

Captain of Thine Enlisted Host*Christopher Batty (1715–1797)*

Captain of Thine enlisted host,
 Display Thy glorious banner high;
 The summons send from coast to coast,
 And call a numerous army nigh.

A solemn jubilee proclaim
 Proclaim the great Sabbath day;
 Assert the glories of Thy name;
 Spoil Satan of his wished-for prey.

Bid, bid Thy heralds publish loud
 The peaceful blessings of Thy reign;
 And when they speak of sprinkled blood,
 The mystery to the heart explain.

Chase the usurper from his throne,
 Oh! chase him to his destined hell;
 Stout-hearted sinners overcome;
 And glorious in Thy temple dwell.

Fight for Thyself, O Jesus, fight,
 The travail of Thy soul regain;
 To each blind soul make darkness light,
 To all let crooked paths be plain.

ΤΩ ΚΡΟΝΟΥ ΚΑΙΡΩ*In the Nick of Time***Civil Air Patrol***Kevin T. Bauder*

The Civil Air Patrol (CAP) was founded less than a week before the invasion of Pearl Harbor. Its purpose was to use general aviation (light planes flown by civilian pilots) to supplement the domestic operations of the United States military. The CAP proved its worth by helping to patrol the borders and to spot submarines offshore. CAP planes actually sank a couple of subs and spotted many more.

After the war, the mission of the CAP shifted toward search and rescue, aerospace education, and cadet programs. Cadets are the junior members of CAP, aged from 12 to 21. They are taught military customs and courtesies, physical training, leadership, and character development. Cadets have been part of CAP's mission since 1942.

During the mid-1990s I was planting a church northeast of Dallas, Texas, and I was looking for ways to involve myself in the community. That's when I first became involved with CAP. The cadet program has always emphasized character development, which in those days was called *moral leadership*. This part of the program was normally taught by chaplains, but in those days a squadron commander could use community pastors as "visiting clergy." I served as visiting clergy for over a year before joining CAP and then becoming the chaplain for Lakeshore Composite Squadron in Rockwall, Texas.

Because Civil Air Patrol is the civilian auxiliary of the United States Air Force, chaplains must meet the same Department of Defense requirements as all military chaplains. They must have the equivalent of a Master of Divinity degree; they must be ordained; they must be endorsed by a recognized ecclesiastical body. My endorser is the American Council of Christian Churches through its constituent member, the Independent Churches Affiliated.

Those early years of CAP ministry were fruitful. While the purpose of a CAP chaplain is not to proselytize, opportunities for ministry do arise. People who are accustomed to talking to the chaplain because of his "ministry of presence" will naturally turn to him in times of spiritual and emotional perplexity. I eventually had the privilege of baptizing my squadron



In the Nick of Time is published by Central Baptist Theological Seminary.

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commander and his wife, and then pastoring them as long as they remained in the area.

In those days chaplains were in much demand. All cadets had to take moral leadership (character development) in order to be promoted. This program belonged to the chaplaincy, but chaplains to teach it were in short supply. The curriculum itself was sparse—barely suggestions toward covering a topic. Chaplains could select a topic and develop it as they saw fit, tailoring their presentations to the needs of the cadets in their individual squadrons. Since chaplains were highly trained professionals, this degree of independence was considered appropriate.

That began to change some years ago when the CAP decided to supplement the chaplain corps by adding Moral Leadership Officers (now called Character Development Instructors). These CDIs are not ministers—in fact, they are not even necessarily religious people. They do not have to be as highly educated as chaplains. Consequently, they cannot perform most of the functions of a chaplain. For example, they are not allowed to offer counsel in a privileged, legally confidential relationship. What they can do is to teach character development.

Because CDIs tend not to be as highly educated, the character development curriculum has become much more directive. Topics are chosen for each monthly lesson at the national level. All cadets in all squadrons hear the same presentations each month. The lessons themselves are written with a minimum of flexibility. Almost anyone could teach the material.

The result is that CAP now has something like double the number of CDIs than it has chaplains. In fact, the growing attitude is that chaplains are wasted if their main occupation is teaching Character Development. They are not as needed for this task as they once were.

Other responsibilities have grown in importance, however. New emphasis is being placed upon the importance of chaplains as leaders of Chaplain Support Teams involved in CAP missions (these missions may involve search and rescue or disaster relief). Also, the relationship between the CAP and the Air Force is closer than ever—CAP is reckoned as part of the “Total Force” of the USAF (I even wear the ribbon for the Air Force’s Organization Excellence Award). This relationship has resulted in a growing emphasis upon preparing CAP chaplains to take over stateside responsibilities that would otherwise be performed by active duty, reserve, or national guard chaplains. Most recently, CAP chaplains are being trained to take responsibility for military funerals.

The reason I joined CAP was exactly to work in my community at the squadron level. I’ve had no desire to become involved in the larger work of search and rescue or disaster relief, much less to advance up the chaplain chain of command. Increasingly, however, it looks as if these other activi-

ties are the price I’ll have to pay if I want to continue to minister in my local squadron.

By the way, my local squadron really is local. I live across the street from the Crystal, Minnesota, airport (KMIC). North Hennepin Composite Squadron (the first squadron in the nation to include cadets) is less than a five-minute walk from my front door. Nobody lives closer than I do. Nobody could.

In my opinion, CAP still provides a useful opportunity to minister to real people. Gaining opportunities for ministry, however, takes plenty of personal involvement. Over the past several months I’ve taken training to renew my ratings as mission scanner and mission observer. I’m pursuing training over the next several weeks to become rated as a mission chaplain. Along the way, I must also complete plenty of other training, such as the Region Chaplain College (this week’s big activity).

It’s a heavy investment, but I really need to do something like this. As a seminary professor I could go for weeks on end and never have a conversation with an unsaved person. CAP is my way of meeting people in the real world, of serving them, and of developing relationships into which I can speak the gospel. It’s not always easy, but few worthwhile things are. This activity in particular has opened the door to much fruitful ministry.



This essay is by Kevin T. Bauder, Research Professor of Systematic Theology at Central Baptist Theological Seminary. Not every one of the professors, students, or alumni of Central Seminary necessarily agrees with every opinion that it expresses.
