

What in Your Life Is Worth a Grand Celebration?

Last week I attended the 50th anniversary celebration of my alma mater, Oral Roberts University. And let me tell you, this was indeed a celebration of the rarest and most deserving kind.

This university, built in the middle of a cow pasture in south Tulsa, was a mere baby during the years that I was a student on that hallowed soil from 1973 to 1977.

And then I had the amazing opportunity to be employed at the university as the first women's chaplain from 1977 to 1979. ORU's steps were no longer wobbling with infant uncertainty. But this premiere institution, where academia and Spirit-led living collided, began marching ahead to make a place for itself among the finest Christian universities of this nation.

During the years of working in the chaplain's office at ORU, I was baptized into the realization of what genuine ministry is all about. During those glory years of ORU's second decade, I received my assignment from the Father ... *to minister to women.*

To teach the Word to women. To encourage hurting women. To call women out of their pain into His abundance.

To help the daughters of the King understand exactly who their Dad is. To laugh ... and cry ... listen to ... and bring truth to women.

Last week, ORU alumni gathered from Zambia and from Germany, from California and from Chicago, from Texas and from New York, from Canada and from Mexico to celebrate 50 years of God's faithfulness.

The charge that Oral Roberts heard from God concerning the

students who would attend ORU in all of the generations to come was this:

“Raise up your students to hear My voice, to go where My light is dim and where My voice is heard small, and My healing power is not known, even to the uttermost bounds of the earth.”

ORU faculty and staff from every era, alumni from around the world, current students and friends of the university joined in the exuberant jubilee and worshipped with reckless abandon.

We worshipped the miracle-working God who is still moving today. We sang until the tears dripped down our cheeks and then we sang some more. We sang the worship songs that were written by the sons and daughters of the university.

Do you know what I learned during those moments of rare and rich worship?

I learned that it is in the presence of God that a miracle of rejuvenation happens. Worship becomes that magnificent fountain of youth! Everyone, regardless of biological age, is young again when worshipping the God of eternity. Old things are passed away and everything has become new when God is put in His rightful place.

We also listened to the voices of the greatest men and women of the past 50 years who have served God without pause, without fanfare and without the approval of culture.

Do you know what I learned while sitting at the feet of the true generals of the faith?

I learned that we serve a God who is still speaking today. I heard God’s voice as a young collegiate on that campus ... and I heard God’s voice again last week at 60 years old.

So, what is all of this about? Why should you care about the celebration that happened at 7777 South Lewis, Tulsa, Oklahoma, last week?

I hope that you have experienced something so grand in your life that it deserves a noble celebration. Take the time out of your busy life to celebrate that which has stood the test of time and has challenged you to become the person that you are today.

Celebrate your marriage, celebrate your parents, celebrate dear friendships, celebrate your children and celebrate your faith!

Celebrate your freedom, celebrate your co-workers, celebrate creation. Find something to celebrate and then do it loudly!

Second, I pray that you know the value of worship in your life. Worship loudly. Worship intensely. Worship with tears and with laughter. Sing the songs of your generation, and then worship some more!

You serve a God who is worthy to be celebrated! His faithfulness extends beyond your circumstances and His love is splashed on your life in spite of the number of your years.

Third, listen for the voice of God. God is still speaking today and will continue to speak for all of eternity! God is speaking ... are you listening?

Listen to the voices of those who have gone before you on this journey called "life" and learn to treasure their wisdom and their insight. Listen to the voices of ordinary friends who have loved you through drought and through delight. Listen to the voices of the next generation and learn from their youthful exuberance and enthusiasm.

And finally, go. Go where His light is dim and His voice is heard small. Go to the uttermost bounds of the earth. Go and be a healing agent in someone's life. Go and make a difference either large or small. Just go in the name and power of Jesus.

Celebrate ... worship ... listen ... and go. There is no greater

celebration than that. {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 five books: No More Ordinary, Holy Estrogen!, The Rooms of a Woman's Heart and Defiant Joy! Her most recent book, Refined: Finding Joy in the Midst of the Fire, was released on Aug. 1. Her teaching DVD The Rooms of a Woman's Heart won the Telly Award, a prestigious industry award for excellence in religious programming.