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Drift proof your marriage with lasting hope from God.

Chapter 1

Green Lake

On a warm August night the water looks black as tea. This night, the moon was full and the breeze gentle. My friend and I were out in the middle of Green Lake, Wisconsin in a rustic boat. The sun had long since set. It was around 10:00 PM.

The fish were not biting so we sat quietly enjoying the silence. The two of us watched the shimmering moonbeams dance across the water's surface. It had been a long time since I had gotten this far away from phones, bills, and traffic. Amazing! I did not quite know how to act or feel. What do you do when you have no demands placed upon you? Oh how I enjoyed the peace and quiet. The calm was very real.

As Brad and I were sitting in our boat, the sound of beautiful choral voices could be heard coming from behind the trees on the shore line about a half mile away. We listened intently. An inner city group had come up from Chicago for the weekend at the old Baptist Church Camp. My imagination got the best of me and I was transported back to somewhere in the 1930's.

Oh the words that traveled across the waters to us! *"What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus."* Later they sang *"Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me"*. I could have sat in that boat all night listening quietly to the melodies, the frogs, and the gentle lapping of waves against our boat. It was one of those evenings that only comes along once in a great while, sometimes only once in a lifetime. I am glad I was there. God taught me that night.

Drifting

Allow Barbara and me to take you to Green Lake late at night on a summer's eve. All is warm and quiet. You notice two rowboats together out in the middle of the lake. They are indeed together yet neither is anchored and they are not tied together with rope or anything.

As the evening progresses hour after hour, the gentle currents and waves have their natural effect. Slowly, subtly, without trying, the two rowboats gradually begin to drift apart from one another. Inch by inch, foot by foot, distance grows between them. They did not plan on this happening. They wanted to be together, but the natural forces of the lake took over.

At the break of dawn, one boat finds himself bumping up against the dam where muskies are caught. The other boat discovers she has drifted into the shallows at the opposite end of the lake where the lily pads and bullfrogs are. They begin to wonder, "How did you get way over there? What happened? Who are you? Perhaps being with you was a mistake!"

Whatever you do, remember the rowboats! If you don't, your enemy, the devil, will have his way. He will slowly, perhaps over a long period of time, drift you apart from one another. The enemy of your souls is powerful, vicious, and relentless. He will do whatever it takes to keep your marriage and home from being used to "*snatch others from the fire and save them*". (Jude 1:23)

You must remember, "*Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.*" (1Peter 5:8,9)

He will go to elaborate lengths with precision and attention to detail in order to convince you that you are not the light of the world. Jesus says, "*You are the light of the world... let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*" (Taken in part from Matthew 5:14-16)

Unless your marriage is anchored to the Lord Jesus Christ, men, women, and children will suffer torment and hopelessness in Hell's eternity. The devil wants praise for himself. He will do whatever it takes to prevent you from praising your Heavenly Father.

**Your marriage is God's loving light
to those He loves and longs to rescue
from the murky waters of sin and eternal death.**

If you have been slowly and subtly drifting apart, please call upon God to save and strengthen your love and marriage. Please read the following letter we received from Debby who is now desperate, broken, and overwhelmed.

Dear Jim and Barbara,

Steve moved out Saturday. I filed for divorce Tuesday. He said in counseling that he wanted a divorce and wanted to be single. I really believe he will renew his relationship with his girlfriend. I told the girls (two little blond-headed sweethearts!) and they were upset.

I bought them a puppy. I can take my grief but theirs is more than I can bear at times. I try to reassure them of their father's love for them but it's just not true. Steve doesn't love anyone. He never spends any time with them. Please pray that somehow Steve will turn back to the love of God he once had.

He has violated his faith so badly though that it will take a real miracle. He has stopped going to church. All he seems to think about is his work, pleasing clients, and going to cocktail parties. Financially, I'm strapped. I don't have a job. I will have to get one.

I'm getting to be quite a prayer warrior. My faith has been so strengthened by this adversity. I know better than ever what it means to cling to Christ. On Christ the solid Rock I stand. All other ground is sinking sand. Pray, please, that I forgive him,

Love,

Debby

Do not let this happen to you! God desires your marriage to be His chosen instrument of hope and oneness to draw to Him the drifting, the drowning, and the discouraged. If couples are left to drift, they won't stand a chance of surviving. They, like neglected boats, will separate, deteriorate, and sink. Understand this: Satan's plan for your marriage is isolation and separation. God's plan for your marriage is oneness and intimacy. What plan are you on?