

Chaplain Takes Stand for Name of Jesus

Take your time with the decision, Terry Sartain was told.

A police chaplain for seven years in Charlotte, N.C., Sartain was given the news three days before a promotion ceremony—there was a change in policy.

He could no longer pray in Jesus' name during public events held on government property.

Maj. John Diggs, who heads the **police chaplain program**, called Sartain with the news and said he didn't have to decide on the spot. But to get back to him the next day.

Sartain, a pastor at Horizon Fellowship, a Calvary Chapel church in west Charlotte, N.C., didn't need 24 hours. He didn't need 24 seconds.

"The only thing I have to offer is Jesus," said Sartain, who asked to be excused from giving the invocation. "There's no way I would ever deny Jesus. No matter what."

Sartain, also a chaplain with the Billy Graham Rapid Response Team since 2006, served at the Virginia Tech shooting in Blacksburg, Va., in 2007.

His viewpoint is strikingly similar to that of Franklin Graham, who in his book *The Name* talks about a moment just before praying at President Bush's inauguration where he was asked by a fellow participant if he was going to pray in Jesus' name.

"That's the only thing we've got," Franklin Graham responded.

And indeed, he closed out his prayer: "We pray this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and

of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Despite the change in policy, Sartain says he still feels called to minister to the officers of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department, even though he will no longer do so at CMPD ceremonies, where the use of Jesus’ name on public property has been forbidden now for about a month.

The reasoning, Diggs explained to him, was the police department wanted to be “more inclusive of all faiths” of the 2,000-plus members of the CMPD. He heard that one recent prayer, since the changing of policy, ended with the phrase “to the being that’s in the room.”

“That’s the kind of world we live in,” he said. “I used to pray at police graduations and promotions. I’m sad about it.”

Sartain isn’t trying to force his religion on anyone, but feels very strongly that he needs to stay true to what he believes. And he’s still volunteering for individual ministry as a chaplain.

“I still do ride-alongs with police officers,” he said. “I still deal with traumas. I do marriage counseling. It’s all about relationships.”

Just Thursday, he was called into duty to minister to the family of a 49-year-old woman who died in the northwest Charlotte area.

“I’ve gotten a lot of emails this week,” said Sartain, after his story has been picked up by national media outlets. “People thanking me for taking a stand. It’s not a stand, it’s just who we are (as Christians).”

Scripturally, Sartain along with many other Christian pastors will tell you the Bible commands us to pray in the name of Jesus.

Ephesians 5:20: “Always giving thanks to God the Father for

everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

John 14:3 “And I will do whatever you ask in my name; so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”

“Jesus gave me this life,” he said. “He gave me this great gift of forgiveness of my sins. To pray any other way is ludicrous.”

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