

## Heroes of the West

I admit it: I'm a fan of the Old West. Some of my favorite radio and television shows have been *The Lone Ranger*, *Gunsmoke*, *Bonanza* and *Rawhide*. In the movies, Roy Rogers and Gene Autry were my boyhood heroes. Those programs, of course, became the American morality play, where the good guys – those wearing the white hats – always won and justice prevailed.

Those were fictional accounts, to be sure, but the real men and women who pioneered the West were, indeed, individuals of remarkable determination and courage. We owe them our gratitude for the trails they blazed and the frontier they settled.

In *The Complete Disciple*, Paul W. Powell describes a picture of a rugged wagon train painted by a famous artist of the American West. It is nighttime, and the wagons have been drawn into a circle for protection.

The men are gathered around the campfire, and the wagon master has a map spread out before him. On the map, a heavy black line traces the zigzag course they have followed. They had swung north a little, then south, but always toward the west.

An argument seems to have erupted about which way to go next. But the leader, with weary determination, has placed one finger on the end of the black line. With his other arm, he is pointing toward the shadowy mountains. He seems to be saying, "We may have to go south around a mountain, or north across a river, but our direction will always be west."

Each one of us should have a similar resolve. Difficult circumstances may stand in our way as we continue on the course God has marked out for us. But if we keep our eyes on the goal by "looking unto Jesus," we will not stray from the path He has outlined. And we will succeed in the end.

*Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus.*  
(Hebrews 12:1-2)

--Beecher Hunter