

76-Year-Old Preacher Banned From University After Confrontational Preaching

Police issued a trespassing warning to 76-year-old preacher George “Brother Jed” Smock after escorting him off Indiana University’s campus. Police claim Smock pushed a gay man, but the preacher says he did no such thing. He also claims the police intervened only after he began speaking about President Donald Trump.

Brother Jed has been preaching on university campuses across the U.S. for 48 years. He tells Charisma News that he and his wife, Cindy Smock, were preaching at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, when police grabbed him and escorted him back to a squad car to write him a trespassing ticket.

“He said I would be banned from the university for a year,” Brother Jed says. “And I said, ‘I’m not trespassing. I’m exercising my First Amendment right to free speech.’”

Brother Jed says the police then told him that another officer witnessed him assaulting a student.

“The story is that two gay men were kissing and I shoved one of them,” he says. “I did take a picture of them, but I was not even close enough to push them or shove them. So I think the police made that up. Now they’re claiming that the issue is not a free-speech issue but an issue of violence on my part.”

Police first arrived on the scene after receiving a call that Cindy had made physical contact with a student who was protesting the Smocks’ preaching, according to IDS News. But Brother Jed again says that wasn’t how the situation happened.

"My wife was preaching, and he got right in her face and then began crying, 'Hail Satan! Hail Satan!'" Brother Jed says. "So I got beside her and was filming him, and he got quite irate and demanded I stop filming him. ... [My wife] didn't shove or touch anyone at all. So if there was any violence, we were the victims."

Brother Jed believes he and his wife faced discrimination on the campus because of their support for Trump.

"My wife was wearing a pair of white, red and blue sneakers that have 'Make America Great' on them," he says. "... And I said, 'We're evangelicals and we believe in, we support Donald J. Trump.' And of course, the name Trump on a liberal campus kind of sets people off."

In a Facebook post yesterday, Brother Jed says he was "dragged off Indiana University on 9/11/19 immediately after [he] started chanting, 'Build the wall!'"

He says the police listened to him preach the gospel for over two hours, but once he mentioned Trump, six officers surrounded him and escorted him off the school's property.

Preacher and missionary Brenda Ajamian says she has known Brother Jed for 40 years. Although she admits his style of preaching can be confrontational and blunt, she says she has never known him to be a violent man.

"Jed is not a violent man," she says. "He is a reasonable, calm, good and godly man."

The Smocks have hired lawyers to negotiate with the university to lift the ban and send an apology. {eo}