

The Celestial Magic Of A Campfire And Friends

To sit around a campfire with a stick while you poke the glowing embers before you, may be one of the most tangible of all visible mysteries of the universe. You stare into pulsing energy that feeds your soul. Warmth comforts your sense of belonging to the wilderness. You feel peace of mind caressing your spirit. Surrounding your fire, a cathedral of trees towers into the ink-black of space. Twinkling stars enlighten your imagination. A full moon balances the evening with a symphony of popping embers, leaping flames and curling smoke reaching into the evening enchantment.

(Few joys in life beat sitting around a campfire with your friends on a chilly night and a starry sky with a pot of stew simmering on the coals and campfire stories flying around like magic to bring laughter, joy and fellowship.)



Sitting with you, friends stare into the same flames, thinking their own thoughts and enjoying the soothing vibrations of the universe.

I have sat by thousands of campfires in my life and each time, I see God looking back at me. I see life sharing itself. I see living creation burning brightly. I see marshmallows,

bubbling stew and hot chocolate waiting to warm my body. I share conversations with friends and strangers that have become my friends.

I see Uwe Rothe, John Brown, Gerd Bollig, Gary Hall and Doug Armstrong. I see Robert, Bob, Gerry and Dave. I see Sandi, Sarah, Ashly and Pam. I see the universe glowing with life, light, warmth and fellowship.

Every campsite that houses men, women or beasts—enjoys a glorious, starry firmament for a roof. That black sky dotted with stars offers constellations, songs and myths from humanity from the beginning to the present. The fire-pit becomes the focal point for fellowship and conversation.

Every summer, I cycle, backpack or raft into the deepest recesses of the wilderness. I discover God staring at me from every branch, tree and bird on the wing.

At Glacier National Park this summer, I asked a ranger, “Do you see God up here in the wilderness?”

He answered, “The more I walk these woods, the more I see God every day. I see God in the hummingbirds, bear and elk. Funny thing about God; a person only need look at all creation in a campfire. It’s that simple for me. I hope I answered your question.”

“You did,” I said.

That night, my cycling friend Robert and I pitched camp on the plains of northern Montana. We found a spot off the road in a stand of aspen. The rolling terrain looked like sand dunes covered in golf-course-smooth grass. First, we pitched our tents. Next, we gathered wood for the campfire. We built a circular stone firebreak. Robert filled the pit with kindling; next larger sticks and then, he lit a match. Within minutes, we sat on two stone seats while we cooked our dinners over the flames licking the evening air.

Above us, a brilliant sunset in the west shot gold across the heavens and back-lit horsetail clouds galloping across the last of the day and huge thunderheads to the east.

“Man, this is one of the best sunsets I have ever seen,” Robert said.

“It doesn’t get any better than this,” I said poking the embers with my stick.

Life glows around the embers of a campfire. Make your own and poke the glowing coals to discover your own answers to the mysteries of creation. You will find yourself sailing the celestial spaces of the universe without leaving any tracks.

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