
THE STORMRIDER ISSUE 9



FREEDOM AND RV LIVING

THE STORMRIDER ISSUE 9

Welcome to Stormrider issue 9 where we are running with the theme of freedom and RV living. But first, on page three, we are starting a series on Christian Communal Living. Some time ago we printed a copy of some of our prayers for revival. There are more of these prayers and we are coming back with them.



For our component on RV living, have you ever thought of boondocking? What is boondocking. Read on and find out. How is that for a great mix of interesting stuff!

Shawn Stevens

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Shawn Stevens

EXPLORING THE IDEA OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNAL LIVING PART 1

Most Christian men and women, though distinct from the world around them in terms of their theological beliefs, in many other ways mirror the culture that they were raised in. We have followed the paths laid out for us by others who came before and we don't naturally think outside of the boxes that we were raised to think and live in. However, every once in a while someone comes along who is willing to overturn all of the tables, re-write the rules and upend the whole system, or at least in terms of how they choose to live. They are non-conformists. They are on a quest for greater Christian experience and greater liberty. They are willing to take a large leap of faith and live another way.

This article will explore such a life, specifically in relation to the idea of Christian communal living, also called living in a

Christian intentional community. Has this been done before? Oh yes. Does this have a Biblical basis? It does. Are there benefits to such a life? Most definitely. Are there challenges to creating such a lifestyle? Uh-uh, large ones.

Why don't we start by considering the Biblical basis and ideal. In the early part of Jesus' ministry He selected 12 disciples and called them to follow him. These disciples left their fishing nets and other occupations and did follow Jesus. How did they live? They traveled throughout the region, ministered to others and lived together. After Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension His followers continued sharing the Gospel. The book of Acts tells us this about the early Christians;

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' [a]doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and [b]sold their possessions and goods, and divided [c] them among all, as anyone had need.

So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to

house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added [a]to the church daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2:42-47

*(Footnotes from the New King James: [a]Acts 2:42 teaching
[b]Acts 2:45 would sell
[c]Acts 2:45 distributed
[d]Acts 2:47 NU omits to the church)*

What a beautiful picture of unity and living together. Has anyone tried to emulate this? Yes, there have been many, many examples of different forms of Christian communal living throughout the centuries from early desert fathers, who lived communally to pursue a more monastic lifestyle, to the Christian hippies of the 1960's and 1970's. And there have been many others. There are some who live this way today. Whether from past or present, they have a story to tell and an example to show us. Some of these we will zero in on and look at more closely.

The Bruderhof is an Anabaptist movement that was started in Germany in 1920 by Mr. Eberhard Arnold. They had an early association with the Hutterites, who are known for their traditional communal living. The term “Bruderhof” had been used by the Hutterites to refer to their communities in

Moravia. The difficult years leading up to World War II saw much of the Bruderhofs, who were conscientious objectors to war, relocate outside of Germany. Many moved to other parts of Europe, Paraguay and eventually in 1954, came to America and set up. Many of those communities continue to this day.

The Bruderhofs live a rural life, operate communal farms and other communal businesses. They live together, worship together and share at least one communal meal each day. They dress traditionally. Each community shares a common purse and each member does not earn a personal income. They are very welcoming of outsiders and they are involved in social and political activism. They say; “We do not want to wait for peace and justice until the day of Christ’s return. We wish to demonstrate a shared life of work and worship in which the harmony of his coming kingdom can be seen and touched today, in our daily lives.” (*Foundations of Our Faith and Calling*

Life in Community)

The Bruderhofs highly esteem manual work. They consider it to be a form of worship to God. They say;

Work must be indivisible from prayer, prayer indivisible from work. Our work is thus a form of worship, since our faith and daily life are inseparable, forming a single whole. Even the most mundane task, if done as for Christ in a

spirit of love and dedication, can be consecrated

to God as an act of prayer. To pray in words but not in deeds is hypocrisy. Work is a command of God and has intrinsic worth. He gave the earth to humankind to enjoy, cultivate, and care for in reverence as good stewards in his stead. Therefore, we honor work on the land. We honor physical work – the exertion of muscle and hand – and the craftsman’s creativity and precision. We honor the activity of the mind and soul too: the inspired work of the artist, the scholar’s exploration of nature and history, the enterprise of the inventor, the skill of the professional. Whatever form our work takes, we are called to do it to the best of our ability in service to the kingdom of God.

Foundations of Our Faith and CallingLife in Community

As well as valuing work, they greatly value the sacredness of human life. They say “Christ’s Golden Rule – to do to others as we would have done to ourselves – requires solidarity with all people and respect for their dignity as fellow human beings made in the image of God. To treat others merely as the means to an economic end is a sin.” (*Foundations of Our Faith and CallingLife in Community*) And; “Our life together gives us opportunities to show love to one another at every stage of life, from welcoming a newborn baby to attending older brothers and sisters in their last years. Deeds of love are not routine but personal – a matter of following Christ’s command to “wash

one another’s feet.” We want to “bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” In doing this, we

seek to remember especially those with burdens to carry: widows and widowers, orphans, the disabled and sick, those with mental and emotional ailments, and those who are lonely.” (Foundations of Our Faith and CallingLife in Community)

Because most Hutterite communities are known for requiring conformity to a very strict set of laid out expectations, it must be noted that the Bruderhofs value a great deal of diversity and free expression. They say of “The Individual in Community”;

Just as in a prism we can see the different colors of the spectrum, so in a fellowship of brothers and sisters we will find diverse reflections of God’s image. We rejoice in each of these, and reject all attempts to make people uniform. Since all are of equal worth, all must be free to be themselves. The more originality there is among us, the more vibrant our fellowship will be. At the same time, we must distinguish between healthy self-determination – being true to one’s conscience – and the self-centered individualism that sees everything from its own perspective and seeks its own advantage. While the former is vital in a living community, the latter will destroy it.

(Foundations of Our Faith and CallingLife in Community)

There are approximately 2900 Bruderhofs members worldwide. They have produced many interesting utube videos telling of their values and their way of life.

The “Jesus Movement”, “Jesus Revolution” of the 1960's and the 1970's is another example of Christian communal living. That whole era (1960s to early 1970s) was known for the secular Hippie movement which was an expression of anti-establishment, anti-war, non-conformity sentiments. Secular hippie culture was known for drug experimentation, rock music and for dropping out of mainstream society. Many hippies practiced communal living.

In the later 1960s and early 1970's a Christian revival broke out among the hippies and became known as The “Jesus Movement” or the “Jesus Revolution.” thousands of hippies came to Christ. Christian hippies dropped their drugs and pre-marital sex and adopted a Christian ethic. However, they still kept many aspects of hippie culture such as dress, rock and folk music (now Christian rock and folk) and communal living.

The Christian hippie was a whole new breed of hippie. How did the surrounding secular culture view these Christian hippies? They called them by a new name, “Jesus Freaks.” This term, though originally meant as a put-down, was embraced by Christian hippies as a badge of honour. After all, Jesus did say; “Blessed are you when they revile and

persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you ” (Matthew 5:11-12) Christian hippies were now proud

year. (Matthew 23:1-12) Christian hippies were now proud Jesus freaks, who were even more counter-culture than secular hippies.

What did Jesus freaks do? They spoke openly of their faith, they ran coffee-houses where they performed their music and engaged in ministry and many of them lived communally.

“The Shiloh Youth Revival Centers” opened up, founded in 1968 in Costa Mesa California. Over 100,000 people became involved in these revival centers and 175 communal houses were set up during its lifespan.

A fascinating documentary called “LIVING IN COMMUNITY-THE MOVIE” can be viewed on utube. It contains 2013 and 2014 interviews with leaders and participants from modern intentional Christian communities operating in Europe and England. They tell their vision and why they have chosen this way of life. Some of these communities are made up of 35 people, like “Gemeinschaftshaus Moosrain” in Switzerland and others are larger like “Jesus Army” in England which consists of over 600 members.

In the documentary they convey their beliefs that Christians are to live sacrificial lives and truly love one another. It is their deep conviction that this love of one another should be more than once-a-week contact, Sunday service attendance,

but rather, is better seen in daily living. They contend that every Christian should participate in community in some way and at some level. They point out Jesus' teaching; "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." (John 15:13) and say that this can be experienced living in community. They are also realistic expressing that people living under one roof does not guarantee community. Participants in this kind of life must open up to each other, be real, extend trust and maintain a relationship with God and then with others. Then community begins to occur. They are enthusiastic because they have found this. They also stress the importance of being missional and reaching out to others, to people on the margins who have lost their way. They have found a deep satisfaction in sharing with others.

So far we have looked at some intentional Christian communities and I have highlighted some on the advantages of living in community. Are there challenges as well? Without a doubt there must be. Anytime multiple people share a small space, there is going to be times when they get on each other's nerves. If your way of overcoming conflict is to retract from people, then you will be less able to do that, living

in community. Living together successfully means striving for harmony, showing patience, having an open mind, being tolerant of certain differences, communicating effectively and showing respect to others. This system of living is only as good as the

others. This system of living is only as good as the people involved in it. The mental health, or lack thereof, of one member will potentially affect the mental health of others. It is important that each member maintains a healthy relationship firstly, with God and then with the others in the group.

All of the above mentioned groups that I have discussed here, are in some ways similar and in some ways different. They are all deeply devoted to Christ and seeking to follow Him. Some like the Bruderhofs, are very rural, where others like the Jesus People and the Jesus Army run urban communities. The Jesus hippies of the 60s and 70s were a combination of both rural and urban. Some groups operate by sharing a common purse while other Christian communities (not necessarily mentioned here) allow a greater degree of private property and assets. In every case there is a great deal of sharing. They share belongings. They share in their work and they share life and faith together.

In their following of Jesus and conforming to Jesus, they have become non-conformists towards the world and culture and system around them. They have become Jesus freaks instead of becoming worldlings. They receive the blessing and look forward to the

heavenly reward, for being reviled and persecuted for Jesus Christ. They have love for God and love for their fellow man, those on the margins, those who have lost their way and reach out to them. Life is sacred; community is necessary and good.

This is a look at Christian Communal living. The respected Christian ministry Focus on the Family has weighed in on this topic in their on-line article “Perspectives on Christian Community and Communal Living”

I would like to quote a section;

From a contemporary American perspective, this is a rather strange and unusual idea. Nowadays most of us tend to associate the word “commune” with left-wing political extremism or abusive and theologically misguided cultic groups. This perspective isn’t unreasonable. We all know that it has a pretty firm basis in fact. Nevertheless, the connection isn’t necessarily valid. We’d suggest that you won’t be able to think this question through clearly until you realize this. As a matter of fact, experiments in communal Christian living can be positive, beneficial, and God-honoring if they’re carried out in the right way. Everything depends on the people involved and their reasons for doing what they’re doing.

If you study history, you’ll discover that there has always been a strong impetus toward communal expressions of the Christian life within the orthodox church. This tradition has solid biblical roots. It goes all the way back to the early Christian community in Jerusalem (Acts 4:32-37). It has manifested itself again and again over the past twenty centuries in an almost endless variety of forms. It has found expression in everything from the primitive

monastic communities of the ancient Desert Fathers to the early American Shakers to the present-day Hutterian Brethren. Catholic monks and nuns live in community. So do certain groups who are heavily involved in inner-city ministry, such as Sojourners and Harambee House, or outreach to the rural poor, such as Rev. John Perkins's Mendenhall Ministries. In and of itself, the desire to create a strong, vital, and visible communal demonstration of what it means to live as brothers and sisters in Christ is a worthy goal.

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/family-qa/perspectives-on-christian-community-and-communal-living/>

In the full article they also give warning that it is hard to make Christian communities work. They warn that sometimes these turn ugly when strong leaders become controlling and repressive.

There is something beautiful and pristine about the Christian Community in the pages of scripture. *“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”* (Acts 2:42 KJV) They didn't have to worry.

Their needs were met; “And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.”(vs 44, 45 KJV) They were simple, were glad and grew in number; “And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread

from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” (vs 46, 47 KJV) This is how it was in the beginning.

We live in a high-stress culture where Canadians are frantically chasing the American dream. Liberal governments, through uncontrolled spending, have driven inflation and the cost of living through the ceiling. That high cost of living is most acutely felt over the cost of accommodation and housing. As our nation is being run off the cliff, many feel that it is becoming necessary for us to re-asses, to re-evaluate, to think outside of the box regarding housing. The established way doesn't work anymore. Is there a better way? Its right there in our Bibles.

So far we have looked at the benefit of community that Christian communal living offers. What about

15

February 19, 2023

the practical expense-related benefits of this kind of living? In a world where the cost of living, cost of housing, burden of taxation, burden of regulation, and burden of government is sky rocketing, it is not hard to see the benefits of communal living. Expenses are shared. Bills are shared. Costs are shared. Shared means divided and the more you

divide your costs the smaller and smaller they become.

Consider the testimony of a one woman living in community, interviewed by Front Porch Republic, who said;”“I think I made \$22,000 last year and it was perfect, and I never lack.” She continued, “I just wish people [could] have all that I have, I’m so rich, I’m so rich. I tell people all the time, ‘I’m the richest person in the world.’”([https://](https://www.frontporchrepublic.com/2020/08/finding-joy-in-intentional-community/)

www.frontporchrepublic.com/2020/08/finding-joy-in-intentional-community/)

Could this be the answer to many of the economic crisis that plagues our land? Could it be that together we could share and divide our expenses down so that we can be more free? Could this kind of living arrangement allow us to let go of that toxic, high-pressure, job that is sucking us dry and

16

February 19, 2023

instead, work part time or even seasonal or perhaps even retire early? Could such a change free us up for more prayer, devotions, ministry outreach or even just healthy living?

Could it be that we can escape the chaos around us and fulfill a more satisfying and more community

orientated way of life, whose example is right before us in the Bible? Could it be that we could be free from the rat race and freed up for service at the same time? Could it be that the answer is in sharing?

From the humble Bruderhofs we learn That human life is sacred and to be respected, cherished, protected and celebrated. They welcome all come and see another way of life. They respect and value individuals as *“diverse reflections of God’s image.”* and they *“reject all attempts to make people uniform. Since all are of equal worth, all must be free to be themselves. The more originality there is among us, the more vibrant our fellowship will be.”* they teach us that *“everyone deserves the liberation of being known and loved. By living together in intentional community, we seek to deepen relationships with God and each other as we grow, serve, and live out the gospel.”*

(Foundations of Our Faith and Calling: Life in Community)

17

February 19, 2023

From the generous Christian communities of Europe and England we learn that loving one another is easier displayed in day-to-day, sacrificial, communal living than it is alone. We learn that missional, Christian community that exists for a purpose, can succeed. It can reach out to those on the margins and give them love and assistance. Christian communal living becomes like 24-7 church and can deepen us in our faith experience

From the noble Jesus freaks we learn that we don't have to conform to this world but rather, can walk a higher road. It is possible to go against the current of this world's systems and survive and thrive. It is possible to live lives of peace, love and sharing. It is possible to live more like Jesus.

Shawn Stevens

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Scripture also taken from the King James Version

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/family-qa/perspectives-on-christian-community-and-communal-living/>

18

February 19, 2023

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shiloh_Youth_Revival_Centers

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_of_Miracles_\(communal_house\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_of_Miracles_(communal_house))

<https://romans1015.com/jesus-movement/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruderhof_Communities

<https://www.youtube.com/@LaurafromtheBruderhof>

https://www.youtube-no-cookie.com/embed/wTS1DQ8Gmfw?playlist=wTS1DQ8Gmfw&autoplay=1&iv_load_policy=3&loop=1&modestbranding=1&start=

“The following are prayers of my own, for revival. Some might ask; “Isn’t it better to keep prayers personal and not print them?” Most of the following prayer material I prayed corporately with other believers. So I feel that it has already been made public. I believe in personal prayer and corporate prayer. I include them here in hopes that others will read through them, find them inspiring and then in some way that they may fuel their own prayers for the same. If this is your desire then go ahead, read them and use them as you see fit. God bless you! Shawn Stevens”

OUR SPIRITUAL HUNGER AND PRAYERS FOR REVIVAL PART 2

Lord, we come to You. You have called us by name. We; “...who once were far off...” (see Eph. 2:13 NKJ) but have now; “... been brought near by the blood of Christ.”(see Eph. 2:13 NKJ) You God have chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world; “... that we should be holy and without blame...” (see Eph. 1:4 NKJ) before You in love. (see Eph. 1:4)

19

February 19, 2023

You, Jesus have; “... [a]made us accepted in the beloved.” (see Eph. 1:6-9 KJV footnote: [a] Ephesians 1:6 Lit. bestowed grace (favor) upon us) In You we have redemption through Your blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of Your grace. (see Eph. 1:6-9 KJV)

Forgive me anew

Wash me anew

Own me anew

Use me anew for Your glory.

May our eyes be good and our bodies be full of Your holy light. Within us may there be; "... no part dark..." (see Luke 11:34-36)

Thank You that You hear us. You always hear us. We want to express our trust in You. We do not trust in ourselves but in You God who raised the dead. (see 2 Cor. 1:9KJV)

We are asking You to do a work in us, in our hearts, in our lives, in Your Church that would bring glory to Your name. That it would be said of this place; "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the

20

February 19, 2023

region and shadow of death Light has dawned.'" (Matt. 4:16NKJ)

LORD, we have great need of revival and we are asking You that revival would be let loose in our church and in our region. Father, enlighten the eyes of our understanding to the hope of Your calling, to the riches of the glory of Your inheritance in the saints and to the exceeding greatness of Your power toward us who believe.

(see Eph. 1:18 KJV)

We choose to believe. We choose to believe.

We are not praying to a dead god. We are praying to the God who; "... is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, ...". (see Eph. 3:20KJV)

Send revival. Send revival. Send revival.

LORD, we humble ourselves before You and pray. Father, instead of revealing to the wise and prudent, it pleased You to reveal Your truth to babes.(see Luke 10:21KJV) We humble ourselves before You and come to You as babes. I know nothing. I need You to show the way. Would You

21

February 19, 2023

do something in and through us for the glory of Your name that would confound the wise.

We cry out to You God who works all things according to the council of Your will (see Eph. 1:11NKJ), to work out Your will in us, yes, Your will in us.

“O wretched man that I am! ...” (Ro. 7:24KJV)

Break off religion.

Break off anything that would prevent me from

being undignified before You LORD. (see 1 Samuel 6:22)

Lord we come to the Light. Do in us what needs to be done for revival to flow through us without obstruction. Will You meet us here LORD? Will You use us in this hour?

God, we are Your workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which You have; "...prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (See Eph. 2:10NKJ) We want to do the good works. We want to walk in them. We need You LORD.

22

February 19, 2023

LORD we are hungry for You. You have spoken Your word to us. You have talked with us on the road and our hearts have burned within us. (see Luke 24:32) Will You now fulfill Your word in us.

You Jesus are our peace. (see Eph. 2:14)
Through You we have; "...access by one Spirit to the Father." (see Eph. 2:18NKJ)
We are asking You, Father to pour out revival, here, in Jesus name.

We thank You God for the unity that You are blessing us with in Your Church. Jesus You are the chief cornerstone and in You we are fitting together more and more. Keep building us; “together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.” (Eph. 2:22 NKJ)

Keep fitting us together for Your glory.

Father again we ask You for revival. Even those who do not know You, know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more will You, heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask. We are asking for a pouring out of The Holy

23

February 19, 2023

Spirit upon us and upon our land. Father, we ask in Jesus name. (see Luke 11:13)

LORD, help us to redeem the time for the days are evil (see Eph. 5:16) Help us to walk worthy of the calling with which we were called (see Eph. 4:1-3NKJ) Help us to walk; “With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Eph. 4:2-3KJV)

Cause us to be renewed in the spirit of our minds, putting on the new man. (see Eph. 4:22) Keep us from giving any

the new man. (see Eph. 4:25) Keep us from giving any;
“...place to the devil.” (Eph. 4:27KJV)

We want to walk as children of light and to be; “...followers
of God,...”(Eph. 5:1KJV)

Lord, we need revival. We really need revival.
Would You bestow it? Make Your church strong in the Lord
and in the power of Your might. (see Eph. 6:10-11)

Shawn Stevens

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24

February 19, 2023

Boondocking

What is boondocking? Boondocking is RV camping for free!
Are you shocked at your RV campground bill? It might
surprise you to learn that not everyone is paying as much as
you are to camp in your RV. There are many places where
you can park an RV overnight for no cost at all.

Where can adventurers like us park our RVs at no cost at all?

Well, if you are in United States, some possible locations would be truck stops, rest stops, movie theatres, government land, and the parking lots of large retail stores such as Costco, Lowes , Sam's Club, etc. If you have chosen a store parking lot location I would strongly suggest going inside the store and talking with management and requesting permission to park there overnight. Rules between individual stores may vary and change over time. I can't guarantee that it will always be allowed. However, there are many locations like the ones I have mentioned and others, that will allow you to boondock. Another courtesy

25

February 19, 2023

when boondocking in store parking lots is to not use your slide outs, levelling jacks, awnings, lawn chairs etc.

Camping on public land is an experience for the serious RVer. Here you can really get away from it all at the end of a forest service road. Canada is not friendly towards boondocking, however, if you are in a tent, you may camp on Canadian public land for 21 days, then you are supposed to move to another spot. If you wan't to boondock with an RV you are best to go south to the land of the free. If you are boondocking on United States public land there are some

general rules to follow: 1) Don't stay in one specific location for more than 16 days at a time. After that move. 2) Don't camp within 100 feet of a water source. 3) Pack in and pack out all garbage. 4) Be aware of any fire restrictions. 5) If there are more than 75 in your crew, get a permit.

Want a great resource on where to boondock on American public land? Visit the website of the Bureau of Land Management. Some other sites related to this are:

26

February 19, 2023

winnebagolife.com/2016/09/how-to-find-free-or-almost-free-camping

gonewiththewynns.com/free-camping

thedyrt.com/magazine/lifestyle/boondocking-guide-free-camping/

campendium.com

Now it goes without saying that boondocking is dry camping. Dry camping is roughing it. Die-hard backpacking campers would say that RVing is not roughing it. That's fine, but if you're a boondocker, you're roughing it. "Roughing it" is a term used to describe a type of camping that is more primitive than traditional camping. It often involves staying in tents or other simple shelters in natural settings, and it can be a challenging and rewarding experience. Boondocking is a form of dry camping, which means camping without hookups. It's a popular activity for RVers who want to enjoy the outdoors without the expense of campgrounds. Boondocking can be done in a variety of ways, from staying in a tent to staying in an RV. The key is to find a place that is safe and suitable for your needs. Boondocking is a great way to explore the outdoors and enjoy the beauty of nature. It's a challenge, but it's also a rewarding experience. If you're looking for a new way to enjoy the outdoors, boondocking might be just what you need.

but for the RVer, dry camping boondock style is ruffing it. You don't have an electrical post to plug into or a water hose to hook up to. There are no campground washrooms or showers. Fortunately, your RV has all of these things already but you will need to fill up your water tanks on the RV and perhaps use solar power or a generator. You may even like to use a portable power station for small devices.

Many RVers plan to journey to a specific destination and stay at a camp spot of some sort and pay for their stay and then

27

February 19, 2023

boondocking along the way between where they are and where they are going? I hope that this short article has got your imaginations sparked over how much fun boondocking could be for you and your family.

Shawn Stevens

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