

Banners Unfurled

January, 2000

2000 and we're still here! In 1993, I was interviewed for the University of Memphis's newspaper and they asked me if I thought I would still be around in 2000. I replied "No- no way!" I really believed the rapture would have taken place by now. And certainly when I first believed in 1970 it seemed imminent. And so our job is the same now as when we first believed. ". . .*that thou mightest war a good warfare.*" A reveler said to my son Jon on New Year's Eve, " People have always said Jesus was coming. Just how soon do you think it is?" I thought he had a good reply when he said "Well it is really near and it's nearer now than it has ever been!" It's like the song says

I'm too near home with my Lord
I'm too near sweet Heaven's reward
I'm too near home with my Lord
To turn back now.

The thing about preaching week in and week out in a place with people milling about is that you get to practice. Once on a recent evening I was up on my 3 step ladder with biker crowds all around preaching and this fellow came up shouting blasphemous homosexual things he would like to do to God etc. I ridiculed him as being vile, mocked him and questioned his IQ. The crowd was entertained and went on with their party as soon as he left. I gained the experience and pondered it for a week or so and thought that I'd try a different approach the next time a blasphemer came up. Not long after another blasphemer and vile fellow approached me as I stood on the ladder. I had a decent crowd so this time instead of ridicule and contempt I expressed sorrow and pity for his anger and contempt for God and told him of God's love. It seemed to touch him and the crowd and he went on his way eventually with the crowd agreeing with me that he was one sick individual. It seemed that I now had their heart and I know that my 'practice' has now changed a lot in dealing with those that oppose themselves.

New Year's Eve I stood on the step of my ladder in the middle of the intersection of BEALE and Third from 10:30p.m.-1 a.m. and had one inquirer after another. I answered questions when they came up, usually after preaching a minute or so on the judgment and telling them they would give account of themselves to God. It was a great blessing to me when one young man who was hostile and disruptive calmed and told me that I must have been guided because my answers and questions to him were in his opinion astute. Another college student listening told me that he was the most sought after student in North Carolina. I asked what he meant. He replied that so many of his friends at the university were preaching to him to get saved and now all the things he had



heard from me had answered a lot of his questions and he was definitely closer to believing. I preached the gospel to him personally for a few minutes and encouraged him to receive Christ. Lots of kind folks came by with encouraging words after watching and listening from the crowd to tell me I was "right on".

PRACTICING

My son Jon (up from Pensacola) and the Zander family likewise engaged in discussion, counselling, and preaching but I think I had the best deal with the ladder. Everytime you preach in the crowd someone gets in your face and demands attention not to mention that the crowd is so thick you are covered up in people. But up on the 3rd step with the Banner as a balance pole, you are looking at hundreds of people who can hear you and possibly thousands that can see you- and you can briefly ignore the folks that want to stop the preaching by getting in your face. And discussion can be with 10 to 20 listening instead of 1 or 2 in close. Some people say the most dangerous cities to live in are the cities with a medical training facility because the interns have to practice on someone. BEALE STREET. is a great place to intern. You can hone your personal work skills, develop your lungs and 'practice' on the spiritually sick. I hope God will add to it his healing touch so it won't be dangerous for the patients.

We still await a ruling on our original *federal court case* which was appealed and heard in Cincinnati on November 3rd. We trust that the Lord will rule in our favor, but according to our attorney, Nate Kellum, the ruling could go either way. Here is how the hearing went, as he related it to us. The first judge was a female Clinton appointee who made it clear with a couple of questions that she was against us. The next judge was a man who seemed to be for us and the main judge did not seem to have studied the case, but he questioned why Memphis in May even appealed it. He asked MIM's attorney if they were just trying to get out of the suit costs. I think maybe he understood that MIM has no one to enforce their no banner/no preaching stand since the City of Memphis (who has the police force) accepted the original verdict. SO. . . he was going to study the brief thoroughly and the ruling should come soon. We'll keep you advised- continue praying.

In the name of our God, we will set up our banners. Psalm 20: 5.

DOES IT COST ANYTHING?

In the middle of all the hedonism of BEALE ST., the New Daisy Theator staged a pre-teen concert so there were hundreds of 11-13 year old kids milling around the theater. After preaching a few times and praying for the Lord to send someone to talk to before I left, two girls approached me and as serious as could be said "Does it cost anything?" I said to them "If you go in there it will cost your soul." At that point one girl said "No, I mean I want to get saved, **DOES IT COST ANYTHING?**" She was very intense and serious, and said she had never been saved, so I took my Bible and began to show them what it had to say about sin and the payment that Jesus made which cost Him everything but costs us nothing. Her mother showed up to pick them up and then went off to round up the rest of their party without stopping me but came back pretty quickly. I spent a fair amount of time with them but with all the pressure I could just give them a final word and then encouraged them to go home and get on their knees and ask the Lord Jesus Christ to save them. I hope they both did but especially the one that seemed so serious.

I CAN'T EVEN ARGUE

One night in September, I had the largest crowd gather around me that I have ever had except when we are pressed in shoulder to shoulder on special holidays like New Year's Eve. I fielded one question after another "What about the heathen, what makes the Bible any different from any other book, how do you know the Bible is true, what's wrong with just having a little fun? etc. etc. When that particular crowd had pretty much dispersed, a large man with purple hair and multiple facial piercings came up and looked at me eye to eye and said " You are so genuine I can't even argue- **I really hope someday I can believe like you do.**" It sounded like a real plea, but I know that I'm just one cog in the wheel. "*I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.*" Many times it grieves me that I don't get to be the reaper, but BEALE ST. is a place to sow and plant and **it'll be worth it all** if someday I meet this man again and he does BELIEVE LIKE ME.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Charles Spurgeon said and I agree,

"If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our bodies. And if they perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees, imploring them to stay. If Hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for."

CAN I PRAY FOR YOU?

While preaching at the University of Memphis one morning, a young woman expressed her thankfulness for me being there, so I told her thanks and said "Pray for me". She went on a little ways and then came back and sheepishly said "Can I pray for you **now?**" She put her hand on my shoulder and innocently and sweetly prayed for me. I am thankful anytime anyone really wants to pray for me. Certainly, I need more prayer in order to be effective at all for the Lord.

WHY I PREACH WITH A BANNER

It separates me from the crowd and identifies my purpose. The banner gives me a greater presence than I would have without it.

It attracts people to me by its content. They actually come to me to ask questions. Why are you here? What does the banner mean? Through it I get many more chances to plant a seed.

It preaches to others even when I am dealing one on one with someone else. MANY pictures of me with the banner have been taken and now appear around the world in photo albums and video clips.

My banner of the Great White Throne Judgment (a copy made from the soul winning tract "Tell It Like It Is" by Dr. Peter Ruckman) focuses my preaching. Explaining the picture automatically keeps my attention on men being sinners, lost and undone, hopeless unless they receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior.

MILLENIUM BEALE STREET BLAST COMING UP!

The **Memphis in May Music Festival** promises to be bigger than ever and we want to be here in force. There will be great preaching, teaching, singing and fellowship. But our primary purpose will be to preach and witness on the streets of Memphis to the thousands of young people for three days. The registration form is included. Last year the campground was half full and this year everyone says they are bringing more people. If you want to learn how to street preach for the first time or how to do things more effectively, this is the place to come.

GOD GIVES THE INCREASE

A couple of months after the Blast last May, we got a tract from a man in jail who said he had gotten saved. We sent him a Bible study and now for the last 5 months we have had several of the inmates of his jail (2 hours away) faithfully doing Bible studies. These men write and ask good questions and if they don't get their Bible study in the mail, they write wanting to know why. This has been a real blessing.

"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." Mt.9:38

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

St. Patrick's Day

Friday March 17

**You can contact me at 901 386-2035 or by
E-mail klansing@concentric.net
Web www.sureword.com/mm/
Ken Lansing, Memphis, Tennessee**

LAST OF THE GIANTS

-Harry Rimmer

John Sornberger was considered one of the last of the giants of preachers to the rough loggers in northern Minnesota around the turn of the century. After a life in the logging camps and a largely undefeated prize fighting career until alcohol brought him down into a depraved life, he was miraculously saved & started preaching to his fellow loggers. He spent the rest of his life preaching to them anywhere he could and starting Presbyterian churches.

In one community the whiskey peddlers were not going to have their business interfered with without a fight.

" Finally a plan was hatched that had every prospect of success. They decided to import **a noted young bully from Michigan** who was reputed to be the toughest man outside of the penitentiary. If he would come and **give John a first class beating** in a fair fight, the preacher would be washed up. For the fee of five hundred dollars, he was hired. The frame up was almost perfect. On a bright Monday afternoon John walked into their trap. He and his wife May came strolling down the sidewalk. When they were almost in front of the saloon, the bully stepped out and said to John, "Where did you pick up that slut?" and quickly stepped back in **slipping his brass knuckles** on his right hand. At the insult, John went berserk; he gave a bellow and plunged in hitting the door with his shoulder. Instead of swinging open, it held and **he went through with the door hung around his neck**. Because of the quaint necklace, the bully couldn't reach John. When John tore the frame off he swung it back out of the way with his right hand & finished the motion by bringing **his right hand around in a whistling hook**. It took the bully right on the point of the chin, and he sagged to the floor. John leaped across the man, booting him in the side of the head as he crossed over. His leap

carried him so close to the bar that one of **the bartenders** seized what looked like a golden opportunity. **He grabbed a bottle and swung it at the back of John's head**. The alert scrapper saw the motion, ducked and whirled in one swift motion. He caught the wrist of his new assailant as the blow fell, and **broke the man's arm on the edge of the bar**. Then he leaped over the bar in one clean vault, hit the dazed bartender behind the ear, and turned to any new business which might be before the house. He grabbed a full bottle of whiskey in each hand and, with **unholy joy, swept the back bar clear** of glasses, bottles, and liquor. Then he noticed the men lined up against the wall. He climbed up on the bar, a broken bottle held like a dagger in each hand, and sent out his challenge: "All right" he said, "I'll clean up the whole lousy crew of you." His eyes swept up and down the row as he demanded, "**Which end of the line do I start on?**"

One of the audience laughed and shouted, "**Not me, I'm only a spectator!**" I just came to see the fun and I've sure had MY money's worth. The decision was unanimous; the fracas was over.

The bully was still out cold, and the bartender hadn't yet moved. John casually broke the few bottles which had escaped his first wild sweeps, picked up a heavy beer stein and hurled it through the plate glass mirror, then started for the door. When he reached it he turned. Looking at the crowd, he spat on the floor and said, "**There'll be preaching tonight as usual, and you're all invited.**" Then he went out to join May, who was still standing where he left her wondering if she was a widow.

Over the next few years, the area was transformed into a quiet and peaceful town of homes and orderly business, and a Presbyterian Church took the place of the store room meeting place."

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First Class Mail