

Banners Unfurled

FEBRUARY, 2003

FROM THE PAST: MORE ZEAL THAN ABILITY

George Whitefield's ministry produced many street preachers, including the Wesleys, but the following excerpt shows that one of them experienced more than his share of persecution.

William Seward tried to preach, but his efforts demonstrated more zeal and courage than ability. Charles Wesley, reporting a meeting, said "Mr. Seward spoke a few words to them which did not convince me of his call to preach." But Seward went with Howell Harris on his open air work in Wales and wrote:

"We had been singing and praying and discoursing for half an hour, when the mob began to be outrageous and to pelt us. . . . The Lord gave us courage to withstand it for an hour and a half-sometimes singing the hymn in a tumult. The noise often drowned our voices till at length I was struck with a stone upon my right eye, which caused me so much anguish that I was forced to go away to the Inn. It was given me to pray all the way for the poor people, and especially for the person who struck me."

The next morning Bro. Harris was much excited to discourse again at ye same place, and "the Lord having abated my pain, I was led by the hand . . . and we had freedom to discourse as long as we pleased."

The blow to the right eye caused a sympathetic blindness in the left. Nevertheless the following morning the all-but-sightless Seward went with Harris to preach at a horse race and climbed with him to the roof of a booth that was to serve as a pulpit. A drunk tried to pull them down, but they held their ground and continued to declare the word of life. Later that day they stood on a table in the market-place.

"We had continual showers of stones, walnuts, dirt, a cat and also a dead dog thrown at us. I was much afraid of the hurt on my eye. I was struck on my forehead and under my right eye again, and also on my side with a stone. A drum was ordered to be beat, which drowned the voices, but then we sung the hymn in ye tumult till the book was all covered with dirt. After Bro. Harris had done, I spoke a few words, but I found my call was more to suffer than to preach."

Seward's words proved prophetically true. Harris, Whitefield, the Wesleys and Cennick possessed rare powers of public utterance with which to command a hearing before the unruly mobs, but Seward, lacking these gifts seemed to be made the target of their violence. In the month of October he and Harris were viciously assaulted as they stood ministering on the Green and Seward was struck by a heavy stone from close range. The blow felled him to the ground and he was carried from the scene unconscious. For a few days he hovered between life and death, but sank steadily lower till, on October 22, 1740, his spirit passed away. He was but thirty-eight years of age. Today the inscription 'To die is gain' marks the grave and interprets the death of 'the first Methodist martyr.'

Taken from George Whitefield (Volume I) by Arnold Dallimore



If you attended the BEALE STREET BLAST the last two years you know about the conflict we have had with the City of Memphis police department in the Beale Street Historic District. To bring those of you up to date that haven't attended here is a history of the conflict.

Background of the current conflict with the Memphis Police Department

For four years we have been hosting a national street preaching training event know as the Beale Street Blast with an attendance in the range of 100 to 150 people. We go together to the Beale Street Historic District (BSHD) during the Memphis In May Music Fest and go through the crowd and pass out literature and preach and sing carrying our banners as we go. Beginning in May of 2001 we encountered our first police opposition.

I have been going to the BSHD with my banner every Saturday night (unless it rains or goes much below 30 degrees) and many Friday nights also in the summers since about 1992 and have never had police opposition or caused any harm to anyone with my banners. I have been in crowds so thick you could not take a full step. I have been to New Years' Eve and July 4th celebrations with the crowd elbow to elbow and never caused a threat or harm to anyone. I walked through the middle of 70,000 dead heads at the last Grateful Dead concert by myself and preached and talked until the concert started and they all went into the auditorium.

My banners are designed so that one person can carry them and still have both hands free to use a Bible or pass out a tract while the banner is aloft with just an elbow around the pole. The new orders coming from the police will effectively eliminate my expression when I have to go alone which is over half of the weekends during the year. To have a banner

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

up without a metal pole would require two people on each side of the banner with something like a cardboard mailing tube. They would have at least one hand constantly engaged and they would have to coordinate their efforts to keep the banner tight and up not to mention trying to move through a crowd!

The police had never considered my banner poles a weapon until May 2001. No drunk in the crowd has ever thought to take the pole from me and dismantle it and then attack anyone with the poles. Only four events come to mind regarding the banners being taken from us. In one instance one was set on fire by a Dead Head with a butane lighter. I put it to the ground and stamped it out. On another occasion a young man came off the curb and wrenched the banner and pole from my hands and pushed the banner to the ground and did a jig on the picture and then took off running. On another occasion while I was up on my ladder a physician I frequently talk to grabbed the pole (he later apologized, blaming his error on too much drink) and pulled it to the ground and the crowd jeered him, Someone went and told the police who came by and asked if I was alright to which I replied that I was OK and they passed on. On the last occasion a man grabbed a banner and tried to run away with it but it is not easy to run with so it was easily recovered. These events cover at least a 10-year period! No one has been injured ever by a banner or pole. And no police were ever engaged in any action to defend our poles or to respond to any danger to anyone's safety!

The discrimination regarding our banner poles is outrageous. Camera tripods are allowed to stay on the BSHD, guitar cases containing who knows what come and go, unattended speaker stands have been pointed out to the police who are detailed to enforce our exit or prevent our entry. We are even threatened with arrest for disorderly conduct because we are accused of arguing when we cautiously bring up the double standard or ask for the citation of an ordinance.

On January 10, 2003 attorneys from the Center for Inalienable Rights filed a suit against MPD on my behalf. You can read the entire pleading at www.bannerunfurled.org. I hope you will read it and pray that the case will be heard soon. The attorney for the MPD has asked for some time to research the law and the MPD's facts about my complaint. I am told they have two weeks to get ready. So we are probably looking at the end of February or early March before a hearing.

I am really excited about our Banners Unfurled web site. It now has 4 audio clips of conversations with real people on Beale Street. I can rotate them with other recordings or add more as time permits. These recordings were made by stealth and truly represent the thinking of the media cloned generation we live among. When Paul said, "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds" he pegged them per-

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.

fectly. I think the recordings will encourage you to be part of the group shining the "light of the glorious gospel of Christ" unto those sitting in darkness.

The BLAST is approaching at neck breaking speed and I am asking you to pray for The Lord's blessing on the event. Each year we are told about what a blessing it was. One young man who came for the first time last year told me it was a turning point in his spiritual life and we recently heard about two teenage girls who attended their first BLAST last year and recently went on a street meeting with another church group. Because they had taken part in the BLAST they boldly approached a group of grunge/hippy youth who asked them why they were the only ones who would approach them! They were thankful they had been initiated on the front lines of a former battlefield. If you want to get some of your youth group stirred up bring them to the Blast.

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

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Beale Street Blast - May 1- 4
Memphis In May BBQ Cookoff May 15-17
Any summer night - even during the week - there will be large crowds - Germans, French, Austrians, Ect., even a few Yanks who stray across the line.

www.bannersunfurled.org

You can contact me at 901 386-2035 or by E-mail lansing1@concentric.net
Ken Lansing, Memphis, Tennessee

I AM AN ADDICT

Dear Bro. Lansing,

My name is Andy, and I am an addict. Let me tell you about it: What I do is very deadly to a part of me, many times in a day I think of my next opportunity to do it, and how I can do it better. A vast number of people who see me do it think that I shouldn't, but I still do it. Oh yes, I need to mention my addiction, and hopefully you can help me; my addiction is the ministry of the saints. (I Cor. 16:15)

The particular ministry I am talking about is the publick ministry (one you are familiar with, and I would like to request a banner that I may use to help my addiction.

Time for me to meet your four requirements:

- 1) My past street preaching experience is only a few weeks long, but I truly love it. A few of my Christian brothers & I go to a busy street and hold up Scripture signs and pass out tracts. One of these times God gave me the boldness, and I stood up and preached the plan of Salvation. My plan is to continue, and make a platform on which to preach. I then hope to make some signs with some scriptures that we don't have on our present signs. . . after reading about three or four of Bro. Sutek's books I have realized the result of it. (Some of the letter of necessity left out)
- 2) The place that I preach at is called Grand River in Detroit, MI. And so far we have gone at least once or twice a week.
- 3) Six years ago, I was forced to come to church, my past church experience was only in a synagogue. I remember when I arrived for the first time to a real church, I said, "I'll probably fall asleep." I was continued to be forced to church, until one day, January 22, 1997, after Wednesday night church, my brother and I went over to my mom and her friend and said, "When can we get saved?" So we went down to the altar and they showed us how to be saved. And that day I asked God to forgive me of my sins and I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and personal Savior. . . Here I am now surrendered to full-time Christian service (June 20, 2002).
- 4) . . . I attend church regularly (I rarely miss a service) and willingly, and I now also see my mom's love for my soul that she would make me go to church, but not make me get saved (I had to do that willingly). . . I am a regular on visitation. Most importantly, I am trying to please the LORD and bring glory and honor to his name.

Once again I am Andy, age 14 and am requesting the free banner you offer, it will be a great help and blessing to my new ministry (to which I am addicted).

***Banners
Unfurled***

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First Class Mail