



The Money Cult: Capitalism, Christianity, and the Unmaking of the American Dream

Chris Lehmann

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A grand and startling work of American history

America was founded, we're taught in school, by the Pilgrims and other Puritans escaping religious persecution in Europe—an austere and pious lot who established a culture that remained pure and uncorrupted until the Industrial Revolution got in the way.

In *The Money Cult*, Chris Lehmann reveals that we have it backward: American capitalism has always been entangled with religion, and so today's megapastors, for example, aren't an aberration—they're as American as Benjamin Franklin.

Tracing American Christianity from John Winthrop to the rise of the Mormon Church and on to the triumph of Joel Osteen, *The Money Cult* is an ambitious work of history from a widely admired journalist. Examining nearly four hundred years of American history, Lehmann reveals how America's religious leaders became less worried about sin and the afterlife and more concerned with the material world, until the social gospel was overtaken by the gospel of wealth.

Showing how American Christianity came to accommodate—and eventually embrace—the pursuit of profit, as well as the inescapability of economic inequality, *The Money Cult* is a wide-ranging and revelatory book that will make you rethink what you know about the form of American capitalism so dominant in the world today, as well as the core tenets of America itself.

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