



BY JOHN D. N. DAVIDSON II

One winter my Scout troop went on an overnight campout in an area with huge rock formations.

The narrow crevasses between the rocks formed maze-like trails flanked by rock walls. We walked around the trails all day and discovered that we could slide on the steep ones by sitting down, tucking our feet up, and hoping the trail didn't rip out the seats of our snowsuits.

After dinner, our leaders let us go out on a night hike alone. They must have thought that with 13 of us they'd be able to keep track of our whereabouts by the noise we made. We grabbed our flashlights and hit the trails with the longest slides. When those got old, we searched for other, more exciting slides. We were steadily heading away from camp without realizing it.

The real problem came when everyone slid down a trail that was too icy to climb back up. The oldest boys thought we could simply take a detour around the rocks. We followed the trail farther, but it didn't turn back toward camp.

We weren't worried about getting too cold since everyone had enough winter clothing, but we were all getting tired. Hour after hour we walked around the trails, hunting for a familiar landmark that would point the way back to camp. The swish-swish of snowsuit legs rubbing together was only broken by the sounds of each boy taking his turn tripping and stumbling.

Exhausted and desperate, we finally thought to pray. Kneeling in a circle, we bowed our heads.

"Our Heavenly Father, we have tried to find our way, but we are lost. Please help us to find our way back to camp. . . ."

"Walk toward the light."

The voice was so faint I thought I had imagined it. I looked up and saw an illumination on the hillside. Now I knew it wasn't my imagination. It was the voice of one of our leaders. They had watched the telltale signs of our flashlights and noise get farther and farther away. When it appeared that we had no intention of turning back, they came after us. They took turns calling to us, but we couldn't hear them over the swish-swish of snowsuits. It turned out we were just over the hill from familiar territory.

From my experiences on overnight camping trips, I have learned to pitch a tent, start a fire, and take care of my physical well-being in the wild. But this time the lesson I learned was more important. None of us was in mortal danger. No one was injured or freezing to death, but that camping trip taught me the importance of prayer—not just prayer before a meal or before bedtime, but the importance of prayer for help with the challenges I face every day. And our answer on this camp came through wise leaders who could see the change of direction we needed to make. **NE**

To learn more about prayer, read Elder Russell M. Nelson, "Sweet Power of Prayer," *Ensign*, May 2003, p. 7.



ILLUSTRATED BY ROGER MOTZKUS