



*John 14:15–21*

*I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.  
Before long, the world will not see me anymore,  
but you will see me.  
because I live, you also will live.*

*May 21, 2017*

## **Thought for the Week**

Scripture: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17 • 1 Peter: 3, 15-18 • John 14:15-21

I have attended various types of sporting events throughout my life, but I must say that the sound of the cheering, the band and the “canned music” and the strobe lights are a little much for me in my “senior years”. But as I sit here at this computer in the quiet of my room on a beautiful Spring evening, I am wondering what any type of sporting event would be like without joyful noise? If the auditorium or the playing field were completely quiet, would the two teams even have any incentive to play? If attendees were compelled to sit and not cheer would they even want to pay the price for a ticket? If you want your favorite team to win, you need to support it with your voice, your spirit, and your enthusiasm? In short, if a person or persons are truly interested in the outcome of any important event, it will show in their attitude, their

excitement, and their support. We would like to think that this is our "Home Town" spirit, whether in the stadium on Saturday afternoon or at church on Sunday morning.

I am thinking about all this as I imagine what the spirit of the followers of Jesus must have been like when he told them that he would need to leave them, but that they would not lose his support nor his friendship; he (Jesus) would send an advocate known as the spirit of truth who would guide them in the direction that he himself had taken while still with them.

Now switch channels for a moment and ask what the Christian world would look like, would sound like, would be like if the followers of Jesus in the year 2017 showed little or no enthusiasm for the work of Jesus in this time and place?

I imagine, of course, that many (most?) Christians must feel that the spirit at a sporting event hardly fits the atmosphere of a Sunday morning worship service. And yes, that is probably true, at least in most communities that we are familiar. I, being in one of those communities, know from experience that it takes a pretty good sermon or some spirited music and song to get most Christian congregations to cheer or clap. Yes, we call the worship services a celebration but it does not often sound like a celebration.

Perhaps the better question to ask is not about cheering or not cheering but about the internal spirit of a congregation? Can one detect any life there, any cooperation, any willingness to make this contemporary church an experience of Christ being present? Even more specifically, what is the quality of the preaching, the singing, the proclamation of the scriptures? Are our members involved in tending to the needy? Do they have a part in the administration of the congregation? Is there evidence that issues of justice and peace are important? In short, can a newcomer detect a certain authentic human spirit among our members? Would Jesus be satisfied with what he might see and hear if he walked in some Sunday?

It's true, of course, that there is no perfect human church, but it would seem at least that everyone; lay members, religious ministers, adults or youngsters would demonstrate the joyful spirit of Jesus. In that instance Pentecost would be happening year round.

By the way, our congregation has a lot of these qualities, and, they could be more involved, but they are still a dedicated and happy bunch. This could be a good wake up call and hold helpful suggestions for a lot of us Sunday Christians.

Oops, have we become Sunday Christians? No, this couldn't happen to us!

*Happy Birthday – Mary (5/26)*

*Live in such a way that*

*those who know you,  
but don't know God,  
will come to know God  
because they know you.*