



Christian Report

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Field Notes—Encouragement While Serving



What's the big deal about Christian Military Fellowship (CMF)? Unique in its design as a peer ministry, its primary mission is to equip our membership "to win, to disciple, to equip, to win." This circle of ministry is what compels us to share the gospel at the grassroots level within military society—one relationship at a time. It is simple in concept, yet powerful in practice, as believers reach fellow service members in the very places they live and serve.

Fascinatingly, CMF's origins can be loosely traced all the way back to 1818, when a British sergeant was reprimanded for placing a Bible in ready access of his soldiers. What began as a small and, at the time, controversial act of faithfulness grew into a broader passion for placing Scripture into the hands of those in uniform. Over time, this led to the development of the British Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association (SASRA), whose leaders would later begin to dream of a similar work in the United States. They were influential in the establishment of the British Officers' Christian Union (OCU), our own Officers' Christian Fel-

lowship (OCF), and ultimately Christian Military Fellowship (CMF).

When I was stationed in England, I lived about ten miles from Aldershot, home of the Royal Army. During that time, I had the opportunity to spend time with our British brethren at the SASRA and OCU headquarters. It was a meaningful connection—seeing firsthand how the same heart for ministry to military personnel was being lived out across the Atlantic.

CMF's model has always been intended to complement the on-base chapel ministry, never to compete with it. I experienced this personally while stationed at Royal Air Force (RAF) Greenham Common, England, in late 1989–1990, when the Lord birthed a CMF ministry at the base chapel.



Chaplains Robert Stroud and CB Goodwin were tremendously supportive—so much so that they used chapel funds to allow me to shop

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at the commissary for a video lunch series. I had become familiar with a series of short Christian biographies that proved to be a perfect focal point for these gatherings.

Greenham Common was a quaint assignment with only about 1,600 active duty personnel, making it a very personal base. You could not go to the bank or commissary without running into someone you knew.



Later, at Ramstein Air Base in Germany, I would experience the opposite—a base so large you could spend an hour in the commissary and not see a single familiar face. But at Greenham, as we began inviting people to our monthly CMF video luncheons, it was easy to remind them simply because we naturally crossed paths throughout the month. Those gatherings became a place where we shared prayer requests, encouraged one another, and built meaningful relationships grounded in fellowship and faith.

Unfortunately, Greenham Common was caught in the 1990s Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, which shortened many assignments by as much as two years. Our group quickly began receiving Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders, scattering what had become a close-knit community. Yet even in that,

the seeds planted did not disappear. Over the years, CMF's *Battle Plan* has allowed me to follow the lives of some who were part of those monthly luncheons. In fact, Chaplain Stroud has remained a long-time member, and I will always be grateful to both he and Chaplain Goodwin for the support they gave to our efforts to bring the Good News to the Airmen at Greenham Common.

Looking back, it is clear that what may have seemed like small, simple gatherings were part of something much bigger—God at work through ordinary relationships, faithfully lived out in a military setting. As SASRA reflects in its own history, *"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news..."* (Isaiah 52:7, ESV). That scripture truly captures the heart of the CMF mission—and the quiet, faithful work that continues to this day.



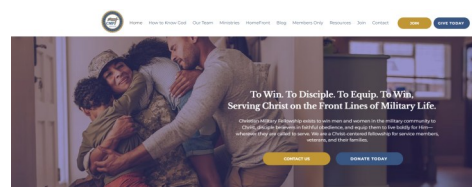
Tony "T-Bar" Barnes faithfully served 28 years in the Marine Corps and Air Force, followed by 10 years with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Today, he continues his service as Vice Chairman of CMF's Board of Directors.

A Fresh Look at CMF Online

Our website has recently been updated to better reflect the heart of CMF—discipleship, fellowship, and sharing the Gospel within the military community.

We've worked to make it easier to navigate, learn about our ministries, and get connected.

Thank you for being part of what God is doing through CMF. We invite you to visit www.CMFHQ.org



Back in ancient times (BC — Before Computers) in a land far away in the midst of a horrible war, I was looking through the resident collection of albums (the round plastic platters with a hole in the middle) when I spied one by some guy named John Denver (released before he was famous). There was a song on the album whose first line lyric caught my ear, “Blow up your TV, try to find Jesus on your own.” I don’t remember much about the song itself but the lyric has remained with me all of these years.

Having reached the age where my children have become adults, I now look back on the earlier years and see that life had some spots that were a blur of activity. Being involved, because of my children, in little league, Boy Scouts, soccer, Sunday School, youth group and also being a full-time sailor didn’t leave much time for anything else. Life seemed pretty full. There are indeed so many activities in our lives! Yet



how many are profitable? How many are profitable for the kingdom? How much time do I devote to those things that are important to my health and wellbeing as a believer?

Sometimes I think that the world does a better job of conforming me into its mold than I do allowing the Holy Spirit to transform me by the renewing of my mind (Romans 12:2 paraphrase mine). I think in my case that the blur of activity was motivated more by my flesh (not wanting my children to miss out) than by the Spirit (wanting to draw me into a closer walk with Him). This doesn’t mean I couldn’t have done both. It means that my attitude wasn’t right.

As I was meditating upon Hebrews, chapter twelve, I was struck by the idea of “throwing off everything that hinders.” (NIV) As I looked up from my easy chair I found myself looking full on at one thing in particular that took up a great deal of my time, the huge one-eyed monster we call television. (Today, we can probably replace *television* with *phone* or *social media*.)

My heart was shaken at its foundations. The Holy Spirit was showing me in a very clear way that I would rather spend time watching the political talk shows than be with Him. Busted! So I got up out of my chair walked across the room and pulled the plug!

I would like to say that the angels of heaven broke out

in song (However, what really broke out was beads of sweat upon my brow. Several times that evening, as I was trying to read, I found my hand reaching for the ol’ remote control. I thought to myself, how many other things are in my life that have become a hindrance to fellowship with the Father. Am I really trying to work out my faith with “fear and trembling” or am I just busy?

C.S. Lewis, in “Mere Christianity,” mentions that one of the “cardinal virtues” is temperance. The first word that the dictionary (my copy was of course printed in the last century) used to define this is moderation, “bringing within bounds, avoidance of excesses.”

If you find yourselves breathing hard at the end of the day, might I suggest in all humility (because I promise you that I am NOT the fount of all knowledge and wisdom) that you take stock of your activities and see if there isn’t some time that could be better used in your relationship with the Savior.

“Blow up your TV (or phone or social media) and try to find Jesus on your own!”

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1-2 ESV



Robert “Bob” W. Flynn has been with Christian Military Fellowship since 1981, serving in numerous roles including Local Leader, Coordinator of Ministries, COO, President/CEO, and Chairman of the Board. After a brief retirement, he returned as Chief Information Officer. His ministry focus

has been one-on-one mentoring and discipleship, and he now leads the Remote Access Discipleship Program, helping members engage in Bible study wherever they are. Bob enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1968 and served on active duty until 1991, when he joined the CMF staff. He lives near Buckley Space Force Base in Aurora, Colorado.



THE DANIEL PRAYER

PRAYER THAT MOVES HEAVEN
AND CHANGES NATIONS

ANNE
GRAHAM
LOTZ

From time to time, a resource comes along that simply helps us return to the basics. The Daniel Prayer is one of those.

In this book, Anne Graham Lotz walks through Daniel 9 and the prayer Daniel offered on behalf of his

people. It is a prayer marked by humility, confession, and a deep reliance on God's Word. It is also a reminder that prayer is not only personal, but something we are called to do for others and for the times in which we live.

Many of us sense the need to pray more intentionally, but are not always sure where to begin or how to stay consistent. This book offers a clear and steady guide, pointing us back to Scripture and encouraging us to seek the Lord with both honesty and faith. It gently reminds us that God hears, that He responds, and that our prayers matter.

For those who carry a burden for their families, for those serving in uniform, and for our nation, this will be a meaningful and helpful read. It

aligns well with the heart of CMF as we seek to stand in the gap, to intercede faithfully, and to trust the Lord to work beyond what we can see. In a time when so much feels uncertain, it calls us back to the unchanging character of God.

We would like to make a limited number of copies of The Daniel Prayer available at no cost to our members. If you would like to receive a copy, please call **(800) 798-7875** or email us at office@CMFHQ.org.

We trust it will be an encouragement to you as you continue to seek the Lord in prayer.

Field Notes Submissions

From time to time, we share "Field Notes" to capture what the Lord is doing through the lives of our members. These are not formal reports, but simple accounts of ministry as it is lived out day by day. They may come from a Bible study, a conversation with a fellow service member, or a moment of encouragement.

Often, it is in these ordinary settings that the Lord is at work.

We invite you to share your own Field Notes with us. Submissions do not need to be lengthy. A few paragraphs describing what you have seen or experienced is enough. A photo would be a great addition!

If you would like to submit a Field Notes article, please email your article to us at office@CMFHQ.org.

CHRISTIAN MILITARY FELLOWSHIP

An Indigenous Ministry • Discipleship • Prayer • Community • Support • Encouraging Men and Women in the United States Armed Forces, and their families, to love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

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