

With canteen in hand, I was prepared for my second 50-mile hike and campout in the Uinta Mountains. I was about as well prepared as a 14-year-old could be. My equipment was all set to go, my boots were sturdy, and my pack was full of all the essentials.

The day of the hike arrived, and our leaders reminded our group of young men that the mountains could be very dangerous. Hikers and campers were often lost in the rugged hills and on the numerous trails. We were warned not to wander away from the path. Our leaders—my father included—all seemed concerned for our safety and were anxious to keep us from straying off of our chosen path.

Being one of the stronger hikers and a leader in the group, I soon found myself and three other boys leading the way. Sometimes we waited for our group at the forks in the trail to make sure we followed the correct path and would not become lost.

We hiked for hours, laughing and joking all the way. We were having a great time. Suddenly, we heard frantic calls and the sounds of running. We knew something must have gone wrong. We wondered if maybe some of the group had become lost. I was concerned for the friends I'd left

behind with the leaders. Something bad must have happened.

We stopped to listen so we could hear what the distant voices were yelling. We heard our names. More specifically, I heard *my name* being called. I recognized my father's voice. We called back and heard their heavy footsteps coming

We stopped to listen so we could hear what the distant voices were yelling. We heard our names. ... We called back and heard their heavy footsteps coming in our direction.

in our direction.

Something bad *had* happened. We learned that four of the boys in our group had strayed from the correct path and had become lost. It was us. We were the ones who were lost. My father was thankful to have finally found us, and together we began the hike back to the correct trail.

In my head, I retraced my footsteps. I couldn't figure out how I'd become lost. I felt like I was still on the original path. I'd been so sure! We retraced our steps and my father showed us a turn we had missed. It was just a small path with a little hidden sign marking the correct way. We had hiked two miles off the right trail! We were thankful we'd been found before dark. For the rest of the hike,

we stayed close to our leaders and the rest of the group and were never in danger again.

Sometimes our overconfidence as youth gives us an unrealistic sense of independence. We push on without consulting our parents or leaders. We fail to ask for advice. We feel

THE 50 MILE HIKE

By Duncan Anderson



CHOOSING RIGHT PATHS

"I plead with you to make a determination right here, right now, not to deviate from the path which will lead to our goal: eternal life with our Father in Heaven. Along that straight and true path there are other goals: missionary service, temple marriage, Church activity, scripture study, prayer, temple work. There are countless worthy goals to reach as we travel through life. Needed is our commitment to reach them."

President Thomas S. Monson, "The Three Rs of Choice," *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 68.



A Voice of Guidance

One role of prophets is to help us know how to avoid dangerous paths by obeying Heavenly Father's plan. Learn more about the strength and protection that come through following the words of God's prophets at lds.org/go/prophetsNE8.

certain we're headed in a direction leading to the right destination. We laugh and joke and enjoy the path until it's too late, too dark, and we're lost.

When it comes to choosing the right trails in life, our Heavenly Father has provided tools to guide us and keep us on the path that leads to Him. We have the scriptures, prayer and revelation, our parents, guidelines like *For the Strength of Youth*, and our Church leaders to guide us through the countless options life offers.

NEED ADVICE?

Is there anything you'd like advice on? Don't be afraid to ask your parents or Church leaders. Remember they are there to help you, no matter what you'd like to talk about.

When we do stray off the path, it's often our loving parents and dedicated leaders who come to the rescue. They can guide us back to the correct way and show us where we went wrong. Through repentance, we can correct those wrongs and start fresh on the right path, headed toward the destination that will give us eternal happiness and a life in the presence of our Heavenly Father. **NE**

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