

Faith and Money

How Religion Contributes to Wealth and Poverty

For those who own it, wealth can have extraordinary advantages. High levels of wealth can enhance educational attainment, create occupational opportunities, generate social influence, and provide a buffer against financial emergencies. Even a small amount of savings can improve security, mitigate the effects of job loss and other financial setbacks, and improve well-being dramatically. Although the benefits of wealth are significant, they are not enjoyed uniformly throughout the United States.

In the United States, because religion is an important part of cultural orientation, religious beliefs should affect material well-being. This book explores the way religious orientations and beliefs affect Americans' incomes, savings, and net worth.

Lisa A. Keister is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Markets and Management Program at Duke University. She conducts research on wealth inequality, asset accumulation, and the causes of each. She is the author of *Getting Rich: America's New Rich and How They Got There* (Cambridge, 2005) and *Wealth in America* (Cambridge, 2000). Her research on Chinese corporations and the country's economic transition appeared in her book, *Chinese Business Groups* (2000), as well as various articles.

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UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
 978-0-521-72110-3 — Faith and Money
 Lisa A. Keister
 Frontmatter
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Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
 a department of the University of Cambridge.

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 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521721103

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First published 2011

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data

Keister, Lisa A., 1968–

Faith and money : how religious belief contributes to wealth and poverty / Lisa A. Keister.
 p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-89651-1 (hardback) – ISBN 978-0-521-72110-3 (paperback)

1. Wealth – Religious aspects. 2. Wealth – United States. 3. Money – Religious aspects.
 4. Money – United States. 5. United States – Religion. I. Title.

BL65.W42K45 2011

2011.73-dc22 2011015744

ISBN 978-0-521-89651-1 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-72110-3 Paperback

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Acknowledgments

My gratitude to the people who assisted me with this book and to the organizations that facilitated my work is deep. I received extremely helpful comments at various stages of the project from a large number of people including Jimi Adams, John Bartkowski, Jackie Brooks, James Cavendish, Mark Chaves, Barry Chiswick, Christopher Ellison, William Form, Robert Hummer, Evelyn Lehrer, Katherine Meyer, James Moody, Christian Smith, and four anonymous reviewers for Cambridge University Press. Innumerable comments at seminars were also indispensable, including from people who attended talks at Duke University, the University of Chicago, Cornell University, the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Studies at Stanford University, Yale University, Ohio State University, UC Irvine, UC Santa Barbara, the American Sociological Association, and the Religion, Economics, and Culture/Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.

A grant from the National Institutes of Health program on Intergenerational Family Resource Allocation (funded by the National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development and the National Institute on Aging) supported early portions of this research, and a grant from the National Science Foundation, Sociology Program (SES 0848653) helped me complete it. The Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences and Duke University provided space to write the book, and a host of graduate students provided excellent research assistance at various stages of the project. Most notably, E. Paige Borelli, David Eagle, Steven Foy, Brad Fulton, Andrew Miles, Matthew Painter, and Alexis Yamokoski assisted in preparing data and tables. Laura Tesch provided editing assistance.

Some pieces of this book were originally published in journal articles. Chapter 6 contains portions of a paper originally published as Keister, Lisa A. 2007. “Upward Wealth Mobility: Exploring the Roman Catholic Advantage.” *Social Forces* 85:1195–226, and Keister, Lisa A. 2008. “Conservative Protestants and Wealth: How Religion Perpetuates Asset Poverty.” *American Journal of Sociology* 113:1237–71.