

Living in the Presence of Spiritual Royalty

A few years ago, I was invited to the home of one of the older women at our church for a fabulous luncheon. She had planned a beautiful party for one of the church ladies whose 80th birthday was on that very day. I, in my late 50s at the time, was the youngest one on the invitation list!

As I was getting ready the morning of the grand event and trying to figure out what one wore to a lovely luncheon honoring an octogenarian, I turned on *Good Morning, America* in order to take a quick glance at the local weather and the news of the nation. However, this particular morning, the early news magazine was not talking about the weather in America—it was focused on the fact that this was the day that President Barack Obama and his beautiful wife were going to visit the queen of England.

The experienced “news heads” on the morning talk show were discussing important matters such as what Michelle would be wearing when she greeted the queen, and they wondered what sort of gift the first lady would offer the revered monarch of England. They also welcomed cultural experts, who were deliberating on whether or not the first lady would bow or merely curtsy in the presence of Queen Elizabeth.

Frankly, I was fascinated by it all, but continued to get ready for my busy day while thinking about the difference between Michelle Obama’s impressive life and my simple life.

Later that morning, as I pulled up to my friend’s home, the street was jammed with the cars of the women who had been invited to this once-in-a-lifetime celebration. I parked several houses away and then walked up to the address with a bouquet of flowers in one hand and a gift-wrapped devotional

in the other hand. (The flowers were for the hostess and the devotional was for the birthday girl!)

The home was filled with the sound of the chattering of loquacious ladies and the fragrance of perfume that only grandmothers choose to wear. The hostess had prepared an amazing luncheon, and we all ate until we were overstuffed.

But it was what happened after the meal that truly left me satisfied, yet longing for more. Have you ever experienced that unique feeling? You are so satisfied ... and yet you want more and more and more!

After the dishes were stacked on the kitchen counter and the coffee pot had been drained several times, these precious women began to talk about the faithfulness of God and how wonderful it had been to serve Him over the decades. These silver-haired beauties shared about the miracles that they had seen in their lifetime and about the prayers that He had answered on their behalf.

But the most memorable moment of all occurred when the hostess began to sing. As a young woman, she had been known for her operatic voice and had sung at conferences and crusades across our region. This thoughtful woman, who had raised three children, was the grandmother of 12 and had been married for nearly 50 years, led us in "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" as the tears began to roll down the wrinkled cheeks of the women in attendance. Then we sang, "It Is No Secret What God Can Do" as a prelude to "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" and "I Come to the Garden Alone". The grand finale of the day was when we all held hands and triumphantly sang, "I'd Rather Have Jesus!"

To many people, our aged choir might have sounded like a mere warble in the grand scheme of history, but to us, it resounded as a soaring anthem through the decades of our well-lived lives.

As I walked away from that afternoon of tea sandwiches,

spotted hands and creaking knees, I realized that Michelle Obama had nothing on me. I was the one who had spent the day in the presence of royalty. {eoa}

Carol McLeod is an author and popular speaker at women's conferences and retreats, where she teaches the Word of God with great joy and enthusiasm. Carol encourages and empowers women with passionate and practical biblical messages mixed with her own special brand of hope and humor. She has written eight books, including *The Rooms of a Woman's Heart*, *Defiant Joy!*, *Holy Estrogen!*, *No More Ordinary*, *Refined*, *Joy For All Seasons*, *Let There Be Joy!* and *Pass the Joy, Please!* which releases on February 1, 2018. Her teaching DVD, *The Rooms of a Woman's Heart*, won the Telly Award, a prestigious industry award for excellence in religious programming. You can also listen to Carol's "Jolt of Joy" program daily on the Charisma Podcast Network. Connect with Carol or inquire about her speaking to your group at .