



The Way Out

My husband and I had tried for 5 days to find the Shedhorn Lift at Big Sky Ski Resort in Big Sky, Montana. There are 5800 acres of terrain at Big Sky and this was an area we had not skied yet. Although it looked easy on the map we were not having any luck finding this lift to ski the runs it would access. Then one day without looking we found ourselves exactly where we had wanted to be only to discover we did not want to be there and were looking for a way out!

This being our 6th day of skiing we were familiar with many of the runs so we took off without a definite plan other than we would stick together. The winds were high that morning, but all in all it was lovely and we hopped onto a run that meandered through the woods. As we arrived at the clearing we realized we had stumbled onto the Shedhorn Lift area. There it was at the bottom of the run, not running. As we looked around the bowl we noticed there were no other skiers anywhere. I had a sudden lump in my throat as we realized at the same time that we were in a place we did not want to be. How would we find a way out?

I offered a quick prayer that we be able to get out of this area safely and as we stood there considering our options (which way should we hike out) 2 ski patrol skied down a distant run. Thank you, God. We knew we were not alone and sure they would be able to direct us. Their questions for us were, "How did you get down here?" and "Did you ski under the closed gate?" We told them there was no closed gate. We had simply followed the "Cow Path" run. They were confused. The gate as supposed to be closed at the top. The main lift indicated the Shedhorn lift was closed, but there was little signage along the "Cow Path" indicating you were even headed that way and there was no closed gate (later found out that the Cat Driver had left it open).

What a powerful message. So many times in life we find ourselves on an unmarked path just cruising along only to discover we don't want to be in the situation and want desperately to find a way out. It may even be a path we have hoped for and even looked for, but after we get there we only want for a way out. Our life journey is not always clearly marked, is it? We are not always alerted to dangerous consequences or dead ends. When we experience these obstacles in

life we must have faith that we are not alone and that we will find a way out.

Prayer is the lifeline that gets us out of tough spots. My prayer as I realized we were not where we should be resulted in a calm feeling inside. I knew God would provide us with what we needed. As I wondered, mid-mountain for several minutes, what we were going to do I remember trusting that we would be given an idea to try and if it did not work we would be given a signal to try something else. I felt an overwhelming calm.

The lift had not planned on running because of the wind gusts at the top. We waited patiently for Ski Patrol to give us directions and 2 other skiers joined us (still no closed gate). We waited together. The winds began to subside and a determination that it was now safe to run the lift was made. When we arrived on top we were directed to ski the "Cat Walk" safely out of the bowl.

In situations beyond our control there is always one thing we can do, pray. Pray for help. Pray for direction. Pray for calm. Pray for peace. Pray without ceasing. We must trust that we are not alone. We must trust that God hears our calls for help. We must not doubt. When you find yourself in unfamiliar territory, a new job, a new relationship, a new home, a new start, a new adventure, keep praying to your constant companion. Prayer will always lead you to a way out.

Questions to ponder:

- When was the last time I found myself in a place I did not want to be?
- When have I felt God's calming presence in my life?
- How can I deepen my trust in the power of prayer?

May God's Peace be with You,

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And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will be given what you ask for. Keep on looking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And the door is opened to everyone who knocks. Luke 11:9-10

