

Dear Friend of [Abiding Above](#),

January 2012

**M**y family and I hope you had a wonderful Christmas as you celebrated with your local church and loved ones. Christmas is such a wonderful time of the year for all of us. It causes us to pause and remember our Lord.

I had the privilege of preaching “*A Joyful Heart*” at the rescue mission downtown. My daughter Maclaren went with me, and I was able to use this time to teach her a life lesson on the evil of drugs and ungodly living. The scars of this kind of life are very evident in a rescue mission. She said to me, “*Daddy, why do they hurt themselves like this?*” I told her they were trying to escape their pain. The pain of discipline in getting an education, the pain of abusive parents or the pain of not feeling accepted by others. Instead of running to God, our Protector and Provider, they ran to something else that now controls them.

My friend, God alone, and what God provides for us is all that we need. He is the great “*I AM*” and we are “*In Him.*” He lives inside of us making real what He has already accomplished for us at the cross.

I had the joy of preaching “*God’s Purpose for Your Life*” from Matthew 5:13-16, at Boulevard Baptist Church in Southaven, MS. My dad, Curtis Hodges, was able to go with me. It is wonderful to have a dad that loves you, lets you know it, and cheers you on in what God has called you to do. I shared with the people that God desires our lives to bring Him glory. This happens as we are conformed to His likeness, by reading and applying His Word to our daily living and surrendering to the control of His Holy Spirit.

We continue to disciple others one-to-one. This is done through the mail with individuals all over America, and also, right here in our home city of Memphis, TN. I am presently discipling 6 men on a one-to-one basis each week for 90 minutes. This is powerful and simple. These men will go on to disciple others. We have been doing this now, through Abiding Above Ministries, for over 2 years. I encourage you to consider making this a personal ministry that you do.

I just completed a series of discipleship lessons with a 9 year-old boy at the Tennessee Baptist Children’s Home. A Christian family in Jackson, TN, has adopted Keith. Praise the Lord for moms and dads who are willing to take on this kind of responsibility for a child who needs them.

I thought you might enjoy just a few quotes I have received as a result of our Men’s Retreat at Pickwick Lake:

*“Brothers coming together for the sole purpose of encouraging one another in love toward a deeper understanding of our ‘true’ identity in Christ, powerful and humbling!” -Jim*

*“I was reminded that Christ died for us and if I am not willing to forgive others, it will be difficult to understand God's forgiveness of my sin.” -Shell*

*“The Men's retreat was a great experience. It was a time for like-minded men to get together and learn some deeper truths about the Word of God, our relationship and fellowship with God, and our position in Christ. The Spirit was at work and the ramifications from this retreat will change not only the lives of those who attended but through their surrender to the Holy Spirit, they will become disciplers of men themselves.” -Larry*

*“Refreshing to be in a sphere of influence and being disciplined toward Christ instead of worldly things. Great bunch of Christian men!” -David*

*“I didn't think I was going to get much from it. That's the selfish attitude we have towards God, what is in it for me? Needless to say the retreat changed my life and walk with my Lord Jesus Christ. When we got back I went to church the next day and the Holy Spirit prompted me to go down during the invitation and share with my pastor about the retreat and I also shared it with my Sunday school class. Later on that week a wife of a friend in that Sunday school class called my wife to ask her if I would invite her husband to the next retreat I go to. It was an awesome time and a spiritually challenging time.” Victor*

**Please pray for me as I preach in view of a call at the First Baptist Church of Lakeland, TN, Sunday, January 8, at 10:45 am.** This is an exciting time for me and my family, and Abiding Above Ministries.

I will tell you more about this as it unfolds in our next newsletter. I will continue to need your support, as God leads Abiding Above Ministries to a greater level of influence than ever before, by radio, satellite, and internet broadcasting. We will only increase our effectiveness in sharing the gospel with every person, encouraging spiritual growth in every believer, by the power of the Holy Spirit and all to the glory of God! Happy New Year!

Abiding above,



Chris S. Hodges

President

Abiding Above Ministries

Colossians 3:1-3