TSB

# TAMMY SUE BAKKER

*Daughter of Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker*

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## Statement from Tammy Sue Bakker

There are very few times in life—if any—that we are given the chance to show the world that everyone is loved.

I have humbly been given the platform to be able to do so, and for that I am beyond grateful. I have thought about this moment for many years.

At this difficult time, I'm thinking about my mother, Tammy Faye, and the unconditional love she showed. That love is also my heart.

Throughout my life, I have stayed silent, not wanting to hurt my family or the church.

I quietly left my father's ministry in 2022 because the message that was being delivered was not mine. I have spent the years since estranged from my father.

No one told me my father was ill or that his illness had progressed to hospice care until three hours before his death. I learned he had passed from a friend who saw it online and didn't realize I hadn't been told.

I am a peaceful and private person, but today I need to be transparent, and I hope that transparency will help someone.

This experience has brought many emotions, and from those emotions has come a boldness that I have never felt before. I want to channel these emotions and use them for good.

I would normally never release a statement, but I can hear my precious mother's voice saying, "Sis, this is your time. Do it."

So here it is.

I want to publicly apologize, from the depths of my soul, to anyone who has been hurt by the church or my family's ministry over the last 60 years. I know that millions of lives were positively changed by PTL, and for that I'm grateful. I have also read the letters and comments—and have been told in person many times—that so many gave their last dime to the ministry.

It breaks my heart to know that the church has been responsible for millions of people suffering, being rejected by their families, living with depression, being kicked out of their family homes, feeling like outcasts, dealing with suicidal ideation, or dying by suicide.

My friends tell me, "You are not your family. This is not your burden to bear," but I have carried it since I was a child. It is a very heavy burden that has brought me to tears more times than I can count.

I want to thank all of you who watched me grow up on television and have been so loving and devoted to me and my family since before I was born.

In lieu of flowers or gifts, I am encouraging you today, from my heart, to donate funds or your time to your local LGBTQIA+ community. No amount is too big or too small to make a real change and possibly save someone's life.

It is time for Christians to stand up and show the true love of Christ. It is time to stop judging. To stop hating. To unconditionally wrap your arms around your brothers and sisters and say, "I love you just the way you are."

Jesus said, "Come as you are." His love was not conditional. He did not command anyone to change who they were born to be.

It is time to show love and compassion.

This is the hardest and easiest thing I have ever done in my life. It is the thing I have been most frightened of.

I hope you will join me today in true love, acceptance, understanding, and peace.

You are loved exactly as you are.

Tammy Sue Bakker

> *If you or someone you love is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 988 to reach the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, available 24/7. LGBTQ+ young people can also reach The Trevor Project at 1-866-488-7386 or by texting START to 678-678.*

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