Highway Religion: Truckstop Chapels, Evangelism, and Lived Religion on the Road
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I affirm that I have adhered to the honor code in this assignment.
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Introduction

Today, there are over 200 truckstop chapels\(^1\) located at travel plazas throughout the United States. These chapels, generally constructed within modified semi trailers (see figures 1 through 7), are typically installed by one of several specialized trucking ministries and staffed by volunteer or paid chaplains from one to seven days a week. Virtually all chapels hold regular worship services on Sundays, and most are staffed on weekdays, when personal prayer, counseling, Bible study, and evening services may take place. During times when chapels are unstaffed, they may still be left open for any drivers who wish to enter (see figure 6, right). In many cases, the chaplains on duty, often former or part-time truck drivers, spend several nights per week in the chapel’s living quarters, prepared for visits to the chapel at any hour.

With an estimated three million professional truck drivers in the United States\(^2\), the trucking industry accounts for an enormous population of individuals. These individuals are often subject to a number of practical conditions inherent to the trucking profession, including long hours, lengthy periods away from home, a solitary work environment, and a generally austere, transient lifestyle marked by sleeping in the sleeper cabin of the truck or in motel rooms. They must depend on public establishments for


other needs such as food, bathing, and laundry. These conditions often give rise to problems that are acknowledged realities for many truck drivers, including sleep deprivation, exhaustion, homesickness, marital and family issues, loneliness, and feelings of isolation and displacement.\(^3\)

The witnessing\(^4\) efforts of trucking ministries encourage drivers to take up religious practices compatible with the trucking lifestyle, thus providing a specific model for religious life on the road that may give greater spiritual meaning and purpose to the driver’s day-to-day activities. As a result of this new approach to the trucking lifestyle, many of the problems inherent in the trucking profession can be either alleviated or re-contextualized in a positive light.

Trucking ministries are thoroughly aware of the unique demands, conditions, and difficulties of the trucking profession, and take great care to provide specialized resources and promote religious practices that fit its unusual schedule, transient nature, and associated locations. In this study, I will demonstrate that due to the highly specialized model of religious life that trucking ministries present and promote through evangelism and witnessing, their witnessing practices are similarly specialized, distinguishing trucking ministries from other Protestant evangelical movements with which they clearly

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\(^3\) Common stereotypes of the trucking industry, which insinuate heavy drug use and solicitation of prostitutes, are inaccurate in their implication that most or all drivers participate in such activity; but the sale of drugs and solicitation of prostitutes do take place, and to such an extent that drivers have ready access to them. Within the trucking industry, the use of drugs and solicitation of prostitutes may be understood as purported antidotes to several of the problems that drivers commonly face due to the nature of their profession. While trucking ministries do not merely present an alternative means of dealing with these common problems, they undoubtedly take them into account in their ministerial efforts.

\(^4\) For the purposes of this study, this term refers to evangelistic activities by which Christians aim to share their faith with others.
share broader origins. This dynamic of traditional continuity coupled with extensive specialization gives trucking ministry its unique cultural and methodological characteristics, which will be enumerated and examined in this study.

In *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America*, Colleen McDannell states, “It is not enough for Christians to go to church, lead a righteous life, and hope for an eventual place in heaven. People build religion into the landscape…”

McDannell’s assertion may be readily applied to the approach of trucking ministries. By combining evangelical Christianity with social and cultural elements of the trucking lifestyle, trucking ministries actively “build religion into the landscape” of drivers to whom they evangelize. By presenting a model by which drivers may engage in spiritual practice in the truck, on the road, and at the travel plaza, ministries encourage drivers to form associations which pull religious meaning and spiritual consciousness into their everyday lives.

A sizeable amount of recent scholarship in the field of religious studies has addressed the subject of “lived religion,” also referred to as “everyday religion.” In *Everyday Religion: Observing Modern Religious Lives*, Nancy T. Ammerman characterizes such research as “looking for the many ways religion may be interwoven with the lives of the people we have been observing.” By “enter[ing] a particular corner of today’s very diverse social world to see how religion is being lived there,” we are able

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to better understand the diverse and deeply personal positions that religious identity and spiritual practice may hold in the daily lives of individuals in a variety of situations.

Much of this study follows the same methodology and goal characterized by Ammerman, examining religious life as lived by a number of individuals working within the trucking profession. Such examination allows for a more thorough understanding of the numerous ways in which trucking ministry is tailored to the trucking profession. As opposed to merely exploring the specialized approaches of trucking ministries, this study considers both cause and effect, tracing the witnessing efforts of trucking ministries to individual drivers who, inspired and encouraged by such efforts, have formed strong and personal connections between their faith and profession.

In accordance with this emphasis on the lived religion of individual drivers, this study does not claim to provide a comprehensive portrait of religion within the trucking industry. Rather, the following material draws primarily from ethnographic research conducted by the author between July 2010 and March 2011, consisting of visits to eight truckstop chapels throughout the Midwestern and Northeastern United States\(^8\) and twenty-five interviews conducted in person or by telephone with drivers (chapel attendees) and those who serve trucking ministries (chaplains, volunteers, and management). Another major reason for the use of ethnographic material is that little to no prior academic research has been conducted on the topic of trucking ministry. By all indications, this project is the first extensive ethnographic study of trucking ministry, truckstop chapels, and lived religion on the road. With this in mind, I have taken care to produce an inclusive and carefully documented study, placing great importance on the

\(^8\) All in-person interviews were conducted in Illinois, Ohio, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.
personal stories, experiences, opinions, and thoughts of drivers and ministry participants.\(^9\) The prevalence of quotations throughout the study is a reflection of this approach, as actual quotations often serve far better than generalizations or summary to depict the deeply personal varieties of lived religion that this study addresses.

Certain historical and theoretical observations, questions, and interpretations are put forth throughout the study, and are reviewed in the concluding section. While the ethnographic data gathered for this study may certainly be suited to a number of interpretive lenses and larger discourses, such treatment is here deliberately conducted on a secondary level, as a supplement to the study’s descriptive focus. This decision stems from the largely unstudied nature of much of the material presented. To place a strong interpretive emphasis on subject matter being presented for the first time is surely a great disservice to those who aim to encounter the primary source material as deeply as possible. With this in mind, I have taken care to provide ample and detailed description without allowing interpretation to overwhelm the ethnographic data, which quite often speaks for itself. However, I do recognize the great potential for this material to enhance and be enhanced by larger discourses in topics of religious studies, and my hope is that this study might serve as a foundational resource and invitation for others who wish to explore the rich subjects at hand with a more interpretive approach.

The following sections present (in this order): (1) historical context, charting the origins and significant developments of trucking ministry, from the earliest efforts of Christian truck drivers to the expansive field that it has become today, (2) description of

\(^9\) It must be noted that no female drivers are represented in the sample of drivers interviewed for this study. The opportunity to interview a female driver did not present itself during this study’s research period, as professional truck drivers are predominantly male.
the basic format of truckstop chapel services, (3) variations in religious practice observed at truckstop chapel services and their causes, (4) analysis of the various witnessing practices of trucking ministries, chaplains, and drivers, with attention to trucking-specific specialization of said practices, (5) examples of lived religion on the road and observations correlating examples of religious practice in the trucking profession with the specialized witnessing practices of trucking ministries, and (6) conclusions and considerations for further study.

**History of Trucking Ministry**

In 1951, Jim Keys, a truck driver from Toronto, Canada, founded the first specialized ministry for truck drivers and the trucking industry. Only twenty years old at the time, Keys was “born again” just one year prior to establishing the interdenominational ministry.\(^\text{10}\) Taking inspiration from Youth For Christ, the major evangelical ministry through which he had committed to Christianity, Keys dubbed his ministry Transport For Christ (TFC).\(^\text{11}\) Keys’ single-handed effort began with his printing and distribution of a monthly paper, *Highway Evangelist*\(^\text{12}\), and offering lectures on highway safety to various trucking companies. In these safety lectures, Keys frequently

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\(^{12}\) Steve Johnson, “Getting Their Religion to Go,” *Chicago Tribune*, April 11, 1993, http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1993-04-11/news/9304110216_1_truckers-brakes-truck-driver. According to this article, the paper was eventually produced in quantities numbering up to 106,000 copies per month.
incorporated spiritual themes. Quoting from the Book of Proverbs, Keys proclaimed, “Safety is of the Lord.”\textsuperscript{13} This passage later became a motto for the budding ministry (see figure 6). In 1956, Keys was ordained by the Independent Assemblies of God\textsuperscript{14}, a Pentecostal Christian association, and in 1958, gave up driving in order to fully devote himself to Transport For Christ. He increased his presence at Canadian truckstops, often sitting outside of the facilities in a folding chair, against which was propped a sign reading “Chaplain On Duty.”\textsuperscript{15} In this way, Keys would counsel and witness to any driver who approached him, using his own experience in the trucking industry as a springboard for his evangelism. Despite this dedicated effort, ministering to the drivers proved difficult. According to Chaplain Vi Martin, a close associate of Keys, “It was 10 years before someone got saved.”\textsuperscript{16} During this time, however, awareness of the ministry gradually increased within the trucking industry, and several volunteers joined Keys in ministerial activities.\textsuperscript{17}

In 1968, a major development took place when, according to Keys’ wife, Alameda, “the Lord told Jim to build a chapel in an 18-wheeler.”\textsuperscript{18} In order to realize this vision, Jim and Alameda Keys sold their house, a decision that also anticipated the itinerant lifestyle that the operation of the mobile chapel would necessitate. With the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} KJV Proverbs 21:31
\item \textsuperscript{14} “Religion: Truckin” with Jesus,” \textit{Time}, June 3, 1974, http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,911370,00.html.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Telephone Interview with Denne “Popeye” Kornechuk, March 5, 2011.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Interview with Chaplain Vi, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.
\end{itemize}
introduction of the mobile chapel, which traveled the highways of North America, the number of drivers who could potentially be reached increased significantly. Furthermore, according to Alameda, the truck-chapel combination proved to have profound effect on many drivers, reaching them in a way that Keys’ earlier efforts had not. She recalled, “There was a big fiery cross over the cab…the drivers would see it and they’d throw out their whisky, throw out their pills.” In addition to serving as a powerful and intriguing witnessing tool, the mobile chapel also drew media attention and increased financial and volunteer support for the ministry. Soon, two more mobile chapels were built and sent out into what Keys often called “the concrete jungle.” Despite the growing support and evangelistic success of the mobile ministry, tension arose within Transport For Christ when, in 1976, the ministry’s board took issue with Keys’ increasing emphasis on Pentecostal practices and beliefs. As a result of this predicament, Keys ultimately resigned from the ministry that he had founded.

Shortly after his separation from Transport For Christ, Jim Keys founded a new trucking ministry, Association of Christian Truckers (ACT). Like Transport For Christ, ACT was established as a ministry open to drivers of all backgrounds and denominational affiliations. However, in accordance with Keys’ heightened emphasis on Pentecostal

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21 Interview with Pastor Mel Weaver, Vice President of Association of Christian Truckers, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.
practices and beliefs, ACT was grounded in Pentecostal/Charismatic tradition, as evidenced by the charismatic preaching style and manner of worship still seen in its services. With ACT, Keys continued the effort of constructing and dispatching mobile chapels. In addition, the ministry purchased land in Brownstown, Illinois, at Exit 68 of Interstate Highway 70, where they built the Road Angel Truckers Center, featuring a restaurant, shower facilities, and lodging for drivers in addition to a large room for worship services. According to Pastor Mel Weaver, current Vice President of ACT, the Road Angel was established not only with drivers in mind, but also as a way of “minister[ing] to the whole family,” that is, casual travelers.23

Meanwhile, Transport For Christ continued its efforts, having assembled a fleet of six mobile chapels by 1986. However, due to high operation costs, only two of these chapels were in regular use at the time.24 During the same year, a truckstop owner requested the permanent placement of one of the chapels at a location in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Placing one of their mobile chapels in a permanent location proved highly successful for the ministry. This new arrangement was significantly less costly, and also provided consistency and reliability to drivers who hoped to attend chapel services regularly. Furthermore, the permanent location of the chapel allowed for local involvement and regular volunteer chaplains. As a result of the success of the Harrisburg chapel, all Transport For Christ chapels from this point on, though still constructed as “mobile chapels” and capable of being moved if necessary, were permanently placed at

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23 Interview with Pastor Mel Weaver, Vice President of Association of Christian Truckers, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.

particular truckstops. This shift from *de facto* mobile chapels to stationary “mobile chapels” proved influential, creating a new model for other trucking ministries. Today, almost all truckstop chapels, though predominantly constructed as “mobile chapels” using modified semi trailers, are installed in fixed locations, towed only for initial placement or in the event that relocation is necessary.

The 1980’s saw significant growth in the field of trucking ministry, with the establishment of two major ministries. In 1981, Joe and Jan Hunter established Truckstop Ministries, Inc., a non-profit corporation operating a “trans-denominational” ministry serving “the trucking industry and their families.” Joe Hunter, himself a truck driver for 20 years, first began ministering to drivers after being given permission by truckstop management to conduct a Bible study at a location near Atlanta, Georgia. Based on his own experiences of difficulty finding welcoming churches on the road, particularly ones that allowed for adequate truck parking, Hunter sought to provide drivers with accessible opportunities for spiritual growth. The ministry’s first mobile chapel opened in 1989. Today, Truckstop Ministries conducts services in on-site chapels and TV lounges at 76

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26 Rare exceptions, in the form of actual mobile chapels, may be found in the efforts of Steering Wheel Ministries, operated by Merwin and Debbie Rhoades of Oregon, as well as in the planned efforts of Wheels Alive Ministries, operated by Dean Hufford.


truckstops in 29 states. The ministry offers a 24-hour prayer line, Bible study correspondence courses and a chaplaincy program for drivers, and also produces and distributes a monthly newsletter, cassettes and compact discs featuring sermons by Joe Hunter. The ministry employs a paid staff, but is also served by volunteers. According to the mission statement listed on its official website, the ministry “seeks to partner with local churches in identifying and equipping those called to this ministry, according to His purpose.” The majority of the financial support that Truckstop Ministries receives (about 67 percent, according to the ministry website) comes from donations made by drivers. The remaining donations are provided by other individuals, corporate supporters (primarily trucking companies) and churches.

In 1987, Glenn Cope, a driver for 32 years, founded Trucker’s Christian Chapel Ministries (TCCM) in partnership with Rev. Clyde Bowen of the Enon First Baptist Church of Enon, Ohio. Their endeavor began when they asked permission to start a ministry for drivers at a Dayton, Ohio truckstop. According to the TCCM website, the Christian owners of the truckstop had previously attempted to begin their own ministerial efforts and conduct Bible studies with their employees, with little success. As the website states, “They then started to pray that God would send someone to do this ministry.” Consisting entirely of volunteers, and relying primarily on the financial support of local

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churches, the self-described “non-denominational outreach”\textsuperscript{34} has since placed over 116 chapels at truckstops throughout the United States, more than any other trucking ministry. In keeping with the ministry’s cooperation with churches near their locations, local clergy often serve as volunteer chaplains. Another activity of the ministry is its production and distribution of tapes and compact discs featuring sermons and gospel music, provided for drivers to listen to on the road. The ministry also distributes Bible study materials and operates a 1-800 number for urgent spiritual needs.\textsuperscript{35}

Today, Transport For Christ, now officially known as Transport For Christ, International, operates a total of 33 chapels at travel plazas throughout the United States, as well as several chapels in Canada, Russia and Zambia. Its monthly publication, \textit{Highway News and Good News}, is produced and distributed in quantities of 30,000 to 40,000 copies per month.\textsuperscript{36} The publication is also available in digital format, frequently with additional articles and features. The ministry also offers a church training program, allowing nearby churches to learn how to better serve and welcome drivers of faith, as well as encouraging volunteer activity and support of TFC chapels.

ACT also remains active in trucking ministry, operating a “Driver-Minister” Program, which provides training and encouragement to drivers of faith who wish to serve the ministry as itinerant preachers while on the road. While the recent efforts of ACT are primarily of a mobile, itinerant nature, the ministry still holds regular services,

\textsuperscript{36} Telephone Interview with Scott Weidner, President and C.E.O. of Transport For Christ, International, July 26, 2010.
revival “jamborees” and other events at its headquarters, the Road Angel Truckers Center in Brownstown, Illinois (see figure 10).

In recent years, a number of technology-based trucking ministries have emerged. These ministries utilize mobile technology in order to provide spiritual resources to drivers, regardless of location or schedule. Chuck Sonn, a fuel buyer within the trucking industry, manages one such ministry, Highway Fellowship, which encourages drivers to “Start your day the best way” by participating in conference calls consisting of fellowship, Bible devotional, and prayer. The calls are facilitated 365 days per year at 6:30 AM CST. While the approach of ministries such as Highway Fellowship is focused on mobile technology, many trucking ministries are making similar (if less central) endeavors. Scott Weidner, President and CEO of Transport For Christ, International, commented, “The drivers are getting younger. The trucks themselves are becoming more high-tech. The fellows we’re dealing with are becoming more tech-savvy, so we’re trying to tap into that.”

The expansion of trucking ministries through mobile technology, partnership with churches, and increased Internet presence shows their evangelical efforts to be more extensive and accessible than ever before, as they actively continue to minister to those working within the trucking industry.

The Chapel Service

In addition to offering scheduled Sunday morning services, many truckstop chapels are open and staffed on weekdays, providing drivers with more opportunities to visit, thus better accounting for their individual schedules. In the absence of scheduled services\textsuperscript{40}, the chaplain on duty, due to the sporadic nature of attendance, is often able to pray with, study with, or counsel visitors in a one-on-one capacity. The attendance of Sunday services is far more cohesive, though the actual number usually varies from week to week\textsuperscript{41} due to the irregular nature of truck dispatch schedules. For this same reason, even if the number of attendees is fairly consistent, the individuals in attendance differ every week. There is little opportunity for drivers to attend a particular chapel on a regular basis, and drivers who regularly attend services do so by visiting multiple chapel locations in accordance with their driving schedules.

Since the group of individuals gathered for the worship service changes weekly, services always begin with individual introductions. The chaplain generally introduces him or herself to the group first, and then encourages those in attendance to take turns introducing themselves to the group. Such an introduction generally consists of name\textsuperscript{42}, hometown, the trucking company for which the individual drives, and the length of time

\textsuperscript{40} Worship services may also be scheduled on weekdays (generally evenings), but are not as commonly offered as standard Sunday services.
\textsuperscript{41} Attendance at Sunday services attended by the author ranged from 3-25 individuals, but typically numbers between 10 and 20.
\textsuperscript{42} Some drivers choose to introduce themselves using only their first name or nickname, while others provide their full names. The use of first name or nickname may reflect the relative anonymity of life on the road.
for which the individual has been driving. Occasionally, drivers may also use their introduction as a platform to provide some type of personal religious testimony.

Following introductions, the chaplain generally leads an opening prayer, which may take place in a standing circle with joined hands, or with the attendees still seated. In either case, most if not all in attendance bow their heads, and may punctuate the chaplain’s words by interjecting or whispering affirmations. The opening prayer frequently contains trucking-specific elements, such as petitions for road safety and well-paying loads. In certain cases, the prayer may make reference to the unconventional setting in which the service is taking place. The majority of the opening prayer is an expression of gratitude, thanking God for the opportunity to gather for fellowship and worship, and for providing adequate time for the drivers to attend services. In some cases, the chaplain may ask one of the drivers to lead the opening prayer.

The opening prayer is generally followed by the chaplain’s sermon or message. The sermon may be based around a particular Bible passage, a personal account, or a broad spiritual topic or concept. Regardless of the specific theme of a sermon, the message almost always addresses the difficulties as well as the potential spiritual opportunities presented by the lifestyle of the trucking profession. Drivers are given advice regarding how to deal with the prevalent problems of their profession, such as loneliness, boredom, exhaustion, temptation, and feelings of displacement and homesickness. Sermons often encourage drivers to use their time in the truck for spiritual

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43 At a worship service held in the TV room of a travel plaza in New Jersey, the chaplain proclaimed, “Lord. This may be only a TV room, it’s not a grand chapel or cathedral, but your presence here makes it such.”

44 It is more common, however, for drivers to be asked to lead the concluding prayer rather than the opening prayer, once the atmosphere of the service has become more familiar.
growth, through meditation, prayer, and listening to recorded sermons or religious music, which are often provided by the ministry free of cost. In some sermons, drivers may also be encouraged to share their faith with others they meet in their travels. After the sermon, drivers are usually given the opportunity to ask questions, make comments, provide their personal testimonies, or make prayer requests.

The sermon and subsequent discussion may be followed by a variety of additional practices. At several services, the chaplain made his way around the chapel, asking each of the drivers if he or she would like to be ‘prayed over’ or ‘blessed.’ The personal blessing may be spoken out loud, whispered, or conducted in silence, and like the opening prayer, commonly makes reference to trucking-specific circumstances. Depending on the customs of the ministry, chaplain, or driver, the chaplain may place his or her hands on the head or shoulders of the driver\footnote{In many cases, the chaplain asked permission before physically laying hands on the driver. Such an approach may be understood as a simple act of courtesy, but likely demonstrates awareness that the driver may not be connected to a denomination in which such practice is common.}, performing the blessing standing or sitting. In rare cases, the chaplain and/or driver engaged in glossolalia (commonly known as “speaking in tongues”), trembling, falling to the floor, and other practices generally associated with Charismatic and Pentecostal traditions. In most instances, the prayer was somewhat conversational, with the driver telling the chaplain of personal matters as the prayer took place, so that the chaplain’s prayer could address issues specific to the driver’s life. Depending on custom and belief, the blessing may also take on a prophetic tone, with the chaplain speaking about the driver’s spiritual and material future, and
offering advice in this regard.46 The personal blessing may or may not include direct
proposition for the drivers to dedicate or re-dedicate47 their lives to Jesus Christ, thus
becoming ‘born again.’ In one such instance, the chaplain asked each driver, “Do you
know Jesus as your Lord and savior?” In the event that the driver said no, he added, “Do
you want to”?48

At many services, the sermon is followed by musical worship, generally of a
congregational, participatory nature. This musical portion may take on a wide variety of
forms, including (but not limited to): (1) the chaplain leading the drivers in singing
traditional hymns49, gospel songs50, or contemporary Christian songs, (2) a singer or
musician performing for the drivers, with or without their participation51, (3) one or more
drivers voluntarily leading or performing songs, (4) a recording being played and listened
to, with or without participation. Musical accompaniment may be completely absent short
of handclaps, or may be provided in a variety of ways.52 While songs invariably contain
spiritual themes, ones that contain both spiritual themes and references to roads,

46 The gravity with which such prophetic claims are made varies significantly, from being
presented more along the lines of one of many possible outcomes, to being put forth as
divinely ordained.
47 These terms, and “commit or re-commit,” were most commonly used.
48 If the answer to this type of question is affirmative, it is common for the chaplain to
guide the driver through a prayer that serves to ‘invite’ Jesus into his or her heart as
personal savior. In the case of negative responses, the chaplain prayed that the driver
would have a prosperous year, and that God would be present in his or her life.
49 The most commonly sung hymn is “Amazing Grace,” a choice likely owing not only to
its potent message, but also to the fact that its lyrics and melody are widely known.
Books or lyric sheets are sometimes provided, but knowledge of the hymns is frequently
assumed.
50 “I’ll Fly Away” is a very popular choice, possibly for the same reason as “Amazing
Grace” (see previous note).
51 The singer or musician may be a ‘special guest’ for one service, or may regularly
volunteer to sing or play at chapel services.
52 Some examples include guitar, organ, keyboard, drum set, karaoke machine, or singing
along with the original recording of a song on tape or CD.
highways, or some aspect of trucking are frequently chosen, and are especially prevalent in the repertoires of visiting singers or musicians, especially those who perform original material.

The service often ends with a concluding prayer similar to the opening prayer, led either by the chaplain or one of the drivers in attendance. After the service has officially ended, activities may continue, often for several hours, provided that the schedules of the drivers permit. It is important to note that due to urgent schedules and time constraints, it is not uncommon for drivers to leave services early. Ministry chaplains, sensitive to the demands of the trucking profession, are accustomed to such occurrences. One chaplain commented, “I tell drivers, if you have to leave early, bring your phone in, if you get that call, bingo, you can be on your way.”

After the service, drivers and chaplain may convene at the adjacent restaurant in the travel plaza for a post-service meal and fellowship, often continuing to discuss topics raised by the preceding sermon. In keeping with the spiritual mood of the service, it is common for those gathered to say grace before the meal, with joined hands. Whether or not this is a regular practice for all involved is unclear, but it certainly serves to set something of an example, and is a conspicuous and uncommon sight in the given setting. Indeed, such visible acts may be understood as a way of witnessing to the entire restaurant. After the majority of drivers have continued on their way, remaining individuals may return to the chapel for one-on-one association with the chaplain. This additional activity may include Bible study, prayer, counseling, or casual conversation. As trucking ministries place a great deal of emphasis on availability, drivers are given

53 Interview with Chaplain Tim, Hebron, OH, January 16, 2011.
information about other chapel locations, and may exchange contact information with the chaplain and stay in touch until they are able to visit the chapel again.

**Religious Practices in Truckstop Chapel Services**

The preceding description of the truckstop chapel service references a number of practices that are present to some degree in most Christian (and, for that matter, many non-Christian) traditions. These include: congregational prayer, sermon or message, sacred music, individual prayer and blessing, and fellowship (often accompanied by a meal). While these practices are consistently included in truckstop chapel services, the specific manner in which they are carried out may vary. Furthermore, additional and less ubiquitous practices may accompany them.

Variations in practices and style of worship are certainly seen among chapels affiliated with different trucking ministries, but also occur among individual chapel locations of the same ministry. It is important to analyze the makeup of traditional religious practices in truckstop chapel services, as examining the variations in their complexity allows us to develop a refined sense of the diverse traditional background of trucking ministry. Such variations may be attributed to a number of factors, including (but not limited to) geographic location, worship setting, number of individuals in attendance, specific preferences/requests of individuals in attendance, background of ministry, and denominational affiliation/background of chaplain. In this section, I will examine observed variations and their causes.
Institutional Affiliations in Trucking Ministry

Virtually every major trucking ministry is self-identified in a manner that de-emphasizes denominational affiliation and indicates that the ministry is open to individuals of all denominational backgrounds. Terms used include “non-denominational,”
54 “trans-denominational,”
55 and “inter-denominational.”
56 While such designations are common among evangelical organizations, they may also be employed to suitably address the ever-changing congregation of drivers at each chapel service. Though such terms are accurate in their characterization of the ministries’ welcoming of drivers, chaplains, and employees of different denominational affiliations, this is not to say that the ministries themselves do not have connections to particular traditions. Such connections may be reflected in the features of the ministries’ chapel services. The most prominent example can be found in Association of Christian Truckers (ACT), which, as previously mentioned, was founded by Jim Keys after ideological tensions regarding his increased emphasis on Pentecostal beliefs and practices led to his split from Transport For Christ (TFC). With this historical point in mind, it is no surprise that ACT remains rooted in the Pentecostal tradition. This connection is apparent in ACT’s worship services, which are marked by a charismatic preaching style, greater emphasis on prophecy than other trucking ministries, and practices including the laying on of hands.

56 This term does not appear in print, but is used by members of Association of Christian Truckers.
(see figure 9), fainting, glossolalia (commonly known as “speaking in tongues”), and anointing with oil.

Other trucking ministries show institutional connections to particular Christian traditions, but to a lesser extent. Truckstop Ministries, Inc. (TMI), though not outwardly presented as such, has what one of its chaplains called “Southern Baptist roots.” This connection may be seen in the ministry’s policy of only allowing men to serve as chaplains, emphasis on abstinence from smoking and drinking, particularly among chaplains and ministry employees, and a favorable (though not rigid) attitude toward full-immersion baptism. Transport For Christ (TFC) does not have any connection to a particular Christian denomination or tradition, and works within a broad, essentially Protestant evangelical framework. The ministry’s chaplains are of a wide variety of denominational, theological, and traditional backgrounds, including Calvinist, Arminian, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Mennonite, Catholic, and Pentecostal.

While TFC has the widest variety of denominations represented, chaplains of all trucking ministries tend to come from different traditional backgrounds. Though trucking ministries focus on common experiences of Christian worship in order to reach out to the largest number of people and prevent potential denominational tensions, the varied background of ministry chaplains often affects the style of worship and practices observed in chapel services.

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57 Interview with Chaplain Bill, Bordentown, NJ, January 2, 2011.

Individual Affiliations of Chaplains

Though ministries generally select chaplains regardless of their denominational affiliations or traditional backgrounds, measures are taken to ensure that the approach and vision of the ministry remains consistent. Scott Weidner, President and C.E.O. of Transport For Christ, International, explained,

When we train our staff, right up front, we tell them, ‘You keep all of your denominational distinctives off the chapel. Stick to the basics, the statement of faith, things that are common to all Christians. If you want to talk about some of these other theological and denominational distinctives, then you tell the guy that this is your own opinion, and you go off the chapel and go somewhere else to sit and talk about it.’ But as a ministry, we try very hard to maintain that non-denominational perspective.\(^6^0\)

Though chaplains generally keep to the set standards of their ministry, there are, of course, instances in which their own denominational and traditional backgrounds somehow enter into the chapel service or their interactions with drivers. The diversity that results from this may certainly enhance the ministry as a whole, creating a network of chapels with a shared vision, but with a variety of worship styles and chapel experiences.

On the other hand, chapel services that contain too many or too strongly denominationally linked elements may compromise the ministry’s core values or alienate certain individuals. The following examples describe actual scenarios that may potentially be understood in either way:

1) One chaplain recalled an experience in which a homeless man visited the truckstop chapel with his son. After talking for some time, the man expressed the

\(^6^0\) Telephone Interview with Scott Weidner, President and C.E.O. of Transport For Christ, International, July 26, 2010.
desire to be baptized. Ultimately, the chaplain drove the man and his son to her sister in law’s home, where she baptized the man in the swimming pool.

2) One driver visited a truckstop chapel near Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and had the following experience (described in his own words): “I asked the chaplain, ‘Is it really important to be baptized?’ He said, ‘Yes, it’s obedient to God.’ So, we went out to a lake and they dunked me.”

3) “Miracles have occurred here,” one chaplain remarked, going on to tell the story of a driver who was physically healed at a service in a travel plaza TV room: “My wife and I laid hands on him, and we were praying for him. He had one leg that was shorter than the other. Right there, the leg grew right out. Everyone saw it. After that, we had lunch, and he told me that he had been in an accident and that leg had to be completely reconstructed.”

4) One chaplain invited a friend of his to be the guest speaker for a TV room service. The man, a “messianic Jew,” spoke about his belief that Jesus is the Jewish messiah, and concluded the sermon by blowing the shofar, a traditional Jewish ritual instrument made from a ram’s horn.

While all of the above-mentioned occurrences may be seen as positive (and in the case of the third scenario, miraculous) spiritual experiences, the question still remains of whether or not they are problematic in terms of the ministries’ ecumenical approach, centered around beliefs and practices common to all Christians. For instance, not all denominations practice full-immersion baptism, Jewish ritual such as shofar blowing is certainly uncommon in most Christian traditions, and healing ministries are distinctly Pentecostal or Charismatic. Such questionable situations regularly arise in the field of
trucking ministry, and may be viewed positively or negatively by chapel attendees, regarded by ministry management either as valuably diverse or as an outright transgression of the ministry’s primary vision.

The Effect of Attendance on the Format of the Chapel Service

The format of truckstop chapel services may be deliberately or naturally modified based on the number of individuals in attendance. In the event that attendance at a worship service is particularly low, the service may become less structured, more interactive and conversational than usual. In such a case, the chaplain may sit instead of stand. Group Bible study or an exchange of detailed testimonies or stories may replace the sermon. In such cases, a particularly outgoing driver may assume the role of chaplain, providing the majority of subject matter to the others. For example, at a chapel service consisting of the chaplain and three visitors, one driver, Felix, spoke at great length about the role of faith in his professional life, including his daily spiritual practices of prayer and Bible study. Additionally, he explained certain trucking-related decisions inspired by his faith, saying, “I won’t run on Sunday. I’ve turned down some loads that pay pretty good, if they run on Sunday.” He also raised the topic of lying on delivery logbooks (a prohibited but nevertheless common practice in the trucking industry), saying, “A lot of drivers say that lying on the logbook is no problem.” This remark led to a lengthy discussion of Christian honesty from the perspective of the trucking profession.

The thin attendance at this particular service allowed for a complete change in format and facilitation. Instead of the appointed chaplain delivering a sermon, Felix, an
older driver with many years of experience, much like a respected church elder, was able to share the spiritual and trucking-related knowledge that he had acquired over time. Both the chaplain and the other drivers in attendance (who were all significantly younger in age) seemed to welcome this spontaneous arrangement, showing interest and enthusiasm.

**Witnessing Practices**

The evangelical efforts of trucking ministries may be conducted either in an overarching institutional capacity (most often through mass distribution and placement of written materials), or in an individual capacity, through the work of ministry chaplains. Additionally, a great deal of the evangelical activity in the trucking industry is conducted by drivers themselves. Trucking ministries strongly encourage such individual witnessing, and often offer instruction and suggestion in this regard\(^{61}\), but such activity may take place with or without a direct link to a particular trucking ministry.

The witnessing practices of trucking ministries are distinct from those of other evangelical ministries by virtue of the specialized variety of lived religion that drivers of faith embrace. The evangelical efforts of trucking ministries, chaplains, and drivers of faith may be understood as presentation of a model for this lived religion, showing drivers that it is fully possible to work faith and religious practice into the trucking lifestyle. Due to the unique concepts and approaches being presented through such

\(^{61}\) Such suggestion, instruction, and encouragement may appear in written materials distributed by trucking ministries, in sermons at chapel services, or on ministry web sites. An example is quoted on page 37.
witnessing, the witnessing practices themselves differ from those that take place outside of the trucking industry.

From an evangelistic perspective, the trucking industry provides a tremendous number of potentially reachable individuals. Scott Weidner, president and C.E.O. of Transport For Christ, International, commented, “Here in the United States, this subculture has the population of a small country. There are literally millions of drivers out there on the road, and well over ten million people who are involved with the industry. So, it’s still missions, it’s still sharing the Gospel, it’s still doing evangelism and discipleship.”62 One driver, Tom, referred to the trucking industry as “a mission field in your backyard.”63 It is crucial to note, however, that of all the individuals who enter the travel plaza, the percentage of those who also visit the truckstop chapel is relatively small. In this way, it can be understood that in order to fully engage the unique “mission field” offered by the trucking industry, it is necessary for ministries, chaplains, and drivers to find ways to witness within the fully public main spaces of the travel plaza, such as restaurants and TV lounges. This section will examine the variety of witnessing practices conducted in the trucking industry, considering the different sources of evangelical activity as well as the different settings in which such activity may take place.

**Witnessing Practices at the Ministry Level**

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63 Interview with Tom Wilson, Lodi, OH, October 3, 2010.
Though the evangelical efforts of trucking ministries are primarily carried out by individual chaplains, some witnessing does take place at a broader institutional level. This type of witnessing is primarily conducted through the production and distribution of printed materials. Publications or tracts are most often placed in public areas of travel plazas where other free, trucking-related publications are available for the taking. According to Scott Weidner, President and C.E.O. of Transport For Christ, International, the 30,000 to 40,000 copies of *Highway News and Good News* printed each month are made available at Transport For Christ’s chapels and also placed “in truckstops, primarily the ones where we have ministry located, but we also put them in trucking companies, trucking terminals, anywhere the drivers can walk by and pick them up.”

Trucking-specific tracts and brochures for the ministry’s driver’s wellness website are also commonly distributed. Truckstop Ministries, Association of Christian Truckers, and HMI Ministries place materials in a similar fashion, including ministry-published magazines, specialized tracts, and specially designed Bibles for drivers, such as the Association of Christian Truckers’ *One-Minute Pocket Bible for Truckers* and *Road Map of Christ in the World of Trucking*, published by Transport For Christ. When placed in the travel plaza, these publications may serve a role similar to the actual presence of a chaplain or ministry representative, in that any driver who decides to take them will likely read

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66 In many cases, the specialization of Bibles only extends as far as the cover or introduction, which nevertheless serves to present the Bible as directly relevant to those in the trucking industry.
scriptural passages, trucking-specific sermons and testimony, and will also be made
aware of truckstop chapel locations. In this way, the approach, activities, and availability
of the ministry (and thus, certain possibilities of religious life on the road) are made
known to the driver.

The physical placement of ministry materials alongside secular trucking-related
publications (which may be understood to be relevant to all drivers) demonstrates the
ministries’ awareness and use of common free-advertising practices and also reflects their
goal of directing their message toward the entire trucking community. When considering
this goal, it is important to note that most periodical-style publications produced and
publicly distributed by trucking ministries rarely use blatant religious images or headlines
on the front cover, instead featuring pictures of trucks and highway landscapes.
Additionally, *Highway News and Good News* frequently contains sections of material that
are completely secular, such as truck trivia.\(^67\) By using such images, content, and
placement, trucking ministries actively seek to engage their mission field, increasing the
likelihood of drivers taking interest in their materials, and potentially, their message.

**Witnessing Practices of Ministry Chaplains**

Ministry chaplains regularly engage in witnessing as a part of their day-to-day
duties. In addition to witnessing to others in the truckstop chapel through their sermons
and individual interactions, chaplains often approach drivers in the main areas of the
travel plaza. In the case of locations with on-site chapels, these efforts may partially be

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\(^{67}\) The publication’s 1988 name change, from the more strikingly religious *Highway
Evangelist*, may also reflect the ministry’s desire to appeal to non-Christians.
understood as means of making drivers aware of the chapel services, and encouraging their attendance.\textsuperscript{68} A colorful example may be seen in the case of the late Chaplain Kris of ACT’s Spirit of the Road/Lil’ Grace Chapel in Milton, Pennsylvania. As one of her colleagues fondly recalled, “She would strut into the restaurant, saying ‘OK everybody! Time for church! Let’s go!’”\textsuperscript{69} Most chaplains, however, are not quite as bold in their approach, and generally make first contact with drivers on an individual basis, tailoring their evangelism to individual drivers just as print-based evangelism at the ministry level is tailored to the entire trucking industry. Many chaplains make a practice of “walking the lot,”\textsuperscript{70} inviting drivers to chapel services, occasionally distributing materials such as tracts and CD’s, and initiating spiritual or trucking-related conversations.

During one sermon in a truckstop chapel, Chaplain Jason emphasized, “The church is supposed to be out these doors. This [chapel] is just a social club.” In keeping with this emphasis on outreach, he often approaches drivers at the travel plaza’s restaurant. He continued, “I’m in the cafeteria and someone looks depressed—God says ‘Talk to him.’” In a subsequent conversation, he addressed the importance of establishing personal connections, and the necessity to “Find out who [drivers] are, where they’re at, and what they’ll need.”\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{68} It is important to draw a distinction between advertising chapel services and witnessing. Chaplains frequently invite drivers to chapel services by making announcements over the P.A. system of the travel plaza, over the CB radio, and in person. While such invitations are frequently made without additional discussion of spiritual topics, these initial interactions may create a forum for witnessing.

\textsuperscript{69} Interview with Carl Burval, Executive Director of Association of Christian Truckers, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.

\textsuperscript{70} Chaplains at several chapel locations used this term colloquially.

\textsuperscript{71} Interview with Chaplain Jason, Lodi, OH, October 3, 2010.
This notion of meeting the driver “where they’re at” is ubiquitous among those involved with any form of trucking ministry. Pastor Mel Weaver elaborated on this point, saying, “We have to meet people where they’re at, literally and figuratively.”

This principal goal of trucking ministry is often aided by the fact that many ministry chaplains are either former or current truck drivers. Having personal experience in the trucking industry enables the chaplain to better understand the particular difficulties that drivers may face and creates a dynamic of commonality and shared experience. Furthermore, chaplains with experience in the trucking industry may be understood to possess a certain credential or authenticity that earns them the respect and confidence of the drivers they encounter.

Weaver also emphasized the importance and effect of “Asking the trucker a question and letting him share his heart,” adding, “You have to be available.” Establishing availability and understanding proves crucial to relationships between drivers and trucking ministries, and is clearly a central objective of trucking ministry. Scott Weidner referred to the “very unique needs” of truck drivers, explaining:

They’re not home every night, sometimes they aren’t home for days, weeks, or even months at a time. They’re in a different place constantly, and because of that, they lose a sense of connection, they lose a sense of communication with their home base, they lose a sense of connection with their support systems, they lose a sense of consistency in their lives… This transient nature of their business keeps them disconnected.

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72 Interview with Pastor Mel Weaver, Vice President of Association of Christian Truckers, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.
In response to this transient and often isolated nature of the trucking profession, Weidner said, “We are trying to create a ministry that is essentially like the church down the street, making consistency and continuity available to the drivers.”

Indeed, truckstop chapels may fill the role of a home church. Even if the driver actually has a home church, a close pastoral relationship is rarely maintained. Concerning the pastor of his home church, one driver quipped, “I could be dead, buried, and resurrected, and he wouldn’t even know it.”

The first-contact interactions of chaplains and drivers often serve as a platform for establishing a reputation of availability and also demonstrate the ability of the chaplain to function as a listener and counselor. Surely, the solitary nature of the day-to-day trucking lifestyle demands such a resource. Carl Burval, Executive Director of the Association of Christian Truckers, emphatically stated that one involved in trucking ministry must be “a good listener, not just a good talker.” Chaplain Vi also acknowledged the drivers’ need for a good listener, saying, “All their problems are right there on that steering wheel.”

The presence of chaplains in the main areas of the travel plaza allows them to make their resources known to drivers who might not take it upon themselves to walk into the truckstop chapel. In such interactions, they may invite drivers to upcoming

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74 Interview with anonymous driver, Lodi, OH, October 3, 2010. Any future reference to anonymous interviewees indicates that the individual chose not to disclose his or her name in print.
75 As previously noted, chaplains often give their phone number or other contact information to drivers, encouraging them to stay in touch.
76 Interview with Carl Burval, Executive Director of Association of Christian Truckers, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.
77 Interview with Chaplain Vi, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.
chapel services or create a platform for witnessing. Chuck Sonn, a former chaplain and fuel buyer in the trucking industry, acknowledged the important role of personal connection in witnessing, particularly to drivers, stating, “People want to know that you care before they care anything about what you know,” adding, “My job is to care about people all the way to heaven.”

TV Room Services

Chaplains may also witness within the space of the actual travel plaza by holding regular worship services in its lounges or TV rooms. Such services generally take place at travel plazas where, due to financial reasons or opposition from travel plaza management, no on-site chapel has been installed. However, they are still arranged in consultation with the plaza’s management, and are officially associated with trucking ministries. Chaplains may advertise these services, usually by placing signs inside or outside of the building. While such TV room services may draw drivers who deliberately plan to attend, they also benefit from their location within the actual travel plaza, where any number of drivers may take interest and attend the service spontaneously. Furthermore, despite one chaplain’s point that “It’s easier for a truck driver to approach the tractor-trailer than a regular church,” the familiar and more benign setting of the TV room may serve to attract drivers who might shy away from the specified and semi-private space of a truckstop chapel, which exists only for religious purposes.

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78 Interview with Chuck Sonn, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.
79 Interview with Chaplain Jason, Lodi, OH, October 3, 2010.
One driver, Bulldog, reflected on this potential hesitation, remarking, “A man gets out of his truck, he sees the chapel, he doesn’t know what’s inside those walls—he doesn’t know that the chaplain’s a great guy, that we’re not judgmental…they see a Christian church and they see the last preacher who judged them.” At the same time, he seemed to regard the option of the TV room service as something of an imposition on the travel plaza, saying, “with the TV room, we’re invading their space.” While Bulldog expressed great personal appreciation for truckstop chapels, he saw them as limited in terms of witnessing to drivers who are not already favorable to religious life, commenting, “These churches in the parking lot are great for those who want to go—deaths in the family, family emergencies, good for counseling. But when it comes to winning people over for God, we’re drawing a blank.”  

Chuck Sonn, a fuel buyer and former truckstop chaplain, suggested that to witness to drivers most effectively, chaplains should supplement (or even replace) the efforts of chapel and TV room services with a greater and more deliberate presence in the high-traffic areas of the travel plaza. He commented, “Forget the TV room—they’ll gladly give you the TV room for an hour on Sunday—but why not have someone sitting in the restaurant for 6, 8 hours a day?” Elaborating on this idea, Sonn said, “Ministry is ‘out there’, not ‘in here’—this is what causes many churches to suffer.” If the truckstop chapel, though readily accessible and visible in the parking lot of the travel plaza, may be seen, as Bulldog expressed, as a mysterious and semi-private space, it may be subject to similar difficulty in terms of widespread ministerial efforts. Witnessing within the public

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80 Interview with Bulldog, Lodi, OH, October 3, 2010.
81 Interview with Chuck Sonn, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.
areas of the travel plaza, therefore, is regarded by trucking ministries as a necessary supplement to the operation of truckstop chapels.

**Witnessing Practices of Drivers**

Trucking ministries strongly encourage drivers to witness to others. As drivers can witness independently in multiple locations and relate directly to other drivers, they are understood by ministries to have great potential as ministers of the Gospel. Sermons delivered in truckstop chapels, as well as printed materials and websites of trucking ministries frequently emphasize the importance and power of drivers’ ministerial efforts.

For example, Pastor Mel Weaver remarked that at his chapel, “Messages were geared to how [drivers] can be ministers on the road.” Weaver expressed his belief that, “Every one of them, God wants to use to be a blessing to the other truckers,” continuing, “Where they’re at is their pulpit.”82 Different chaplains and ministries vary in the extent to which they accentuate this point, but in keeping with the Protestant notion of the priesthood of all believers, all present it as an important consideration and possible endeavor for drivers. In one sermon, Chaplain Jason declared, “If we can take God to people, that’s what we’re called to do.” He encouraged the drivers not only to “find the little piece [of scripture] that you had today, and go out and apply it,” but also to “take it out there and share it.”83

Certain ministries offer specific guidance for drivers who want to share their faith with others. A section of the Trucker’s Christian Chapel Ministries website, entitled

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82 Interview with Pastor Mel Weaver, Vice President of Association of Christian Truckers, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.
“Help For Witnessing,” offers an idea of specialized witnessing practices that may be employed in trucking ministry. Here, Chaplain Rich provides a list of selected Bible verses, and offers strategic suggestions for those who wish to “speak of things not common in everyday Truck Stops, warehouses, loading docks or waterfronts,” writing:

I enjoy going into restaurants at truck stops and looking for a driver sitting alone just beginning his or her meal and asking if I may join them. Very rarely will I ever get a "no". We all like to talk and starting off by "Giving Thanks" for your food is a way to open any door. Try these Scriptures out for memorization, look up the verses and complete them, and trust that the Lord will use you in a positive and thrilling way to speak to His Creation.\(^{84}\)

The Association of Christian Truckers is especially focused on encouraging drivers to witness to others, offering a “Driver-Minister” Program, through which drivers of faith may receive ministerial training and assistance. Dean Hufford, who organized the program in 2008, stated that the ministry’s hope is to have “10,000 drivers out there using their time to further their relationship with the Lord.”\(^{85}\) At ACT’s “Wheels Alive” Jamboree, held in Brownstown, IL in October 2010, one speaker remarked, “Driver-ministers are out there delivering the word,” continuing, “It takes a trucker to talk to a trucker…truckers are overcomers, that’s why God wants truckers to deliver the word.” Using a trucking-related analogy, he noted, “You have to be saved in order to deliver the word—it’s a qualification, like a CDL [commercial driver’s license].” One long-time supporter and benefactor proudly declared, “God loves the truckers. He wants the good news of what Jesus did going out through the truckers.”\(^{86}\)

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\(^{85}\) Telephone Interview with Dean Hufford, September 30, 2010.

\(^{86}\) Interview with anonymous ministry supporter, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.
Though ministry encouragement, advice, and even formal training may be offered to drivers who witness to others, the ways in which and extent to which they share their faith are largely personal, and vary according to individual and situation. One driver, Raymond, a Mormon who attends truckstop chapels while on the road, recalled one instance in which he met a woman at the travel plaza, and after a brief conversation, gave her a picture of Jesus Christ. After learning that Raymond was a Mormon, the woman’s husband expressed his admiration of the architecture of the Mormon Temple in Salt Lake City. Raymond enthusiastically recalled, “I just so happened to have a picture of the temple, too—I gave it to him and he was so happy!” In this instance, Raymond’s personal religious affiliation is evident in his individual witnessing. His method of witnessing generally involves welcoming questions from drivers, and finding relevant Bible passages to address the questions. Raymond characterized his approach, saying, “Let’s look it up and find the answer together. That’s how it should be.” Raymond’s understanding of his personal witnessing practices and those of fellow drivers places it within the context of a larger evangelical cause: “We are all witnesses,” he stated, continuing, “We’re out here not just to pick up and deliver the next run, but we’re here to plant seeds and spread the word of God, and he makes sure that we’ve got the transportation to do so, from city to city to city.”

Another driver, David, witnesses in a way that strives to “find whatever hurt they’ve got and meet them where they’re at.” As previously noted, this approach is prevalent among trucking ministries, and is frequently emphasized by chaplains. David also expressed his belief in the effectiveness of brevity when witnessing to drivers,

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87 Interview with Raymond, Lodi, OH, October 3, 2010.
saying, “I try to make it real short and to the point, and I believe in that very much. If they really want to hear the whole gospel, though, I’ll give it to them.” Significantly, David employs trucking themes in his witness and testimony. He explained, “When I see a driver having a problem with dispatch, a Christian driver in particular, I say, ‘Well, I’ve got a good dispatcher, his name is Jesus,” continuing, “If the Lord’s your dispatcher, you’ve got nothing to worry about, the Lord’s got your best interest at heart.”

Another driver, though fully in support of the evangelistic efforts of trucking ministries and other drivers, did not feel a personal need to explicitly witness to others, saying, “I’m not cramming it down your throat, telling you that you’re screwed up. I love you the way you are.” The independent witnessing of drivers allows for a variety of different approaches and levels of involvement. Some drivers may choose not to witness directly, but may still witness to others in more passive ways, for example, through wearing religiously-themed t-shirts or other apparel, or through truck decoration (see figures 14 through 17), which serves to witness not only to fellow truck drivers, but to any number of motorists on the highway. Drivers who witness directly and rigorously simultaneously re-contextualize and take personal advantage of their profession, rendering themselves itinerant ministers.

All trucking ministries recognize the potential for the personal witnessing and testimonies of drivers of faith to provide valuable reinforcement and contribution to their

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88 Interview with David Newman, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.
89 Interview with anonymous driver, Lodi, OH, October 3, 2011.
90 As with more direct witnessing by drivers, trucking ministries also encourage these passive varieties of witnessing, by offering lighted cross kits and religiously-themed (and often trucking-specific) bumper stickers, mudflaps, and apparel for sale at chapel locations (see figure 15).
larger efforts. Regardless of whether or not such interactions increase awareness of truckstop chapels and trucking ministries, the efforts of individual drivers are undoubtedly understood as a means to the same evangelistic goals. In addition, in any number of locations where there is no official ministry presence, drivers of faith may be able to offer other drivers the personal connection and concerned ear that ministry chaplains aim to provide. In the case of locations with on-site chapels, drivers of faith may be able to assist chaplains in encouraging others to attend the services.

If the travel plaza’s management does not support public activity of the trucking ministry, drivers may, in their dual driver-minister status, continue evangelistic efforts that may be unwelcome if carried out by a chaplain. Finally, drivers of faith (who are rarely official representatives of any particular ministry) may relate to other drivers in personal ways that lead to a variety of approaches that ministry chaplains do not take. This diversity therefore contributes to the greater interest of “meeting the drivers where they’re at,” in turn reaching a greater number of individuals according to their unique needs and sensibilities.

**Lived Religion on the Road**

While drivers may participate in a variety of religious practices within the walls of truckstop chapels or in the public space of travel plazas, their spiritual practice is most often conducted in the solitary setting of the truck, where they spend the vast majority of their time. For many drivers of faith, the day-to-day scenario presented by the trucking profession, despite its potential difficulties, is viewed as a special opportunity for spiritual growth. In one sermon at an ACT service, Chaplain Ellis explained, “We have
opportunities as truckers. You can do anything in that eight-foot box.”\textsuperscript{91} Certainly, this private work environment, coupled with long hours, does create the potential for many hours of personal religious practice, much of which can safely and easily occur while driving. As previously stated, such practice is encouraged, presented, and taught through the specialized witnessing of trucking ministries, the effect of which may ultimately be seen in the daily activities of individual drivers. This section uses the ethnographic findings of this study to illustrate and examine such lived religion in detail, drawing from interviews with drivers in order to show the ways in which religion often exists at the center of their everyday lives.

**Standard Religious Practices**

Many of the drivers interviewed maintain a number of standard religious practices while on the road. Such practices, referred to as ‘standard’ in that they are widespread and not exclusive to the trucking profession, include regular personal prayer, reading and studying Bible verses, listening to sermons and religious music, and attending services when possible.

**Personal Prayer**

Many drivers of faith practice personal prayer on a daily basis. Due to the nature of the driver’s daily schedule, such prayer most often takes place in the cab or sleeper of

\textsuperscript{91} Sermon delivered by Chaplain Ellis, Brownstown, IL, October 23, 2010.
the truck. While some drivers may regard this setting as a mere fact of life, others find the solitary setting to be especially conducive to prayer. One driver, Bulldog, commented on this, saying, “I believe that when you pray, you should be alone—between you and God.” He further explained his daily prayer practices and the settings in which they take place:

I have two ways—one, going into my sleeper by myself, just me and God, and two, showering. No one else is around—it’s also a physical cleansing. Some people sing in the shower, some people listen to the radio, I pray. That’s my prayer time. Muslims go to Mecca, I go to the shower! I know I’ve screwed up, and I’ve got to talk to Him about things…so if I’m dirty and smelly, you know I haven’t prayed in a while!\(^{92}\)

Several drivers spoke about their frequent practice of less formal prayer in the form of “talking to God.” The solitary lifestyle of the trucking profession, as well as the long hours spent driving, may be understood to both demand and enable such a practice. Of his time spent in the truck, one driver said, “You’re always talking to God.”

Another driver, Raymond, provided an example from his own experience:

I’ll tell you what gets me through the night sometimes…I drive at night…It’s dark, no traffic around. I start thinking about things, and all of a sudden, I’m talking to Him. I could have two, three more hours of driving to go, and sometimes it feels like only fifteen or twenty minutes.

**Bible Reading**

Many of the drivers interviewed kept Bibles in their trucks. While the regularity with which they read the Bible varied, Bible study clearly had an established role in their daily spiritual practice. One driver, Felix, remarked, “The best way to start the day is to pray and read the Bible. I don’t move my truck until I’ve read the Bible.”\(^{93}\) Expressing a

\(^{92}\) Interview with Bulldog, Lodi, OH, October 3, 2010.

\(^{93}\) Interview with Felix, Hebron, OH, January 16, 2011.
similar outlook, Chaplain Vince explained that when speaking to drivers in the chapel, he often “compare[s] being spiritually prepared to doing a pre-trip [inspection]” on your truck.” For many drivers, such ‘spiritual preparation’ includes reading the Bible and/or daily devotionals.

Felix continued, “I don’t know how many Bibles I’ve got in my truck. I’ve got to read the Bible morning, evening, and if I stop, I’m reading the Bible. And I sleep with a Bible.”

The physical portability of the Bible may give it special importance to the transient driver. In a sense, a driver’s Bible can serve as a constant spiritual companion, traveling from state to state in the truck and being carried into travel plazas, motels, and truckstop chapels. The level of consistency, familiarity, and reliability that a personal Bible can provide a driver may surpass that of nearly any other spiritual resource, even those offered by truckstop chaplains with such virtues in mind, thereby making it extremely valuable to religious life on the road. In addition to this consideration, the highly Bible-based approach of trucking ministry serves to further cement the central role of the Bible in the spiritual lives of Christian drivers. Most trucking ministries, including Transport For Christ, Truckstop Ministries, and the Association of Christian Truckers, provide Bibles to drivers. These Bibles frequently contain trucking-specific imagery,

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94 A pre-trip inspection is a Department of Transportation (DOT) codified procedure in which drivers inspect many of the truck’s components, including tires, engine, mirrors, exhaust, cab, trailer, brakes, lights, etc., prior to beginning a haul.
95 Interview with Chaplain Vince, Harrisburg, PA, January 5, 2011.
96 One popular and prominent example is Our Daily Bread, a calendar-style booklet published by RBC Ministries. The publication features one or more Bible verses and accompanying articles for each day of the year.
97 Interview with Felix, Hebron, OH, January 16, 2011.
terminology, and subject matter on the covers or in their introductions, presenting the
Bible as an asset to the unique needs of the working driver (see figure 12). 98

The introduction of one such Bible, the One-Minute Pocket Bible for Truckers, printed and distributed by the Association of Christian Truckers, reads:

The Christian trucker is a highly respected professional on our nation’s highways today. In an industry that works 24 hours a day, seven days a week, a trucker needs more than physical abilities, strength, and stamina. To be successful on the long haul, the inner qualities of faith and integrity must also be present...The Bible is the inspired Word of God. God’s Word offers nuggets of truth and wisdom principles that can be applied practically and systematically for successful Christian living on the go...Make the Holy Bible your road map for travel on the highway of a successful Christian life. 99

A New Testament distributed by Transport For Christ bears the cover inscription, “Here is your personal copy of The Road Map of Christ in the World of Trucking.” 100 A sticker on the front of a New Testament distributed by Truckstop Ministries reads, “Here is your free personal copy of The Trucker’s Guide.” 101 By presenting the Bible not only as a spiritual guide, but as a particularly relevant guide to the trucking profession, trucking ministries encourage the Bible’s foundational role in the daily religious lives of drivers.

Listening to Recorded Sermons and Religious Music

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98 The same type of presentation is also seen in ministry periodicals.
99 Mike Murdock, One-Minute Pocket Bible for Truckers (Dallas: Wisdom International, 1994).
The nature of the trucking profession requires that the driver spend ample time in
the truck, traveling long distances on a demanding schedule. Trucking ministries actively
encourage drivers to make the most of this time by using it for spiritual growth. In
keeping with this goal, many drivers regularly listen to recorded sermons, religious
music, and Christian radio programs during their travel time. One interviewed driver
maintains a strict standard in this regard, commenting, “I only listen to Gospel and
preaching.”102 Another driver remarked, “Sometimes I’ll listen to rock n’ roll, oldie but
goodie stations, country—those songs, they keep you going, but not like Christian
songs.”103

In certain cases, listening to religious materials may cause an exceptional
experience to take place within the cab, moving beyond the bounds of routine study or
listening. Often, the solitary environment provided by the truck serves to further facilitate
moments of introspection, meditation, and prayer. When discussing his regular practice
of listening to Christian music, one driver recalled:

One day, I was in my truck, and I heard that song, “Our God is an Awesome
God,” and I just started crying…I had heard it before, but that day, I cried—why,
I don’t know.104

For many drivers, religiously linked listening practices may in time become fully
associated with the task of driving, forming a unified practice. One driver enthusiastically
commented, “Boy, I tell you, there’s nothing better than driving through Wyoming,
putting on some CD’s, some Gospel, some preaching…”105

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102 Interview with Felix, Hebron, OH, January 16, 2011.
103 Interview with Raymond, Lodi, OH, October 3, 2010.
105 Interview with Felix, Hebron, OH, January 16, 2011.
Trucking ministries actively contribute to and encourage certain listening practices through recommendation and suggestion, as well as through producing and distributing listening materials. These recordings of sermons and Christian music are typically distributed free of charge at truckstop chapel services. Often, the sermons or music are specialized so as to include subject matter and language pertaining directly to the trucking industry. Truckstop Ministries, Inc. produces and distributes compact discs and tapes featuring the trucking-related sermons of founder Chaplain Joe Hunter. Truckers Christian Chapel Ministries also produces recorded sermons and gospel music for distribution to drivers, who are encouraged to pass the materials on to others after they are through listening to them, as a means of witnessing.106 In one such sermon, entitled, “Hey Driver,” Reverend Bill Stanley, himself a driver for eleven years, addresses the listener in a mood of spiritual and literal companionship, saying, “If you don’t mind, driver, I’d like to just ride down the road with you, and sort of explain one very important verse of the Bible to you…”107

In addition to Christian radio stations and listening materials available on compact disc and cassette, satellite radio, now commonly installed in trucks, provides a number of listening options for drivers of faith.108 In this way, technological innovation continues to expand the possibilities for such religious practice on the road.

106 http://www.tccministries.org/about/about-us
107 Reverend Bill Stanley, “Hey Driver.” Truckers’ Christian Chapel Ministries. The verse in question is John 3:16, to which Stanley refers as “a promise from God…the message of salvation.”
108 Popular choices included “Family Talk,” a Christian talk station, and “The Dave Nemo Show,” a trucking-focused program which, though primarily secular, features a running segment called “Heaven’s Road Morning Devotion,” hosted by Chaplain Joe Hunter of Truckstop Ministries, Inc.
Trucking-Related Practices Shaped by Religious Belief

In addition to standard religious practices, drivers commonly engage in trucking-related practices that have somehow been informed or altered by religious belief or spiritual consciousness, and in this way may be understood as religious or spiritual practices. When faith permeates every area of the drivers’ lives, they certainly do not draw such a distinction themselves, nor does their approach to spiritual life require them to do so. However, for the purpose of better understanding examples of lived religion on the road, this distinction is being made here, separating practices that are solely religious in nature from other practices that have been spiritualized according to one’s faith. These adapted practices may be seen in individual approaches to driving and certain professional elements such as CB radio use, route logging, weight limit, and dispatches.

Approaches to Driving

A number of drivers commented on certain personal approaches to driving and road safety that had either been changed over time by spiritual influence, or were newly adopted as a result of spiritual development. Several drivers mentioned that they had become more steadfast about obeying speed limits. Other drivers referred to a decline in their tendencies toward road-related anger or anxiety. One driver explained:

A few years ago, before I got deep into religion, I would cuss people out for getting in my way. I don’t cuss them out anymore…Now, I’ll just look at my wife

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109 One driver elaborated, specifying that his preferred method in a 70 mile-per-hour zone is to “cruise at 68.”
and say, “Wasn’t that pretty stupid?” I don’t get as angry or upset anymore, I just thank God for every day.\textsuperscript{110}

Another driver stated:

If someone cuts me off or does something on the road, I pray, ‘God, please forgive them, they don’t know what they’re doing.’ It feels good to sit there and smile, knowing that I kicked the devil one more time.\textsuperscript{111}

Regarding traffic jams, one driver, Edwin, commented, “Other drivers get anxious, because they get distracted…I don’t focus on that, because my mind is always focused on the Lord Jesus Christ.”\textsuperscript{112} In all of these cases, the drivers’ regular driving practices were changed as a result of their spiritual positioning. In these changes, we see ways in which the drivers’ religious beliefs may create overarching sensibilities that manifest in their day-to-day activities.

The driver’s regard toward the scenery that he or she constantly sees while driving may also be influenced by religious and spiritual sensibilities. In this way, the highway’s various landscapes may take on greater spiritual significance, becoming more than pleasant, picturesque sights. One driver, David, explained:

I see the trees and everything, and I don’t ever get bored. I was in North Dakota, there doesn’t seem to be anything out there, but I love it all…I see how marvelous He made it.\textsuperscript{113}

Edwin remarked, “I see God’s beauty wherever I go. The trees, the land, the animals, and looking up at night, the stars…God created that.”\textsuperscript{114} Another driver, Bulldog, commented,
“It could be a diesel engine, a tree…God made it all.” One driver proclaimed, “Now I can look at the sky and get a blessing out of it.”

Furthermore, drivers often find inspiration in religious billboards and roadside crosses, which are a fairly common sight along U.S. highways (see figure 13). One driver, Raymond, remarked, “You see things on the road that keep you going…you see crosses, and I mean big crosses.” Raymond also referenced a set of two consecutive billboards, which together displayed the Ten Commandments. Remembering another billboard that had inspired him while on the road, Raymond explained, “It’s Jesus Christ on a billboard, and it says, ‘Fear not, I am with you always.’” While such forms of highway evangelism are intended for anyone who drives past them, and are likely placed with the interest of witnessing to those who have not committed to Christianity, they undoubtedly invoke a positive response in Christian drivers, who are able to see them frequently and repeatedly.

Approaches to Professional Elements of Trucking

Certain professional elements of trucking may also be influenced by a driver’s faith. A number of Christian drivers expressed some degree of aversion to the CB radio, an essential tool of the trucking profession, used for practical purposes as well as for personal conversation and entertainment. Tom, a driver for 48 years, refrains from using

115 Interview with Bulldog, Lodi, OH, October 3, 2010.
116 Interview with Felix, Hebron, OH, January 16, 2011.
his CB more than necessary, due to the presence of “so many foul-mouthed guys on there.”118 Another driver explained that he keeps his CB radio on low in case of accidents or traffic, but otherwise prefers to listen to religious music. An additional reason for avoiding excessive use of the CB radio, one driver explained, may lie in the fact that prostitution and the sale of drugs are often advertised over the CB using code words. Several drivers take a proactive approach to these perceived problems of the CB radio—as opposed to avoiding association with objectionable conversations, they deliberately participate in such dialogues, using them as a forum to express faith-based opinions, ideas, or to directly witness to others. For example, one driver explained that when passing strip clubs or casinos on the highway, he often talks on the CB radio, saying, “I’d really like to see this place shut down.” The driver continued, “People talk back, saying, ‘why are you preaching at me?’ Then I say, ‘What if someone was in that strip joint and Jesus came back?’”119

Drivers may also cite faith-based values in explaining their approaches to other professional dealings, such as those involving weight limits and route logging. While hauling overweight loads and forging logbook entries are strictly enforced prohibitions within the trucking profession, they are rules that many drivers commonly bend. Many Christian drivers adhere closely to such regulations—even if the drivers do not feel a practical need to follow the rules, they do so for markedly spiritual reasons. One driver explained, “I don’t haul overweight, I don’t break certain rules…all for the Lord.” The driver further commented that such regulated driving practices aide in “keeping a strong

118 Interview with Tom Wilson, Lodi, OH, October 3, 2010.
119 Interview with anonymous driver, Hebron, OH, January 16, 2011.
testimony." In other words, a driver’s adherence to institutional regulations of the trucking profession aids in preserving his or her reputation as a witness to the Gospel.

Regarding logbook entries, one driver, Derek, stated, “I’m not going to throw the page away, I log true…if you’re being dishonest, you’re going against God.” Another driver remarked that his company had reprimanded him several times as a result of his policy of honest logging. He continued, “People say you can’t make a living like that. You can! I’ve got my needs, not my wants…if you give everything to God, you don’t have to lie or cheat.”

Drivers may also make faith-based decisions regarding their job opportunities. Though most of the drivers interviewed based their attendance of worship services on their dispatch schedule, some drivers, if financially able and allowed to do so, declined dispatches in favor of attending chapel services. One driver, Felix, who upholds a policy of not driving on Sundays, further explained, “If I can’t get [to a chapel], I try to get a room so I can watch preaching on TV.”

By adapting and adjusting approaches to their profession in accordance with their religious ideals, drivers of faith are able to achieve spiritual growth, making religious expression an inherent element of their work and career. In this way, a long drive becomes an opportunity to admire the beauty of God’s creation; following weight limit regulations becomes a virtuous offering to God. For devout Christian drivers, such an

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120 Telephone Interview with Dean Hufford, September 30, 2010.
121 Interview with Derek, Hebron, OH, January 16, 2011.
122 Interview with Felix, Hebron, OH, January 16, 2011.
123 Interview with Felix, Hebron, OH, January 16, 2011.
attitude toward the trucking profession ensures that it is personally rewarding and joyfully performed.

Through observing and understanding the daily practices of Christian drivers, we are not only provided with a rich example of lived religion on the road, but are also able to clearly see the effect and influence of the specialized witnessing efforts of trucking ministries. The drivers’ common religious practices are successfully incorporated into the trucking lifestyle, and are accompanied and complemented by trucking-specific practices that take on the same spiritual significance. In this way, many everyday dealings of the trucking profession are given greater meaning, becoming both professional and personal practices, seamlessly existing in relation to both the trucking profession and the Christian faith. Examining the dual role of such practices demonstrates that the oft-perceived divide between sacred and profane is not at all present in the lives of numerous individuals. Rather, the ‘profane’ elements of the individual’s existence are influenced and informed by his or her personal spiritual and religious beliefs, practices, and identity, thus giving them new dimension. One driver directly addressed this occurrence in his own life, saying, “In the last five years, He’s taken trucking to a different level for me.”

Conclusions and Considerations for Further Study

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124 Interview with Felix, Hebron, OH, January 16, 2011.
In examining the history and practices of trucking ministries, the characteristics of truckstop chapels and their services, and the lived religion of Christian drivers, we see the existence and implementation of highly specialized approaches to religious practice on multiple levels. While individual examples vary somewhat, the findings of this ethnographic study show widespread and often codified specializations among trucking ministries, chaplains, and drivers. This unified evidence of specialization establishes trucking ministry as a concrete and unique social, cultural, and religious formation, the existence and properties of which allow drivers of faith to take an equally unique and concrete approach to religious life. Given their emphasis on specialization of religion, these findings may be considered in relation to larger topics and discourses, further demonstrating their relevance to the field of religious studies.

The distinct specialization seen in the efforts of trucking ministries and in the lived religion of drivers raises broader questions regarding the possibilities and implications of specialization of religion. The specializations applied to evangelism and religious practice by trucking ministries and drivers clearly aim to make religious practice more relevant and compatible with daily life. With this larger goal in mind, trucking ministry may serve as a potential model for the creation of additional specialized religious organizations, and may be considered and studied alongside others that already exist. Further study of specialized ministries and religious groups such as those examined in this study would undoubtedly be of great value to the field of religious studies, as such unique and often innovative approaches to religious life vividly demonstrate the complex and deeply personal roles that religion may play in the lives of individuals. Through such
study of lived religion, scholars stand to gain crucial understanding and insight, by which they may actively continue to chart and question the position of religion in today’s world.
Figure 1  Li’l Grace Chapel/Spirit of the Road, Milton, PA, originally placed by Association of Christian Truckers

Figure 2  Chapel Interior  Figure 3  Chapel Interior
Figure 4  Transport for Christ Chapel, Harrisburg, PA—first permanent location

Figure 5  Transport for Christ Chapel, Lodi, OH
Figure 6  Transport for Christ Chapel, Lodi, OH

Figure 7  Chapel Interior
Figure 8  An early photo of Chaplain Jim Keys (Courtesy of ACT)

Figure 9  Worship Service at ACT Road Angel Truckers’ Center
Brownstown, IL
Figure 10  Revival Tent at ACT Road Angel Truckers’ Center  
Brownstown, IL

Figure 11  Sign at Transport for Christ  
Chapel, Frystown, PA

Figure 12  Specialized Bible Cover
Figure 13  Roadside Cross in Illinois.

Figure 14  Truck Decoration

Figure 15  Mudflaps for Sale
Figure 16  Truck Decoration

Figure 17  Driver in front of decorated truck
Figure 18 Truck interior with trucking-specific religious sticker

Figure 19 Example of incorporative art
**Historical Timeline of Trucking Ministry**

1951  Jim Keys, a truck driver from Toronto, Canada, establishes Transport for Christ (TFC), the first specialized ministry to the trucking industry.

1957  Keys begins printing and distributing a monthly paper, *Highway Evangelist*.

1958  Keys retires from driving in order to focus on ministry full-time, increases presence at truckstops.

1966  Transport for Christ extends into the United States, when a man from Texas becomes interested in the ministry after reading *Highway Evangelist*. TFC is officially chartered in Akron, Ohio. Many local chapters form throughout Canada and the United States, providing financial and volunteer support.

1968  Keys and his wife, Alameda, sell their home in order to realize Keys’ vision of building “a chapel in an 18-wheeler.” First mobile chapel is constructed, dedicated as “Trailblazer” in Grand Rapids, Michigan on June 29. Chapel travels throughout North America, totaling 30,000 miles per year. Mobile Chapel ministry consists of safety films/lectures at truck terminals on weekdays (a short gospel message is usually permitted at the end of presentations), and visits to truck stops and churches on weekends. TFC begins paying chaplains.

1972-73  An additional two chapels are constructed and travel throughout North America.

1976  Jim Keys resigns from Transport for Christ. Meanwhile, TFC board members continue the ministry’s efforts.

1979  Keys establishes a new ministry, Association of Christian Truckers (ACT). Three mobile chapels, dubbed “Spirit of the Road” 1, 2, and 3, are soon constructed and operated.

1981  Truck driver Joe Hunter and his wife, Jan, establish Truckstop Ministries, Inc. (TMI).

1985  ACT purchases land in Brownstown, Illinois, where the “Road Angel Truckers Center” is built. The facility features a restaurant, showers, and lodging, in addition to a large room for regular worship services.

1986  At the request of a Harrisburg, Pennsylvania truckstop owner, Transport for Christ installs one of their six mobile chapels permanently. The success of the
Harrisburg location leads Transport for Christ to place all of their chapels, and all new chapels from this point on, in fixed locations.

1987 Glenn Cope, a truck driver from Ohio, establishes Trucker’s Christian Chapel Ministries (TCCM) in partnership with Rev. Clyde Bowen of the Enon First Baptist Church of Enon, Ohio.

1991 Truckstop Ministries, Inc. begins operating a 24-hour prayer line for drivers.

1994 Transport for Christ opens a chapel location in Moscow, Russia.


2007 Transport for Christ launches Driverswellness.com, a website featuring articles pertaining to “emotional, relational and spiritual questions, feelings and issues” common to the trucking profession.

2009 As of this year, Transport for Christ operates a total of 27 chapels in the United States, six chapels in Canada, three chapels in Russia, and one chapel in Zambia.

2011 As of this year, Truckstop Ministries has 76 locations in 29 U.S. states. Truckers’ Christian Chapel Ministries has over 116 locations throughout the U.S.

\[125\text{Driverswellness.com}\]
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