



Dear Friend of *Abiding Above*,

October 2015

I have just returned from leading 19 people in retracing the journeys of the Apostle Paul. Praise the Lord and what a dream come true for me!

Three years ago I led a group to Israel on a pilgrimage to see where Jesus was born, lived, and taught. It was wonderful to be in the Holy Land, where Jesus was crucified, buried, and raised from the dead, and where He ascended back into heaven from the Mount of Olives. There is just something about being in these places that resonates in the heart. The Bible teaches us that Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets. Everything written about the Messiah (Jesus) comes true just as God tells us in His Word.

Jesus said, *"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill."* **Matthew 5:17**

The same is true with the writings of the Apostle Paul. Think about it, Paul wrote most of the New Testament. Many commentators say, *"It's as if Paul had the last word."* It was Paul who stood before the Gentile philosophers in Athens. At that time it was said about the City of Athens, there were more gods to worship than men. They even worshipped what they called The Unknown God. Paul stood before them at a place we know today as Mars Hill. I climbed up this hill, and stood there, just thinking of what Paul must have felt as he was being questioned with no friends to stand and support him, all alone in this world-renowned city. He must have felt alone in one sense, but in another sense God's Holy Spirit was in Him, reasoning in his mind and speaking with his lips.

On another day, we stood where Paul stood, before the judgment seat in the market place of the City of Corinth. A place we also call *"the bema."* The Jews were looking for a reason to kill him because Paul was teaching the real truth about Jesus, the only one and true Messiah who had already come into the world, died for our sins, and rose again on the third day just as He said He would.

The Bible also speaks about something that is still in the future, the Judgment Seat of Christ also known as the *"bema."* **(Romans 14:10-12; 1 Corinthians 3:10-4:5; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10)** Only church age saints will appear at this judgment. *"For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ."* **2 Corinthians 5:10**



Chris Hodges
President & CEO

The purpose of this judgment is to examine the Christian's whole life, not for the purpose of condemnation, but for the purpose of reward. So, it does matter how we live our lives, right now. Each person must reflect on what he has done, and what he or she is presently doing. The time God has given, the talent God has bestowed, and the treasure God has entrusted are to be used in accordance with His will and for His glory and we will be held accountable.

George Beverly Shea, the famous soloist for the Billy Graham Crusades used to sing, "***I'd Rather Have Jesus.***"

*I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold,
I'd rather be His than have riches untold;
I'd rather have Jesus than houses or land,
Yes, I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand.
Than to be the king of a vast domain
And be held in sin's dread sway
I'd rather have Jesus than anything
This world affords today.
I'd rather have Jesus than worldly applause,
I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause;
I'd rather have Jesus than worldwide fame,
I'd rather be true to His holy name.
Than to be the king of a vast domain
And be held in sin's dread sway
I'd rather have Jesus than anything
This world affords today...*

My friends, let's you and I finish well. How? Give all you know of you to all you know of God and simply trust Him. Let God have His way with you. This same Paul who tradition says was beheaded by Nero said this:

... for we walk by faith, not by sight—we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. 2 Corinthians 5:7-9

Because of your faithfulness in giving to this ministry, we continue to reach thousands of people through the radio airwaves and the printed page with Bible lessons. This is what drives me personally, to see people saved and immediately to encourage them in spiritual growth with discipleship. There is no waste of resources. None.

If you have not given in a while, we need you. No amount is too small. What you give sees people saved and discipled. We can do this because you give. Thank you!

Abiding above,



President
Abiding Above Ministries
Colossians 3:1-3