

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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