

As network turns 50, Robertson bows out of politics

by [Adelle M. Banks](#)

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(RNS) Marking the 50th anniversary of the first broadcast of his Christian Broadcasting Network, Pat Robertson said he will no longer make political endorsements.

"When I was in charge of the Christian Coalition I was available to mobilize grassroots support for somebody," Robertson told The Associated Press in an interview. "I don't have any army right now. It's just an opinion, and that isn't quite as good as it used to be."

Fifty years to the day after his first broadcast on Oct. 1, 1961, Robertson on Saturday recalled his network's humble beginnings in an address to a crowd gathered outside CBN's headquarters in Virginia Beach, Va.

"I came down here to buy a television station and I didn't even own a television set," he said.

Robertson said his first deposit in the network's corporate account was \$3.

"You take what God has and you praise him for it," he said. "Now at the end of 50 years, I can look back, and I said it's all God."

Robertson's network now produces programming in dozens of languages across about 200 countries. Robertson ran as a Republican for president in 1988, and later channeled his supporters into the Christian Coalition. His last endorsement was of former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani in the 2008 Republican primaries.

Over the years, Robertson has been criticized for various comments, most recently for suggesting that a man whose wife has Alzheimer's could get divorced to marry another woman. He later said he was "misunderstood" and thinks spouses should support each other during illnesses.