

## The Trailblazer

Have you ever been hiking? There are lots of places to go hiking. There are varying difficulties of trails too. Some are paved with blacktop. Others are gravel. Still, there are some where the climb is steep, so they built stairs out of wood, stones, or a mixture of both. And for the more rugged adventurer there are trails that are barely noticeable and involve climbing over large boulders and through caves and/or creeks.

Often, a map is given. This helps hikers know where the trail is heading. Sometimes there are trail guides. They know the trail inside and out. They help those who are less familiar with the trail be able to navigate it to completion. These things are important. Leaving the trail may lead to danger. Poison ivy, deadly animals, or even steep cliffs may await those who venture outside the marked trail. These can lead to injury and even death.

Hebrews 12 talks about Jesus as the author and perfecter of faith. These words carry the idea of trailblazer and finisher.

The trailblazer is the one who created the trail. He discovered the way to get from one place to the other. He moved the stones in place to cross the creek. He cut down the trees to make the path. He paved the path with gravel to make the path known and possible for others to come behind. Not only did Jesus create the path of faith, he completed it. He walked the trail to the cross. He walked the trail of obedience. He walked the trail because of the joy set before him.

Now that he has created the path of faith and completed that path of faith we can follow in his footsteps. Sometimes the trail is easy. The ground is flat. Other times the trail gets tough. Sin easily entangles us. We leave the trail. We forget to read the map. We don't keep our eyes on our Trailguide, Jesus.

The path is difficult. But think how much worse it would be trying to traverse the landscape without a trail or off the trail. Staying on the trail truly is the only way to follow Jesus.

--Alex Swango