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The Emmaus Journal – "The Path"

By C.L. Mareydt

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I use to wonder why so many of the Lord's people could believe or behave the way they did. I use to hear and participate in endless discussions of why this Church believed one thing and another Church believed another. No two groups of Christians appeared the same from doctrines to beliefs! There were such diversities among all us Christians! Many times all the talk led me into more confusion and distrust. Many times it left me doubting my own relationship with Jesus; and worse yet, doubting an-others relationship with Jesus.

What I could not seem to grasp was why our Lord allowed all these differences to remain! Didn't Jesus know how they all looked as His Disciples? Didn't Jesus care how they all reflected on Him? To make matters worse, no one seemed to have any answers either. The few answers that were shuffled around never seemed to satisfy MY Discipleship or beliefs. It instead, seemed like everyone was jockeying for some position within the Kingdom either here on Earth or in the Heavenly's.

This went on for a few years without any spiritual solution or personal resolution. At times when I felt more spiritual myself, I would try to present some 'religious cliché' as an answer. But, never any answer that reveals the real Truth that sets you free.

One morning, while again, quietly pondering such things with the Lord, the answer came. The truth appeared! In front of me I saw a Path. This Path stretched from horizon to horizon. The path curved and weaved its way into hills, valleys, and mountains. A well worn Path it was, it could not be mistaken for anything else. It cut its way thru the entire landscape and forged its way into pleasant meadows and glens, forests, and even deserts. A Path for one and a Path for all. Yet the Path always seemed to remain relatively narrow.

As I continued to focus on this picturesque Path, I began to see people. Many people, and all kinds of people! Yet the Path was not crowded and there was plenty of room for more people. Seeing so many people I noticed certain individuals and groups. All were plainly dressed in long nondescript robes and all generally appeared the same age, yet not old or young. Each distinctly still had their own individual appearance.

Looking still closer, I began to see some carrying on conversations with each other. Large groups on the Path, talking and walking; smaller groups on the Path, talking and walking also. Each group was totally engrossed in enjoyable conversations as they walked on the Path together. I can even remember how I wished to join up with them just to hear what was being said.

But then as I looked along the Path I noticed a few scattered here and there that were totally alone. Some walking alone, some sitting on the Path's side, all alone. It looked like a few were just plain tired and had sat down to rest. Then I noticed others so alone they had helplessly sat down and started crying. Tears falling as others walked on by. Once in awhile a hand would reach out to one and immediately that one would jump up and start walking again as the two clasped hands and continued on together. Then there were a few who never moved from the Path's side where they had settled down. These few people seemed to cry and cry and cry, a continuous flow of tears. So great was their weeping that I wondered why? Looking a bit closer I knew that such burdens within had caused their hearts to cry out in distress, since it could no longer bear the grief. So such cryings were their only relief.

Upon seeing such sorrows, I had to look away and immediately my attention was caught by a loud commotion arising from another group on the Path. A whole crowd was laughing and joking and back-slapping, like there was no tomorrow. The noise attracted such attention that more and more people were being drawn to it like a magnet. Some out of curiosity, some just following the one's in front of them. Many stragglers joined the raucous group as if they had nothing better to do. What a sight to behold! As the crowds got bigger and bigger, it seemed to center around one individual person. Each time this person spoke all would cheer wildly and wave their hands and arms, like spectators at a game. The excitement actually filled the air and everyone was enthralled in the mesmerizing atmosphere.

Looking over this great grouping I happened to see afar off in the distance, a huge structure. A monolithic mansion, that was more than just a building. I was in awe at its apparent greatness! It literally held my gaze and drew me closer. Its sheer beauty struck my soul as each specialized brick proclaimed its own elegance. Embedded throughout were gleaming plaques lavishly engraved with the names of honor to immortalize its prestigious builders. Such luxury and opulence, there was nothing common to be seen in this place! Trying to venture closer yet, my attention was suddenly turned back

to the Path again; then I saw what looked like smoke.

Further up the Path, just off the side a spell, was a camp. A camp of people, setting up camp! Tents going up and tents coming down, all at the same time. People mulling around, organizing this and organizing that. Some were starting little camp fires and some were fixing food, all into the activities of a camp. Scattered throughout the area were many such camp sites, full of people. Some staying in groups within the camp, some hanging around the fringes waiting for an invitation to come on in. But, all were very preoccupied in camping. Strange as it may sound, the Path was always right there along side of each camp. Every once in awhile a few would pack up and head back out onto the Path, by two's, threes, or foursomes. Not many ventured off alone from the camp. Some looked as if they would never leave the camp; they had settled into it so securely. These were in for the long haul and had claimed their piece of the camp personally.

Swinging my attention to the other end of the Path, into my sight came people running blithely in such stupendous freedom. Effortlessly running and talking at the same time, each jogging along with obvious joy. Some were calling to others to join them, some beckoned with waves of the arm. Some didn't care and just shot ahead of them all, faster and faster they went, till out of sight! A few would

back track and try to join with others. It looked like each was enjoying the run as much as the company of the others. Not a one looked tired or sweaty, or even drained, from the continuous exercise. All must have been well trained athletes.

Seeing a valley come into sight, was next. It was full of trees and the Path stretched along side a stream as it made its way through the trees that became a forest further on. All looked peaceful, but the ones on the Path in the valley were walking very slow and meticulous. Each step, by step was heavy and purposeful. Little talking was heard and each person on the Path did not look up much. Many took long cool drinks from the stream and splashed the refreshing water onto their faces. This seemed to revive them so they continued on, looking toward the end of the valley ever so intently.

Next came a mountain and many people were scattered everywhere on the Path. Climbing, climbing, climbing. Each looking earnestly to the top of the mountain. It was a good thing they had the Path to follow, since the mountain was vast and it would have presented a much more difficult task. Thankfully the Path was well kept, so each traveled steadily upward. Many held staffs in their hands and used them to lean on to help maintain their balance. The staffs appeared strong and useful as they dug into the Path and helped each one gain more ground and keep their feet sure on the Path in front of them. None stumbled or fell, but progressed step by step. It seemed that rest was not thought of, just the strong determination to get to the top of the mountain persisted in each person.

Once at the peak, each would linger in small groups where they would smile and shake hands and share some of their experiences along the Path. Never too many cluttered the mountain peak, since new ones would constantly arrive. No one even sat down to rest. Each seemed eager to keep their pace going and start the downward trek to the bottom of the mountain. Again, these must be some more athletes. Just watching them seemed exhausting to me, but I knew deep down inside it wasn't even phasing them! Another great sight to behold.

As the Path left my sight, I returned back into my chair contemplating with the Lord. What on Earth did I just see? It all happened in just a few minutes, yet it felt like it had been much, much longer. Was that a mini vision? Was it a vision at all? My mind had travelled into a supernatural scene. My mind had travelled? What on Earth!

No it was not of this Earth... it was a special revelational truth that set me free. Never again have I questioned this one or that one. .. this Church or that Church. I tend to the Path that is set before me! Hopefully I can share a few miles along the way with a few dear friends. But, I remain ever so thankful for The Path that was shown to me and the truth that set me free – free to keep on going!

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