**Hinking in the High Sierras**

**Many times Grandpa Thom and I would go on overnight camping trips with our father. But, once in a while we would go for maybe a week of camping and hiking. This was always a real treat for us.**

**Today, hiking and camping is a lot different. Today you have light weight back packs, dehydrated meals in a foil pouch, extra warm sleeping bags and electronic gadgets to help you know exactly where you are. When Grandpa Thom and I went camping, we had old wooden frame back packs. We would wrap up all our gear and food into a canvas ground cloth and then, tie it very carefully and snug to the wooden frame. The backpacks could become very heavy.**

**Our sleeping bags were heavy and bulky. Our shoes were not as light weight and sturdy as what they have today. Our fishing equipment was old and did not work very well. Our food was not made for hiking. Our cooking pots and pans were heavy. It was just a lot more difficult back then.**

**But, the most important part of the trip was being with our dad. He was a true camper and hiker. Once he climbed the highest mountain in the lower 48 states. He taught us how to tie on our backpacks with a double diamond design. He taught us about how to enjoy sleeping out under the stars and not in a tent. He taught us how to make a comfortable bed on the ground using pine branches and make a “hip hole.” The hip hole was a a small dug-out area in the ground under your sleeping bag for your hip to rest in and to help you not slide around during the night. He taught us how to fish. He taught us a lot of things about life as we feel asleep looking up at the stars in the night.**

**Grandpa Thom and I also loved the mountains with their jagged peaks, the beautiful tall trees, the crystal clear lakes and the refreshing cool water of the rushing streams. After a long hike, it was so nice to soak our feet in a mountain stream. It was such a pretty sight to see all of this and to enjoy its beauty. We began to be thankful for this beautiful world Heavenly Father and Jesus created for us.**

**But, one thing we did not like was hiking uphill with heavy backpacks! It would get hot and dusty on the trail. The trails were steep and rocky. It seemed like every ten minutes we were asking our dad, “How long is it before we get to our camp site?” Each time our dad would save, “just around the corner.” After a while we stopped asking him because we already knew what he was going to say!**

**As we look back on this time with our father, we understand that sometimes we have to work hard but the rewards are worth all the effort and hard work. Even though we complained about the hiking, we never complained about all the beautiful and wonderful sights of nature all around us. But, we could never see those things unless we made the effort to get there.**

**Part of “Twin Power” is knowing the importance of hard work and the great blessings that come to us when we do our best.**