



CHRISTIAN RIGHTS MINISTRIES

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"To defend and preserve God given inalienable rights, to support His perfect will, and to promote the establishment of His kingdom for the glory of God."

Richmond Court Rules in Favor of the Gospel

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By Chaplain Jeff Keeney

Richmond, VA- Today, a Richmond Circuit Court ruled in favor of three Christian Evangelists who were charged with five counts of "making a loud and disturbing noise" for street preaching in downtown Richmond. The court ruled that the preachers did not violate the statute.

The three local preachers, Ray, Walker, and Craft, are members of the Richmond Biblical Evangelism team. They were charged in two separate incidents with violation of a local noise ordinance. In one incident, the members of the team were witnessing to passers by outside of two local bars when a police officer approached them requesting that they not use amplification, and that they cease to preach after midnight. This officer did not write a summons.

The team continued to preach, pass out tracts and witness to the crowd throughout the night when another police officer approached the pair and began to question their purpose. The police officer eventually cited them for violation of the city code section that prohibits "making a loud and disturbing noise."

On another occasion, three members of the team were sharing the gospel in downtown Richmond when one team member was asked by police to step down from the stool on which he was preaching in order for the police to write him a summons. As one-stepped down, another stepped up to continue preaching. All three were eventually issued summonses for "making loud and disturbing noise."

Christian Rights Ministries defended these preachers' right to engage in peaceful demonstrations and championed their rights of freedom of speech under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Steve C. Taylor, Founder and Director of Christian Rights Ministries commented: "The court today reaffirmed the Constitutional right of free speech with this decision. The Christian message is not second class speech, and Christians should not be discriminated against because of their beliefs. This great country was formed on the Constitutional foundation of being able to express this belief by sharing their faith."