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**John 14:15-21**

Life's special moments, graduations, weddings, vacations, even birthdays are all too short, but they last forever through photos, souvenirs, and memories. As we sit and journey through the scrapbooks of our lives we get that same warm feeling of comfort and love we experienced when we lived that moment.

Jesus knew that his time on earth was short and that the disciples would be left alone in a rough world. Rather than having the disciples look back longingly, "for that wonderful time when Jesus was with them" he promised "if you love me and keep my commandments" I will ask the Father to send you an advocate to be with you forever.

When I first read this passage I thought of an advocate also as a comforter, a helper, or a friend. Much like a security blanket or stuffed toy that a child might get attached to in their early years. Or that lucky, sentimental charm we attach to our key ring or carry in our pocket each day. To know that we carry it close, it gives us that strength to face a rough world each day, with the warm fuzzy feeling of a gentle hug, a shoulder to lean on or to cry on when those we love aren't around.

The advocate Jesus speaks of is the spirit of truth, which will always be with us, unlike that stuffed animal, security blanket, or pocket charm that fades or is lost over time.

I remember the security blanket my brother carried around when he was growing up. A beautiful purple plaid blanket with satin trim, I remember how that blanket went into the wash many times and came out smaller each time. Soon it was nothing more than a small square of the original fabric. But that square still offered him and taught him about the comfort and security of an advocate and friend.

Jesus asks us to love him and keep his commandments. To join love and obedience we must think of love as something other than a romantic feeling. Love is doing what is right, to act for another's good, to do that which brings comfort or benefit to another.

To love obediently is to answer God's call even when it differs from our own agendas and plans.

That warm feeling of comfort and love, that spirit of truth, that I spoke of earlier in this lesson is the wonderful feeling I get when I am wrestling with a decision, problem, or project and I give it to God.

I found that out recently in trying to decide the direction for my career with Community Bank. I was presented with the opportunity to switch offices and spent much of a day off praying and listening to that spirit of truth inside me. From the sense of peace that came over me that afternoon I was led to put in for that transfer and I find myself quite excited about the decision that we made and the journey we began together last Monday.

A friend recently shared her story of the "indwelling of the holy spirit or that spirit of truth" that fueled a career change, her journey to the seminary, and guides her each day in her ministry. It unleashed a passion and thirst that was all consuming to read and learn all she could about God, the bible and all they offer.

My prayer for all of us is that we may experience that warm and wonderful feeling of comfort and love, and our own "indwelling of the holy spirit". Not just occasionally but everyday with the passion my friend found in her journey. As we love Jesus and keep his commandments we will surely find that the Holy Spirit, that Spirit of Truth walks with us each and everyday.

Amen