

KNOWING WHEN TO TURN

By Chuck Dayton

Jasper Lake, near Ely, Minnesota,
August, 1998.

“Sometimes you just have to stop swimming upstream.”
Stephanie Simonton.”

Hurry, my love, The sun's only

One finger above the trees.

The keel scrapes as we push off,

Stroking toward a crescendo of light:

Fortissimo oranges, gold and pinks,

Streaming out through broken clouds.

Handel's Hallelujah chorus.

Let's carve a sweeping turn,

Strong stem rudder, now!

To swing the sunset to our back,

And drift along the cedar shores,

Double-bathed in amber light.

Pianissimo pastels in mirrored sky,

Pachelbel's Cannon in D.

Have we missed this drifting,

This quiet looking back,

Always seeking after light,

Always paddling into the wind?

Lets glide along familiar shores,

Past favorite stones, and driftwood, and

Planted seedlings of our lives.

There is still a little time, my love

There is still a little time,

To lie and cuddle in the canoe,

To scull one-handed with the paddle,

And drift among the constellations,

Till the bow swings toward Polaris.

One final heading, toward the stars.