



Through the Valley of the Shadow

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Some people prefer to read novels but I've always enjoyed biographies. It seems to me that enough things happen in real life that are amazing, and stir the imagination sufficiently to inspire. My son Pete and I read the classic accounts of famous adventurers together; Shackleton, Shipton, Tilman, Herzog, Slocum, Cherry-Garrard, Lindbergh and Mawson. Some were written shortly after the particular events occurred, many of them were written years later. The ones that we particularly enjoyed showed incredible personal courage through epic hardship, "close calls" and frequently "one man against the elements". I think Peter learned a tremendous amount from these books and they had a way of inspiring him to try new things, think big thoughts and they prepared his mind for action. I can imagine him thinking to himself "I can do that". It was an unusual education but then Pete was an unusual guy. If this book inspires others to be a little more prepared, adventurous and resilient, especially during severe hardship, then Peter may have contributed to that collective experience. Second, I have in the back of my mind the young people who meet annually in Gunnison Colorado where Peter went to school. This rendezvous, The Peter Terbush Outdoor Leadership Summit, at Western State Colorado University, has a special meaning for me as the story of Peter continues to unfold through the lives of others. I look forward to being with them each year and to share some of these stories. This book is specifically written for the Summit students as they learn to be "servant leaders and mountain guides" in the high Rocky Mountains. I hope they get a taste of what it was like to be Peter from this short book. This is also a love story; about a father's love for his son; about discovery, growing up together, love of the outdoors and adventure and a love of God our creator. Pete soaked in these things like a sponge. I also believe he was given help as he walked through dangerous circumstances and dangerous places, similar to the 23rd Psalm, and did not fear evil. His courage was based on more than his own strength. As I grow older I realize that we are surrounded by heroes; people like my father and mother, people of awesome character, of courage, self-sacrificing people whose life experiences have made them wiser, more caring, and better able to anticipate the future. I have had the good fortune to meet a number of these people, be mentored by a few and learn a couple of life-lessons along the way. I tried to pass these good things along to my son. This book could have been written years ago but now, a decade or so after the events, I feel compelled to do so, before the memory of the events fade and the persons who were actually involved move on. I had always thought that writing a book about Pete would be difficult, but perhaps not for the reasons you imagine. Like most non-authors, I was too busy to write a book and could not fit it in to the schedule. Fortunately, almost by accident, I was given some time to reflect and accomplish the task. I also believed it would be too difficult to resurrect a lot of old memories. However, it turned out to be a gift and a real healing experience. Finally, I had friends who actually knew something about writing a short book and they were invaluable in continuing to send encouragement my way. I only hope that you can enjoy these musings and perhaps find inspiration and joy through the life of one who lived well.

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