

# a fresh, bubbling stream within you

## I. Preamble & Prayer

### A. John McCain Quote

- Senator John McCain has just written his last book
- He's winding down his life as he wages his final battle—with brain cancer
- On this Memorial Day Weekend I thought it would fitting to open this message with two of Senator McCain's quotes along with a riveting story of his
- Let me briefly paint the picture of a man who served our country in Vietnam and who was captured by the Viet Kong and brutally tortured for five years
- Quote 1: "In prison, I fell in love with my country. I had loved her before then, but like most young people, my affection was little more than a simple appreciation for the comforts and privileges most Americans enjoyed and took for granted. It wasn't until I had lost America for a time that I realized how much I loved her." (OS)
- Senator McCain shares this story:
- What packages we were allowed to receive (while POW's) from our families often contained handkerchiefs, scarves and other clothing items
- For some time, Mike, a fellow prisoner, had been taking little scraps of red and white cloth, and with a needle he had fashioned from a piece of bamboo
- He laboriously sewed an American flag onto the inside of his blue prisoner's shirt
- Every afternoon, before we ate our soup, we would hang Mike's flag on the wall of our cell
- And together recite the Pledge of Allegiance
- No other event of the day had as much meaning to us.
- The guards discovered Mike's flag one afternoon during a routine inspection and confiscated it
- They returned that evening and took Mike outside
- For our benefit as much as Mike's they beat him severely, just outside our cell
- Puncturing his eardrum and breaking several ribs
- When they had finished, they dragged him bleeding and nearly senseless back into our cell
- We helped him crawl to his place on the sleeping platform
- After things quieted down, we all lay down to go to sleep

- Before drifting off, I happened to look down toward a corner of the room...
- Where one of the four naked lightbulbs that were always illuminated in our cell, cast a dim light—and there was Mike
- He had crawled there quietly—when he thought the rest of us were sleeping
- And with his eyes nearly swollen shut from the beating, he had quietly picked up his needle and begun sewing a new flag
- (Pause)—Today, what value do these stars and stripes have for you and me?
- Quote 2: “Ironically for someone who had so long asserted his own individuality as his first and best defense against insults of any kind, I discovered that faith in myself proved to be the least formidable strength I possessed when confronting along organized inhumanity on a greater scale than I had conceived possible. Faith in myself was important, and remains important to my self-esteem. But I discovered in prison that faith in myself alone, separate from other *more important allegiances*, was ultimately no match for the cruelty that human beings could devise when they were entirely unencumbered by respect for the God-given dignity of man. This is the lesson I learned in prison. It is the perhaps, the most important lesson I have ever learned.” (OS)

## **B. Singing of the Star-Spangled Banner – National Anthem**

O, say can you see, by the dawn’s early light (OS)  
 What so proudly we hail’d at the twilight’s last gleaming,  
 Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight  
 O’er the ramparts we watch’d were so gallantly streaming?  
 And the rocket’s red glare, the bombs bursting in air, (OS)  
 Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.  
 O, say doeth that star-spangled banner, yet wave  
 O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

### **II. Message**

#### **A. Enchanting Fountains**

- There something enchanting about fountains (OS-2)
- This past March, Laura and I visited Washington D.C.
- It had been more than a decade since we had been there
- And the World War II Memorial with its majestic fountains had since been built (OS-2)
- We paused at California’s section and walked the entire circuit of 50 U.S. states along with districts and territories

- But as we looked on, people, ourselves included could not resist fixing our eyes on the water, the fountain
- Walking past it's shimmering flow brought such soothing calm to our spirits
- And you know, fountains are meant to do just that (OS)
- They're—
  - a. Irresistible
  - b. Magnetic
  - c. Romantic
  - d. Gleeful (children's laughter and screams can be heard above the water's splashes)
- Fountains were intended to flow, constantly, overflowing and doing it all over again—again and again

### **B. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (OS)**

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the poet said it well

“Talk not of wasted affection, affection was never wasted;  
 If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning.  
 Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of refreshing;  
 That which the fountain sends forth returns again to the fountain.”

### **C. Your Life a Fountain (OS)**

- Picture with me, your life and mine as a fountain
- When love, joy, hope, peace come pouring forth like a fresh, bubbling stream—
- They're flowing from you, like a fountain

### **D. Apostle Paul's Vision**

- The Apostle Paul pictured your life and mine in very similar terms
- Let's read of it in Ephesians 3:16-20
- TEXT: Ephesians 3:16-20 MSG (OS)

“I [Paul] asked him to strengthen you by his Spirit—not a brute strength, but a glorious inner strength—that Christ will live in you as *you open the door* to invite him in. (1-OS)

And I ask him that with both feet planted firmly on love, you'll be able to take in with all Christians the *extravagant dimensions* of Christ's love. (2-OS)

*Reach out and experience the breadth! Test its length! Plumb the depths! Rise to the heights! Live full lives, full in the fullness of God. (3-OS)*

God can do *anything*, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in *your wildest dreams!* He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us.” (Ephesians 3:16-20 MSG) (4-OS)

- Friend, you and I are chosen, called, given right-standing, and glory awaits—all this, when you and I open ourselves to Jesus’ love
- A fresh, bubbling stream within you, continuously flowing and being a blessing to all your life touches

### **E. Woman of Sychar and You**

- Walk in the shoes of the woman of Sychar, Samaria for a moment
- As Jesus sits next to Jacob’s well and looks down to the water below and he says—(OS)

“Everyone who drinks this water will get thirsty again and again. Anyone who drinks the water I give will never thirst—not ever. The water I give will be an artesian spring within, gushing fountains of endless life.” (John 4:13, 14 MSG)

- What Jesus was telling her then, he is telling you and me today
- Your life and mine, these lives of ours, are meant to be a fresh, bubbling stream
- Nearly 2,000 years have passed since that encounter outside the village of Sychar
- Countless people have encountered Jesus and the difference he makes is extraordinary—out of this world
- Are you experiencing this endless life, this gushing, flowing fountain within you that Jesus promised?
- Or, are you more like the fountain I put on the screen last week—a dried-up fountain—living with dryness in your soul?

## **III. Application**

### **A. Four Levels of Your Spiritual Fountain**

- Let’s go ahead and imagine our lives as a fountain (OS)
- The classic style fountain
- A four-tiered kind of fountain, with a tall column in the center
- Where the water is pumped up to the top and then fills each tier and then cascades down
- These four-tiered bowls represent different types of relationships in your life

- Those four types of relationships are established by Christ in his last words here on earth before he left for heaven

## **B. TEXT – Acts 1:18 NLT**

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

- Let’s make the application then—first thing first
- “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.”
- The disciples had just been otherwise occupied with their question of Jewish nationalism—an end-time inquiry of theirs
- Jesus says, “But you... meant, but you are meant to focus on something much, much more important
- And Jesus promises that they will be Spirit-filled and receive power
- And you know what? Everyone who believes in Jesus as Lord and Messiah is promised the same power
- As Paul envisioned in Ephesians 3:20 – “the (Holy) Spirit working gently, and purposefully in you and me
- Put it down, everyone who enters a relationship with Jesus is given—given Jesus’ life by way of the Holy Spirit—which brings power, wisdom, and godly insight
- All this when the Holy Spirit comes into your life—
- So picture your life as fountain with this promise from Jesus in Acts 1:8 (Bible in hand and fountain on screen)

**Key Point – Central Column in the fountain – Holy Spirit –“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.” Acts 1:8a**

- Just as the central column ultimately fills every bowl of the fountain
- So the Holy Spirit wants to fill every one of our relationships with God’s love, peace and wonder

**1<sup>st</sup> Bowl – Your relationship with God –“...telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem”**

- This first bowl is our personal “Jerusalem”—where we go to begin and develop our personal relationship with God
- Back when Jesus was here, people went to Jerusalem

- If you wanted to hear the voice of God, be close to Him, talk to Him and worship Him—you went to Jerusalem
- Jesus changed all that—now you come to *your Jerusalem*—this is your friendship, your relationship with God
- There is not a temple made with hands, it is fact your body (that Jesus spoke the original one into existents) here’s where he dwells
- And this bowl has to be filled up before any water gets distributed to the next bowl
- The very next bowl that you will impact, when the Spirit fills you, is your family

**2<sup>nd</sup> Bowl – Your relationship with family and friends –“...telling people about me everywhere –in Judea”**

- For the disciples, Judea was home base—they knew it like your grandparents know their hometown
- Jesus’ disciples knew the people of Judea, warts and all
- Same was true of the people of Judea—they knew the disciples, and they were watching
- Would their relationship in the first bowl with Jesus really change them or not?
- Once you and I fill the bowl of family and friends (Judea) up, the Holy Spirit then flows from us to the next bowl

**3<sup>rd</sup> Bowl – Your relationship with the community –“...telling people about me everywhere—in Samaria”**

- The next bowl is unfamiliar territory—people you have little or no connection with
- For the disciples, Samaria was a nearby region they disliked even to travel through
- For the disciples, Samaritans were—“not our kind of people”
- Jesus had come to teach them, and today, teach us too about flowing in the Spirit to our community
- We will learn through the Holy Spirit how to overflow in this bowl—remember, only as we overflow in each bowl by the Spirit do we enter the next bowl

**4<sup>th</sup> & largest Bowl – Your relationship with the world –“...telling people about me everywhere—to the ends of the earth”**

- When the disciples heard Jesus say, “the ends of the earth” they had visions of places like Gaul and Britannia
- Savage lands with those covered in animal skins and carrying fierce weapons

- These were hardly the places they desired to go to, but God’s love is intended for all people
- You may remember Jesus’ words in Matthew 24:14—“And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.” (OS)
- A fresh, bubbling stream within you—this is what Jesus desires in each of us
- How do we get the first bowl started, filling up with the Holy Spirit?
- I would like us to let one woman, a mother of one of the judges tell us how...

#### **IV. Close**

##### **A. TEXT – 1 Samuel 1:8 NLT**

“Why are you crying, Hannah?” Elkanah would ask. “Why aren’t you eating? Why be downhearted just because you have no children? You have me—isn’t that better than having ten sons?”

- Not Elkanah’s (a husband’s) best approach—Honestly?
- Hannah could have replied, “No!” or at best, “It’s a draw”
- But what I want you to see is she didn’t get into an argument with Elkanah
- She went to the Lord God—when your fountain is run dry, turn to the Lord
- So she went along with Elkanah and Penninah (his other wife) when they made the yearly pilgrimage to Shiloh (Jerusalem of the day)
- When Hannah arrived she had spent numerous hours looking into the faces of Penninah and Elkanah’s children
- Perpetual reminders of her dried up fountain
- But here’s what Hannah did—Hannah got up and went to pray (at the tabernacle entrance)
- TEXT: 1 Samuel 1:10,11 NLT
- Hannah wept bitterly as she prayed—like a fountain, her eyes poured forth, just as her heart poured out to the Lord
- Friend, what need, what calling, what burden has God laid upon you like Hannah that you are longing for today?
- A need which God is using to say, “You need me!” “You need the Lord!”
- Hannah took her need for a child and first—she prayed to the Lord

##### **1. Make your request known to God (OS)**

##### **2. Be specific with your request**

### 3. Vowing to God the surrender of your request

- Hannah asked for a son, and having asked for a son she promised and vowed to return and offer him to God for his entire life
- Now watch, time has a way of trying our commitments as we are aligning ourselves with our vows and promises to God
- TEXT: 1 Samuel 1:21-23 READ
- Hannah didn't ask for twins—God give me two, you can have one and I will take the other
- No, she asked for a son, an only child—knowing that if God answered, she would have to make good on her vow and deliver him up as promised
- So, when Samuel was weaned, the next years trip to Shiloh, Hannah and Samuel were in the caravan
- TEXT: 1 Samuel 1:25-27 READ
- What is there about this story that speaks to our personal fountain of life?
- In giving up our “Samuel” to the Lord, we need to do what Hannah did—she gave *herself* to the Lord
- Read the Prayer of Praise recorded here by Hannah—here's what you will find
- Hannah focused on the Lord going forward—not on Samuel
- Oh Samuel was on her radar—he got a new priestly outer garment made and delivered each year
- He obviously got a copy of his mother's prayer—he includes it here in his first book
- But Hannah's prayer is all about the Lord, Himself—let's read the first verse at least
- TEXT: 1 Samuel 2:1 READ “My horn is exalted—means her fountain head, the Lord and the Holy Spirit were lifted up where they should be—atop her fountain
- Hannah would be a mother five times again—three sons and two daughters
- But even more importantly, Hannah's fountain was restored and flowed with the Holy Spirit

#### B. Right Water

- There are many voices calling in this world today—declaring they have “water”
- Saying, “this is the water” come and try it, but there are *more important allegiances*, my friend
- That *water*—the water of stuff, advantages, the next ladder—never seem to satisfy for long

- And it won't be long and we're thirsty again
- How completely different is the water Jesus promises—water, that when we drink it, we find it satisfies, and we will have more than we need—and we can let it overflow outwardly

**V. Prayer** – Lord Jesus, you are more anxious to bestow your blessings on us than we are to receive them. Holy Spirit, you thirst for me to experience the life of Jesus as the overflowing fountain he created me to be. Remind us like you did Hannah, of the delight in your eyes as you give us the desires of your heart. How many of those in the hearing of my voice would like to say to God—“Make me a fresh, bubbling stream, oh God?” Raise your hand. Holy Spirit, come upon us, fill us, exalt our individual horns—be the One atop our fountains. AMEN! & AMEN!

**VI.**