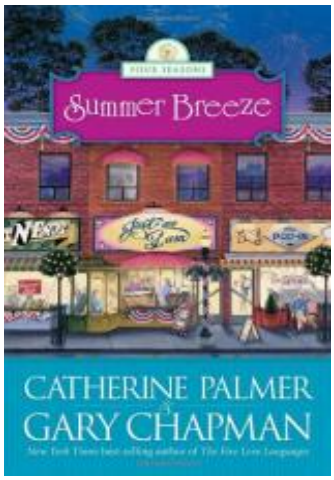
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Summer Breeze

by Catherine Palmer and Gary Chapman



About the Book

In book two of this fiction series based on the bestselling nonfiction book **The Four Seasons of Marriage**, readers meet the blended family of Derek and Kim Finley. Kim has a set of twins --- one boy and one girl --- from her first marriage; Luke has recently been diagnosed with diabetes, and Lydia is acting out as a result of the attention now being showered on Luke. To complicate matters, Derek's overbearing mother comes to live with them. With all that's going on in their lives, Kim and Derek's communication begins to break down and their marriage slowly moves into winter. Although the second book will focus on Kim and Derek, readers will also encounter all their favorite characters --- Patsy Pringle, Pete Roberts, Steve and Brenda, Esther and Charlie --- as well as some new ones, like the proprietor of the new sandwich shop that's moved in next to Patsy's beauty parlor.

Discussion Guide

The principles and strategies illustrated in this novel are taken from **The Four Seasons of Marriage** by Gary Chapman. In this book, Dr. Chapman discusses marriage as a journey back and forth through different "seasons."

Springtime in marriage is a time of new beginnings, new patterns of life, new ways of listening, and new ways of loving.
Summer couples share deep commitment, satisfaction, and security in each other's love.
Fall brings a sense of unwanted change, and nagging emptiness appears.
Winter means difficulty. Marriage is harder in this season of cold silence and bitter winds.

1. In **Summer Breeze**, which season of the year is it in Deepwater Cove, Missouri? Which season of marriage do you think Derek and Kim Finley are experiencing? What are the signs that let you know?

2. At the start of the book, someone has drowned near Deepwater Cove. What changes does this event bring about in Derek's life? How does the drowning affect Kim? What does the news mean to Cody? Can you think of an example in your own experience in which God has used one event to bring about change in many peoples' lives?

3. In what way does Patsy describe Luke and Lydia to Derek at the beginning of the book ? How do their personalities change through the story? How does a family's structure affect children? How does the parents' relationship affect children's behavior?

4. On the way to church, the Finley family erupts into a furious argument. What is the end result for each member of the family? Do you ever find your own family engaged in disagreements on the way to church? Catherine Palmer's family refers to these quarrels as "holy wars." Why do you suppose tensions are so high at such times? Can you think of some good ways to prevent "holy wars" in your family?

5. Patsy Pringle gets angry with Pete Roberts over the lawn chair incident at the Fourth of July barbecue . How does her version of the event differ from his? What is the root cause of her anger? Twice, Patsy is challenged to forgive Pete. Why do you suppose it takes her so long to admit her wrongdoing? What does Cody say that finally propels Patsy to forgive Pete? How can we forgive others?

6. What does Miranda think of Christians? What are her own religious beliefs? How does Jennifer Hansen respond to Miranda's declarations about religion ? What do you think of Jennifer's method of stating her beliefs? Have you ever tried to share your faith with someone else? Has anyone tried to tell you about a religion different from yours? What happened?

7. In this book, Kim and Derek are dealing with Luke's diabetes. What impact can a chronic illness have on a family --- financially, physically, emotionally, and in other ways? How is Kim handling the situation at the start of the book? What is Derek's attitude about Luke's problem? How has Dr. Groene chosen to deal with his diabetes?

8. In the first book in this series, **It Happens Every Spring**, Steve and Brenda Hansen's marital problems grew from within their relationship. In this book, Kim and Derek face trouble that comes from outside their marriage. They are struggling not only with Luke's illness but also with a blended family and with in-law relationships. But Kim and Derek also have trouble within their marriage. What are some of the mistakes they have made in building their relationship?

9. Strategy 3 in **The Four Seasons of Marriage** encourages couples to discover and speak each other's primary love language. The five love languages are (1) words of affirmation, (2) acts of service, (3) receiving gifts, (4) physical touch, and (5) quality time. What love language does Derek speak? How can you tell? What is Kim's response to his way of communicating love? What is Kim's love language? How does Derek feel about it?

10. In this book, Charlie Moore teaches Derek how to "fish". "Fishing" is Strategy 4 --- empathetic listening --- in **The Four Seasons of Marriage**. What is the goal of this kind of "fishing"? Practical ways to do this include (1) listening with an attitude of understanding (not judgment); (2) withholding judgment on the other person's ideas; (3) affirming the other person, even when you disagree with his or her ideas; and (4) sharing your own ideas only after the other person feels understood. How did Derek begin to listen empathetically to Lydia? to Kim? How was Kim's "bait" different from Derek's? Can you describe how you might listen empathetically to your spouse or loved one regarding an area of disagreement in your relationship?

11. Think about the other couples in **Summer Breeze**. Along with Kim and Derek Finley, you have met Ashley and Brad Hanes, Esther and Charlie Moore, and Brenda and Steve Hansen. Patsy Pringle, viewing her salon as a garden, describes the season she believes each woman is experiencing in marriage. From what you have learned about these marriages, would you agree with Patsy? Why or why not?

12. During a meeting of the TLC, Cody quotes a Bible passage his father taught him, Isaiah 2:18-21: "Idols will completely disappear. When the Lord rises to shake the earth, his enemies will crawl into holes in the ground. They will hide in caves in the rocks from the terror of the Lord and the glory of his majesty. On that day of judgment they will abandon the gold and silver idols they made for themselves to worship. They will leave their gods to the rodents and bats, while they crawl away into caverns and hide among the jagged rocks in the cliffs. They will try to escape the terror of the Lord and the glory of his majesty as he rises to shake the earth" (NLT). What characteristics of God does this passage reveal? Do these traits fit with your concept of Him? What are idols, and why is God so angry about them? Idols made of gold, silver, brass, clay, and wood are still worshipped in many countries of the world, mostly in the East. Are there other things that people in the Western world idolize?

13. In this book, the character of Cody is childlike in his faith and understanding. Recall some of the truths he speaks and how they affect the other characters. What was your favorite "Cody moment"?

Author Bio

Catherine Palmer lives in Missouri with her husband and sons. She is a graduate of Southwest Baptist University and has a master?s degree in English from Baylor University. Her first book was published in 1988. Since then she has published more than 20 novels. Catherine has won numerous awards for her writing, including Most Exotic Historical Romance Novel from *Romantic Times* magazine. Most recently she has been nominated for the Romantic Times Career Achievement Award. Total sales of her novels number more than 1 million copies.

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