



News Tracker

2006 VOLUME 13

2005 NGM NATIVE CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

Native Gospel Ministries of Canada, Inc. (NGM) hosted its 10th annual Native Christian Conference at the Metropolitan Bible Church in Ottawa from June 3-5, 2005. When NGM first started hosting these Native Christian Conferences in Ottawa we held them in February. Later we moved the Conference dates to June, because some people found the ice and snow in winter hazardous for driving long distances, and because the Cree communities in northern Quebec are still on their goose break during May. The month of June seems ideal for our Conference because the warm weather is pleasant for the Conference guests to go shopping and sightseeing in the nation's capital city.

Richard Twiss did an excellent job as keynote speaker last year and we invited him to be our special speaker again. He is the Cofounder and President of Wiconi International and is in demand as a conference speaker. His ministry with Wiconi International takes him to different countries of the world to share the gospel. He is presently working on a doctorate degree in missiology and has a good understanding of cross-cultural communications and contextualization of the gospel to indigenous people. We taped all his messages on CD for the last two NGM Conferences and we have them available through our office in Ottawa. Richard is an effective communicator and has a good way of blending his messages with stories and Indian humour.

Richard had to take a funeral service for a friend the day before our Conference started, and he was not able to be with us on Friday night and Saturday morning. We had to quickly find someone to take his place for the time he was scheduled to speak. It was truly of the Lord that Adrian Jacobs was in Ottawa at that time. He was able to substitute for Richard on Friday night. Adrian is a well known Native Christian leader himself and has a good understanding of world missions and Native ministries. He gave a powerful



Pastor Willie Jock and his wife Sandi from Akwesasne Reserve.



George Small Jr. and his brother Rick provided the special music at the Conference.

message on *Diverging to a Postmodern World*. Excerpts from his message at the Conference are in this issue of the NGM News Tracker. We also have his complete message on a CD that you can order.

On Saturday morning our special speaker was Pastor Willie Jock, a Mohawk from the Akwesasne Reserve, and with his wife Sandi a good friend of Richard. They came to our Conference last year also. He gave an excellent message on *Spiritual Warfare* which is an important topic in Native ministries. His wife also shared a word of testimony.

Special music throughout the Conference was provided by George and Rick Small from Moose Factory, Ontario. The other musicians we invited were not able to come because they were just starting new jobs. We included a few songs by Rick on one of Richard's CDs.

Attendance for the Conference was about the same as the previous year. Everyone enjoyed the close Christian fellowship throughout the weekend. Some made close friends with whom they can stay in contact with during the year. On Saturday night, the Conference guests had a fellowship meal together in the Met's Fellowship Hall. This is becoming an annual event at the Conference and we plan to have another fellowship meal again this year. After the meal we had our regular service in the Fellowship Hall.



The fellowship meal was enjoyed by the Conference guests.



Richard Twiss and NGM Board member Barney Shackelly.

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UPDATE

ON THE GO WITH DR. JOE

Once again we have experienced both blessings and sorrows with our people, and we rejoice with you in all that God is doing in individual hearts. Since 1994 our ministry with NGM has focused on the Cree communities of James Bay. I speak the language so that has opened a lot of doors for me to minister. God has opened doors to minister occasionally in other locations as well.

In May I spent most of my time in Ottawa in preparation for our NGM Conference in June. May 21-23, I was invited by Kateri Ministries to speak at their Healing and Prayer Conference in Pembroke, Ontario.



NGM Board of Directors

June 3-5, We had our 10th Annual NGM Conference in Ottawa. The NGM Board of Directors met together on June 4th. The next day after the Conference I went to Waskaganish for counseling services. While I was there I shared at the Waskaganish Cree Gospel Fellowship.

June 15-16, I was invited by the Grand Council of the Crees to attend a Cree Regional Conference in Mistissini on Indian Residential Schools. My role at this Conference was to be a resource person and to be available to do individual counseling. While in Mistissini I was privileged to attend a banquet for the golf tournament in Chibougamau.

During the month of June, after school was finished, my family came with me on my visits to the Cree communities of Mistissini, Waskaganish and Ouje Bougoumou. I went to Waskaganish during the last week in June to do a Cross-Cultural Communications Seminar for the Elders Council. It was a good topic for the elders and I learned a lot from them on traditional cultural values. It was such a blessing to teach this course to them.



Annual gospel camp meeting in Mistissini, Quebec.

July 8-10, I spoke at the annual gospel camp meeting in Mistissini. There are many Christians in Mistissini and meetings are always well attended. I preached on Sunday morning with at least 500 people in attendance.

Altogether I spoke 3 different times on the topics of forgiveness, anger and the grieving process. Some of the people were mourning the loss of a loved one and they appreciated the messages related to the grieving process.



Youth Conference by the Cree Regional Authority in Chisasibi, Quebec.

In Chisasibi, I was invited to the Youth Conference by the Cree Regional Authority, to do workshops on grief. I talked with many young people, including some I had met on visits to their communities. It was good to be part of this Youth Conference and to share in the workshops.

Every summer I try to do a wedding in the Cree communities, but this year I performed a wedding in Ottawa for my cousin, Elaine MacLeod. It was good to see so many friends and relatives there and some key Native leaders.



Elaine MacLeod and James Lazore were married in Ottawa.

During the last week of July I was invited by the Mistissini Public Health Service to do a 3-day grief workshop and 2 days of individual counseling for the 11th Traditional Gathering. For the workshop I taught understanding grief, dealing with anger and the therapeutic value of forgiveness. From my studies, I can see the great need for people to be educated on how to manage their emotions.



Grief seminar in Mistissini during the 11th Traditional Gathering.

During the first week of August, I went with my family to Waskaganish for a few days, then to Moose Factory where I was scheduled to do a grief seminar and some individual counseling for the Mocreebec Health Program. During one of my visits at the hospital, I had a wonderful opportunity to share the gospel message with a Native woman who was diagnosed with terminal cancer. She told me she understood the message of salvation and was ready to receive Christ into her heart. Her husband, who was with

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**Native Gospel Ministries**
of Canada, Inc.

11th Annual General Conference

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Vincent Yellow Old Woman of NAIM Ministries



OTTAWA, ONTARIO
June 9-11, 2006

Metropolitan Bible Church
on 453 Bank Street at Gladstone.

Conference Schedule

Friday June 9th 7PM

Saturday June 10th 10AM and 7PM

Sunday June 11th, 6PM

The Annual Conference is a wonderful time to be encouraged from the excellent preaching, testimonies and singing. Be sure to attend.

Contact Dr. Joe Jolly
at (613) 739-0112 or
e-mail drjjolly@sympatico.ca



Special Music by:
**Flaming Fire
Ministries**
and
Abraham Jolly

ON THE GO WITH DR. JOE

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her, also wanted to put his trust in Jesus. What a blessing it was for me to pray with both of them and lead them in the sinner's prayer. She has since gone home to be with the Lord.

Two days after we got home to Ottawa, I flew to Thunder Bay for a 2-day workshop on Cross-Cultural Communications, invited by Ishaawin Family Resources. One of the people who took the workshop was my grade four teacher. I was humbled to know that she made a special trip from Waterloo, to see one of her former students. She has been a Christian for many years.



Erica Jantzen (left) attended the seminar in Thunder Bay. She was my grade 4 teacher in Moose Factory, Ontario.

During the second last week of August I went to Ouje Bougoumou with Sheila and Little Joe. There was no room at the Capissit Lodge in O.J. so we stayed a couple of nights at the Chibougamau Hotel. Shortly after 10:00 p.m. on the first night, I received a call from the Ouje Bougoumou clinic to inform me that a suicide had taken place in the community. I made immediate plans to drive to Ouje Bougoumou to be with the bereaved family. Sheila and Little Joe didn't want to stay by themselves at the hotel so they came with me. I was already tired that evening after a healing family circle and feast at the Wapachees' camp. The parents and almost all the brothers and sisters of the late Henry Wapachee were there.

When I got to Ouje Bougoumou I went directly to the clinic. A lot of people were there including the police who asked me to talk to the young man who discovered the body. After talking to him, I went to see the bereaved family in their home where I shared words of comfort from the Bible. I also gave the sermon at the funeral. There was a good spirit at the service, and despite the circumstances people were encouraged.

I was in Eastmain from August 31 to September 3. I had the joy of praying with a Native couple to accept Christ on August 31st. I went back to Eastmain again the middle of September to do a seminar on Cross-Cultural Communications with the elders. While there I prayed with Gilbert Mayappo to receive Christ. The next evening we had a service in his home, which was filled with his family members, relatives and friends. This was one of those special times when I sensed the presence of God while preaching the message of salvation. Gilbert had terminal cancer. He died a couple of weeks later, after he accepted the Lord. I counseled another elderly man and prayed with him for assurance of salvation. He was very sick too and he died about the same time as Gilbert. At the funeral, their friends and loved ones were comforted knowing they had both received Christ into their hearts.

In October in Waskaganish, I prayed with a man to accept the Lord. He was going through a difficult time in his marriage and needed to talk to someone. Afterward he made a public confession in church that he had accepted

the Lord. When I saw him a week later he sounded determined to go all the way for the Lord. Pray for things to work out in his marriage.

In Eastmain during the second week of October, a young man came to see me for counseling because he decided to give his life to Christ. This was October 13th which also happens to be the day my wife and I accepted the Lord back in 1974. It was a special blessing for me to lead someone to Christ on my spiritual birthday. All these people I prayed with to accept Christ are first time decisions. It's encouraging to see all of them growing in their Christian walk.

On October 26th Little Joe celebrated his 10th birthday. He invited his friends to his party and they had a great time. Every year I prepare a big meal on his birthday and invite some of our friends in the city.



Little Joe invited his classmates to his birthday party.

There was a suicide in Mistissini on the first week of November and the family requested me to help out with the crisis counseling for the bereaved family. I spoke also at a community service on Sunday evening in the school gym, with about 500 people in attendance. There was gospel singing, and I shared a message that related to the gift of life. This gave me a good opportunity to share the message of salvation.

November 23-24, I went to Toronto to speak twice at the gospel meetings hosted by Scott Mission. I used to minister there quite often in the past and it was wonderful to be invited again. I took Little Joe with me so I could spend some time with him. We took the Via Rail from Ottawa so I could relax and enjoy the ride. He had his DVD player with him and enjoyed watching his movies. In Toronto, we went up on the CN Tower and checked out a couple of malls.

In early December I spoke at the Waskaganish Cree Gospel Fellowship's annual Christmas banquet. There was a good turnout in the gym where the feast was held. On Sunday I spoke twice for their regular services. During the evening service the ladies in the church put on one of the best Christmas pageants I have seen. The play was well written and the costumes were well designed. They even had a real baby for the manger scene.

After I got back to Ottawa from Ouje Bougoumou, the Board of Directors had a teleconference meeting. Then we went to Moose Factory for the Christmas break. I was thankful for the opportunities I had to share at the

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M E S S A G E

KINGDOM DIVERSITY

Sociologists are talking about the “browning” of North America. Eighty percent of the world’s population is already brown. In the United States by the year 2040, half the American population will be people of color. The radically shifting demographics have huge implications, politically, socially, economically, and spiritually. As a church it is very important to understand the signs of the times, in particular as it relates to the “browning” of North America and God’s purpose in our countries. In our time-space world of nations, states, and political ideologies, it is sometimes hard to find our way to relate to those who are different from ourselves. But I do not think God has a problem at all, because diversity is a reflection of His nature.

The Kingdom of Heaven is the reign of God established through the lordship of Jesus Christ. His disciples misinterpreted the work of Christ and the coming of His kingdom. They thought Jesus was going to overthrow the Roman government to establish the kingdom. But He said, “My kingdom is not of this world.”

In Acts 10 we see God revealing the nature of the kingdom to the church. Until Acts 10 all Christians were Jewish. They had yet to understand that salvation was not only for the Jew, but also for the non-Jew. They were thinking of a kingdom that did not include Gentiles. Peter and all the apostles had been raised with a Jewish attitude reinforced culturally and religiously from the Torah to prejudice them against Gentile people. This attitude about people of color was brought with them into their new found relationship with Jesus Christ. God had to dismantle their old covenant-based thinking about the kingdom and replace it with an understanding based upon the new covenant for all tribes, tongues and nations.

With Peter’s trance in Acts 10, God began to deconstruct their old way of thinking. Peter saw a sheet coming out of heaven filled with all kinds of animals, and God spoke to him, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.” God was beginning to rearrange Peter’s thinking, his attitude towards Gentiles. This happened three times and the sheet was taken back into heaven. Then some Romans arrived because their centurion, Cornelius, had had a visit from an angel. They took Peter back to Cornelius’ house.

Talking with them, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. He said to them: “You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean.” (Acts 10:27,28) Here Peter got part one of the dismantling of his understanding of the kingdom.

Part two comes in verse 34. Peter said, “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism, but accepts men and people from every



Richard Twiss

nation who fear Him and do what is right.” In verse 44, revival broke out in Cornelius’ house as Peter continued to preach. The Holy Spirit came, and uncircumcised people spoke in tongues and were baptized.

When God looks at planet Earth He does not single out people groups as favorites based upon nation of origin or cultural or ethnic identity. Instead God accepts all people who fear Him and do what is right. That is a kingdom world view in contrast with a cultural or ethnic world view. That is part two.

Then rumors went up to Jerusalem that Peter was hanging out with colored folks. He had broken cultural and societal laws by going into the house of these Gentiles. “The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.” (Acts 11:1) That should have been cause

for a huge celebration, recognizing that God was now saving Gentiles, delivering them out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His Son. But because their world view was too small, they could not recognize the new thing God was doing. Their world view had not been enlarged to see God’s heart for the nations. Rather than rejoicing, the circumcised believers criticized Peter and said, “You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.” (Acts 11:2-3)

Now these critics were not immature Christians. These were apostles, men and women who had walked with Jesus. They were there when Jesus called Lazarus out of the grave. They were there to see Jesus healing the crippled, and casting out demons. These heard Jesus say, “You have seen me do this. Now you do the same in My name.” And He sent them out two by two. They themselves had experienced the power and anointing of God to heal the sick, to cleanse the lepers and to preach the gospel. They were deeply committed to Christ. No one could question their acquaintance with the power and the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Yet because their world view was too small, for all intents and purposes they were anointed, empowered, born-again bigots in the kingdom of heaven. Had God not enlarged their thinking they would have continued erroneously believing salvation is for us, not for them.

Being a Christian does not eliminate the possibility of wrong thinking. Being deeply committed to Christ and filled with the Spirit of God does not exclude us from the possibility of being bigoted or prejudiced in our thinking towards those who are different from ourselves.

Within a Trinitarian theology you have the oneness of God within the expression of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Before the beginning began, you had radical community in the relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So within God himself is diversity, is mutuality, is community, is shalom, is wholeness, is harmony.

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TESTIMONY

MY PERSONAL TESTIMONY

The best decision I ever made in my life happened when I accepted Jesus as my personal Saviour two years ago. When I gave my life to the Lord I gave up the heavy burdens that I was carrying, and I felt as if a huge load was lifted from my shoulders. That was on April 2, 2004, in Ottawa, Ontario. On that day I received my first Bible and from that day on I started reading it daily. Since that time my life began to change. That's when I started developing a personal relationship with God. My faith and trust in God has been strong since that time two years ago. Having God in my life has brought me many gifts and miracles, especially peace and happiness. He just keeps on providing for my needs and pouring out such incredible blessings on me. Sometimes I get overwhelmed and even emotional when I talk about the many things that have been happening to me in the last two years.

In the spring of 2004, I had been in a state of deep depression. I felt that I was a total failure both in my personal and professional life. I was on sick leave and I was getting counselling from a Christian helper by the name of Dr. Joseph Jolly. He had asked me if I had ever read the Bible and of course I had to say no because that was the truth. I had never even owned a Bible in my life. Dr. Jolly also asked me if I would consider giving my life to the Lord and I told him that I would think about it. Well, little did I know that God was already working in my life. One day after several counselling sessions, I admitted to Dr. Jolly that I was ready to accept the Lord into my life and I finally let go of my stubborn and controlling attitude.

I totally surrendered my life to God when I made a second decision which was to resign from my job at the Cree Health Board. This decision was made in consultation with God, of course, and from that day on my life began to change. Little did I know that God had something planned for me. Soon after that, I started another job that I didn't even have to apply for because I let God arrange things for me. I believe that all things are possible with God. I also believe what the Word of God says: "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7).

In the winter of 2005, I began experiencing extreme pain in my knees and could hardly walk at times. I also had difficulty sleeping at night due to the pain. I was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis and was given a prescription for pain medication. However, I did not start taking these pills because I believed that God could heal me. I did not want to be diagnosed with any disease. So, I started to pray specifically for healing in my knees, and I read my Bible every day. In fact, I actually got down on my knees beside my bed even though I could hardly tolerate the pain. I knew that I had to do it because Jesus suffered worse pain for me. I prayed the same prayer every day for several weeks and the pain gradually disappeared. Today I have no



Laretta McKenzie

pain and I give God all the praise and glory for healing me. I am still thanking Him today in my daily prayers.

Another thing happened when I was living with my daughter Kelly in Chisasibi. Whenever we would go out for a ride she would do the driving because she did not trust my driving. She was afraid that I would hit someone or get into an accident. I would meet people driving by and I couldn't see them waving at me. So, she suggested that I might need new glasses and that I should see the visiting eye specialist in January 2005. The eye doctor told me that I needed more than new glasses, that I needed surgery, but would have to wait about six months. I was told that I was 'legally blind' and that I could no longer drive my vehicle. I felt so helpless because I

had been independent all of my life. I needed my eyesight so I began to pray about it. I asked God to help me see so that I can do His work. One month later I received a call from the doctor's office informing me that I could have surgery immediately if I was ready to go. I thanked God and agreed to go. After the surgery I realized how blind I actually had become. It was like I was living in a thick dark cloud of smoke. I give all the credit for intervention to my Heavenly Father. Today I have my eyesight and can actually see colors. I can see clearly now.

I love reading the Word of God every day. One day I read this verse: "Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4). And I expressed my desire to go back to the teaching profession which was my first passion. I was an elementary and secondary school teacher for more than twenty years. But this time I wanted to teach adults. God granted me this desire in June 2005 when He opened the door of opportunity for me to teach in the First Nations Bachelor of Social Work program at the University of Quebec in Abitibi-Temiscamingue. I received a phone call from the campus in Val-d'Or and moved here in July, 2005. So now I am back to my original passion of teaching. And the amazing thing is that it doesn't even feel like a job. I get paid to do something that I love and enjoy doing. I cannot ask for more. God has been so good to me.

What an awesome God! He is faithful, and He does fulfill His promises that He gives us in His Word. I feel inadequate when I want to express my gratitude to my Heavenly Father. One thing I do know for sure: God loves me and has a plan and purpose for my life, as He does for all His children who come to Him (including you out there). All you have to do is pay attention to Him, acknowledge Him, talk to Him on a daily basis and you will experience miracles and blessings in your life.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Joseph Jolly. He is the angel that God sent to intervene in my life in order to bring me closer to God. I want to thank God and Dr. Jolly and his wife Sheila who are now my friends. Thank you for being so patient with me. May God bless you and pour out the desires of your heart. God loves you and so do I.

2005 NGM NATIVE CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

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Since George and Rick Small had to leave Sunday morning, I shared a song in their place and a brief testimony about our ministry with NGM. On Sunday morning Richard spoke at Willie Jock's church on the Akwesasne Reserve. It was a good experience for the Conference guests to attend a Mohawk church in New York state. The distance is about 60 miles from Ottawa to Akwesasne. On Sunday evening Richard shared at the Metropolitan Bible Church and the people there really appreciated his preaching of the Word. Sherry Wiestche from Waskaganish, Quebec, shared a couple of songs before Richard's message. It was encouraging to see Chief Robert Wiestche from the Crees of the Waskaganish First Nation at the Conference.



Harry Jolly and his son Isaac.



Fellowship meal at the Conference.

The Conference, as always, was free of charge. We rely upon the goodwill offerings for the special guests' accommodations, meals, travel expenses, honorariums and other related expenses. The total offerings came to \$2399.35. We received other donations through our office during the year and we thank the Lord that we were able to cover all of our expenses. PTL!



Sherry Weistche from Waskaganish, Quebec shared in music at the Conference.

KINGDOM DIVERSITY

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The apostle John, standing before the God's throne, says, "After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, every tribe, every people, every language standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb." (Revelation 7:9) You have around the throne of God radical community expressed in remarkable diversity, which has always been God's intention for human beings because no one language could ever adequately express the indescribability of God.

We embrace this diversity and try to be culturally relevant in how we present Christ and the message of the kingdom to various audiences. In the mission of God there is a concern for community that includes social, economic, spiritual, and relational concerns, so that the body of Christ truly becomes one in a caring community. Jesus said that the way people will know you are my disciples is by the love you have for one another. If Christians do not have the spiritual capacity to love one another, to lay down our lives for one another in the midst of our unique cultural and ethnic differences, how will the world ever say to the church, "We can tell you are disciples of Jesus because we can see the quality of relationships that you have with each other." As we become browner and browner only the church will have the authority to speak the message of the kingdom in the midst of

conflict. But we cannot do it if we cannot authentically love one another in the household of God.

Dr. Billy Graham back in the 80's is quoted in Phoenix as having said these words, "The greatest moments of Native North American history may lie ahead of us if a great spiritual renewal and awakening should take place. The Native American has been a sleeping giant. He is awakening. The original North Americans could become the evangelists who will help win North America for Christ. Remember these forgotten people."

God did not put Native people on the earth to be the mission field for the body of Christ for all time and eternity. Every group in the mission of God has a distinct contribution to make. When God looks at people He has no partiality. He accepts all people equally. We are living in a generation that is witnessing an unprecedented extension of the kingdom of heaven among the nations. Having a kingdom world view, having an understanding of the mission of God which affirms diversity, which welcomes and causes cultures to flourish in Christ, is desperately needed. May God give us a deep affection and a passion for all our brothers and sisters, and especially for those who are lost.

▼ Creative Responses to Grieving ▼

PART ONE

Since February 1998, I have been conducting grief seminars in the various Cree communities. A need for teaching the grief process had become apparent as we found many people “stuck” in their grief, not knowing how to grieve properly.

“Our culture has done everything in its power to rid itself of having to think of death and its consequences. As a result we don’t talk about it, or do a very good job preparing ourselves for its certain arrival. As a result we enter into the grieving process unprepared for what lies ahead.” (James R. White, *Grieving*, p. 22)

As I educated myself on the subject, I learned that grief is a natural part of human experience, an expected reaction to a loss. It comes in many forms. People grieve through a job loss, material loss, ill health, aging, divorce, death. The loss of a loved one (bereavement) is the most widely recognized form. Grief consists of the thoughts and feelings as well as the psychological, social, physical, and spiritual reactions we experience with the death of a loved one. As such it is individual, unique. Everyone will experience some form of grief, and go through a grief process. Anyone old enough to love is old enough to grieve, even young children. Sometimes it is a very painful process, but God has designed us to grieve through our losses and find healing.

One pastor wrote, “I grieved with a couple whose 5 year old son was killed in a freak hunting accident. His father’s rifle discharged and killed the boy. For weeks I felt the pain, and I couldn’t shake it.”

I. Why Grieve?

The overall purpose of grief is to bring you to the point of making necessary changes so that you can live with the loss in a healthy way.

A. Intentionally Grieve. Confront your grief rather than ignoring or denying it. Seek a resolution for it. When your loved one dies, you cannot avoid it. But remember it is a process, and with every process, there is a goal. Go ahead and grieve. Grieve heartily. Grieve so that you can live and love again. Then prepare to move on.

B. Manage Your Pain. You must make a decision as to how you will manage your pain. Don’t avoid the pain-attack it. Don’t endure the grief-manage it. Choose to do the grief work, and remember that grieving is a journey. Life itself is a journey. You need to experience every part of that journey fully, but you don’t want to stop at one place too long. Deal



Dr. Joseph Jolly conducts grief workshops in the Native communities.

with the grief now so that you can move on with your life. Loss changes us, but do not let the death of a loved one kill your spirit. You must learn to let go.

II. How Do You Grieve?

A. Face The Emotional Pain. Emotional pain consists of a pyramid of feelings such as fear, anger, guilt and sadness. You need to identify and explore those feelings. Don’t delay it, don’t avoid it, don’t try to go around it. Go through it. You cannot avoid reacting to your grief.

If we refuse to deal with grief then good grief turns into bad grief. Unresolved grief can affect your body and mind. Some people get sick and some die of a broken heart. Grief resembles steam in an engine. Unless the steam can escape in a controlled manner, pressure builds up and the boiler explodes. If you are struggling with grief, talk to someone about what you are going through. Talking about it helps.

Some of us have never learned to cry. We are afraid to let go of our tears. God has given tears to express the deepest feelings words cannot express. It’s right to cry when you are grieving. Tears bring healing. Even Jesus cried when his friend died (John 11:33-35).

B. Take Time For Yourself. Learn to appreciate time alone by spending some time each day doing something that you enjoy by yourself. Learn to be a companion to your self. Even begin

to talk to yourself and learn to reflect on your feelings.

C. Attend Support Groups.

III. What Is The Grieving Process?

A. Three Most Common Factors That Affect The Grieving Process.

- Your relationship with the deceased.
- Your personality characteristics related to your personal circumstances. If you are established in your own career or have fulfilling employment, you have an asset in approaching the grief process. Work can serve an excellent distraction by reminding you that life is more than the relationship.
- Type of death. Death, no matter how it comes, is tough.

B. Themes And Expressions Of Grief.

- Physical Sensations: Tightness in one's chest or throat, heart palpitations, hollowness in the stomach, dryness in the mouth, shortness of breath.
- Feelings: Anxiety, fear, anger, guilt, loneliness, sadness and depression often emerge during the grief process.
- Behaviors: Crying, preoccupation, absent mindedness, withdrawal from others, etc.
- Cognition: Widowed people often find they are preoccupied with them selves and the death of their partner, and they are often disinterested in normal activities.
- Spirit: The bereaved's spiritual life may change.

C. Basic Landmarks Of Grief Work.

- Recognizing and accepting the fact that your loved one is dead and unable to return.
- Allowing yourself to experience all the feelings related to your loss.
- Finding a place for the memories of your deceased spouse in your head and heart that adequately honors what you had together, but makes room to move on with life.
- Adjusting in life according to your own desires own interests.
- Reinvesting in life according to your own desires own interests.

IV. How Can You Take Charge Of Your Grief?

Grieving takes work, intentionality, and assertiveness on your part. Take charge of your grief. You, and you alone, can take charge of your grief work toward wholeness and healing.

Grief work doesn't just happen. It takes time and it is difficult. Don't be afraid to get professional help. Sometimes assistance is needed in order to become healthy again.

Creative Responses To Grieving

Read a few good books on grief. Attend a grief workshop or support group.

Plan the funeral rituals and memorial services.

Decide how to allocate the belongings of the deceased.

Pay attention to your self-esteem and self-care. Be gentle and consistent with yourself.

Take time away and make vacation plans. Plan some "firsts" you have dreamed of.

Give yourself permission to say no. Do not be bound by promises and expectations; these things are not sacred.

Spend time with journaling and self talk. Be creative in getting out thoughts and feelings about special memories or conflicts you may have had with the deceased. Think about some of your fondest memories. Write a letter to the deceased at various times during the grieving process. Write letters to people who were important to you during the illness and death.

V. Our Faith In God Will Not Exempt Us From Grieving.

Christians are not exempt from grief, but our faith in God will provide us with the resources we need to deal effectively with grief. Christians grieve, but not as those who have no hope (I Thess.4:13). Hope is the key to the grieving process.

If you go to the tomb of Buddha today, his body and remains would still be there. The same would be true of Mohammed. But if you were to go where Jesus was buried, His tomb would be empty. Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Christians live in the hope of the resurrection. When Christ returns the dead will rise and we will be reunited with our loved ones. Hope makes grief a means of healing. See John 5:28, 29; 11:25. Available to the Christian is the comfort of God Himself. (II Corinthians 1:3-4)

Grief is a painful process but recovery is possible. We need to commit our loss to God and ask Him to help us overcome our grief.

M E S S A G E

DIVERGING TO A POST-MODERN WORLD

The Native community has been changing tremendously over the last decade in North America. People are upset by the changes and by many things not going well within the Native communities.

There is a huge movement in the Native community back to the traditions, back to the elders' teaching. Some people have lost their own traditions, like the Mi'kmaq people in eastern Canada. They have been part of the Catholic church for such a long time that they no longer practise spiritual ways of the Mi'kmaq. But in the resurgence of Native pride they want to experience nativeness, so they have Lakota elders from South Dakota come and teach Lakota religion to Mi'kmaq people. Some say Mi'kmaq people should be authentically Mi'kmaq but are now something else.

Other people are in the cities where many different nations and traditions come together in one Native community. As people begin to share their traditions and songs there comes to be what is called Pan-Indianism, a melting pot nativeness that people are embracing. People who never had sweat lodge are going to sweat lodge. People who never burned sweetgrass are now burning sweetgrass. This sharing of traditions is going on in the Native community right across Canada. It depends on whether people still have their language as to how tied to the past their traditions are. But they are still greatly affected by changes in the world around them.

In the general world, especially the U.S. and Canada, we are living in what is called a post-modern world. That would mean that the modern world is over. The question then is what do I mean by the modern world?

The whole idea of the modern world is something called the "triumph of technology" and the "triumph of man." It is the idea that we are all getting better, that we are becoming stronger, that we are becoming perfect, that we are approaching a "golden era," that we are going to create a new world order. It is a false hope because none of that is going to happen except through Jesus. But modernity believes it is going to come through the ingenuity of man. We are going to control this chaos and we are going to create something that is like Babel, a tower that reaches heaven. That is what evolution is all about, and physical and social evolution looks down on native people.

When I was in university professors taught social evolution. They said the family is the most basic primitive organization. Then there is the clan, then the tribe. Then there is a more organized nation state. When there is a city in the nation state and an empire, then there is a world power. When you look at that, you say those poor indigenous people are way back there on the evolutionary rung, craving this new world order. People on the highest level say, "You want to be like me, right?" People believe that. "Everybody wants to be like me." Especially with democracy "Of course the whole



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world wants our kind of democracy, because this is the social evolution of what it should be."

Even the church has embraced that kind of mentality. We build things that are impressive and try to be impressive. We keep control of everything. The principle is that there is chaos and out of chaos comes order. That is evolution. Chaos is scattered matter but then certain things go into operation and we evolve from one-celled organisms to us. We are so complex we are much better than anything else.

The modern world is full of pride about itself. The Native person, the indigenous person is considered uncivilized, needing to be educated and made like others. Native people have been taught and educated to be made like Canadians and we are still not. It just did not work.

We are very adaptive. Not many Native people said after they had a gun that they wanted to go back to the old way. Everyone picked up the gun and got a better one. We take the best from the past, but we are ready to move on and do whatever we need to do. Microphones, computers, internet... There is nothing non-Native about that. It is useful to fulfill a purpose. But technology is not our god. Technology will only make somebody who does not know Jesus into a more proficient barbarian. People have learned how to kill babies through abortion very very well technologically. That is not civilization. That is very precise murder. (I say to anyone who may have experienced an abortion that through all that God's mercy is here. If it were not for the grace of God we would all be in the same boat about something.) Modern people have equated technology with civilization. We are reaching for the stars. That was the promise of Babel. But I think some of the things in Native communities are far more civilized.

This younger generation that you live in right now does not believe in the same things that you grew up believing. Almost everybody here comes from what I would refer to as a modern world. There are certain things in your ways of thinking that the younger post-modern generation just does not have. When you talk to them, unless you know where they are coming from, you will not make any sense to them nor make much of an impact on them. I know because I have kids. We raised them in Christian belief and read the Bible to them. But they had been so impacted by television, by the internet, by their schools and by just living in this world, that they have a whole lot of assumptions that are not the same as the assumptions I have. If you do not know that, you are going to say that you do not understand the kids these days. You cannot be effective in reaching a group of people if you do not know what they are all about.

You are modern. Your children are post-modern. You have been hurt by institutions but you still have some faith in them. You still go to the polls.

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U P D A T E

ON THE GO WITH DR. JOE

Continued from page 4

Cree Gospel Chapel. Right after Boxing Day I went to Eastmain for 3 days, then returned to Moose Factory to pick up my family.

In January the only place I went for outside ministry was Kashechewan. There has been a crisis in the community since the summer evacuation, and a number of people were affected by the recent fire at the police station which claimed the lives of two youth. I was part of a team that did grief seminars and individual counseling for four days.



The Waskaganish Cree Gospel Fellowship held their annual Christmas banquet as a means of outreach in the community.

During February I went to Waskaganish, Ouje Bougoumou and Eastmain where I always meet a lot of Native people. In March, I was planning to spend much of my time in Ottawa but I was called to do some crisis counseling for 3 days in Waswanipi. I was kept busy counseling a number of people with unresolved grief.

March 14-16, I was invited to be one of the facilitators for Waskaganish's Local Wellness Conference and to speak on *Men's Issues And Roles*. This was a community effort and the Chief and some councillors were in attendance.



Little Joe was very anxious to open his presents on Christmas Day.

Then I was asked by Nishnawbe Aski Nation to go to Kashechewan again for crisis counseling. I was there for 4 days but the response was not the same as the first time I went in January.

Before the Easter break I went to Waskaganish and Eastmain. A group of Christians from the Waskaganish Cree Gospel Fellowship went to Eastmain for an outreach ministry. Pastor Paul Moses asked me to share the message at an evening service on Palm Sunday. The service started at 7:30 p.m. and didn't end until past midnight. The Christians rejoiced to see one person accept the Lord.

For the Easter break we went to Moose Factory, to fill the pulpit for two Sundays at the Cree Gospel Chapel during the goose break. While we were there I had an opportunity to go goose hunting myself. There was a lot of water at the camp but we had a successful hunt. Before we left for Moose Factory I had gone to a studio in Kanata and made three CDs for the Chapel's radio broadcast. The prerecorded messages were aired for three consecutive Sundays.

Again we thank you for your prayers for us, and encourage you to pray for the ministry as God leads us forward into another busy year.

DIVERGING TO A POST-MODERN WORLD

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You still go to church. The kids of this generation are profoundly disillusioned by everything. They do not have faith in institutions. The idea of political patronage that you get money because you are close to somebody in power is not of God. It is a shame. This generation has no faith in politics. They have no faith in business. You read about multi-million dollar wrongs happening in business communities. Kids look at it and say there is no faith. After the whole residential school problem, people have no faith in the church. Native people have been profoundly disappointed. The church failed us. Our leadership failed us. We know that. But we are still hopeful.

The idea of modernity is that there is chaos out there and we are going to bring order to it. Post-modernity is chaotic. That is just the way it is. Nobody knows what is going to happen. That is how kids think today. So when you come to them and you are dogmatic about something, they just discount you. They will quietly defy you or allow you. Modernity believes this about truth: Truth is absolute and I can know it. That is what made people so sure about things. This is the way it is and the way it should be. In post-modernity kids look at it this way: If it is true for you, that's okay. You do not have

kids arguing about philosophy or truth. They just say what they think and everybody in the group accepts it.

In the modern world you hide chaos in the basement. Keep chaos private. You do not show chaos in church. Best foot forward. Only the best for God. That is not the church. The church is reality. The church is struggling. Native people are more comfortable with reality and humanity.

I believe there are some things that we can hook up with in Native communities to say what God is like. There are some things we know about Him that are right. The rest of the story is Jesus. Missionaries were saying, "Nothing you know is right. Throw it out and I will start from scratch to teach you everything you need to know." It does not work that way. If you do that with somebody all you ever have is a child. But I have enough sense to know that God is already at work in lives drawing them to Himself. I just need to find out what He is doing and hook up with it. God is smarter than I am and knows how to speak to them. I give a message and somebody comes and says that they were just thinking about that. God knows what He is doing. He is big. He is wonderful. He is all about Jesus.

