ollie North.

**Westover**: (1:54:57) Ollie North is a great guy, [cough] Ollie's a strong Christian and so he came here, in fact the day that he spoke at graduation here was his last official day in the Marine Corp and, and so he and Jerry were just good friends and as a result Ollie and I became good friends.

**Hall**: (1:55:21) Now another person who is quite controversial I guess in conservative circles is Jesse Helms, of course our school of Government is named after him, there was a really close personal relationship between these two.

**Westover**: (1:55:33) There was a very close, personal relationship. Jesse was probably as strong a character, strong in character as Jerry, I don't, I don't remember the issue but years ago there was an issue that Jesse was on one side of the issue and some of Jerry's friends were on the other side of the issue and they said "Jerry whenever you see Jesse now, try to change his mind." I

don't remember what the deal was, I don't remember who the people were and so we were in Washington and went to see Jesse there just as friends, we never really had anything to specifically go for other than just to say "hello" and so Jerry said, "Incidentally Jesse, on this issue..." He started to lay it out and he said "What do you think?" and before Jerry could really get it all out Jesse said "You know Jerry, I never let anybody lobby me over about anything. So I don't know which side but whatever it is, forget about it." And so Jerry said, "OK." [laughter] so...

Miller: (1:56:48) OK, Richard Viguerie?

Westover: (1:56:48) Richard Viguerie and Jerry were very, very, dear friends, the history of Richard Viguerie is, Richard Viguerie is the guy who really started using direct mail to get the word out to conservative people and, and he was bypassing the media and he was the very first one to do that and so, and so Richard was not part of the religious right, because he, because Richard was not a religious person, you know? But he was on the right side of every issue that Jerry was on, you know, especially the abortion issue and all and so, and so Richard Viguerie and Ron Godwin got to be dear friends and so, and so because of the friendship of Ron, Richard was always around, Good guy.

Miller: (1:57:53) OK, how about Ralph Reed?

**Westover**: (1:57:54) Ralph Reed also is a very, very good guy. Ralph, the way Ralph first got involved with Jerry was the Ralph was the head of the Young Republicans while he was in college and then he went to work as the executive director of the Christian Coalition and so we were always in the same circles, I see and talk to Ralph every now and then even now.

**Miller**: (1:58:31) OK, here's a quick question that came to mind is, you mentioned some of the inner circle of the folks that would have breakfast together.

**Westover**: (1:58:38) Yeah.

**Miller**: (1:58:38) With you and Ron Godwin and Duke Westover, but I was thinking as we were talking here, somebody like Elmer Towns, were there, were there some people who for Jerry who were more co-worker friends, family friends or, what would you say about that?

Westover: (1:58:56) Well I am not, not sure, absolutely sure of the question. But now...

**Miller**: (1:59:03) I guess I am saying, there's lots, I know he was very close to Dr. Elmer Towns but he wasn't one who would typically go out for breakfast...

**Westover**: (1:59:13) No, no.

**Miller**: (1:59:18) Talk about different people like, Jesse Jackson it seemed like there was a personal bond there, were there some people who were just co-worker bonds rather than familial or friendly type bonds?

**Westover**: (1:59:34) Jerry was a person who could make you his best friend as far as you were concerned and you really were, you know? Jerry, Jerry had the ability that virtually anybody who he knew could literally say that they were Jerry's best friend and I can name...

**Miller**: (1:59:57) And that came up at the funeral, you know?

**Westover**: (1:59:59) That is exactly right, yeah.

Miller: (2:00:00) You know, all these people "Well, I was his best friend." [chuckles]

**Westover**: (2:00:04) And that's true, Jerry just, had, had that ability so there were people now, Elmer Towns of course, he has been around for a long time, I mean he was here for awhile and then he left and came back and all and so he's he been a major player up here, you know?

**Miller**: (2:00:26) OK, let's talk then about Billy Graham, let's talk a little about him there, but were those two close?

**Westover**: (2:00:38) You've got to define close whenever you say that. Now they didn't talk on the phone every week or so, you know, they were good friends, I wouldn't say that they were very close friends because they were, they were travelling in different camps, no reason.

**Miller**: (2:01:07) Now were there some people, you mentioned John Rowlings. Jerry would call John Rowlings and you considered him to be a mentor, and then were there some younger men that really considered Jerry there mentor, that they were calling Jerry all of the time.

**Westover**: (2:01:26) There's hundreds of them...

**Miller**: (2:01:28) OK, so unfortunately that left a void I imagine for some of these in, in that man's, so. How could he keep touch with all these people did he do email, telephone calls?

**Westover**: (2:01:41) He did email, he was an email wonk for the last five years of his life. In fact he would sit there in his office for hours and do email.

**Miller**: (2:01:49) Now did the email stay in his office or when he got back home was he sitting on his computer back at home in his house?

**Westover**: (2:01:55) Sitting at the computer at home.

Miller: (2:02:02) OK, so did he have a laptop or a desktop type computer?

Westover: (2:02:08) All of the above.

**Miller**: (2:02:09) OK, and so when you would go to a town, if he had some time was he checking email on the road?

Westover: (2:02:15) Yes, yes, yeah, yeah.

**Miller**: (2:02:17) OK, and alright, so let's get back to our name list, how about Billy's son, Franklin Graham?

**Westover**: (2:02:22) Very good friends, in fact, friendship wise, Jerry and Franklin were probably closer than Jerry and Billy because Franklin would speak on the same subjects that Jerry was speaking on and so they would be, they would have to talk and now about various things going on in Washington and so on and so forth.

**Miller**: (2:03:18) OK our next name then, Pat Robertson?

**Westover**: (2:03:20) Pat Robertson and Jerry were the two big 800 pound gorillas during the, the days of the religious right and the conservative movement. They were not great friends, they were not enemies, they, you would think that they travelled in the same circles but they really didn't. Pat of course was doing a lot of the same things that Jerry was doing, but he was Charismatic, you know, and it's not that Jerry was anti-Charismatic but there was a lot of people who ran around with Jerry that were.

Miller: (2:04:06) OK, Adrian Rodgers?

**Westover**: (2:04:08) Adrian Rodgers was a great friend. Adrian, who was not so much involved in the political side, Adrian was a pastor of a church and one of the great preachers in America.

**Miller**: (2:04:26) And that brings up a question to mind, was there ever a point at which if Jerry had been in an airplane crash or something like that and, was there ever a succession plan for Thomas Road Baptist Church, was there ever somebody who, well if something ever happens to me here's the person to go to or would they have done something internally or if they had so many talented people locally, was there ever any thought to that?

**Westover**: (2:04:55) The succession plan that Jerry had in his mind from the day his boys were born was that they were going to be his successors. Now there were things talked about, "Well this guy will, man this guy's a great preacher and one of these days maybe he can take Jerry's place" it was never thought along those lines.

**Miller**: (2:05:17) So there again the dreamer you know, ah it sometimes took longer to get there but eventually his dream came true right? Rather than needing to go to plan b or the intermediary plan.

Westover: (2:05:28) Time and time again in the last few years people would come to me you know and stop and look over their shoulder and see who was listening and say "Jerry..." and said "Duke, what's going to happen when Jerry dies, whose going to take his place?" I always had a great answer, I didn't realize how great an answer it was until after Jerry died, but I always said, "Well whose place did Jerry take?" and he said "Well, nobodies." And I said, "Nobody's going to take Jerry's place either." You know? And I said "When the time comes God will raise up somebody to do something, now his name might not be Falwell, I don't know, you know? But it might be Falwell, but I do know this, that nobody is going to take Jerry's place." He said "OK" and so that's exactly what happened.

**Hall**: (2:06:14) Was it always, over the years I had always heard about a plan, something to do with the school and all that, locked on some bank vault and all that?

Westover: (2:06:23) Not a chance, no.

**Hall**: (2:06:24) [laughing].

Westover: (2:06:24) Whenever Jerry Jr. graduated from law school, he started working with his dad in the business and it was at a time, at the time that Jerry graduated from law school was the time that we were going through some of our deepest financial waters and so Jerry got, Jerry Jr. got a baptism of fire and so Jerry Jr. has been, actually Jerry Jr. ran the business of the university for about four years before his dad died and so Jerry Jr. just understood, I mean it was just the logical thing that Jerry Jr. was going to be the Chancellor and President of Liberty University, there's no, there was never any doubt on that one, the one that there was doubt on was Jonathan because Jonathan had never really stepped up to the point where he actually felt like, excuse me, where anybody felt like he really wanted to be the successor, but the funeral was his rite of passage and...

**Miller**: (2:07:33) He surprised me actually.

Westover: (2:07:34) He surprised everybody, folks would have, folks still today call me and said "Duke how long have you known Jonathan?" and I say "Well since he was three years old and sometimes I think that maybe I helped raise him." and he said "Well I am sure that you could see this quality in him?" and I said "Well I will say this, a week before his daddy died, nobody in his right mind thought Jonathan could do this, even Jonathan."

**Miller**: (2:08:03) It just seems as though the Lord set a special anointing on him and how that goes. Well, now you mentioned Jerry Jr. becoming the General Counsel, at one time, do you ever remember a man named [Ralph Modsley]?

**Westover**: (2:08:20) You know I do remember the name, but that's about it.

**Miller**: (2:08:22) OK, I knew that he was at one point and I don't know, he was in the early eighties as I recall and so maybe before Jerry Jr. was old enough or had graduated there, I knew at one time he was the General Counsel of Liberty ...

Hall: (2:08:41) Some of the younger people like Rick Warren, Jerry's relationship with him?

Westover: (2:08:49) Oh it was very good.

**Hall**: (2:08:49) Rick Warren has a little bit different approach...

**Westover**: (2:08:53) Yeah, but the approach, the difference in approach was not a big deal with Jerry, as long as you preach the gospel and you got people saved, you know? The methodology was never a big deal with Jerry.

**Miller**: (2:09:11) And now it is interesting some of the directions that Rick Warren has gone, with support for AIDS and some of the different things here and yet Jerry had him here to speak in pastors conferences and that, so you didn't have to agree with Jerry or consent on something as long as you were both going in the same general direction and...

Westover: (2:09:30) That's right...

**Miller**: (2:09:30) On the key issues here, Jerry Vines?

**Westover**: (2:09:33) Jerry Vines was Dr. Falwell's best friend in the ministry, they had more fun together than any two people, they would email or talk daily and they were always sending each other jokes and playing practical jokes on each other.

**Miller**: (2:09:54) Was there anybody else, now we mentioned John Rawlings, we mentioned Jerry Vines, was there anybody else who kind of, on a daily basis, he just really kept track with? Other than of course the local staff here, Ron Godwin and yourself and that...

Westover: (2:10:11) Probably not, I can't think of anybody right now, let's put it that way.

Miller: (2:10:16) OK, think James Dobson?

**Westover**: (2:10:19) James Dobson, they, I can't really say that they were dear friends, they, they worked together on some things you know and, but Dobson wasn't a pastor, you know? And so they were friends, I can't say that they were close friends.

Miller: (2:10:43) OK.

Hall: (2:10:43) I don't believe, if I am corrected, Dobson never came here to speak, or did he?

**Westover**: (2:10:48) He spoke, he spoke at graduation one time, but he didn't want to I mean, he was, we had to do it in such a way were we would go out and pick him up and bring him back and he was on the ground for about an hour before graduation and about fifteen to twenty

minutes afterwards we took him back, you know? I mean he, Dobson never has been a people person.

**Miller**: (2:11:15) Now but your saying that reminded me here, for some of these VIP guests were you the handler for, made arrangements for?

Westover: (2:11:24) All of them, all of them.

Miller: (2:11:26) Charles Stanley?

Westover: (2:11:28) Charles Stanley was a nice guy, they, they worked together in starting the moral majority, and Stanley was always, always noted as one of the founders, but, but Stanley, Stanley never really got out front in it, he pastored a church and he had his radio and television broadcast and he helped out on the radio and television, but as far as being a real, active participant and hanging around he and Jerry hanging out together didn't happen.

Miller: (2:12:10) Now that reminds me of a question, and it seems like in recent years, here at Liberty, that it's shifted a little bit from having a lot, now we have a lot of pastors and that, but as I look back at those old television broadcasts I look at people like John MacArthur and [Charles Ryrie] and some of the more theologian types of people and now we have gone to a lot more business men, people like [Truitt Cathy] and was that a deliberate move as the, just in response to the University, so many different departments and not just having preacher and theologians, any thought on that?

**Westover**: (2:12:54) I think in the early days the preachers and the theologians were the only people that Jerry really knew, you know, and as Jerry grew and his influence grew other people came to mind, you know, that's whenever we started having politicians and business people and so on.

**Miller**: (2:13:14) OK, now the whole DeMoss family and the relationship to the DeMoss family, could you talk about that?

**Westover**: (2:13:22) Well, Arthur himself was a dear friend of Jerry's and so he was probably the first real big business man that Jerry got to know and had got to know Jerry and philosophically they were on the same wavelength, Arthur DeMoss was a soul-winner and so

Jerry, Jerry really appreciated a soul-winner and, and so when he died in 1979, uh, Jerry really, it shocked Jerry, you know, that he died and as a part of his will he left some money to Liberty University, and, and, and so that money was used mainly to be built, to build buildings right here on Liberty mountain to be, because I think Liberty mountain was purchased about 77 when we started and so, and so some of the money from the DeMoss will was used to build some of these early buildings.

Miller: (2:12:40) Now Mark DeMoss was what relation to Art?

Westover: (2:14:43) Son to Art.

**Miller**: (2:14:43) Son to Art, and, and he served as an assistant to Dr. Falwell for some time and then Nancy Leigh DeMoss, what's the relationship there?

Westover: (2:14:57) Well she was a daughter...

Miller: (2:15:01) Maybe Marks sister?

Westover: (2:15:01) Yeah, Marks sister, yeah.

Miller: (2:15:03) Yeah, OK and OK.

Hall: (2:15:06) David DeMoss, his son that was killed, one of the buildings was named...

Miller: (2:15:12) David's place.

**Westover**: (2:15:13) That's right, see Mark was a twin, he had a twin brother named Paul and Paul was never really involved up here at all.

Hall: (2:15:23) Did Jerry learn a lot from Art about mailing, raising money through the...

**Westover**: (2:15:30) Direct marketing though the mail, that's where Mark, that's where Art was a genius.

**Miller**: (2:15:38) Ok, moving down the line we have talked a little bit about John Rowlings, anything that we haven't mentioned so far about him? I would often see Dr. Falwell mention on a Sunday morning well he'd wish him a happy birthday or something like that John was

watching on the satellite, did he have anything to do with getting him hooked up so that he could see all of these Liberty Channel events type things?

Westover: (2:16:04) No Dr. John was always on the front lines of technology and he's got four sons that kept him on the front lines and so Dr. John was always, always involved and he talked to Jerry and he would phone Jerry and he said "Jerry this is what you ought to do." And Dr. Falwell would say "OK, go ahead." You know? And sometimes he would do it sometimes he wouldn't but now Dr. John was always involved up here.

**Miller**: (2:16:39) Well now it's surprising based on his advanced age that he outlived Jerry, now it seems as though in recent years that John, the Rowlings Foundation has tried to kind of have a resurgence of can we have some fundamentalist cooperation and they would have some meetings and things, was Jerry Falwell ever involved in those resurgent meetings?

**Westover**: (2:17:04) Not in the meetings themselves but now Jerry was always, always supportive of everything that Dr. John wanted to do.

Miller: (2:17:16) OK, let's talk next about [John Heggie].

Westover: (2:17:19) John Heggie, John Heggie is, let's see, got to be a good friend. John, John has always been a big supporter of Israel and so John made a statement a few years ago that lead folks to believe that John believed that there was, that there was a, that God dealt with the Jews in different ways than he did with everyone else and that their salvation was not necessarily based on a belief and a trust in Jesus Christ and so, and so he made that statement publically to a news person one time that got in print and Jerry, Jerry took John to task in his newspaper, in fact he sliced him up into small little pieces is what he did and it was a funny thing because, oh a couple of months after that, Jerry and I were in Memphis, Tennessee at a pastor's meeting and we were sitting there and in the door walked John Heggie and so John sat down and at the first break John came over to Jerry and said "Jerry, can I see you outside for a few minutes?" I could see these two old fat guys out there, you know wrestling in the mud, [laughter] Jerry said "yeah." So they went outside and John said "Jerry you took me to task over my statement." And Jerry said "Yeah." He said "You had every right to, because I did say that, but Jerry I don't believe that, he said, at the time somebody asked me a question and I had to go someplace and I just said the thing that popped into my mind." And he said "I really don't believe that." So they talked

about that and after that they became good friends and so a couple of years after that we were having our 4 of July thing here at the stadium and Jerry asked me, he said "Do you think that my folks would allow me to call John Heggie?" I said "Well, you're not inviting him to church; you're inviting him to the stadium." He said "OK." So John came, you know and spoke and was very well received and all and so he invited Jerry to his church to speak and it went very well and so Jerry invited him to our church to speak, and so they just got to be good buddies.

Miller: (2:19:58) D. James Kennedy?

**Westover**: (2:20:01) D. James Kennedy was, was heavily involved in the Moral Majority and so his religious ties of course were different from ours, as a Presbyterian, there is a different level of theology there, I am not sure that is exactly the way I ought to say it, but anyway...

Miller: (2:20:27) Well they are more Calvinistic and Jerry wasn't a Calvinist, but...

**Westover**: (2:20:32) Right, yeah. Also they were not as staunch Israel supporters either, you now? But they had some disagreements and things, but never let a disagreement hurt anything, so you know? They were friends.

**Miller**: (2:20:47) And so we've kind of glossed over this with John Heggie and also now with D. James Kennedy, of course the, there's some that believe that the church placed Israel then and so all of the prophesies dealing with Israel are dealing with the church, the new Israel, but Jerry Falwell didn't believe that...

Westover: (2:21:07) No, not at all.

**Miller**: (2:21:08) Could you just simply tell us what was Jerry Falwell's position on Israel and then what was Jerry Falwell's position on individual Jews and their salvation?

Westover: OK, the individual Jews and the salvation, Jerry believes that everybody had to come to salvation through Jesus Christ because that is what the Bible says, you know? No, "No man comes to the Father but by me."So, that one was simple, now the Jew that was looking for the messiah to come, Jerry could be friends with, I mean, they could pray together, they could eat together, they could have fun together, but when it came to actual salvation, Jesus was the only way to heaven. Now Jim, Jim, Jerry loved the Jewish people because the Bible said you are

supposed to and it was a simple as that and so as a result, Jerry became a strong supporter of Jewish people and of the nation of Israel, that did not mean that everything that the nation of Israel did and said, Jerry supported a hundred percent, but he did support the nation because of the Bible.

**Miller**: (2:22:24) And so what would he, if you would have asked him "What is your position on the Zionist movement?" What would he say?"

**Westover**: (2:22:29) He would say that he is a Zionist because he believes that the Jewish people should have a homeland and it should be in, in what was then called Palestine because God gave Abraham a promised land and, and the nation of Israel right now is just a small portion of it.

Miller: (2:22:58) So, but he would believe that that land there in Israel that started as a new nation, that went back to flourishing after 1948, those are the people and God wasn't through with Israel yet, there still was a place in the calendar for Israel.

**Westover**: (2:23:13) Absolutely, without a doubt.

Hall: (2:23:16) What is, of course a long relationship with Tim LaHaye, as well...

**Westover**: (2:23:21) Yeah.

Hall: (2:23:24) Now LaHaye was part of the Moral Majority since the beginning?

Westover: (2:23:24) Yes, he was, yeah. Tim LaHaye is a special individual, he is one of these guys that has always been out there in the front lines, he pastored a church, built a big church in San Diego, built a big family seminar ministry, you know? And then when the Moral Majority flourished he was very heavily involved in that because his, his organization Californians for Morality was the thing that he was doing whenever Jerry saw that, he said, this is the thing that needs to be done on a national scale and so then he and his wife started the Concerned Women for America to offset the NOW and the NOW, National, National Organization of Women was the biggest noise that there was, there was, at its height, it probably had thirty five to forty thousand members is all it had and so they started the Concerned Women for America to be the antithesis of that, before long they had six hundred thousand members in that, you know? And so Bev ran that and so all those years Tim LaHaye never made any money, probably the most

money he has ever made in his life is thirty thousand dollars as a pastor, you know, he wrote books and so on a so forth and made a decent living off of that, and the Concerned Women, he didn't make any money off that and so when she retired off of the Concerned Women and they moved back to California from Washington, he was on the airplane going home and he got to thinking about what would happen if the rapture happened while they were on that airplane and that was the beginning of the book *Left Behind* series which he made millions of dollars on and he has given a lot of it to Liberty University.

**Miller**: (2:25:31) And we have buildings here that have been named in his honor, then that did remind me of something, let me ask you about this. Dr. Falwell's relationship with women, you we mentioned the Concerned Women of America, and now Dr. Falwell because of his understanding the Bible he said that women shouldn't be pastors, but just as you observed him as a man, how did you see treating women, pastors wives, women who were strong leaders and so forth, can you talk about that for just a moment.

Westover: (2:26:03) Jerry was always kind to everybody and very respectful of women, very respectful, but now two things, if a pastors going to get in trouble over anything, it would be two things, number one is money and number two is women and so Jerry never, never wanted that to be an issue in his life or his ministry at all, in fact, Jerry never wanted a woman in his office by herself for any reason, other than [Cathy Rusk]. Cathy now was his secretary for all these years and so Cathy was allowed to go in there, but she was only allowed to stay about a minute, minute and a half by herself, you know? And so anytime that Jerry was forced and it would have to be forced, have to be forced to have a meeting with a woman by herself, Jerry would always do it, there was an anti room my office over at the mansion where there was glass all the way around. OK and he would have the meeting in that room and so Cathy was outside the glass door and I was on the other side of a glass door, you know? Jerry, in his sermons sometimes he would say that he is going to apologize right up front for what he is fixing to say, but he said "If one of my church members, one of my lady church members was standing out in the rain waiting on a bus and I drove by and I was in a car by myself, I would wave to her but that's about the extent of it, you know?

Miller: (2:28:00) OK.

Westover: (2:28:00) And along the same lines, anytime we were on the road we were constantly, constantly making sure that there was no, no way anybody could do or say anything. Anytime that Jerry, we were in a restaurant or someplace, anytime that Jerry had to go to the restroom I went with him, you know, just in case somebody said "Oh, I saw Jerry in a bathroom with a little boy." or something like that, you just could not say it.

Miller: (2:28:31) And so he was very careful to maintain the integrity, very I mean the most, that is one thing he thought about on a daily basis to make sure nothing like that happened.

Miller: (2:28:41) And so was there ever anything were somebody photo shopped a picture of him or anything of that, has there ever been some scandal, you were it wasn't proven, or?

**Westover**: (2:28:51) No.

Miller: (2:28:53) There wasn't even any...

**Westover**: (2:28:55) Nope.

Miller: (2:28:55) Well that is good, um, Francis Schaefer.

Westover: (2:28:58) Francis Schaefer, Francis Schaefer and Jerry were an odd couple in the since that Francis Schaefer was the most intellectual dude you ever met, you know and Ed Hinson of course you know, he is highly intellectual also, and so whenever Jerry was going to meet with Francis Schaefer for the first time and Ed said "You'd better take me along to interpret." [laughter] but Jerry appreciated Francis Schaefer and all of his writings and so on, they weren't together enough that you could say that they were good buddies, you now?

Miller: (2:39:39) OK, Now Francis Schaefer did really encourage Dr. Falwell on the abortion issue.

Westover: (2:29:48) He did, he did.

Miller: (2:29:49) And the sanctity of life and now did Dr. Falwell have anything to do with either to develop or promote the How Shall We Live Series? What Ever Happened to the Human Race?

Westover: (2:30:05) I don't think so.

**Miller**: (2:30:07) B. R. Lakin, OK then we have the B. R. Lakin School of Religion here, do you recall what year B. R. Lakin died?

Westover: (2:30:17) Yeah, 84.

**Miller**: (2:30:19) OK, and, and so you knew B. R. Lakin, but this is before you were really his day-by-day.

**Westover**: (2:30:27) But I was very, very much involved and B. R. and I travelled together, we were good friends.

**Miller**: (2:30:36) And so did Jerry kind of consider him to be a father in the faith, any incidents or illustrations you can share about B. R. Lakin?

**Westover**: (2:30:46) Yeah, there is a lot of them and most of them I can't talk about [*laughter*] OK.

Miller: (2:30:53) How about John R. Rice?

**Westover**: (2:30:56) John R. Rice was a mentor I guess in a sense, John R. Rice was a very kind man and he likes Jerry, but now you put a typewriter in front of John R. Rice or a pen in his hand he became a really nasty person sometimes, you know? And so the newspaper itself was not always kind to Jerry.

Miller: (2:31:31) The Sword of the Lord newspaper?

**Westover**: (2:31:32) *The Sword of the Lord*, yeah and it's mainly because people like some names I would rather not say, but anyway, Jerry and John R. Rice probably were good friends, there were not close but the respected one another.

**Miller**: (2:31:55) And really kind of was a division between the Bob Jones Secondary Separatist and the John R. Rice over really the issues of Jerry Falwell, that he was kind of the pivotal point there...

Westover: (2:32:07) Right, that's right.

**Miller**: (2:32:10) And they published the booklet, the facts of John R. Rice, well let's see here that he will not face but it had to do with Jerry Falwell and, and so Jerry Falwell represented the one who wouldn't be a Secondary Separatist on the national level there.

**Westover**: (2:32:25) And Jack Hyles was very, very influential with John R. Rice probably more because he financed him than anything, and so, and so Rice and Hyles even disagreed over Jerry Falwell.

Miller: (2:32:45) Right, David Ring?

**Westover**: (2:32:48) David Ring, Jerry invited David Ring here to preach, he hear him preach someplace and invited David here and The Old-Time Gospel Hour was the biggest thing on television at the time and so David Ring preaching on Jerry's program, The Old-Time Gospel Hour made David Ring a household name in an hour.

Miller: (2:33:14) A nationally know person there.

Westover: (2:33:16) David loved Jerry.

**Miller**: (2:33:19) OK, Lee Roberson of Tennessee Temple?

**Westover**: (2:33:22) You know all of Jerry's association with Lee Roberson was before I got here so I really can't.

Miller: OK, but one you would now Tim Lee.

**Westover**: (2:33:32) Tim Lee, yeah, in fact he is on the board for Liberty University and so they have been friends for years and Tim loved Jerry and Jerry loved Tim.

**Miller**: (2:33:43) OK, any mention of the Bob Jones's did, would they ever meet? Did they he ever know him? Was there any interaction between those?

**Westover**: (2:33:56) There was some interaction that was really important in the life of the school, Bob Jones University and all but the incident, I really cannot talk about.

**Miller**: (2:34:10) And we've mentioned a little bit about Larry Flynt. Were you along on any of those trips when they would?

**Westover**: (2:34:18) I was not.

Miller: (2:34:20) OK.

**Westover**: (2:34:29) I was not.

**Miller**: (2:34:21) OK. One of his biographers had quite a change in his life, moved in a across the street there, tell us a few thoughts about Mel White.

**Westover**: (2:34:32) Well obviously, Mel White, strange individual, obviously a good writer, when the big publisher in New York wanted to do Jerry's biography, they wanted an editor and a writer who was big time and Mel White had co-wrote a book with Billy Graham and one with Pat Robertson and so they wanted, so they suggested Mel White so Mel became the writer with Jerry and, and obviously Mel's a bright guy and then he became, he came out of the closet.

Hall: (2:35:23) So all of this wasn't known when he was writing any of the biographies?

Westover: (2:35:25) No, no, no, no not at all, he came out of the closet then and one of his big sticks was well I was the one who did this for Jerry and for Pat and for Billy Graham and so therefore I should be the spokesman for the gays who are Christians, you know and so Jerry just kind of laughed it off and finally whenever Mel moved here, Jerry kind of felt sorry for him and, and so Jerry, so this is kind of funny, this is kind of strange and it sounds, it was stranger than it sounds and it sounds pretty strange but Mel came here for the purpose of taunting Jerry nationally so he could raise money, so he could make a living and so, and so Mel was making his living off of Jerry Falwell because whenever he would do something or say something that would get national attention, Mel would send out letters and they would send him money because he was the guy in the Lion's Den here in Lynchburg, Virginia and so Jerry knew and saw what Mel was doing and so Jerry would even help him every now and then, he would do something and say something just so Mel would have something to write about so he could raise money, so that was just the kind of guy that Jerry was.

**Miller**: (2:36:58) Well now didn't they have sort of a meeting with the homosexual community there at Thomas Road, can you kind of talk about that?

Westover: (2:37:04) Well, somebody else, somebody else was trying, trying to put that together for other reasons and I won't say who, but anyway, Jerry was just kind of talked in to doing this and up front, up front Jerry said "Now look, there is nothing that is going to happen here that is going to change my attitude, and, and you will never be accepted." He said "Homosexuality will never be accepted as a Christian lifestyle." You know? And so if we want to meet and talk about some of the issues like violence against gays, we'll talk about that, but that's all we are going to talk about, and that's what was done.

**Miller**: (2:38:02) Now Dr. Falwell believed, based on the scriptures that homosexual acts are wrong, did he have an opinion, did he state a public opinion, did he believe that they chose that or did he believe that, did he believe that they were born that way or did he think that that was a sinful choice on their part.

Westover: (2:38:25) He thought that was a sinful choice on their part.

**Miller**: (2:38:29) Well that's the last of the names that we have on our list here; we are going to talk for just a moment about Jerry Falwell the man. Let's talk just a little about fundraising here for Liberty, did you personally ever go out and raise funds for Liberty or did, for any of the ministries, or were you just accompanying Dr. Falwell as he did?

**Westover**: (2:38:53) Nobody raised money for Liberty University except Jerry Falwell. Now occasionally, some of us would go out and pick up a check, but every dollar that was raised here came in because of Jerry Falwell. So I can't say that I raised money for Jerry Falwell, I did go out and pick up some checks every now and then, but that's about the extent of it.

**Miller**: (2:39:17) So now we are going to talk about Jerry Falwell the man and we have already talked about that he ate out more than eating there at home and talk about Jerry Falwell the husband, for just a moment.

**Westover**: (2:39:34) Jerry was a great husband, he kept Macel on a pedestal and she was the mother of his children and he treated her like a queen, always, anytime we were on the road or here in town he would call her on the phone five, six, seven, eight times, you know, and he would talk to everyone of the kids, everyday, everyone of his children he talked to every day on the phone no matter what or where.

**Miller**: (2:40:06) Well I even heard him talk in a message one time about texting his grandkids, you know? [*laughter*] How, tell us about Jerry the Grandpa.

Westover: (2:40:16) Jerry loved his grandkids, in fact their whole, their whole family structure was around the family, now they, they were, now I mean this in the best way It can mean, they were not inclusive. I was probably as close to be a member of the family as anybody, but I was thousands of miles away from being a member of the family, it's just that they were a tight knit group and that's the way they wanted it, that's the way it existed, that's the way Jerry lived and that's the way Jerry died.

**Miller**: (2:40:56) And now, he always wore a very distinctive set of clothes in public. Where did he get his suits, why don't you talk about his wardrobe?

Westover: (2:41:08) Well for years folks would give him suits, you know, we, we would be on the road, some, some, someplace and some pastor would say "Jerry I want to take you to this store here where I buy my clothes." And buy him a suit you know and so Jerry never was one, Jerry was never a dapper guy, I mean, you know? If it fit, you know he wore it, as far as a tie, if it didn't have gravy on it he would wear it, I mean, back in the mid 90's we were in India working with a missionary over there, actually he was a native in [Kota], India, [Emay] Thomas and his son Samuel, great friends and so there is a tailor there in their town of Kota and so at midnight one night the tailor came and measured Jerry and I for a suit and at noon the next day we had suits and they fit perfectly and from then on the guy in Kota would send us suits and we paid about a hundred bucks a piece for them from then on, in fact I still get all of my suits from Kota, I do not have a suit that I didn't get from Kota and the guy still does it and up until the day Jerry died, [Ashuk] would send a suit for Jerry and I would send him a check, you know?

**Miller**: (2:42:43) It seemed like he always had the red ties, how many red ties would he have in his closet? [*laughter*]

**Westover**: (2:42:49) The night that they had the family viewing of Jerry, the family invited Carlene and I to go with them, we were honored to do that, and so he was there in the casket with a red tie on and so Jonathan said, said "Duke, you'll appreciate this." So I went through his ties trying to find a tie for him to be buried in, he said "It took me fifty ties to find one that didn't have a gravy stain on it [*laughter*] so.

**Miller**: (2:43:29) Alright, a little bit about his habits or hobbies, was there anything he had for a hobby?

Westover: (2:43:35) He didn't have a hobby, no his hobby was doing...

**Miller**: (2:43:40) The work of the ministry.

**Westover**: (2:43:41) The work of the ministry.

**Miller**: (2:43:42) Now I heard that he always liked a Snapple tea in the afternoon, that's one thing that student who interviewed him and he told him and but was there any other, we talked about his devotional habits for every morning, waking up, was there, was he much of a creature of habit? Or was it something new every day?

Westover: (2:44:04) It was kind of something new every day, he did not have any hobbies, at all. And as far as eating, Jerry did not really, well he did enjoy eating, but I mean he had to do it in a hurry, he had to do everything in a hurry, he was ADD you know? And so the reason that he ate a lot of hamburgers was that it was easier, you know? And, and so we would be going someplace on the plane and I would run by and pick up some hamburgers from McDonalds and Chicken Fingers and you know? And small story, we were in New Orleans, Ron Godwin, Ed Hindson, Jerry and I and he was speaking at the Southern Baptist Convention and so it came time, came time for dinner and Jerry said "Duke, I am hungry, let's go find a McDonalds." I said "Doc we are in New Orleans." He said "Does that mean that they don't have McDonalds in New Orleans?" I said, "No they got McDonalds here but some of the greatest food in the world is here in New Orleans." You know? He said "OK, what do you want?" and I said, "Well, not far from here is K-Paul's." He said "What's that?" "Well Paul Prudhomme is the guy who invented blackened Cajun cooking; he's got one of the great restaurants in the world right here." He said "OK let's go to there." He said "Wait a minute, what kind of food do they have?" I said, "Well it's seafood mainly, you know?" He said "Do you mean like shrimp and fish and that stuff?" I said, "Yeah." He said "My dog won't eat that stuff and I'm not going to eat it." [laughter] and so Godwin spoke up and said "Well your dog hasn't been invited to this show and we are going." So we put him in a cab and we gripped about it all the way there and we got out, walked in a maître 'd took us to the back and, you know, a table and the, and so the waiter came and he looked and he said "My gosh your Jerry Falwell." Jerry says "Yeah." He said "Man, I watch you

on television all the time, my mother in law, is man, I mean she will not miss you for." He said "Would you mind signing this menu for me?" and Jerry said, "No of course not" and Jerry signed the menu and he said, "Paul is in the kitchen, would you mind if Paul came out and met you?" and Jerry said "No." and so he goes in the back and in a few minutes here comes Paul Prudhomme, you know, I mean, one of the great chefs in the world, and so he had on his apron, you know and he came and "Ah Jerry man it is good to meet you." And he just pulled up a chair and sat down with us and so we were there talking back and forth you know and so Paul was having the best time and Jerry was enjoying it and finally Paul says, "You know Jerry, I think maybe God might have sent you here today." And Jerry said "Why is that?" and he said "Well, you know I lost my wife around eighteen months ago, some days I have good days and some days I have bad days and this has been a specially bad day, he said, I wonder if you could pray with me?" Jerry says "Sure" so they got up and they walked all the way in the back and stood against the back wall and you could see Jerry with his hand on Paul's shoulder and Jerry praying and Paul crying and you know? And so in a little bit they came back and they were both smiling and having a good time and they both sat down you know and the waiter came and said, "It's time for you all to order." So I ordered the blackened red fish and so did Godwin and Hindson ordered chicken, shrimp [etufaye] or something and then everybody in unison looked at Jerry and Jerry said, "Bring me some chicken fingers." [laughter] and so Paul got up and went to the back and probably cooked the only batch of chicken fingers that had ever been cooked there.

**Miller**: (2:48:04) Out of that restaurant, well didn't he try to go on a diet, on his birthday about two years before he died?

Westover: (2:48:10) Jerry was constantly on a diet, up and down, in the late 90's, late 90's early 2000, Jerry went on a forty day fast twice, twenty two days apart, and this was a spiritual thing for him, had nothing to do with his diet and at the end of the first fast, and I was with him every day and so and Jerry really did fast, all he drank was water, coffee and, mainly tomato juice, OK. At the end of that he says, you know, that fast, I was fasting for Liberty University, but as it turned out, that was more a fast for me than it was for Liberty, and he said, I am going to go on another one now for Liberty University, and during that period he lost 75 pounds you know? So...

Miller: (2:49:19) And now did that affect him physically?

**Westover**: (2:49:23) Not really, after awhile Jerry would try to lose some weight and Jerry enjoyed eating, that's as simple as that, you know and finally, finally Jerry just decided, decided that he was going to die a fat man, that is as simple as that, I mean there wasn't any, no big decision, he just decided, "I don't want to fast, I don't want to diet anymore."

**Miller**: (2:49:50) What, if anything, did he watch on television?

**Westover**: (2:49:52) He didn't watch a lot, excuse me, he watched a lot of sports. Jerry was a sports nut, I mean, any kind of sport, it doesn't make any difference and a lot of times if he was in the room by himself, he would be watching a baseball game and then he would switch over and watch a football game a little bit and back and forth, Jerry. If the timing was right, he could watch three events at the same time, so he was a sports nut and he watched a lot of news. If he watched anything else it was probably a western, he liked John Wayne, you know?

**Miller**: (2:50:40) OK.

**Westover**: (2:50:42) Jerry really was a very, very simple man.

Miller: (2:50:46) And now did he like to go to sports events in the arena?

**Westover**: (2:50:50) Yes, oh yeah. Oh, every, every sports event that Liberty University had he tried to be there and was at most of them.

**Miller**: (2:50:59) Unless his grandkids were in something, or you know, so his grandkids I heard, had sort of priority over so if his grandkid had to play, he might have to miss this game, that's right, and tell about his practical jokes.

Westover: (2:51:16) Some of them were brutal [laughing] Jerry, Jerry sometimes got mean with his practical jokes, probably the worst that I ever heard, this actually happened. One Friday night, in the middle of the night, on his way through Danville from preaching in Greensboro, I think it was, he called, I think it was about one o'clock in the morning; he called the pastor of the church there, R. J. Barber, woke him up in the middle of the night he says "Is this R. J Barber?" He said "Yeah." "Pastor R. J. Barber?" "Yeah" he said "My name is Stevens and I am with the Criminal Investigation Department of the IRS and we have been going over some of your past statements, income tax statements and we found some glaring errors, you know, so these are

something that must be taken care of, and I am not supposed to be calling you because, but I just thought I would warn you in advance, you know? So over this weekend you need to get with your accountant, your CPA go over your past tax return and be in my office in Richmond at nine thirty on the ninth floor of the federal building, room 932, and he says, please bring legal counsel." And hung up and of course Barber didn't sleep anymore that night, got with his lawyer and accountant over Saturday, couldn't even preach Sunday, showed up in Richmond and there was no ninth floor [laughing] and then he finally figured out who did it. See sometimes his practical jokes were brutal, but he was big on fire-crackers he loved crackers and stink bombs and he would use them in various places.

**Miller**: (2:53:34) Now did he ever prank you or?

**Westover**: (2:53:36) Oh, in a lot of ways he did, Jerry was always trying to scare me, you know he would walk by and hit me in the stomach or something like that and I was always ready for him, I was always and if he, he would hide whenever I walked into the office, he would jump out and shout at me, but I made up my mind a long time ago that I wasn't going to let him scare me and so that [*laughter*]

**Miller**: (2:54:06) Kind of took all the fun away.

Westover: (2:54:07) Kind of took all the fun away.

**Miller**: (2:54:12) So, let's say that he knew this young pastor and the pastor would call and say "Dr. Falwell I have been unfaithful to my wife." That he heard about a moral failing of somebody, what was his typical reaction to something like that?

**Westover**: (2:54:26) It broke his heart, that broke his heart. Now if the pastor came and said "Doc, I did this, man and it was the stupidest thing I have ever done in my life and I have repented and my wife has forgiven me and God's forgiving me, he has to you know, I mean, that is his business and all and so I would like for you to help me through this." And Jerry would...you know.

**Miller**: (2:54:57) Now did he ever have someone though, that this guy got found out and he is holding tight and did Jerry ever lash out at somebody? Did he ever rebuke somebody?

Westover: (2:55:06) No, he just washed his hands of him.

Miller: (2:55:10) And, OK.

Hall: (2:55:13) What do you think of, his major impact on American culture in general?

Westover: (2:55:19) Well you are sitting right in the middle of most of it, right here, Jerry's impact on America will be felt for years and generations. Just he brought the issues, the Christian issues, into, into the society like nobody else has and the starting of Liberty University, the starting of the Law School, the starting of the Helm's School of Government all of these things, will, have already had a major impact and will have a major impact, you can look at Fox News, there are some people on Fox News, now they graduated from Liberty University, who are front line people, you know, so things like that have to have great effect, and they do.

**Hall**: (2:56:20) What was your favorite quote, from Falwell quote?

Westover: (2:56:27) Probably "God's man is invincible."

Hall: (2:56:33) That was in his last sermon wasn't it?

Westover: (2:56:36) Yeah, I had heard him say that a thousand times.

**Miller**: (2:56:43) And through all of the years that you have known him do you have favorite Jerry Falwell story?

**Westover**: (2:56:51) Oh man, I can give you Jerry Falwell stories for the next two weeks [*laughter*] yeah.

**Miller**: (2:56:59) Well even a story, even the story that you just told though about the Chef there, that was just typical Jerry Falwell, but he didn't necessarily want to be there and the thought you shouldn't have gone over there but he stepped up and ministered to somebody when there was a need.

**Westover**: (2:57:16) That's probably as good as it gets, the other big story is the time he lost his pants at the convention, that's another story, so. [*laughter*]

**Miller**: (2:57:28) And what has been your relationship with Macel Falwell through the years?

**Westover**: (2:57:33) Well Macel and I have always been good friends, she, anytime that we were on the road a and she needed t talk to Jerry and he was not in a position to answer his phone at that time she, she was always calling me while we were on the road asking me things, you know, and she and Carlene, my wife, they have always been real good friends, probably more so now after Jerry's death, we take, we take Macel out to eat quite often and, so, so like you say I wasn't close to being as family to anybody.

Miller: (2:58:28) What do you think about the work of Jerry Jr. and Jonathan now?

**Westover**: (2:58:30) Unbelievable, unbelievable. Jerry Jr. has just stepped up and continued and the transition with the church and the university has just been unbelievable, totally seamless.

**Miller**: (2:58:49) We're, we're out of time, we had an initial about two hour interview and we just spent about three hours together and it doesn't quite seem that long, it just has been fascinating talking with you. Is there something that we just didn't get on the record, for, for a, for a final thought here that, something that we haven't talked about that you want to mention before we close?

Westover: (2:59:11) Well, I am in the process of writing a book now, and I was in Washington a few weeks ago to an Israeli event and the man who was hosting this was a good friend of mine who is a rabbi in Jerusalem and a Congressman, a U. S. Congressman was there and the rabbi, [Benny Eilon] was going to introduce me to the congressman, he said "Congress man, this is Duke Westover, for many years he was Jerry Falwell's right hand, and he travelled with him everywhere." And the congressman said "Wow, what a ride." And I said "You just named my book." So if I ever write a book that is going to be the name of it and on the first page of the book I quoted Moody, Moody said that "The world is yet to see what can be accomplished by one man, wholly, totally sold out to the Lord." And underneath that I wrote and I said "I worked for him for 38 years."

**Miller**: (3:00:29) And with that we will conclude today's interview with Duke Westover. This interview has been conducted as part of the Oral History Project of the Liberty University Archives.

[End of Interview]