



**L**ET US CONTINUE our hike! Our journey is spiritual. It is arduous and can end in tragedy if we are not aware of the basics. Thankfully we are blessed with a Guide who not only knows the terrain, signs, map, and rules, but also created them! Rules are not meant to spoil our fun but to ensure our safety. Our first rule was proper dress. The second rule is to be sure to observe the signs!

### The weather report

I looked with remorse at the guide who commanded us to hold hands and repeat Psalm 91 before venturing into dangerous terrain on one of my several hiking expeditions. The journey began in sunshine. There was no sign of trouble. The guide pointed to the rising water level that meandered alongside us. Aquamarine water was suddenly tinged with brown. Sunshine disappeared. Silence descended. Rain plummeted. Sounds familiar? Conversion begins in joy but trials abruptly drench our joy. Consumed with rising stress levels parents, friends, work, school, and a host of other problems, you lose sight of the Guide. Didn't He promise that He would always be with you? (Matthew 28:20). It appears that everyone has pressed on and left you behind. You are lost! You cry out: "Oh God help me!" You cannot see Him, but desperation forces His name from your lips.

### Your map

It is at this point that the map becomes critical. Choices can become scary when we are alone. Which path should we take? The crossroads are many. A group of us were lost

# SOS! Allegory of a Hike —Part II

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and spent the night in the forest because of one small oversight—the lack of a proper map. Our map did not account for the several paths that faced us. We needed to make a choice to exit the forest and, unfortunately, we chose the wrong trail, because we did not have the correct map. In our spiritual journey, we must consult the correct map—the Bible—when making choices, because choosing the wrong path chosen could result in regret at best and tragedy at worst. The map advocates one way for a young person to choose the right path, by *living according to God's word* (see Psalm 119:9). The Word of God must govern our choices of spouses, entertainment, friendships, jobs, diet and all aspects of our life. "*Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You*" (Psalm 119:11)

Follow these steps and you are guaranteed a positive outcome! Look out for Part III to find out how the story ended.

Until next time, make sure you dress appropriately, observe the signs, and follow the correct map!

Be blessed. ☺

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