"Blessing of the Elders' Celebrates America's Rich Spiritual Legacy of the Black Church

T.D. Jakes was honored at the Museum of the Bible's Blessing of the Elders event on June 23 to celebrate his accomplishments as both a revered communicator, pastor and global humanitarian. The event honored the Black Church's impact in America and how it has pioneered the way for many Americans to hear the message of the Bible.

John Hope Bryant, chairman and CEO of Operation HOPE, led the tribute of Jakes with these words:

"[T.D. Jakes] is the ultimate translator and can communicate to all people, from business to ministry to global philanthropy. On Sunday, his message of hope and love is reaching millions around this globe, and by Monday he's in his director's chair producing some of the most compelling faith-based films and stories. On Tuesday, he's overseeing real estate development that will bring affording housing and economic opportunities to thousands, and by Wednesday he's helping the formerly incarcerated through his [Texas] offender reentry program. Now through his foundation, he's preparing people for the 21st-century workforce. T.D. Jakes is a man who understands the Scripture's charge to 'go into all the world and preach the gospel.' It's an honor to know him and call him friend."

As the senior pastor of The Potter's House, a non-denominational, multicultural church and global humanitarian organization based in Dallas, Jakes has built more than a church. He has built a multi-faceted, faith-based organization whose impact reaches well beyond the pulpit by using business and community outreach as a force for good. Jakes believes that faith is what connects us all – be it faith in a higher power, faith in ourselves, or faith in the goodness of humanity. Jakes' ability to transcend cultural, racial, gender and socioeconomic barriers has transformed him into a guide and global leader for presidents and paupers alike around the world.

John Sharp, chief relations officer at Museum of the Bible, has long said that spiritual renewal in America could come through the Black Church. The Blessing of the Elders initiative is intended to honor Black pastors across the U.S. who have been committed to the call of preaching and caring for others. It acknowledges their exceptional contribution as vitally important to the development of America's biblical values.

Along with Jakes, Pastor Shirley Caesar, Bishop Charles E. Blake Sr., Dr. John M. Perkins, Rev. Dr. A. R. Bernard Sr., Dr. Tony Evans, and Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie were also honored.

B-roll footage and photos of the event are available.

Jakes will look to make an impact on thousands of women next during his <u>Woman, Thou Art Loosed!</u> conference in Atlanta, Sept. 22-24. The conference brings inspirational and motivational speakers to the stage to help

women around the world be loosed from a myriad of strongholds, transforming them into revelations that help women to change the world.

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About The Potter's House

Located in Dallas, <u>The Potter's House</u> is a 30,000-member nondenominational, multicultural church and humanitarian organization led by Bishop T. D. Jakes, twice featured on the cover of *Time* magazine as America's Best Preacher and as one of the nation's 25 Most Influential Evangelicals. The Potter's House has four locations: The Potter's House of Dallas, The Potter's House of Fort Worth, The Potter's House of North Dallas and The Potter's House OneLA.

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