



Journal by a Ponytail Guy

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In the morning of January 27, 2010, the ponytail guy and his friends were chopping the wood. It has already been 2 weeks roaming back mountains to collect dry wood for a fire stove. Finally, several piles of oak wood are readily prepared. They are the best quality of fire wood prepared with saw and axe. After hearing the rumor that the current price of a truck load of oak wood reaches 800,000 Korean Won, the ponytail guy decided to save that worth of money in a matter of few days.

The ponytail guy went straight ahead with the fire wood making project. First thing was to gather fellow workers. An atomic physics student has become very good at sawing. Sergeant Choi, who just got his last vacation from military service, saws wood as thick as his waist as if he is slicing radish. A seminary student, who came for a break from Greek and Hebrew, is clumsy in chopping the wood but never gives up. A female kindergarten teacher is quite skilled in sharpening a saw with metal chains. A sister who worked as a secretary for head of international mission organization carries wood that weighs as much as her own weight on her back.

While his fellow workers were chopping wood, the ponytail guy spent all morning in sharpening an axe with a stone. Out of his concern for his fellows' safety, he did the most dangerous job himself. But when he finds his fellows are doing a poor job in chopping the wood, he would take over that job as well. No matter how thick the wood is, it easily gets split into two by his hand. The philosopher is not only chopping the wood but also breaking up his doubting mind.

In the afternoon, he listened to a presentation and critique of "emotion and reason" by his fellow workers. He was content to sit next to a fire stove that smelled burning oak wood prepared by him. The presentation was by a wavy hair guy who is 10 years junior to the pony tail guy; he described his hurt wandering between emotion and reason in the mist of his elder fellows. His metaphor was very exceptional.

"There was a dragonfly. It was such a beautiful dragonfly that I wanted to trade my life with

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it. I wanted to catch it. I was in deep agony worrying that it may fly away. But I could not control myself and reached out to it. But it bit me instead of flying away. I was disappointed by it, but I finally gave it up. God probably did not want that free dragonfly to be caught by a human. I found out that I was emotionally sensitive but did not know how to make an objective approach with reason. It was such a poetic and rational analysis beyond expectation.

An atomic physics student, who is skilled in sawing, critiqued on the presentation of the wavy hair guy; "I believe it is almost impossible to make clear distinctions between reason and emotion because reason is incomplete and emotion is unclear. This statement itself is self-contradictory. I learned that a lot of problems occur when one pursues one of the two to the extreme from the book, "Truth is alive." I personally believe that reason and emotion function as complementary measures for each other. If you want to catch the dragonfly, why don't you study about the dragonfly? Then consider what the dragonfly feels. Be honest with yourself in your own purpose to catch the dragonfly."

Everyone was silent to his brief critique that penetrated the very heart of the presentation. But there was a person who was gazing at him intently; it was his roommate who shared the room for the past 3 weeks. He wondered how this atomic physics major student knew so well about Hegel's dialectic that he studied as a philosophy major student. It was the very ponytail guy.

In the end, the ponytail guy finally opened his sealed lips; "Western history of intelligence evolved around the battle between reason and emotion. Western philosophy is the history of confrontation between idealism emphasizing reason and empiricism emphasizing experience. In Christian perspective, we should consider both and make them into one. Otherwise, we would fall into the trap of the West dividing them up into dualism. To learn more on perfect reason and emotion, study the life of Jesus." When one brave L'Abri worker was about to make some comments, he was interrupted by a bell that announced the tea time was over. It was regrettable that everyone was obliged to leave the scene.

On one Wednesday night where we studied the book of Romans together, the ponytail guy also answered the question by a non-believer; Sergeant Choi confessed that he had never been to a church and asked an honest question if one needed to read the whole bible to believe in Jesus and be saved. While workers were searching for a proper answer to his question, the ponytail guy answered; "I also thought that I should know the whole 66 books of the bible to believe in Jesus. I have not read even the half of the bible. But whichever part of the bible you read, you will find one consistent message that you will be saved by faith. I am sure that if you believe in Jesus, you will be saved without reading the whole bible." No further explanation was required.

It was the ponytail guy who made an igloo (snow house) a few days ago when we had heavy snow. Along with his fellow friends, they spent nights and days to complete an igloo as

big as a house with a low entrance so that people can get in with their heads bent. It was built to block the stiff necked people from getting in.

To celebrate its completion, the most humbled gathered in the igloo with instant noodle cups. English class students who are my wife's pupils also studied English with instant noodle cups in their hands. But no stiff necked person was able to step into that igloo. One night, I found the pony tail guy was shivering in the cold and smoking just outside the igloo. I came near him for a talk.

Sung: "The weather is quite cold. Why don't you smoke inside the igloo?"

Ponytail: "I want to abide the rule of L'Abri."

Sung: "Do you mean that smoking in the igloo goes against the rule of L'Abri?"

Ponytail: "No smoking inside also applies to this igloo."

Sung: "Is that so? We should take off our shoes when we are in the igloo then."

A small change is surely happening in this ponytail guy lately. Silent wind of Holy Spirit is passing through the heart of this ponytail guy who wants to keep a small promise of "no smoking inside" of L'Abri although it leaves him outside in fierce wind. His spirit, which was long oppressed as a pastor's son, must be awakening. He must be meeting Jesus not only in intellect but also in experience. I am expecting "the day" would come soon.