



SIEBENQUELL

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# On the Way to the House of the Father II:

**Do not stare at that which is yet to come**

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»Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going.«

Thomas said to him, »Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?«

Jesus said to him, »I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also From now on you do know him and have seen him.«

Jn 14, 1-7

## **The Paralyzing Fascination with Worlds we cannot yet fashion**

When in our faith we are too fixated on the metaphor of the house at the cost of the image of the path, then this fixation will lead to a paralyzing fascination. Then we only speak and think about a future that will be better than the present day. How lovely, comfortable, spacious, liberating, relieving and peaceful it will be on the day we finally arrive! This, too, distracts us from the path, which is usually difficult, laborious, burdensome and challenging. However, what is most overlooked is the fact, that paralyzing fascination with the coming world can cost us the joy and pleasure of life in this one.

It is like the first trans-Canada trip of my brother with his small children: 5000 km from West to East over 5 days. Hardly 100 km into the trip the frightening question issued forth from the back seat or the first time: »Are we there yet?«. On the fifth day, my brother sat behind the wheel, grim and determined to reach his destination as swiftly as possible. Once he gets there, he is sure he will find everything that is lacking in his car: joy, relief, liberation, relaxation, well-being and comfort. While he grinds his teeth behind the wheel, everything that makes life worth living is projected into a promising future.

But the joy of the journey (the path) is lost. (Not to mention the pleasure!) He finally arrived, but what did he find? Not the Promised Land, not the house that has space for life and joy. No, he found that he had transferred his anger, misery, impatience and frustration 5000 km east of his point of departure. This troubled his heart. From this Jesus wishes to protect us.

There is a joy to the journey, and not just to the arrival.

There is a joy in creating, not just in the result.

There is a joy in the engagement, and not just the accomplishment.

There is a joy in creativity, and not just in the end product.

And although we seldom say it, there is a joy to life and not just in eternal life.

Indeed, the desire for eternal life in fullness is good only when we note: And you know the way to where I am going.

On the way:

- learn to love justice.
- relish everything that has to do with love.
- place a high value on relationship.
- discover the joy of mercy.
- enjoy good experiences with serving.
- feel the deep satisfaction of offering consolation.
- drink deeply of the joy of sharing

Should none of this be of interest to us during our time on the path of life then our hearts will be troubled when we arrive in the house of the Father. For the House of the Father will be like hell for us. It will be a hell with a lot of room, but, nevertheless, a living hell.

These rooms are spacious and wide, because they open up room for justice, love, relationship mercy, service, consolation and sharing with and in God. God ensures that these things, and thus he himself, receive plenty of space on the path and in the house. We, on the other hand, need only be concerned that these things find plenty of space on our path and in our lives.

It is interesting, that Jesus identifies himself with the image of the path and sees his mission as way, truth and life. He is the beloved Son who shows, accompanies and journeys on this path with us. If the House is already a place filled with glory, then only because it is a house filled with life.

Huub Oosterhuis wrote a beautiful text: »At the end of all days«. But he also wrote the poetic mediation »You should live upon the earth«. Only those who observe both, in right proportion and in the correct sequence, will be preserved from moving through all of life with a troubled heart. »Let not your hearts be troubled.«

**Erik Riechers SAC**

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