

## **Becoming a Fountain of Life**

When our children were small, several times a year I would take them to downtown Cleveland to visit a wonderful fountain inside the Terminal Tower Building. This was not your traditional fountain. It didn't have marble statues that spouted water. Instead, it was a dry oval about 100 feet long and 20 feet wide surrounded by a polished granite border that was just high enough to sit upon. Every four or five feet around the edge of the fountain was a hidden spigot that could spout a clear crystal stream of water that was about two inches in diameter. All of these spigots were angled towards the center of the fountain so that, when they were turned on, the water jumped 30 feet into the air forming a gentle arc that descended just short of the other side

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What was especially wonderful about this fountain was that it was computerized so that you could never predict what it would do. Sometimes, when all of the spigots were on, it looked like a Marine Honor Guard holding their sabers high so that a bride and groom could pass beneath them. Other times the fountain played leapfrog. A stream would shoot from the right only to be answered by one from the left. Back and forth it went until the water had jumped from one end of the fountain to the other. Sometimes in this game of leapfrog, two or three streams jumped together. It often reminded me of graceful dolphins jumping high above the water for the sheer joy of living.

I wonder... does God want us to be fountains that bless other people? Does he want us to live in such a way that we bring joy

and delight to others?

Jesus once said, *"Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" (John 7:37-38).* For years, I thought this verse was about Jesus meeting my needs. My reasoning went something like this, "I'm spiritually thirsty, so I will come to Jesus and he will quench my thirst." And that is true; Jesus *does* quench our thirst! If you haven't ever experienced that, I invite you to give Jesus a try.

However if we stop there, we're only getting half of the message. Jesus doesn't say rivers of living water will flow "INTO" our hearts, rather he says they will flow "OUT OF" our hearts and into the hearts of others. In other words, once Jesus has given us life we are to become a source of life for others.

And that brings me back to fountains. The other day I was walking down the street and this image came into my head that I was a "walking fountain." Like a fountain, I was bubbling over with life and joy, and I had this sense that God wanted me to give that life and joy to other people. Now I didn't do that by pulling out my Bible and thumping someone with it. I did it with a smile, a kind greeting and a silent prayer that God would bless the people I was meeting.

Maybe God wants you to be a fountain, too. That's what our new emphasis on praying for our community is all about. As we pray for our neighbors and strangers, fountains of living water will flow out of God's heart, through our hearts, and into the hearts of others.

In Christ's love,