

# Judge Shuts Down Free Speech

## First Amendment Rights Of Religion And Free Speech At Stake

Los Angeles County judge curtails the rights of freedom of speech  
outside L.A. County courthouses

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*Note from pastor Kevin Lea follows this article.*

On September 13, 2005, Judge William A. MacLaughlin issued a court order forbidding public speech on the public property of any courthouse in Los Angeles County. The order was delivered by two police officers to best-selling author and award-winning TV show host Ray Comfort this past Friday, as he addressed about 40 people on public property outside of the Bellflower city courthouse in Los Angeles County.

Comfort and his general manager, Emeal Zwayne, have made it a practice to speak outside the courthouse on almost every weekday for 2½ years. Comfort stated, "The freedom of speech and religion are basic rights guaranteed to every citizen. It is to give others this same freedom that American soldiers are fighting in Iraq. We were shocked by the court order. This isn't Iraq. It's the United States. But it's another example of our religious freedoms being denied."

Comfort spends 15–20 minutes addressing those outside the courts who choose to listen. He estimates that he has spoken to about 30,000 people this way, and feels he does so with respect and civility. Comfort explained, "I begin every morning by introducing myself, saying that I'm not part of the court system, that I've been doing this for years and have been assured personally by the sheriff that I have a right to be here, under my First Amendment freedom of speech rights. After this court order, I can no longer say that."

Told by the officers delivering the order that in the last year they had received only one or two complaints, Comfort found the judge's action all the more surprising. The court order affects not just Comfort's ability to address people outside the Bellflower courthouse, but is a blanket order impacting all 49 courthouses in Los Angeles County.

“In his desire to stop us from speaking,” Comfort said, “Judge MacLaughlin shut down not only us. Now, no American citizens can exercise their First Amendment right to free speech on American soil outside of any of those courthouses. If this order is allowed to stand, where else will free speech be curtailed? What will be the next religious freedom that is taken away?”

Broadcast video footage of Emeal Zwayne speaking outside the Bellflower court can be seen at [www.freespeechrights.com](http://www.freespeechrights.com), showing that listeners appear to be receptive.” For more information or interviews contact Mark Spence, LW Publications, 562-207-9300 ext. 304.

Note from pastor Kevin Lea: On November 1, 2005, I contacted Mark Spence for an update. He informed me that the ACLU had offered to defend Ray Comfort, and thankfully Living Waters Ministry declined (Ezra 4:1-3).

Mark also told me that the serving police officer couldn't sleep the night before but explained to Ray Comfort that if he didn't serve him with the court order to stop preaching, then he (the police officer) would have been arrested for contempt of court. But is this true?

Americans are being duped into accepting anything a judge says as being the final word. In doing so we are giving the judicial branch of our separated powers the trump card of tyranny.

The framers of our constitution did not see it this way. That is why every constitutional agent (including judges and police) is sworn to defend the constitution as required in Article IV, Clause 2 and 3:

Clause 2: This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof-----shall be the supreme Law of the Land; **and the Judges** in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.

Clause 3: The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, **and all executive and judicial Officers**, both of the United States and of the several States, shall **be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution;** -----  
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In a practical sense, this means that the judge is not above the “Supreme Law of the Land”, which says in the first Amendment:

## **Amendment I**

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; **or abridging the freedom of speech**, or of the press; **or the right of the people peaceably to assemble**, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

In other words, the court order was illegal and the police officer (because of his sworn duty to defend the constitution and not an activist judge) was morally obligated to ignore the unlawful order of the judge.

I pray that any law enforcement officers who read this will ponder the great responsibility they have to help prevent the erosion of our country's freedoms by standing up to the tyranny of these judges gone amuck.

As a final note to Christians, our freedom to preach the gospel does not come from the Constitution, but from our Commander and Chief, the Lord Jesus Christ, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. (NKJ)

The time is coming to America where those who obey Jesus will be thrown into prison, beaten and killed. I pray the Lord Jesus will give all of us the courage we will need to keep contending for the faith, even when doing so will result in the loss of everything we have in this world, including our earthly lives.

Acts 4:17 "But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name." 18 And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. 20 "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." 21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified

God for what had been done. (NKJ)