

# Wrong Roads and Revelation



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"Matt, let's go to the Colorado River," Dad suggested. I was seven years old, and my family was visiting both sets of grandparents in St. George, Utah. Eager to see the mighty Colorado, I yelled, "Great! Let me get my skipping stones."

Little did I know that he meant we were going to the Grand Canyon traveling over cow trails. Yes, we would see the Colorado River, but we would be on a cliff about a mile (1.5 km) above it. There would be no skipping of stones.

Grandpa Holland loaned us his truck and gave us a homemade map and a set of directions to help us find our way on a little-used dusty path along the back roads of the Utah-Arizona border. As we turned off the paved road, lumbered through the desert, climbed a set of hills, crossed another desert, went up another set of hills, I wondered how Grandpa or anyone else ever found this place.

We reached the overlook of the Grand Canyon late in the afternoon. After looking at the spectacular view and launching a few stones as far as I could throw, we got back into Grandpa's old truck and started the trek home.

It was dusk, and we had only gone a bumpy mile or two when we came to a fork in the road. We stopped. Dad was

not certain which trail we had come in on. He knew he had to make the right decision. There wasn't much light left, light he desperately needed to ensure he could make the correct turns the rest of the way home.

Wasting time on a wrong road now meant we would face the difficult task of making our way home in the dark.

As we did whenever we had a family problem or concern, we prayed. After we both said amen, Dad turned and asked me what I thought we should do. I answered and said, "All during the prayer, I just kept feeling, 'Go to the left.'"

Dad responded, "I had the exact same impression."

This was my first experience receiving and recognizing revelation.

We started down the dirt road to the left. We had traveled only about 10 minutes when our road came to a sudden dead-end. My father promptly whipped the truck around, roared back to that fork in the path, and started down the road to the right. Fortunately, there was still just enough light to help us navigate the web of dirt roads that would take us home.

We were almost back to St. George, now on roads my father knew well, and the thick darkness of the night was lit by pinholes of thousands of stars.

I was troubled. With my head resting on my dad's leg and my legs stretched across the seat, I asked, "Dad, why did we both feel like Heavenly Father told us to go down the road to the left when it was the wrong road?"

My dad said, "Matty, I've been thinking and silently praying about that same thing all the way home, because I really did feel a very distinct impression to take the road to the left."

I was relieved that my first experience with revelation had a  
"second witness."

He continued, "The Lord has taught us an important lesson today. Because we were prompted to take the road to the left, we quickly discovered which one was the right one. When we turned around and got on the right road, I was able to travel along its many unfamiliar twists and turnoffs perfectly confident I was headed in the right direction.

"If we had started on the right road, we might have driven for 30 minutes or so, become uneasy with the unfamiliar surroundings, and been tempted to turn back. If we had done that, we would have discovered the dead-end so late that it would have been too dark to find our way back in totally unfamiliar territory."

I understood and have never forgotten the lesson my Heavenly Father and earthly father taught me that afternoon. Sometimes in response to prayers, the Lord may guide us down what seems to be the wrong road—or at least a road we don't understand—so, in due time, He can get us firmly and without question on the right road. Of course, He would never lead us down a path of sin, but He might lead us down a road of valuable experience. Sometimes in our journey through life we can get from point A to point C only by taking a short side road to point B. We had prayed that we could make it safely home that day, and we did.

*Lesson: We get put on the wrong path for a reason*