

When Your Hut's On Fire

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A few years ago I received an email from a friend entitled, "When Your Hut's On Fire." It is a story of the sole survivor of a shipwreck who was washed up on an uninhabited island. At first he prayed feverishly for God to rescue him. As time went on, his chance of rescue seemed to be slim to none. As the reality of his fate sank in, he went out and gathered enough driftwood to construct a crude hut to shelter him from the elements and store what few possessions he had gathered from the wreck.

In time, he grew accustomed to his hut. In fact, he was somewhat proud of his hut. After all, it was just about all he had in this world. One day as he was off gathering food on the island, his hut caught fire. He returned to see his hut in flames. All was lost! Now he had nothing. He couldn't understand why God had taken the last thing he had in this world. "Why, God, did you take my hut?" "Why did this happen to me?" "Haven't I had enough bad things happen to me?" He became very depressed with the magnitude of his loss. He wallowed out a bed in the sand for himself and lain down to die. After awhile he drifted off to sleep. Early the next morning he was awakened by a sound, the sound of a ship approaching the island. As his rescuers came ashore, the man asked, "How is it that you came to rescue me after such a long time? How did you know I was here?" His rescuers responded, "We saw your smoke signal."

I have experienced many twists and turns in my life over the years. The story in this man's life had taken one of those turns. He had been lost alone on a deserted island with no hope of rescue. To make matters worse, he lost the last thing he had in this world. Now his hut is gone. He has absolutely nothing. He has given up. He had lain down to die. Sometimes life takes a turn from which there seems to be no return. This man had reached that point. There was nothing more he could do. He could not change the direction of his course. He could not overcome the obstacles that had been placed in his path. He was slowly slipping to the bottom of a pit from which there was no escape. The last thing he had in this world had just gone up in smoke. He was convinced that even God was against him.

Ever been there? Have you ever felt everything was lost? There was no use trying to go on? Sure you have. We've all been there. I've been there many times. I've seen the sun going down on my life. I've experienced the darkness from which my only hope is to lay down and die. I lost everything but the shirt on my back several years ago. I had a debilitating stroke followed by a tumor in my abdomen. I felt like the man in this story. I lost my ability to speak, I lost my identity, I felt rejected, felt useless and worthless as a human being. I could do nothing but wallow out a bed in the sand and wait for death.

There was one thing I had - God's amazing grace. In my desperation, it was time for God's amazing grace to kick in! That's just exactly what happened. When the last thing you have goes up in smoke, there is God's grace. Even if you can't feel Him there, He is there. He takes the ashes of your lost hut and turns them into smoke signals for your rescue. That's God! Resting in His grace is the one thing I can do to weather the hard storms of life. When your hut's on fire, hold fast to your faith in God. He turns the ashes of your hopelessness into a living hope! His grace is sufficient.