

**The Christian Child**

*Reginald Heber (1783–1826)*

By cool Siloam’s shady rill  
how sweet the lily grows!  
How sweet the breath beneath the hill  
of Sharon’s dewy rose!  
Lo! such the child whose early feet  
the paths of peace have trod,  
whose secret heart with influence sweet  
is upward drawn to God.

By cool Siloam’s shady rill  
the lily must decay,  
the rose that blooms beneath the hill  
must shortly fade away;  
And soon, too soon, the wintry hour  
of life’s maturer age  
will shake the soul with sorrow’s power  
and stormy passion’s rage.

O thou, whose infant feet were found  
within thy Father’s shrine,  
whose years, with changeless virtue crowned,  
were all alike divine,  
Dependent on thy bounteous breath  
we seek thy grace alone,  
through every stage of life, and death,  
to keep us still thine own.

**ΤΩ ΚΡΟΝΟΥ ΚΑΙΡΩ**

*In the Nick of Time*

**Transitions in Ministry**

*Kevin T. Bauder*

I’ll be retiring this week.

Partly.

From one of my jobs.

Let me explain.

The vocation at which I earn my living is as a professor at Central Baptist Theological Seminary, but besides my teaching I have been pursuing three smaller callings. One is writing. One is pastoring. One is chaplaincy in the United States Air Force Auxiliary, the Civil Air Patrol.

When these callings come into conflict, the writing is what tends to get pushed into the background. It’s been that way for the past several years. This summer, however, I have devoted significant time to two projects. One is a revision of my book on finding God’s will, which will soon be re-released under the title *Can I Know God’s Will?* The other is a collaborative work honoring Charles A. Hauser, Jr., co-edited with Bruce Compton, and entitled *Dispensationalism Revisited*. It, too, should be appearing in print soon. Both books are being published by Central Seminary Press.

For the past two- and one-half years, I have also been serving as interim pastor at Bible Baptist Church in East Bethel, Minnesota. Bible Baptist is a small congregation in a semi-rural area. It has a building located on a major US highway and lies in the growth corridor for the Twin Cities. During the time that I have been serving as interim pastor, this ministry has taken more and more of my focus and attention. The church is unable to support a full-time pastor, and finding someone who will accept the pastorate on those terms has been difficult. The pulpit committee has asked me repeatedly to candidate for the position, and with the blessing of Central Seminary I have eventually agreed. The church will vote this Sunday whether to call me.

At Central Seminary, we are coming up on an accreditation self-study. Consequently, all of us will be carrying extra responsibilities. It’s also my turn to teach a course in the Doctor of Ministry program (which I also administer).



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Teaching that course will add another layer of activity to what looks like an already full academic year.

That leaves chaplaincy. I began serving the Air Force Auxiliary (the Civil Air Patrol) as visiting clergy during the mid-1990s. At the time I was pastoring in Texas and I was looking for a way to be involved with people in the community. I soon joined the organization and jumped through the hoops to become recognized by the Department of Defense as a military chaplain. Before long I had the privilege of baptizing my squadron commander and his wife, who then became members of the church I was pastoring. Civil Air Patrol has been the main way that I have found opportunities to minister to unsaved people.

Through the years, however, the demands of the position have intensified. I have found more and more of my time going toward training and qualifications, with the result that less time is available for personal ministry. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that my work in Civil Air Patrol no longer integrates neatly with my other ministry activities.

On top of that, I'm getting older. In a few weeks I'll pass 68 years of age, and I find that the edge of my stamina is beginning to dull. I can still throw myself into normal day-to-day activity, but anything out of the ordinary (like an illness) sets me back far more severely than it used to. This summer included such an illness.

Let me say in passing that I now understand why God put opiates in the world. This summer's illness produced a cough that grew worse and worse for more than a month. At some point I even broke a rib from hacking so hard. I finally asked my doctor to give me some industrial strength cough medicine, which of course involved codeine. Within ten minutes of the first (deliberately tiny) dose, I began to experience relief. That was the point at which healing began. All told, I never took more than a few small doses, but the medication helped enough to put me on the road to recovery.

Somewhere during that process, I recognized that I was not physically capable of sustaining all my commitments. I love Central Seminary. I love writing. I love pastoring. I love chaplaincy. Something, however, was going to have to give. In the end, I decided that it had to be the chaplaincy, and I notified the proper authorities of my intention to retire.

This past week I fulfilled my final responsibilities as a Civil Air Patrol chaplain. All that remains is a final send-off, to be administered this coming Tuesday. As I understand it, when I walk out of the squadron meeting Tuesday night, I will no longer be Chaplain Bauder.

I hate to give it up. It's a responsibility that I have tried to fulfill in one way or another for nearly thirty years. Chaplaincy has been useful and meaning-

ful work, and it has created opportunities to bring the gospel into people's lives.

Going forward, however, I believe that what is more important is to pour my life into the students of Central Seminary and the members of Bible Baptist Church. It would also be nice to complete the second volume of the history of Baptist fundamentalism, as well as to publish several shorter works that are in process right now. So I am retiring from one position, not to work less, but because I can't work any harder, and so I have to choose my work more deliberately.



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This essay is by Kevin T. Bauder, Research Professor of Historical and 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.

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