

## Thoughts on Chaplains

Many of the Confederate chaplains were local preachers and ministers from the home counties of the various commands. Quite often they rotated their services to the Company with other ministers in the local county. Sometimes they volunteered to serve for the entire war and requested assignment to a certain Company or Regiment to provide services for their neighbors. Their service was invaluable to the troops as echoed in these letters:

April 26 – Culpeper Court House

Cpl. Benjamin Freeman  
44<sup>th</sup> N. Carolina Infantry

“We have a good revival going on yet here in camp. Sunday before last there was 23 baptized by a Baptist preacher, 10 by a Methodist and about 15 joined the Persytorean church.”

August 1 – Culpeper, Virginia

Sgt. Benjamin Porter  
11<sup>th</sup> Alabama Infantry

“. . . prey for me. I feel that your preyers are all around me & shealding me from harm. I am where all are sinful. I have few to talk with who ever have a serious thought.”

August 8 – Glade Springs, Virginia

Sgt. Robert Watson  
7<sup>th</sup> Florida Infantry

“There is a revival going on in the Regt. and half of them are being converted . . . The preacher is a regular “snorter” and can be heard for miles off yelling out Hell fire and brimstone which just suits the “Crackers.” A good sensible preacher could not get along with them”

October 12 – Demopolis, Alabama

Private Grant Taylor  
40<sup>th</sup> Alabama Infantry

“There is preaching every night and from 50 to 100 mourners. They say that 190 have joined the different denominations. Oh how touching it is to see strong men come up with tears streaming down their manly cheeks and tell that they have found the Lord precious to their souls. May the good Lord carry on his good work until every soldier shal be converted.”

Tonight we light a candle in memory of all Confederate chaplains and our own Chaplain Bill Blizzard who has passed over the river to rest in the shade of the trees.

(quotes taken from *Mama, I Am Yet Still Alive*, Jeff Toalson, Bloomington, 2012, by date & Cpl. Freeman from *No Soap, No Pay, Diarrhea, Dysentery & Desertion*, Toalson, Lincoln, 2006, by date.)