

Q Notes

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Volume 23 . Number 09 September 6 . 2008 Printed on Recycled Paper FREE



A new voice for One Voice
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q-notes.com

Always forgive, never compromise

by Matt Comer . Q-Notes staff

Jay Bakker talks about his ministry, LGBT inclusion and his parents' impact on his life

exQlusive

I don't think I've interviewed a more laidback person than Jay Bakker. Sitting at my desk, safe from the sweltering humidity of what

scheduled time to chat.

"Hi, Jay Bakker?" I inquired.

"Yes," the voice on the other end replied.

"I'm Matt Comer, with Q-Notes in Charlotte. Is this a good time?"

"Well... I need to finish up some laundry. Can I call you back in about 15 minutes," Bakker asked with a slight laugh.

The young and vibrant Christian leader — who many folks still remember as "Jamie," the even younger son of influential televangelists Jim Bakker and the late Tammy Faye (Bakker) Messner on "The PTL Club" — has an easygoing attitude that extends far beyond his casual relations with the media. The way he lives his life and performs his ministry have made him the *beau idéal* of a growing movement that eschews the pent-up, pinched-off attitude of old-time religion.

As one of the founders of Revolution Church — with congregations in Atlanta, New York City and Charlotte — Bakker has taken traditional Christianity by storm. Like the Biblical voice crying out in the wilderness, he beckons those deemed unworthy by conservative evangelical leaders into a faith community free from condemnation, judgment and cold shoulders.

It's no surprise that his radically inclusive and

unorthodox approach to worship and fellowship have drawn ire from his conservative

peers — who are more than willing to continue their adherence to doctrine and dogma that excludes far more often than it embraces.

Bakker's work with Soulforce, a national interfaith organization fighting "spiritual violence" and religious prejudice, has led him to join with LGBT families to visit some of America's largest and most conservative mega-churches and their charismatic leaders.

During the latter half of this month, just prior to his arrival in Durham for the NC Pride Fest and Parade, Bakker will work with Soulforce and its Seven Straight Nights for Equality national organizing event.

In the following interview with Q-Notes, Bakker opens up about the impact the PTL scandal had on his life, the lessons he learned from his father and recently departed mother, his ministry and the inclusion of LGBT people in the life of the Church.

Tell me a bit about your history with Revolution Church. Where did the idea come from? How did it get started?

Revolution was started in 1994 by me and two friends in Arizona, so I've been doing Revolution for a while now. We've done it in Arizona and L.A. and Atlanta and now I've been in Brooklyn for two years. We meet in a bar here every Sunday at 4 p.m. It really is a ministry for people who may feel like they've been outcast from church or feel they don't belong or maybe they're just a little bit different.

Your churches in Atlanta, Charlotte and New York have made efforts to reach out to communities that have often been ignored by the traditional church. Where do you see the LGBT community fitting into the life of

see Bakker on 18



Jay Bakker: 'We are to be known for loving each other and how we treat each other. To me that is really powerful.'

had to be one of the hottest days all summer, I dialed Bakker's cell phone number at our

South Carolina drags it out

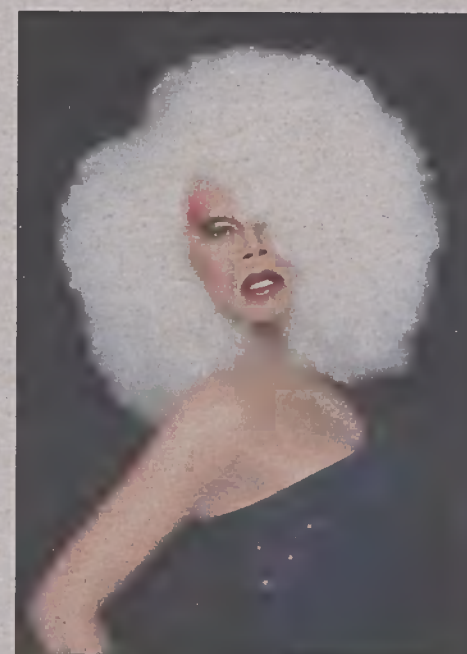
RuPaul will headline SC Pride
Sept. 20

exQlusive

On a recent trip to Washington, D.C., my friend pried me out of his apartment the evening I stepped off the long train ride through Carolina and Virginia to attend a "Project Runway" party put on with fabulous D.C. gay style. The great RuPaul sat as a judge as designers fought the clock — and the every whim of their drag performers' wishes — to create the best and most imaginative drag outfits.

Just days later I found myself sitting right back in my Charlotte office speaking over the phone with RuPaul at her offices on West Coast. Since her last exclusive interview with Q-Notes, the nationally-renowned drag performer has been busy with movie and TV appearances, including

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Performing activist

Fights HIV discrimination
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S.C. paper denies 'Naked Boys Singing'
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Dangerous liaison

HIV+ Raleigh man pleads guilty
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