**Are You Ready For The Rapids Or Are You In An $8 Tube?**

**Jim Putman**

This last summer I went tubing on the Saint Joe River with my family. I had my future daughter-in-law, all three of my sons and 2 daughter-in-laws, and my two grandkids and my wife, and it was.. it was a fiasco. But that’s another story. The river was low and we didn’t have enough tubes, so we did what every person does – we went to Walmart and bought cheap $8.00 tubes. The river was low because of the drought and there we times when we had to get out and walk – it was such a slow meandering river. It was quite a deal getting my wife in there in her tube and the kids and the grandkids, my little 2 year old grandson was miserable, but we were taking him rafting., and my 5 year old grandson kept wanting to go his own way – you know how that goes. So, I was thinking to myself, I wonder if this $8.00 tube I’m in right now would make it down a class 5 rapid…honestly I was thinking that, it kind of hit me for second. A class 5 rapid on this little tube- and I thought no, that wouldn’t be a good idea. And then I thought, what would I go down a class five rapid with? What would my wife actually get in if we were on a class 5 rapid, and what would she allow my grandkids in? Would she even let my grandkids on a class 5?

Then I pictured one of those professional rafts, where everybody’s got their stuff on and they got their stuff and there’s this leader going ‘Left! Left!’ and he knows the holes and he knows the whole thing. You guys may have done some of that, and you know you’re up and you’re down and people are getting flung out and they’re teaching you what to do- they have this whole lesson before you do this.

And I was thinking to myself and it dawned on me.. if our faith was a tube or whatever I think most Christians are in an $8 tube. And here’s the problem. Our culture is becoming a class-five rapid. This faith that they have created where ‘*I do a little devotional every once in a while and I go to church a couple of times a month. And you know – I’m in a home group. If I go to home group that’s just once a week and I only want to do once a week so I don’t really need to go to church that week. And the Spiritual feeding thing you know – and REAL relationship? I mean I’ve got a lot of acquaintances you know – How are doing? Fine fine fine..’*

This thing is, in the culture that we are in right now - that isn’t going to work. This culture is going to require us having each other’s back, and us knowing what we are doing. And going through the conflict and the practice ahead of time so that WHEN, not if, it hits, we’ve got each other. And we know what we’re doing. Because this missing ingredient (relationship) that many of us have in our Christian walk has left us immature. And imagine adding to this whole picture of a class five culture, the devil on the shore shooting at us at every turn. We have a spiritual enemy who is looking for immature people trying to go class 5 in an $8.00 tube.

You can view the video of this message here: <http://bit.ly/8DollarTube>