

# **THE SETUP – NAVIGATING THE RIVER OF LIFE**

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My wife Doris and I are the founders of Eagles' Gate Prophetic Ministry. Our ministry is a 501C3 non-profit Christian organization.

Today, I want to share a few insights my training as a Whitewater Rafting Guide taught me. I was a White Water Rafting guide for a Christian based White Water rafting company for about 12 years back in the late 80's and through the 90's. I'd like to call this session today. "THE SETUP".

When you're in a raft on a river that has serious White Water, you can't change or stop what that river "gives" you. Our training taught us to take what the river gives us and learn how to work it – some have even called it finessing the river. We learned to make good decisions in guiding our way through rough water, and how to recognize hazards before you get to them. We learned to take action to avoid the hazards that are too dangerous for both the guide and the crew. Not all hazards are visible on the surface. Some hide just under the surface like submerged tree branches near the bank or large rocks that would be exposed in lower water levels. Learn to have fun in the thrilling parts. If someone gets bumped out of the boat, you and the rest of the crew stay in the boat, paddle to the person in the water, and help them get back in the boat ASAP and DON'T PANIC ! If you are the person in the water, DON'T PANIC. We would train the crew, before they get in the boat, on how to stay safe if they get bumped out of the boat in rough water.

On the river in white water conditions, PANIC and inexperience are your worst enemies. If you panic, it's very difficult to make the good decisions needed to save your life and get you through the situation in a safe and sound condition. If you are the one in charge – i.e. if you are the Guide – your panic can result in injury or death to you and/or those under your care in the boat.

On the river, the less difficult areas in the Class 1 and maybe some Class 2 formations are fairly forgiving if you go into them sideways, backwards, or at some weird angle. The guide can even take advantage of those areas to create excitement or even ensure the crew gets splashed with cold river water safely. But in Class 3, 4 and, if you are good enough and brave enough to try Class 5's, success depends very heavily on how you "SET UP" (that is how you prepare) BEFORE going into the rapid. If you "set up" wrong or if you don't prepare at all, disaster is almost certain every time – someone or someone's falling out of the boat is very likely.

How we "set up" (develop our relationship with our Heavenly Father and our Savior Jesus Christ) makes all the difference in how we get through the class 3, 4, and especially the class 5 situations of our life. God's Word is filled with

instructions on trusting God in different kinds of life's turbulence. The book of Psalms shows King David's prayers for God's help in dealing with trouble of every kind. Proverbs gives instruction on getting the Wisdom and Knowledge of God to avoid pitfalls that come our way. There are countless assurances that if we put our trust in Him, He will see us through difficult "waters" and He promises we will not drown. Not only does His Word teach us many ways we can have the skill set necessary to navigate through the "Class 3's, 4's, and 5's" of life, but the Word of God will train us how to avoid the parts of those difficulties designed by the enemy to overwhelm us and take our attention off trusting God.

The reality is, that many difficult circumstances in our life catch us off guard. But just as on a river with many places where you could get bumped out of the boat, it is vital we don't PANIC into making bad decisions. On a stretch of river we've been down a hundred times, we know what's ahead and how to deal with it before and during the encounter.... How to SET UP for it. But to make it through the unexpected, even the life threatening situations (both spiritually and physically), requires getting "set up" for the unknown. There is always a path through difficulties, that will keep us solid, unshakeable, and knowing God will help us get through it. The Lord has promised in 1 Corinthians 10 that:

**"<sup>13</sup> No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear (endure, walk through)**

Instead of being overwhelmed with sorrow, despair, and discouragement as a result of the trial, we can be sustained and healed by God's strength and His indwelling and Comforting Holy Spirit. But the SET UP is crucial. Knowing God and His Word and that He is the Trustworthy, Faithful, Skillful, Amazing Guide is the key. Knowing that we can trust Him to navigate our path through the River of Life by the Holy Spirit all the way to the Take out Point, when we'll be with Him for the rest of eternity, brings peace and confidence in the midst of the turbulent waters of life. The best time to learn that and have that TRUTH secured in our spirit is daily spending time with Him and, as often as we can carve out the time, studying His Word. Then we will have the confidence that we are developing effective SETUP strategies for overcoming difficult, hard, discouraging events in our life when they come.

We hope you have a very blessed day.