

Open Letter to Jennifer Lopez: 'You Are So Much More Than Your Sexuality'

There are many well-known people with whom I would love to develop a caring and mutually respectful friendship. For me, Jennifer Lopez has always been one of those people.

When Jennifer served as a judge on *American Idol*, she spoke the truth with kindness and with compassion. As I have listened to and watched many of her interviews over the years, what has spoken to me the loudest is her sincere benevolence and humanity.

Now, I will also be quick to say that I don't often listen to her music, although I know she is an extremely talented musician and dancer. It wasn't her developed talent that drew my desire to befriend her, but her heart.

Every year, my family excitedly plans for the Super Bowl. We anticipate the food, the company, the commercials and the teams for whom we will be cheering.

But we also all know we will not be watching the halftime show. There have only been a few times in the recent history of Super Bowl halftime entertainment when I could have labeled it "family appropriate."

I was hoping, however, that Jennifer would keep it classy. I was expecting that what we would see, perhaps, was a finely disciplined woman sharing her Latin heritage and magnificent talent with the Super Bowl audience. I knew she had it in her.

As you all know by now, that was not what happened at the halftime of Super Bowl LIV.

If I had the incredible privilege of having a sweet heart-to-

heart talk with Jennifer, this is what I might say to her.

“Oh, Jennifer! You are so much more than your sexuality, than your talent, than your body, than your million-dollar costumes and than that halftime show presented! You are a woman of unmatched glory and of eternal significance!

“Jennifer, as a woman of platform at this moment in history, you have a responsibility to communicate the power of a woman and the nobility for which women were created. Girl, you are more than sequins and a man’s attempt to grab you inappropriately!”

The NFL has never been known as an organization that honors women for their brains, their talent or their accomplishments. If you don’t believe me, just take a look at the outfits worn by the cheerleaders on any NFL team and ask yourself if you would like to be seen in public dressed like that.

We have a problem in our society that is not a new one—the blatant sexualization of women as objects rather than as people of dignity. This ugly perception has been rampant in the entertainment industry, in the church, in politics and at sporting events for decades; it wasn’t just recognized for the first time at Super Bowl LIV.

The culture is not our moral compass, but we, as the church, should be the moral compass for the culture. We can take on this role with courage, with compassion and with love.

And by the way, in case you are wondering, I still would love to develop a friendship with Jennifer! {eo}

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 five books: No More Ordinary, Holy Estrogen!, The Rooms of a

Woman's Heart, Defiant Joy! *and* Refined: Finding Joy in the
Midst of the Fire. *Her teaching DVD* The Rooms of a Woman's
Heart *won the Telly Award, a prestigious industry award for
excellence in religious programming.*