

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH REVEREND DR. CARI JACKSON, PART 3

Monique Moultrie : Going to put us back on record, today I believe is August 5th and we are continuing an interview with Reverend Dr. Cari Jackson. We are concluding a conversation started in May. So this will be recording three. We're picking up, just to remind you what we've covered. We had gotten to the move to New York, and we've gotten through your first roles within ecclesial ministry. We talked about ordination and seminary and I was just about going to transition to your social organizing and to find out more about your project work in South Africa when we stopped. So we're sort of going to pick up from there and I think the questions I have for today really revolve social organizing and consulting and how you have, as a leader, been able to sustain yourself in these various capacities.

Monique Moultrie : So, that's what we're going. I'll start with a really general one, and then we can get to some specific examples.

Cari Jackson: Okay.

Monique Moultrie : My question, would you tell me how you understand the balance between social organizing and religious activism?

Cari Jackson: Well, for me the spiritual must always be social. That was not teaching from my earliest religious tradition within Pentecostalism. Very individual, but spirituality for me is both individual and communal. The scripture that really guides me in terms of social activism is from the Lord's Prayer "Give us this day our daily bread." It's the communal aspect of that. It's not "God, give me my bread and screw what happens to the other people." But it's our bread and so whatever I have in my life I see it as spirit gifting me to be a conduit to help share those resources with the community. You know, there's some who talk about the cross in its horizontal and its vertical. I just did it backwards. Its horizontal and its vertical, and that it's the individual and God and the individual connecting to community. For me, you know, the word "religio" taken from the Latin root meaning "To buy." There is not only that my heart and soul are bound in a relationship with God, but also bound in relationship with others.

Cari Jackson: And that my fullest humanity can only be experienced as I'm relating this to others. So it is out of that understanding and that sense of being. As Martin Luther King talked that we're inexplicably bound with others and I feel very, very strongly about that. I remember sharing this story with you from when I was 13 volunteering in the Children's Hospital and met this little 18 month old baby who had been scalded with hot water by her mother's boyfriend. In the moment, as I was holding that child, I felt this incredible sense of being bound with her and since I met her, every now and then I pray for her. I don't know if she's alive, physically alive. I don't know any of the circumstances of her life. But I never left that sense of connection with that child.

Monique Moultrie : Yeah.

Cari Jackson: And I feel that way in terms of people who I have never met, I feel a responsibility to them because we share our humanity. And so it's spiritual and it is social for me. One of the things that's really important as I do the work now with RCRC, with the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice is this firm belief that I have that our families, our societies, our world are better when individuals live their authentic selves. It is my hope that everything that I do helps nurture a firm authenticity in others. Because there is a benefit to the individual and that benefit then has this reverberating effect in all of society. I've seen that in my own life as I have made some challenging and at times costly choices to live authentically who I am. What I bring in all the context where I show up is this more fully empowered person which then helps. You know, what's the expression about all boats rise? And so the religious, that's how the religious and the social activism come together for me.

Cari Jackson: I can't imagine living any other way that would work for who I am, and my understanding of who God is. I think I shared this story with you that when I was in college I met folks who did not speak in tongues the way it had been emphasized to me was important. In my early Pentecostal teachings I was told that unless a person spoke in tongues they did not have the indwelling of the spirit. I met people, I kept meeting people, I had to feel the spirit of God in them, and they did not show up in the ways that I was taught one must show. So throughout my life I've the multiplicity of ways that God shows up and that when each person is authentic to his or her or their own expression, that we get to see the amazingness and the varieties of Gods expressions and the society is stronger when we really nurture that and not just accept it and tolerate it, but really affirm that better society.

Monique Moultrie : Awesome, do you see your calling or your career or your following of spirit as animated by any one particular identity or any one sense of authentic self? Or is your authentic self kaleidoscoped of several different pieces that could be the whole?

Cari Jackson: It's fairly kaleidoscopic. I don't know if that's a word. But let me ask more on your question? Any particular religious identity? What do you mean by identity?

Monique Moultrie : Any identity. So when I've asked others this question, I just did an interview with ... I did the interview in Detroit with one of the leaders, used to be from Unity, and she's now not working with Unity anymore. I asked her this question, and she said she'd identified as a woman of African descent working for justice in specific ways. For her, that's what her identity was. It wasn't black, it wasn't lesbian, it was for her, she feels herself very grounded in her woman centeredness and being woman centered played itself out in typical kind of ways into specific endeavors she made in her life.

Monique Moultrie : When I've talked to others, their identity is a person of color, or their identity, usually with men, when I've asked this question of men, their identity as a queer

person or a gay man is what is sort is the animating energy behind the work that they do. But I've gotten a variety of different questions, and so I've learned to sort of leave it really open and-

Cari Jackson: Gotcha. Gotcha.

Monique Moultrie : To see what pops up for people as what classifies for them as identity characteristic.

Cari Jackson: Well, I think my initial response that it's fairly kaleidoscopic is very accurate. It's all of those elements of and aspects of who I am that come together in this particular blend. I am spiritual, more than I am religious. And by that, I mean there are many religious and spiritual traditions that speak to me. So that is a strong pull of what guides me, and I was responding to your question about the intersection of religion and social activism. At the core of that is my understanding and my experience of spirituality. I think how we relate in societies at the very base line is a manifestation of who we are collectively as spiritual folks.

Cari Jackson: When we are spiritually out of balance, collectively our societies look like they do right now. You know, when I was pastor of a church, predominately white church and experienced lots of isms, people often asked me was it predominately racism, or sexism, or heterosexism, and people to tweak their heart.

Monique Moultrie : Yeah.

Cari Jackson: Tweak of those identities, what guides me most is I talk about authenticity. I'm authentically all those things. Clearly, being a woman, being black, being dark skinned, being someone who was shaped in a working class context. All of those things inextricably, that's who I am. It's the gestalt of the experiences from those realities and those particularities that guide my life, and I can't, I really can't tweak them apart. I can say at the core of it is spirituality because I think that if I do any work affirming people in their spirituality, in their authenticity, which I think is spiritual work, I'm not primarily focusing on people who are of African descent or people who are women, or people who are LGBTQ, any of those because I see when things are out whack socially. When there is over privilege and under privilege, both of those are spiritual dynamics and I think both leave a disease that needs to be addressed.

Cari Jackson: I think perhaps in some ways, that might be why much of my calling has been to work with wealthy white people. Because I see the internalization of what their context has told them, that they're supposed to be privileged to have is as unhealthy as the internalization of racism that tells people they're supposed to have less.

Monique Moultrie : Write that. Sorry I was letting my husband know I was recording.

Cari Jackson: No worries.

Monique Moultrie : Wonderful. I want to shift gears.

Cari Jackson: Yes.

Monique Moultrie : And I'm moving to some questions about career and career focus. So I know you talked to me about some of the jobs that you were doing while in seminary and before seminary. I wanted to get on record your move to consulting and what that led to, and what led you into those avenues?

Cari Jackson: Well, when I was in my 20s working for Prudential in Newark, New Jersey my role was under the umbrella of HR working within the training and development department and I developed a range of curriculum for managers and employees within Prudential. Things such as supervisory management skills to communication and listening, on and on and on and on. So in the course of doing that work, I was able to draw upon supervisory experiences I have had in my life beginning in undergrad. I was working in a dining hall on campus supervising other students. So I started supervising folks rather early in my life. And because I've been this consummate observer of human behavior when I developed the training for supervisors and managers within Prudential, one of the things that emerged from that was that managers who were many job levels above me starting seeking me out for counseling.

Cari Jackson: Now my immediate bosses didn't like that because it was like people who were their job level were seeking me out and I was black, so that was the other thing. They're like "Why are they seeking out this young black girl? They should be coming to me. I'm the manager." And all this stuff. But it's been a gift and I really see as that. So I really started doing that kind of coaching, leadership coaching when I was in my 20s and its continued to follow my work. It was in that context, and so its just continued to grow as I gamed and claimed "Oh, I really have a gift doing this."

Cari Jackson: Then I was in college, not college, when I was in law school, I was doing some of that leadership coaching within church communities. Totally volunteer basis. And people kept saying "Oh wow, you're really good at this." So it took a number of years for me to say "Oh wow, this is a particular gift that I have." I have really, since I was an undergrad, started looking at how organizations operated and seeing some ways that if they did a little tweaking here and there, how their budgets could be more effective, their programs could be more effective. So my brain has just worked that way. It's a set of analytical skills that I've used for capacity building within organizations and strengthening leadership. I used to do that with a cross section of business organizations and then while in seminary I said I only want to do this with faith based organizations and spiritual leaders. So its always been there. I've been fine tuning how I want to use those particular skills.

Cari Jackson: That really is one of my favorite things to do. I get to see these aha moments that leaders have and then as well, that their organizations have. Years ago I would do work with organizations and see the leaders intentionally or unintentionally sabotage the work that we were doing with the organization. And then I started requiring, if you want me to do any work with your organization with the path building, I will only do it if I'm also doing one on one coaching with the leaders. I've seen that make a tremendous difference so that there's a real alignment and the leaders can see more clearly some of the ways that their actions and their words have sabotaged the very thing they say they want to happen.

Monique Moultrie : Yeah.

Cari Jackson: So doing that work with them has been immeasurably important in that whole process for me. At times I do the consulting as my full time work, and then other times I do on the side if I have some other primary work that I'm doing. Its always been there, for I'd say 35 years?

Monique Moultrie : Awesome. So in the work that you're doing for RCRC, it sounds like you were sort of hired in the niche you already work in? Sort of the capacity building and working with budgets.

Cari Jackson: Yes.

Monique Moultrie : And training of leaders. So is that more of an extension or are you gaining new skills?

Cari Jackson: I'm gaining a lot more knowledge because I'm in a context I've never worked in before. And because the context is different, how I apply the skills and when I apply the skills also has had to be different. It's a different audience, different set of issues. Of course, some of the issues are the same across movements. And there's some important nuances, so I really had to attend to those nuances and apply the skills and the ... It's been a steep learning curve in terms of knowledge. That's been really fun for me. It really is. Also, what I love about the work now is that RCRC and most repro organizations are understanding the work much more inter sectionally then they did 10 years ago, even five years ago.

Cari Jackson: And how my brain works is very intersectional so I don't know if I could have done this work 10 years ago because I don't think it would have satisfied all the parts of me.

Monique Moultrie : Yeah.

Cari Jackson: When I was an undergrad, I was majoring in psychology, and I said, "No, somethings missing." So I needed to add sociology and that really is how my

mind works. So the intersectionality of doing this work really is aligned with who I am as a person.

Monique Moultrie : Perfect. That led into the question that I was going ask about what led you to RCRC and to that type of different type of genre of work. So we've checked off two.

Cari Jackson: Okay.

Monique Moultrie : I now want move into some questions about your authorship and that part of your career component. What led you to start writing books, to what purpose, to what audience were you aiming to impact?

Cari Jackson: It came from my consulting work. I was working with a cross section of business organizations and community service organizations. Some 20 plus years ago. I was seeing a common pattern. That is the development of strategic plans, the responses to customer concerns and complaints. The responses to challenges with teams within the organizations. Across the spectrum of those issues the common thread that I was observing was that people were doing a lot of talking, but they really didn't know how to listen to one another. They were interpreting what each other said in ways that often led to communication shut down. In order to do the work that I was hired to do, whether it was strategic planning or the culture competency work or whatever it might be, I developed some materials to help people strengthen their listening skills.

Cari Jackson: Every time I shared that segment of the training with folks, in whatever their particular work context. Every time I would hear "Wow, this is really good stuff. Have you written a book about this?" Or "You ought to write a book." And each time I was "I don't want to write no book about this." And in particular I said "At times I'm not a very good listener myself." If I write a book about listening people will expect that I'm an expert and I always do it well. And then I went to a writers retreat because I had a book I meant to write. I went to the writers retreat to strengthen how to move forward with this other project that was a spiritually based project. Even there they said "Oh you ought to write this to." Because they would ask what work do you do?

Cari Jackson: I can't tell you in this moment now how it led to folks saying to me you ought to write a book about listening, but it was even in that context. I prayed out it, and that's what I kept hearing from spirit. That was supposed to be my first book. So most of the books I have written are spiritually oriented self help books. The one exception, I've written five books so far. The one exception is my doctoral dissertation that I converted to book. But I think even in that there's some self help stuff. I'm very oriented to helping people identify and analyze how they got where they are. What is working and what isn't working. And some strategies and tools for improvement. So whether it's an individual or an organization or a society, it's the same set of skills that I use and apply, again different nuances given the context. That's what got me started writing.

Cari Jackson: I have known since I was probably in middle school that I was a writer. I knew that I loved to write, but didn't think of myself as a writer. I was writing short stories and poems but I thought I was just writing it for myself. So I didn't think of writing, that my writing would then be used more broadly. So, as Spirit had done with me through much of my career, is I'm just showing up using the skills that I have to help a person or an organization strengthen what it is that they're trying to do, realize what it is that they are trying do. Because I don't have a consciousness about it, I'm just bring the thing to help, and then that's what leads "Oh you're really good at this, so help us more broadly. Help more of us more broadly."

Monique Moultrie : And how has that led to you as an author helping nourish and spearhead other authors, because I also saw on your website that you're also pushing others into the creative genre. So how does that fit into the larger vision?

Cari Jackson: Well, when I retire, my vision for when I retire is really just to do creative stuff. My own writing, helping other writers. I meet a lot of people who have powerful stories that need to be told. They, like me, don't see themselves as writers. I didn't see myself as a writer. Unfortunately through the years, my first book released 15 years ago and it continues to sell well. I haven't had the advertising dollars for lots of people to know this stuff, but to this day I meet people and they say "Are you Cari Jackson who wrote such and such?" And I said "Yes." "You changed my life." And I know that I'm not exceptional in that regard. I know that there are other people who have stories to tell and who have particular insights and wisdom that need to get out there. So I seek to nurture that in them.

Cari Jackson: I'm working with an author now whose story is so absolutely amazing, and she is Latina. She was a crack addict for over 20 years and tells the story of how she was [inaudible] every time she lit a pipe. And I said, "People need to hear that story." Two sets of people. One, those who say drug addicts don't pray. They need to hear that. And people who are addicted to whatever they're addicted to who say God won't hear. Because her story transformed because she kept praying. She's writing her story, and I fell privileged to help folks tell those stories.

Cari Jackson: A book that came out, the last book, was the autobiography of the basketball star whose life crashed. That one, I knew he could not write that himself. So I interviewed him, and I wrote his story. The cross section of people who have been blessed by that has been awesome, including black men and boys, which was an audience I had not thought my writing could impact. So as I work with other writers I want to help them think bigger about how their writing can impact folks. There're some things I see, some possible movies, and all of those things coming. I've written a screenplay, I have ideas for television shows.

Cari Jackson: So when I retire from the justice work that I'm doing, I really want to focus more on the creative. I see it as a strong avenue for transformation. I think one of the things that helped understand that was really my preaching. Through preaching,

I often laugh and joke and have people cracking up. While they're in that mode of experiencing entertainment, because preaching, I think, ought to be entertainment. It should not only be entertaining. If it is then it's missing the point. But it's in those moments of entertainment that I've been able to fold into peoples hearts some things that otherwise they'd be resistant too. While they're laughing and their defenses and their guards are down, I'm able to pour something in them that they would not have been receptive to.

Cari Jackson: The preaching moment has helped me say I want to use entertainment. So I have this wonderful comedy series idea for a television show that I really want to get out there one day, and that I think will be transformative for how people think in different contexts. So helping new writers. To help them, of course I continue to expand my own understandings of how my writing can impact people. There's a social consciousness to my writing. Those are the folks whose stories other writers, it's when there's a social consciousness. They really have an intention of using the written word to help heal and help transform, and help build, those kinds of things.

Monique Moultrie : Awesome.

Cari Jackson: And entertainment.

Monique Moultrie : That sounds like a kick ass second and third act.

Cari Jackson: Oh yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Hey, I say I'm in my final third. I've been saying that, and I'm excited about what Spirit and I will co-create in this final third. You know, the first third I'm trying to figure out who I am. The second third I'm still trying to figure out who I am and learning how to break through what was socialized in me in the first third that I'm supposed to guide my life based on other peoples expectations because that's what I learned in the first third. Second third I'm trying to undo a lot of that socialization and really get to my authentic self. In the final third my goal is to allow that more empowered, more self actualized and more playful ... I wasn't very playful in my first third because I was taught to be a good Christian you're supposed to be sober minded.

Cari Jackson: I was very serious all the time. And in the second third I started becoming more playful. This final third, I'm cracking people up all the time. I can be in a room by myself and start laughing. I'm glad to be alive. There's so much I celebrate even as I look at so much work that there is still to do. And in this first third and second third, I didn't know how to move with a sense of urgency to help heal and repair and transform and be joyful and playful. I didn't know how to do both of those. These last several years I've been learning more how to do that and understanding that my ability to help others heal and transform is connected with my own self care.

Cari Jackson: I'll tell you, it was not part of your question, but Mother Theresa is an important role model for me for what not to do. She did incredible work in the world, and

internally was depressed and angry much of her years. That's not how I want to live. I want to live with joy and delight even while I'm helping others, and helping them come more fully into their empowered and authentic selves, facilitating, healing and transformation. It's a longevity. Longevity, sustainability, also rooted and grounded in joy, not only rooted and grounded in service, but also in joy.

Monique Moultrie : Awesome. That brings me to this set, it's a segment of questions that are personal in ways that the rest of this is personal but in a slightly different context. But I'm also, I'm interested in the self care of the activist. Of the spiritual leader. I'm interested in what brings them joy and fulfillment, and how do they sustain those moments? How do they nurture themselves and support themselves as they are doing the work of facilitating healing and transformation? So you want to live with joy, what's an example of how you do that?

Cari Jackson: In activism, there is a need to be strategic and look at the lay of the land, who are the players? How do you move a particular issue forward and what's the right timing, and all those things. Really important things. I bring that, that's all head. I bring that and I bring, what am I feeling in the room right now? Example, when I was pastor in Connecticut there was a lot of activity defacing Muslim mosques. Islam, I don't call it Islamophobic, I just call it Islamic hatred. It's not just fear, it's hatred. Some other, an interfaith group of us said "Look, we've got to speak out against this." And we organized an interfaith prayer vigil and we did it on the front lawn of the church where I was pastor. Because that church had bounded the city, and it was in the center of town, and someone said "I don't want this indoors, I want this out on the lawn, so that as people drive by, they can see this mass of people in different races, different languages, praying together."

Cari Jackson: While we were there, I felt the spirit of love so strong, until I asked the Muslim leaders who were there "I know Ramadan is going to end soon, and you will have your Eid Al-Fitr, do you think people would be amenable to having an interfaith Eid Al-Fitr?" "Yeah, I think so." "And having it here at this church?" "Yeah, yeah." So that was not part of a strategic plan. That was feeling the energy. So we organized that I think in four weeks. It's something that has continued, that was seven or eight years, and that church ... And I left there long ago. And that church has continued to do it. I got a lot of push back from folks, especially when there were Muslims doing evening prayers in the Christian church.

Cari Jackson: What gives me joy is responding to what I hear, sense and feel Spirit saying in a moment. It's the balance. I'm one of these interesting, really spiritual, really intellectual, and they come together for me. They're not separate and distinct. So I do the strategic planning and the dadadada, the head stuff, but I'm also listening to Spirit. When the two come together, it really gives me such an incredible sense of joy and that is very much a part of my self care. When I don't listen to Spirit, I don't have as much joy in my life. When it's only what's our

plan, and I believe in planning. But if that's all there is? I can feel the energy siphoning from me.

Cari Jackson: I grew up Pentecostal. One of the things gives me, continues to give me joy is listening to black gospel music and dancing all over the house, and praising God, and speaking in tongues. Whether I'm in the house or driving in the car, it doesn't really matter. That nurtures me. Where I live, I had to be very intentional about that, I need to be in spaces that nurture me, so I can then go do the work. With that sustainability and joy. And so I'm very intentional about those kinds of things. I don't socialize with a cross section of people. I'm very intentional about who I spend my social time with because in many social contexts, people know I'm Reverend Doctor and they're wanting me to work. I need places where I'm not online. I just get to play.

Cari Jackson: My partner is a big part of my self care, because she gets these things and she's attending to the same kinds of things for her own life, so we support one another in doing those things. We're really intentional about taking cleansing baths and massages and just going out in the stillness of nature. So just a cross section. And exercising, not as often as I need, but when I do it, I can feel how alive I feel internally, so it's a combination of things. I have to do all of those things. But a lot of laughter, a lot of laughter.

Monique Moultrie : Awesome. That's usually my last question, but I realized ask this one identifier question so that I'm accurate in my labeling in the description. Do you identify as a lesbian or as same gender loving or do you have a particular identity formation around your orientation, and if so, if you're willing to share that. Also, do you then identify in groups, so when you were talking about certain social spaces, you having to be on. Are there places where you intentionally go because it's a meeting of the liberal lesbians of Fountain Hills?

Cari Jackson: I love that. Maybe I'll start that group. What was that? So my own identity is lesbian. I think, it's been probably close to 40 years since I last had, 35 or something like that, since I last had a connection with a male partner. Even then there's never been any comparison for me about where I'm fully nurtured as my whole self. That for me is with women, and I've been privileged to be partnered with some really incredible women. I'm grateful for that. A lot of learning and lot of growing. My soulmate has been incredible, incredible woman. Yeah. Our relationship really nurtures me, a lot, it does.

Cari Jackson: And do I seek out space? Actually, I don't seek it anymore but it happens. It's like Spirit orchestrates it or something. Years ago, I used to seek it out for several years I was a member of Metropolitan Community Church in Washington D.C. that was a particular space that I really, really needed to be. It was there that I finally said yes to my call to ministry. Here in Arizona we visited a cross section of churches when we moved here. A couple of them were LGBT oriented, and most of them were not. It happens that the church where we decided to become members, there are a lot of LGBTQ folks in this church even though it's not specifically for that community. There are more transgender

individuals in this congregation than in any I've been a part of. Any congregation I've been a part of.

Cari Jackson: That is so special to me. Our senior pastor is a gay man. We've developed from each of the churches we've visited, we've developed some friendships and many of those are with gay people. We get together with them and have raucously good time. But then there are also a lot of other people who are not part of LGBTQ community who are very special to us, so it's a cross section. My partner's Latina and it has happened that many of the people we connected with here are primarily Mexican ancestry, primarily, but not all. So it's wonderful, she gets to speak Spanish a lot with some of the folks that we connect with. Every now and then we go to an all black church, because there ain't a lot of black folk there. So there've been times we sought that out. I remember when we first moved here [inaudible] happens to be black and gay. We didn't seek him out for either of those things. And that's why I say Spirit is here connecting.

Cari Jackson: He had a Christmas party and he invited us, and we had just come to Phoenix a couple months before. When we got to the party, my partner said "Oh, here are all the black people!" You know, there were a couple of non blacks, but most of them. Then he's a member, this same guy is a member of one of the very large black churches in town, and she's "Oh wow! We didn't know there were this many black people." So it's been Spirit has felt our need and has aligned us in the spaces that we need to be with where we can be our authentic selves. Whether that's in all LGBTQ space or all black space, or all Latino space, or a cross section. The connections have been there, and that's been really, really wonderful for us. For me, it's been great.

Monique Moultrie : Awesome. Well that's my questions. We made it through with minutes to spare. I want to say thank you, I always do this on record, so I want to say thank you deeply for sharing and opening up and speaking from your life experience and your story. I am grateful beyond words to just have been a vessel to hear what you shared. And really, every interview I do, I get more and more enthused. The one that I was speaking about that I did in in Detroit is Darlene Franklin, and I left that interview and I thought, this is where the energy comes from.

Monique Moultrie : Because I'm reading and I'm doing a lot of dry sociological theory of leadership activism and what type of leaders motivate in what arenas. There's not a lot of joy there, but I'm finding joy in the stories. I'm really excited each time I get to record.

Cari Jackson: I have two other things I want to share with you that are not part of your questions. One, I am part of a group of women, an interfaith group of women who are writing an anthology. We're writing this book about the stories of, our stories of caring for and grieving the loss of our mothers. It's a really powerful, powerful project to be a part of. I can't even tell you. When I was invited to be a part of this project, one of the first things I said to them was "You don't have a Latina here." So then I recommended someone and brought someone in. It's

even in those small spaces that I feel that activism continues to be a part and sensitize folks to some things. So we have a cross sections of Asian, Latina, black, and white, and different Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Buddhist. I think one of us is Buddhist. That nurtures my soul to be a part of a project like this, and come together and talk and share our stories. I feel my mom so present with me.

Cari Jackson: It nurtures me. I feel held by here. I talk with both my parents and my grandparents a lot. I feel held, when I'm going through particular challenges, they're like "okay, baby girl needs me." That's a real blessing. I'm really grateful for that. I know that's not directly on point with your questions, but it's part of what nurtures me.

Monique Moultrie : Yeah.

Cari Jackson: To do the work. The last thing I want to say, the words it says on the cross "It is finished." Those words hold me as I do my work because I never have a sense that I called to do it all and fix it all and make it all right. Jesus didn't do that, who the heck do I think? Jesus was clear about what his part was. So as I'm in this final third, I have much more clarity about what my part is. For me to do that with gusto, to do it with love, and with grace, and integrity, and joy. As I have clarity about what my part is.

Cari Jackson: When I was a younger person I used to run relay races and I was usually the third or fourth in the relay, and I had to run with gusto to get to that line. But whatever position I was in relay, it really didn't matter. It's more about let me run the race with, as I said, integrity, and joy, and love, and compassion. For me to do my part really well. Then as I have clarity about I'm running a leg of it, then I don't heap upon myself this over responsibility for all of it getting fixed. So I'm much more able to do this well. That's very, very important to me, it really is. Hopefully, as I'm running my leg of the race, I'm helping set it up well for the next person, and next people who come along. That's my prayer, I do this leg well and pass on something really favorable to those who are yet to come.

Monique Moultrie : Yeah. Beautiful. Well I thank you for the highlight of my weekend, which has been spent laying in bed, so I'm really grateful. I get to check off that illness did not take the weekend away from me. There's no food in my house, but I got this done.

Cari Jackson: Well I'm going to, I have some food seasoning. I did that right before we got on the call. I'm attempting some buffalo wings.

Monique Moultrie : Okay.

Cari Jackson: My partner works on Sundays now, and we used to, before she started working on Sunday, we used to go out to eat every Sunday afternoon with friends of ours. So now I said "Emma, when you come home, we're going to have a good

dinner together." so every Sunday "Oh what am I?" Because when the work week happens, it's rare that I cook dinner.

Monique Moultrie : Yeah.

Cari Jackson: So I try to do that on Sundays. It's fun for me, I really, I like to cook but usually too busy.