



By Kelly Robinson and Marissa Widdison

(Based on a true story)

*“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right”
(Ephesians 6:1).*

“Wow, the dirt is orange!” My sister pointed to the crusty ground by the boardwalk we were standing

on. A few feet away, an oval pool seemed to glow yellow and blue.

“Where do the colors come from?” I asked Dad as he stopped to take a picture. He handed me a pamphlet

from the ranger station. “I think it talks about it in there.”

The pamphlet told about the history of Yellowstone National Park. It also had a map of where we were. Then I saw a section about geothermal pools.

“Whoa! The colors are caused by bacteria!” I told Dad. “I wouldn’t have guessed that.”

I started imagining what the bacteria looked like. I wished I could take some water to look at under a microscope, or at least touch it to see if it felt weird. I guess my sister had a similar idea, because pretty soon she tugged on Mom’s shirt.

“Mama, I want to touch it! Pleeeeease?”

Mom and Dad gave each other a look—one of those “talk without saying anything” looks—and pulled my sisters and me to the side of the boardwalk.

“Remember what we talked about before we got out of the car?” Mom said. She didn’t even wait for us to answer. “Don’t touch anything off the boardwalk.”

“But why?” The words popped out of my mouth before I could stop them.

Instead of just saying “Because I said so” like he sometimes does, Dad paused for a second and pointed to a sign nearby. It said, “Dangerous Ground.”

“The water might look nice and cool. But it’s actually very, very hot. If you touched it, you’d get badly burned. There’s even super-hot water just under the orange dirt there. But we can enjoy it all safely from the path.”

Dad pointed out that the sign was written in lots of different languages. “The warning is so important that they wanted to make sure everyone could understand it. They want everyone to stay on safe ground.”

I nodded, and even my little sisters seemed to understand. We kept walking along the boardwalk, listening to the steam hiss around us. Before, I had mostly been thinking about how awesome the scenery was. Now I was

also watching my sisters and making sure they were safe.

After a while, we saw a geyser shoot into the air! I loved watching the wind blow the water droplets across the colorful ground.

Finally it was time to head back to the car. Mom walked up beside me and put her arm around my shoulders. “You know, the boardwalk is kind of like the commandments.”

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“Well,” said Mom, “Heavenly Father gave us a beautiful world to live in. And He gave us commandments to help us make safe and happy choices. He really loves us, and He wants us to have a wonderful experience here on earth.”

I thought about that for a bit as we passed the blue-and-yellow pool of water again.

“So I guess wanting to touch the water is kind of like temptation?”

Mom nodded. “I think so. It’s easy to think that the pools of water won’t hurt us—that we’ll have more fun if we leave the gospel path—but that’s just not true. Listening to the prophets and following the commandments is like staying on the boardwalk. It helps us make good choices and enjoy our lives.”

Before I climbed into our van, I took one last look back at the boardwalk and made myself a promise: I was going to stay on safe ground, no matter what! ◆

The authors live in Oregon and Utah, USA.



“Our safety, our peace, lies in working as hard as we can to live as the Father and Son would have us live.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

“Beware of False Prophets and False Teachers,” Ensign, Nov. 1999, 64.

Following the prophet helps us stay on a good path.



Read a message from him on page 2!