



Going Out into the World – a Modern Day Parable based on John 14:15-21

Marcy walked into TJ's bedroom and surveyed the moving boxes. "My son," she said. "You are going out into the big world tomorrow. You will have to be responsible for yourself and make decisions on your own. Mama won't be there to help you every day." TJ was leaving for college the next day. As a single mother, Marcy always wanted TJ to know that he has a heavenly father. She had many conversations with her son about faith in God and the difference in Godly Wisdom and worldly wisdom. As she helped him pack, she tucked a small Bible into his suitcase. You will always have God on your side, but remember God gives you the greatest advocate – His Holy Spirit – to be with you every day, and in every situation. It is the Spirit of Truth.

"Many people you will meet out in the world don't accept God and His Wisdom. You will find the Truth in God's Holy Word. You, TJ, are blessed to have another advocate," she added. "ME! I love you so much, and I know you love me, son. I hope you will follow my advice I have given you over the years. I will be praying for you."

For the first time this evening, TJ looked his Mama in the eye. He sat on the bed and said, "I'm gonna miss you Mama. Thanks for all you have done to support me and raise me and get me to college. I hope I don't let you down," he added as his head lowered showing a little nervousness.

Marcy gently lifted his chin with her hand as she always did when she had something very important to tell him. She needed to look deeply into her son's eyes to know he was listening. "You are my son. I am very proud of you. When you are at college, you won't be able to see me, but know that your Mama will always be here for you. Trust me."

TJ recognized that look. He knew she had much more to say. Things he would never forget. Marcy continued, "You won't see the air. But you will breathe and trust it is there.

"You won't see the water in the pipes. But you will turn on the faucet and trust it is there.

"You won't see the chef prepare your meals. But you will go to the dining hall at dinner time and trust the food is there.

"You won't see your professors travel to the classroom. But you will show up ready to learn and trust the lessons are there.

"You won't see the information traveling the internet. But, you will turn on your computer and trust it is there.

“My dear boy, we won’t see me or God the One who created you, and who loves you most. But get up every day, go out into that big world, be your best self, experience new things, make new friends, and trust that God is there with you.”

One month later, TJ lay in his dorm room listening to the sound of his roommate’s soft breathing as he slept. The campus hadn’t awoken yet so it was still very quiet outside – no traffic noise and busyness yet. The sun was just beginning to make its appearance bringing a soft glow in through the window. TJ was awake unusually early for a Monday. Today was the day of his first college exam and he was naturally a little nervous.

He thought about Mama. He could see her cupping her hand under his chin, looking deeply into his eyes and telling him everything would be ok. She would remind him that he had studied and prepared and he needed to trust that. He could almost smell Mama’s homemade butter waffles. Man, those were so good! For as long as TJ could remember, Mama made waffles every Monday morning. She knew that would get him out of bed better than any alarm clock. His stomach would push him away from the warm covers and lead him sleepily downstairs following that delicious smell. It always worked – at least until he got his drivers license. So many times during those last few years of high school TJ would just blow by Mama and her fresh butter waffles on his way out the door to meet his friends before school. But, she still arose early every Monday to make them in case he stayed to eat because the most important ingredient poured into those waffles was her love. A twinge of guilt made TJ regret the times he hadn’t stayed to have Mama’s waffles before school.

What he wouldn’t give for Mama’s waffles right now! TJ realized that Mama’s waffles weren’t about his stomach at all. Mama made those waffles so she could spend time with TJ and help him start off the new week with a feeling of love and trust that he would never be alone. That he would always have an advocate to be with him. TJ said a prayer for Mama, and a prayer for his exam. He could feel the immense love. That love pushed him out of bed to out into the big world, give it his best, and to trust that God is with him.