



Dear Friend of [Abiding Above](#),

September 2013

Thank you for praying for me while I was away in New Jersey, preaching at a Bible Conference that has been in existence for more than 100 years. The purpose of America's Keswick is to model and teach Biblical victorious living in Christ Jesus, and to provide an environment in which Biblical life transformation takes place, and to foster active personal involvement in the local church. I brought a series of Bible messages entitled "*Joy in the Journey*." These messages were a call to absolute surrender so that we may experience joy in our earthly pilgrimage.

My friend, have you come to the point of realization that your life here on earth is short compared to eternity? As a child of God, this is not your home. The Bible teaches us that we are pilgrims.

Philippians 3:20 – *“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ...”*

Ephesians 2:19 – *“Now, therefore, you are no longer **strangers and foreigners (on earth)**, but fellow citizens (**our eternal home in heaven**) with the saints and members of the household of God...”*

This is how Thayer defines the word pilgrim: *“One who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside by the side of the natives. One who stays in a place as a stranger or visitor; to describe Christians whose final citizenship is in heaven and who are regarded as temporary dwellers on earth.”* You see, we are here for a little while and like Jesus, we will go to heaven. Like the old song says... *“we are pilgrims passing through.”* What did Jesus do during His short 33 years upon this earth? He made disciples and He died on the cross. What are we to do?

Matthew 28:19-20 – *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...”*

The Bible teaches that Jesus set His face like a flint towards Jerusalem and for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. My friend, this same Jesus lives in you. As a child of God, you have the joy of our Savior.



Chris Hodges
President & CEO

Sometimes the circumstances in our lives seem unbearable. My friend, we are to count it all joy when we encounter various trials. How can we? By coming to the realization that the testing of our faith produces endurance. When we are at our weakest, and tired of relying on self, God's Holy Spirit will carry us along as we abide in Him.

One of the fruits of the Holy Spirit is joy. This kind of joy is an eternal joy. This kind of joy is not based on our circumstances, whether positive or negative. This kind of joy is not based on creature comforts. Eternal joy is the Holy Spirit who is our joy, and He wants to have unhindered way in our lives.

Nowhere in scripture can we find an encouragement to retire. My friend, the last thing any child of God needs to do is sit down. God designed us for His purposes, and we lose joy when we lose purpose. The joyful life of the Christian is the one who walks according to God's purpose. The church, like the human body, is self-developing. Children of God have the Holy Spirit living in them, and each one of us has been spiritually gifted for service. The joy of service comes as each individual exercises his or her spiritual gift in the edifying of the body of Christ.


The Apostle Paul said in **1 Corinthians 12: 4-7** – *“There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.”*

I often encourage others to live a surrendered life. My friend, there is joy in the Christian life when we surrender to God's perfect will and not our own human will. It is only as we surrender that we will come to understand the reasons God created us, and His divine purpose for our daily living. We will find life at its very best, and God will use each of us for His perfect will and plan, which will bring Him honor and glory.

Please pray for me as I begin a revival in Dyer, TN this coming Sunday, September 8th. Pray that God would anoint me with the messages for His people.

As always, we love you and are grateful for your prayers and financial support. May God continue to bless you and make you a blessing to many more!

Abiding above,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris S. Hodges". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris S. Hodges
President
Abiding Above Ministries
Colossians 3:1-3