

Huron Claus' Sermon 2019 My Heart's Desire

I'm proud to be a Native, First Nation, person by race, but I'm even more proud to be a follower of Jesus Christ—by his grace. I'm a fifth generation follower of Jesus Christ. It's quite a story about how I became a follower of Christ and of how the evangelistic organization that I now lead, CHIEF, began.

My family and my people, the Mohawks, were first touched by Jesus Christ in the 1700s because of the faithfulness of one young man. As this young man, who went to Yale at the age of 13, began to understand God's Word and love for people, the Lord put a passion in his heart for Native people. This young man's name was David Brainerd and at the age of 26 he went among our Native peoples in America declaring the Word of God.

Not only was Brainerd an evangelist but he was also a man of prayer.

I began to read Brainerd's diaries and was touched, literally to tears, because of his passion for sharing the gospel. On December 21, over 300 years ago, as he prepared to go to my people, the Mohawks, he prayed and recorded in his diary this prayer, "May these people truly understand the glory and the praise of God."

I'm a fifth generation follower of Jesus Christ. Brainerd's efforts led to the salvation of my great-great-great-grandfather, a Mohawk chief, and he was one of the first in his family to proclaim Jesus Christ. I can see, through the five generations, the faithfulness of God's hand upon our people and our ministry.

Back in the '40s, my dad was an evangelist to many tribes and people with *Youth for Christ International*, an amazing movement of God through the young people.

In fact, when God wants to send His message, he often begins to speak to the young generation. It was young men in *Youth for Christ* who shared the gospel across the country. My dad was one of these young men and another one of these was Dr. Billy Graham.



Huron Claus

In 1974, Dr. Graham held a gathering in Lausanne, Switzerland and invited my dad. I was just a teen then and I'll never forget what my dad said when he got back. He said, "Huron, you should have seen the real Indians, the Eastern Indians. There were literally hundreds of leaders and delegates..." My dad got quiet because, I believe, God touched him, then he continued, "And out of about 11,000 Christian leaders at that conference I was the only North American Native Christian believer. We have had the Gospel within our nation, within our continent, for over five hundred years,

where are all the Native Christian leaders?" And that stuck in his heart and that was the beginning of CHIEF.

In 1975, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Dr. Graham had a crusade and dad and Dr. Graham had invited over a hundred Native Christian leaders, tribal leaders, educators, and pastors, to look at the state of the Native church. That was the birth of CHIEF. CHIEF exists to strengthen the Native church through evangelism, discipleship, and helps, and we've been doing that for 42 years. I'm the second generation to see that happen. As we speak God's truth from Alaska to South America, we are reaching tens of thousands of Native people.

When I look at David Brainerd's prayer, active over an expanse of over 300 years, and see thousands upon thousands of our Native people touched with the gospel, I'm humbled and blessed.

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My Heart's Desire *continued from cover*

I want to encourage you share the Gospel. No matter where you're at in life, you will have the opportunity to share the gospel with those around you.

I love the passage in Romans chapter 10 because it is an example of sharing Christ.

When I think of Paul, who wrote Romans, I think of a man who at one time was steeped in his own culture, a Jewish follower, a Hebrew of Hebrews, taught by some of the highest teachers of that day, a man who practiced the traditions of his people, and who had no business with the Gentiles. We read in Acts 9 how Paul met Jesus and how his life was completely changed. From that point on he began influencing the world for God. When Paul shared the message of Christ he was passionate and not only did he preach it but he lived it every day of his life.



When I think of Paul, I also think of a man of God who shared the gospel with intense focus. In one instance a snake bites him while he's preaching. If I was preaching and a snake bit me I would totally lose my train of thought. Not so for Paul who shook off the snake and continued preaching. Paul was focussed and passionate.

I want to hear the message of the heart of the man of God today. I want us to be effective in ministry.

My prayer is for the salvation of my people. When I look at Paul's life I see passion, love, and compassion for his people. He faced many trials but never gave up sharing the gospel. He was driven by love and compassion. God showed such incredible love in his life that he was driven to show that same love to others.

What is your deepest passion today?

How's your prayer life today? It was Paul's prayer that his people would be saved. Who do you pray for and what stirs your heart? If we are faithful in prayer we'll see God's hand work in a powerful way. Paul testified about the Jews saying that they had a zeal for God but not according to knowledge. My people, the First Peoples, are also a zealous and religious people but also not according to knowledge. People all over the world have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge, but, Paul says, Christ is the end of the Law, Christ completes the Law and is salvation for everyone that believes.

Do you want to be effective in everything God calls you to? What are you living for? What is your passion today? How passionate are you about talking to others about Jesus Christ? What is your prayer life like? Are you spending time in conversation with God?

As a fifth generation follower of Jesus Christ my dad would say, "The Bible is not just words on paper but this is the Word of God. Every time you open up this book you open up the mouth of God. I want you to go to your room, son, and have a conversation with God." I would go to my room and have a conversation with God. I see in Scripture that God speaks to us.

Spend some time in prayer today. Pray for the salvation of our people. We share the gospel with people from Alaska to South America and it's been a joy to lead many people to Christ. One praise I give to the Lord is, for one of the first times, I'm seeing Native chiefs calling me to ask for prayer for their people.

In our culture giving a gift to honour someone is to give a gift and the greatest way of offending is rejecting a gift. When I talk to our Native people I say that the Creator's greatest gift to us is the gift of His Son to our people but Native people say that Christianity is the white man's religion. I ask them, "Is it possible that we've become the greatest offenses to the Creator by rejecting his gift?" That question has opened up a lot of conversations and many people have come to accept the gift of Jesus Christ.

We come from many different nations and different tribes but when we get to heaven we're going to sing in one language, the hallelujah language.

Gracious heavenly Father, how good, precious, loving, and faithful you are. We acknowledge you today. I'm often broken before you because of how magnificent you are. I thank you for the way you've touched my life and the lives of others like Paul; you touch peoples' lives every day. I pray for these people that they will be touched by you and be passionate for you to reach out to those around them, careful to listen to those around them and ready to share your story of hope, victory, and forgiveness. Lord, speak to us and change us. Give us opportunities to share the gospel, in Jesus' precious name, Amen.

Excerpts of a sermon delivered July 22, 2018 by Huron Claus at the Metropolitan Bible Church in Ottawa, Ontario.

23rd Annual Native Christian Conference

We had our 23rd Annual Native Christian Conference in Ottawa on July 20–22, 2018. We had all the sessions in the theatre at the Metropolitan Bible Church. We have been using the theatre for years now and we have enjoyed the soft and comfortable cushioned seats in there because our services tend to go on for about three and half hours. No one seems to mind the length of the services because the people really enjoy listening to the various testimonies, special music and the preaching of the Word.

Our keynote speaker this year was Rev. Huron Claus. He is a fifth-generation follower of Jesus Christ. He comes from the Mohawk/Kiowa tribes of New York and Oklahoma. Huron is the President/CEO at CHIEF, Inc (Christian Hope Indian Eskimo Fellowship). Mr. Claus resides in Phoenix, Arizona, with his wife, Lois, and his two adult children. Huron did a great job in preaching the Word.

Altogether Huron gave five powerful messages at the conference. His Sunday morning message at the Metropolitan Bible Church was entitled “My Heart’s Desire.” His text was Romans 10:1–4. After the morning service a number of people who attend the Met approached me and said they really appreciated Huron’s message.

If you are interested, you can hear Huron Claus’ Sunday morning message “My Heart’s Desire” on the internet. To begin your search, first type “Metropolitan Bible Church”

and then click “Sermons – Metropolitan Bible Church.” In the “sermon search” type “Huron Claus.” I guarantee you will enjoy and be blessed when you listen to his message.

There was a good attendance for the conference this year. We had our NGM Board of Directors meeting during the conference and it was good to take care of all business matters related to NGM’s ministry. In the past some of the Board members have brought some of their family members to the conference.

It is a lot of work to have the banquet but it has become a fixture at our annual conference. The conference guests had a wonderful fellowship meal



Clockwise from top: Keynote speaker for the 2018 NGM Conference was Huron Claus.

Kene and Milly Jackson minister in music at the Bilberry Creek Baptist Church in Orleans, Ontario.

Jerry and Edna Quequish from Weagamow Lake, Ontario.



Creek Baptist Church in Orleans, Ontario. He preached there two years ago and his ministry was well-received.

For special music we invited Kene and Milly Jackson from Calgary, Alberta. They did a wonderful job and many people appreciated their music. We also invited Francine Weistche from Waskaganish, Quebec, but

she was not able to come. She had a cold and could not sing because she had lost her voice. I also scheduled my son Joseph Seth and myself for special music at the conference. We always have an open mic at the conference to give opportunity for other musicians who want to share a song or a testimony.



The conference is free of charge but we rely upon the goodwill offerings and donations to cover its costs. This year the total expenses for the conference came to about \$13,500. We praise God

that we were able to cover all the expenses for the conference through the freewill offerings and special donations that came in through our office. We managed to receive enough funds to cover the costs for the conference but we had to delay some payments until the funds built up again. It costs money for travel, accommodations, meals and honorarium for the speaker and musicians we invite. For some reason the funds have been slow to come in this year. We did manage to pay for the whole costs of the conference. NGM is a faith ministry and we commit the whole conference to the Lord in prayer.

We always plan the conference without any money because we believe and put our trust in God to provide and supplies our needs. We thank God for His great faithfulness in answering prayer for the 23rd NGM Conference. We want to thank those who gave and had a part in making this possible. This year I am hoping that we will receive enough funds to cover all the conference expenses.

Clockwise from top: Fellowship meal at the Conference.

Richard and Miriam Williams helped to prepare the banquet meal.

Refreshments at the Bilberry Creek Baptist Church.

together that was prepared by the ladies and some men who attended. We want to thank everyone who volunteered to help by cooking and setting up the tables for the meal. We made sure the kitchen was clean when we left by washing all the dirty dishes, pots and pans afterwards. The banquet was a complete success.



On Sunday evening Huron preached at the Bilberry Creek Baptist Church and the ladies served refreshments after the service. The people enjoyed the service and there was good fellowship time over refreshments afterwards. This year Dr. Falls will be preaching twice at the Bilberry

On the Go with Dr. Joe 2018–2019

May 28–June 1, 2018

There have been a number of deaths in Waswanipi, Quebec during the past couple of years. I was invited by the Chief and Council, through the Waswanipi Health and Fitness Center, to provide individual counselling services and to do grief workshops in the community. I went to Waswanipi on May 28–June 1 and counselled a number of people while I was there.

June 4–8

I went back to Waswanipi on June 4–8 for counselling services. Two days before my trip to Waswanipi, there was a boating accident and two young men from the community drowned. There were three men in the boat and one of them survived by swimming to shore. After a massive search, the bodies of the two men who drowned have been recovered. The whole community was affected by the loss of the two young men who drowned and while I was there, I talked to a number of people who were grieving.

June 11–15

On June 11-15 I was invited by the Community/Health Wellness in Oujé-Bougoumou to do individual counselling services and a workshop for the elders during National Elders Awareness Day. My workshop topic was Elder Abuse and there was a good response for the session. I was impressed by the interest and lively interaction by the participants. I relate well to the elders whenever I do a workshop for them because I speak Cree and I also share spiritual truths with them. Most of the elders are Christians.



Far left: Memorial Service in Waswanipi for the two young men who drowned.

Left: Elders Workshop in Oujé-Bougoumou.

Above: Cleaning fresh walleye for supper.



Clockwise from far left:
Music is always a highlight
at the youth camp meetings.

Special music guests Kene
and Milly Jackson.

(Left to right): My sisters
Gertie Diamond and Daisy
Moar, with our brother Harry
Jolly playing the guitar.

Huron Claus preaching
at the Metropolitan Bible
Church

Fellowship meal at the
Conference.



June 27–30

I went to Waskaganish, Quebec to speak at a Youth Camp on June 27-30. This was the second time I was invited to go there. It was nice to spend time with the youth from my home reserve and to share God's Word with them. The camp is located a few miles out in the bay and it was relaxing for me to stay in the bush for a couple of days. The youth had a great time swimming, playing outdoor games and fishing. They had services in the evening.

July 15–19

I went back to Waswanipi on July 15–19. While I was there I counselled the mothers of the two young men who drowned during the first week in June. Both mothers are strong believers and they said the Word of God is their greatest source of comfort and strength. I counselled quite a number of people in Waswanipi and I thought my time in the community was well worth it.

July 20–23

We held our 23rd Annual NGM Native Christian Conference in Ottawa on July 20–23. There was a good attendance this year for the Conference. Our keynote speaker, Huron Claus, did a great job in sharing the Word during all the sessions. He preached twice on Sunday morning at the Metropolitan Bible Church and his messages were very well-received by the church members. On Sunday evening Huron spoke at the Bilberry Creek Baptist Church in Orleans, Ontario. My two older sisters, Daisy Moar and Gertie Diamond, who recently lost their husbands, came to the conference and they both said their spiritual needs were met.

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On the Go with Dr. Joe 2018–2019 *continued*

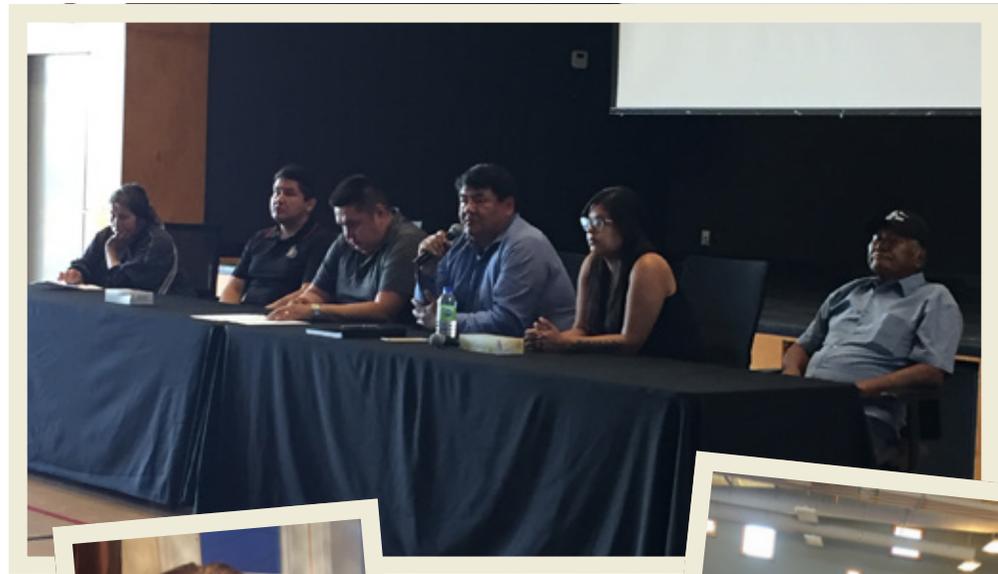
Clockwise from top: The Cree Nation of Waswanipi Chief and Council hosted the Conference on Social Issues in the Community.

Attendees of the Waswanipi Conference on Social Issues in the Community.

The Wemindji Band Office.

Roast Canada Goose with potato salad and peas.

My cousin Christina (Katapatuk) Cooper lives in Waswanipi and she invited me for supper. She prepared oven roasted Canada goose and made potato salad to go with it. Whenever I go to the Cree communities, I get a chance to eat a lot of wild meat.



August 12–17

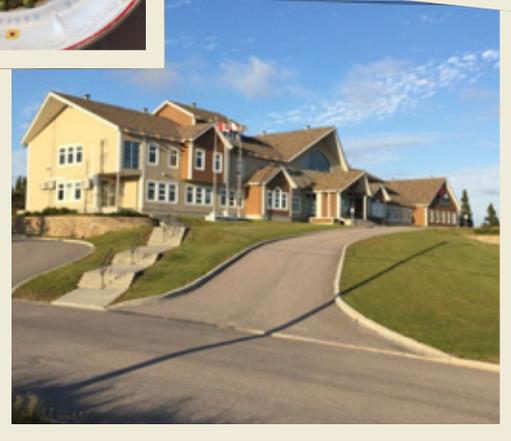
I went back to Waswanipi on August 12–16. While I was there the Cree Nation of Waswanipi hosted a conference on Social Issues in the Community. I was asked to do a presentation on the grief process during one of the plenary sessions. There was a good discussion that followed after my presentation. Those in attendance asked me a number of questions about grief, which I was happy to answer. I counseled a number of people who are dealing with grief.



Over the years I have been to Waswanipi a number of times and I know quite a few people there. There are many Christians in Waswanipi that I know and I have a few relatives there. I went to residential school at the Mohawk Institute in Brantford, Ontario with some of the people there who are about my age. I went to the Mohawk Institute in 1964–66 and there were students there from Waswanipi.

August 27–31

I went to Wemindji, Quebec on August 27–31. It has been a while since the last time I went there, so I was looking forward to going. I went to residential school with many people in Wemindji, so I know quite a few people there. My niece Dianne and her husband Thomas Mistacheesick live there with their family, so I have relatives in Wemindji. While I was there, I had contact with a lot of people and I took time to talk to them.



I was very encouraged of my visit to Wemindji because I counselled quite a number of people there. I counselled a young couple that accepted the Lord about seven months ago. It was a blessing to meet these new believers. They became Christians through the gospel meetings held by Evangelist Lot Thunder and Pastor George Hester from Waskaganish. I also talked to another new Christian who accepted the Lord at these meetings. I know this man's mother from residential school. There is a small group



Left, below and right: Gospel Band in Wemindji.



Daisy Georgekish is a retired Cree Cultural teacher for the Cree School Board. I offered her a ride home after our visit, but she declined because she had her own car. I was very impressed that she drives her own car and has the independence to do things for herself.

The Wellness Program rented a truck for me in Wemindji.



coming to Wemindji. There was a Native missionary couple in Fort George (Chisasibi) and we used to have Bible studies for the children in the community. Sometimes we

of Pentecostal Christians in Wemindji and they asked me to speak at their mid-week Bible study, which I was very happy to do. Pray for them to get a regular pastor.

I counseled two couples who are serious about quitting drinking. They wanted to know what to do. I mentioned to them that there are treatment programs which they already knew about. They seemed very interested when I told them that there is a way that they can quit drinking permanently. I told them that Christ is the answer. I had a good opportunity to share the gospel with them and the wonderful thing is that they understood what I was saying. The Word of God was sown in their hearts and I pray the Holy Spirit will do His work to draw them to Christ. Over the years a few people I have counselled have come up to me a few years later, just to let me know that they have accepted the Lord.

Emily, who lives in Wemindji with her family, has been a Christian for many years and she shared this story with me. She said, "We lived in Chisasibi for a few years before

had as many as 42 children come to Sunday school. We sowed the Word of God in them. Today, after many years, some of them are Christians, so the seed we sowed in their hearts bore fruit." Today there are quite a number of Christians in Chisasibi and most of them attended the Sunday school they held many years ago.

While I was in Wemindji I prayed with two adults to accept the Lord. I prayed with a woman who is grieving the loss of her granddaughter who was murdered a few months ago. Pray for this woman to grow in the Lord. I also prayed with a young man who wanted to have full assurance of his salvation. Most of the Native people in Wemindji know I am a preacher, so I shared the gospel message whenever there was a good opportunity. In Wemindji I made home visits and prayed for a number of people who are sick. Whenever I pray for people, I honestly believe that God can heal any sickness or disease. Over the years a number of people have been healed in my ministry.

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Sheila's Report About Our Trip to Kashechewan (September 10–14)

We are very thankful for the many people who prayed for us as we travelled from Ottawa to Kashechewan on September 10–14. I share my story of our ministry there to praise God.

Several weeks before we went, I was surprised to be informed that Kashechewan Ontario Works Department had invited both Joe and I to do a parenting workshop and a grief seminar there.

When I heard that I was a bit apprehensive and I wondered if I should really accept the invitation. I was also reminded that sometimes an opportunity may sound like a good thing but maybe it is not the right time. I committed myself to prayer and I felt that with other people praying on a regular basis for our ministry, the Lord would confirm if I should accept this call.

I hesitated because of the negative media coverage of the northern communities, including Kashechewan. I also did not want to be a burden to anyone if the travel and environment was rough. I wondered how I would manage travelling to a fly-in community. The food is very expensive, water questionable to drink, and I wondered if we would have a proper place to stay. A great concern on the news was about the mold in some of the buildings and houses. When we were there, the elementary school was closed due to mold in the buildings.

The time came when I realized that God had taken away my concerns and fear. I was no longer worried about going to Kashechewan. I did not want to turn

down this great opportunity in case it might totally be from the Lord. I thank the Lord for the peace and motivation He gave me to accept this invitation. I did not want to take it lightly and I considered that ministering as a couple may have been the Lord's plan. I had also wanted assurance because I did not want to place myself in my husband's work if it was not necessary.

Everything was so amazing and encouraging from the day we left. The travel on the planes from Ottawa to Kashechewan was pleasant and the weather was great. When we arrived at the Timmins airport, partway there, we met people we knew from Moose Factory and we had time to visit them. I was amazed and awed to see how many people knew Joe. Over the years he has had many contacts from different Cree communities. I recognized that as a ministry by itself. We gave them our website to check out our work and newsletters, so that they might be encouraged by the messages and testimonies.

When we arrived at the Kashechewan airport, we were taken to the place where we would be staying. To my delight the place was far better than I expected and our accommodation was very comfortable. However, I was surprised when we found out later that we would be staying with six men. Being the only female there, I felt I would be uncomfortable to share the same bathroom and kitchen with all these men. It was a bed and breakfast place that was designed like a mini hotel with several individual rooms.

I soon observed that all the men behaved like real gentlemen and I felt comfortable being there. Joe and





Jennifer Wynne, Sheila, Joe and Cynthia Koosees. Jennifer and Cynthia coordinated the workshops and seminars.

I had great visits with them during our meals and rest breaks before we left for our meetings. I was surprised to find out my cousin Pat Chilton was their boss.

We knew one Native man from Moosonee who was also staying there. When Joe was doing his pastoral internship in 1978 at the Moosonee Baptist Church, Dan Wabano and his wife Laura were attending the church there. His wife passed away not too long ago and he shared with us that he read Joe's book, *Going and Growing through Grief*. We had fellowship with him in the Lord and it was encouraging that he helps the Native churches by sharing the Word of God. He is an electrician by trade and he travels to different Cree communities.

The workshops in Kashechewan were a blessing to me because the people who came out were greatly encouraged. They each received my book, *My Grief Journey from Mourning to Dancing*, as well as Joe's book

on grief. It was wonderful how the people expressed their appreciation of our workshops. They showed their appreciation towards us in so many ways. We have both been asked to come back in November and that is such a great privilege to minister in that way again.

The Word of God was shared during the many different topical lessons within each session. During the sessions we had some of the participants share a bit of their stories of grief and loss. The two women coordinators showed good leadership and they made sure everyone had water, juice, fruit and refreshments snacks.

I am reminded not to believe everything you hear on the news. It sure can affect your emotions and create fear. I thank the Lord that going on this ministry was such a great blessing and truly an answer to prayer.

Pray for us as we will be going back to Kashechewan. There are Christians there, but some are not committed to the Lord. I am reminded of what former National Chief Phil Fontaine said: "We need transformation within our communities." The Word of God was shared, along with our testimonies. God's Word brings transformation. In my personal observation I noticed that the people in our sessions received the Word of God. Pray that they will also receive Christ into their hearts and be saved. This is our request for our next trip and ministry to Kashechewan. The fact that they are also reading our books will educate them not only the process of grief but the One who is the healer of broken hearts.



Left to right: Arrival in Kashechewan, Ontario

Kashechewan has a good northern grocery store but the food is expensive. Welcome to the North.

The bed and breakfast in Kashechewan.

The bed and breakfast kitchen where we cooked our meals.

All the participants received copies of my book and Joe's book. The gospel message is very clear in the books.

Sheila sharing her grief journey of multiple losses in her family.

Sheila with workshop participants.

We worked as a team for the parenting workshops and grief seminar.

On the Go with Dr. Joe 2018–2019 *continued*



Clockwise from far left: Joe and Sheila beside their newly purchased 2017 Dodge Grand Caravan.

Enjoying bannock, tea and chicken soup with Matthew and Maggie Wapachee.

Clifford Coonishish from Oujé-Bougoumou with Sheila.

Pray for Evadney Bosum, who recently lost her eldest son Walter. This picture taken was at their camp on kilometre 2.



September 23–28

We went to Oujé-Bougoumou and before our trip we were wondering if we should rent a vehicle or take our van up north. We decided to take our old van and we praise God that we made it back to Ottawa without any mechanical problems. The engine light and tire sensor would come on and go off at times and that was a concern for us. We are happy to let you know that on March 9 we purchased a 2017 Grand Caravan that only had 1,200 kilometres. We got an excellent deal, which was an answer to prayer.

In Oujé-Bougoumou we counselled during the day and held parenting workshops and grief seminars in the evening. The ministry there was amazing. We had contact with so many people and shared the Word of God with them. A young couple prayed to receive Christ as their Saviour.

While we were there, Sheila and I drove to Chibou Sibi to visit Matthew and Maggie Wapachee in their home. No one was home when we got there so we went to Chibougamau, hoping to see them there. They were with their daughter Alice and she couldn't start her van. She called her husband Roger and he was on his way. We ended up driving Matthew and Maggie to their home. It was a divine appointment to see them.

Maggie had prepared chicken drumstick soup and made a fresh bannock. She didn't want to eat in a restaurant in town but wanted to eat what she had prepared. She was so happy to serve us hot chicken soup and fresh bannock with tea for lunch. Alice came by later. They get fresh spring water from their other camp, which tastes like Eska water. We had a good visit with Matthew and Maggie and we talked about spiritual truths, which always encourages them.

October 17

We went see Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder's concert at the Centrepont Theatre in Ottawa. Ricky Skaggs is a born again Christian and we had a chance to talk to him after his show. He was recovering from a sore arm and his doctor did not allow him to play his guitar and mandolin for a few more weeks yet. I prayed for his arm to be healed.

October 19

I did a wedding in Montreal for Amanda Jane Mayappo and Johnnie Ronnie Neeposh. The couple is from Waswanipi. Doing weddings is a great way to meet Native people from the various Cree communities.



Far left: Joseph Seth opens his birthday presents at home.

Left: Joseph Seth does voluntary work as Chief of Security at the Metropolitan Bible Church. He has been doing that for a few years now.

October 31–November 7

I went to Oujé-Bougoumou on October 31–November 7. While I was there, I interviewed the elders at their camps to get from them an assessment of their needs and the various ways the Elders Outreach Services can help them. We went to Anna Bosum’s camp, where the elders were being used to teach traditional cooking and how to skin beaver.

On Sunday evening I preached at the Oujé-Bougoumou Pentecostal Church (Jishemundo Mijwap). The Native people appreciate music, so I sang a few gospel songs before my message. Pastor Reggie Neeposh invited me to teach in the morning sessions at their summer camp meeting on July 23–25.

November 12–16

I went to Waswanipi for counselling services. While I was there, I met with Johnny Cooper, an old friend.

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October 26

Our son Joseph Seth celebrated his 23rd birthday on October 26. He has a keen mind and he reads a lot, which helps him to develop his vocabulary. He has learned to discipline himself to be self-taught on a number of topics like psychology, philosophy, leadership strategies, law and criminology. To help him make extra money for himself I will get him to edit my letters and any articles I write. He is quite knowledgeable in so many areas and I use him as my consultant. Basically, I am trying to teach him how to work in the office and to follow administrative procedures. He says he has a plan of what he wants to do with his life. Sheila and I always remind him to put God first in his life and he will be blessed.

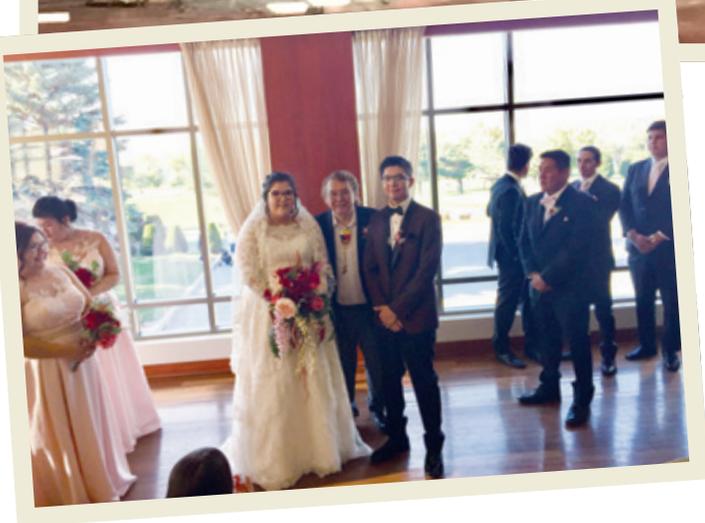


Clockwise from left: Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder.

Maudie Misacheesick and her son came from Wemindji to see Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder. I went to Moose Fort Indian Residential School with Maudie. We were in the same class and she still remembers I used to throw snowballs at her and her friends.

Ricky Skaggs signed autographs after the show.

Amanda Jane Mayappo and Johnnie Ronnie Neeposh with Dr. Joseph Jolly.



On the Go with Dr. Joe 2018–2019 *continued*



I went to school with Johnny at the Mohawk Institute in Brantford, Ontario. Johnny's younger brother Allan also attended Mohawk Institute. The Cooper brothers had a bluegrass gospel band and are still well known in the Cree communities for their musical abilities and talent. Johnny and his brothers Allan, Jimmy and George all know the Lord and we always have good Christian fellowship together.

November 26–30

I went to Moose Factory at the invitation of the Mocrebec Health Program. While I was there, I did individual counseling and made several home visits to those who have suffered recent losses. On Wednesday evening I preached at the Cree Gospel Chapel during their midweek Bible study and prayer time.

I went to visit my friend Art McLeod while I was there. Years ago when I was preaching at the Cree Gospel Chapel, Art and his wife came forward to receive Christ. His brother William McLeod, who was a Pastor at the Native New Life Church, passed away October 18, 2018. Sheila's mother Alice (née McLeod) and Art were first cousins.

Oliver Small is in his early nineties and has been a Christian for many years. My late dad used to go goose hunting with



From top left: Traditional meal at Anna Bosum's camp. Skinning beaver the traditional way.

Reggie Neeposh is the pastor of the Oujé-Bougoumou Pentecostal Church (Jishemundo Mijwap).

Matthew Wapachee at his camp in Rabbit Lake. He just got back from checking his traps and he was happy that he killed a beaver.

Maggie Wapachee is 87 years old and she has a wealth of knowledge about the traditional way of life. She has been a Christian for many years and likes to talk about spiritual matters. She and her husband Matthew have been blessed with a large family and they have many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Maggie is a good cook and she makes the best bannock I know.

Above left: Johnny Cooper from Waswanipi is a singer and a gifted guitarist. Above right: Allan Cooper lives in Waswanipi with his family. He is a singer and also plays the guitar. Allan's sons are good hockey players.



Clockwise from far left: Oliver Small; Art McLeod

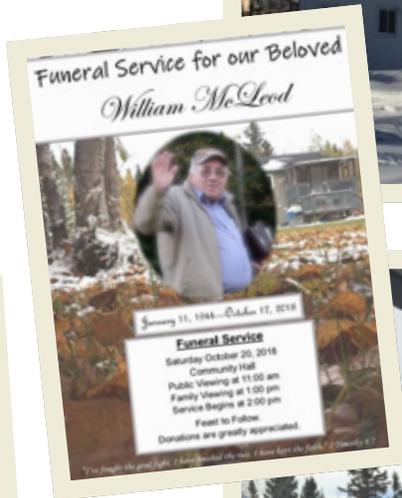
In loving memory of Pastor Bill (William) McLeod, the Moose Factory Tabernacle had its grand opening on October 28, 2018. The former name was the Native New Life Church, which was torn down to build the new church.

Bill (William) McLeod

The river was starting to freeze and I had to go by helicopter from Moose Factory to Moosonee.

Allan Cooper

Donald Faries is my wife Sheila's first cousin. Pray for Donald to get a kidney donor.



Oliver when they were young men. My father once told me a story when he went spring Canada goose hunting with Oliver. He said, "We each had only 40 shotgun shells and at the end of the day we had killed 80 geese." Our families were close because Oliver's wife Alice (née Katapatuk) was my mother's first cousin. My late parents and Oliver's late wife, Alice attended the Native New Life Church.

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On the Go with Dr. Joe 2018–2019 *continued*



Above: Grief Share at the Metropolitan Bible Church in Ottawa.

Right: A special treat for Sheila before Christmas was to see the Johnny Reid Christmas concert at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa.

Above right: Johnny Reid's Christmas special with the National Arts Centre Orchestra was so good and a great blessing.



December 3–7

I went to Waswanipi for counselling services on December 3–7. While I was in Waswanipi I had time to fellowship with Allan Cooper, who is married to my mother's half sister Clara. I often visit them in their home. Allan is an ordained minister and is quite zealous to share the gospel in different Native communities.

December 10

Associate Pastor Randy Jost from the Metropolitan Bible Church asked me to share at the Met's Grief Share session.

I shared some ways how to manage grief emotions over the holidays. I have recommended Grief Share to a couple of Native churches. Those who have taken the Grief Share sessions have found it very helpful to them in their grief work.

December 22

Sheila and I went to see Johnny Reid's Christmas concert at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. Johnny Reid has a wonderful voice and we were blessed by his music. The NAC Orchestra did a superb job backing up Mr. Reid's songs. The NAC Orchestra thrilled the audience by doing a few numbers on their own. That was one of Sheila's highlights for the Christmas Season.

December 25

We spent Christmas at home and went to all the special services at the Metropolitan Bible Church as part of our Christmas celebration. We had our Christmas tree up and had the presents under the tree. We had roast turkey with all the trimmings on Christmas Day. We took time to watch the TV Christmas shows. I found this Christmas so relaxing and quiet. Joseph Seth said it was the best Christmas ever, so Sheila and I were very happy about that.

January 7–11, 2019

Sheila and I went to Moose Factory at the invitation of the Mocrebec Health Program. While we were there, we did individual counseling and home and hospital visitation. Sheila was happy to see her brother Thomas and her sisters Gloria and Diane. We did two hospital visitations and talked to a number of patients there.



Right: Sheila wrapping presents on Christmas Eve.

Above: The presents under and on the tree on Christmas Eve.

Above right: Joseph Seth opening his presents on Christmas Day.





This recent family picture was taken at the Metropolitan Bible Church on January 20, 2019. Little Joe is not little anymore.



Top: We stayed at the Ecolodge in Moose Factory. In the evening before going to bed, we would sit and relax and enjoy a nice cup of tea beside the fireplace in the guest lounge.

Above: One of the two workshops on women's grief and loss that Sheila did.

Left: Participants at the marriage and couples workshop in Waskaganish.

January 9

In the afternoon on January 9, Sheila and I went to see Marjorie McLeod in her home. We had a lengthy visit with Marjorie and she took the time to share her grief journey with us. She is grieving the loss of her late husband William McLeod, who died recently. She said the Word of God gives her great comfort. She still gets emotional now and then when she talks about William. While we were there, she served us tea and cookies.

On Wednesday evening I shared songs and preached at the Cree Gospel Chapel.

On Thursday evening Sheila and I led a grief workshop at the Ecolodge. There were about 7 adults present in the workshop. We covered the grieving process and all the participants felt free to share their grief and losses. That was one of the highlights of our visit to Moose Factory.

January 28–February 1

Sheila and I went to Waskaganish at the invitation of the Waskaganish Wellness Society. While we were there, I did individual counselling sessions. Sheila and I did a marriage and couples workshop together. Sheila did two

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On the Go with Dr. Joe 2018–2019 *continued*



Clockwise from top left: We had supper with my two sisters Daisy Moar (left) and Gertie Diamond (right).

Elder Hattie Wapachee (centre) is teaching women how to weave snowshoes.

Elder Alice Shecapio-Blacksmith is teaching the young women how to make traditional moose hide moccasins.

Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation Elders Council shares a meal together before the meeting.

Charlie Diamond holding a copy of the Waskaganish history book.

workshops on women's grief and loss. In Waskaganish I shared some songs and preached at the Cree Pentecostal Church.

Before we went to Waskaganish I asked Gilmore Reproduction to make a physical copy of my book, *A History of Waskaganish*, so the people in Waskaganish could see what the book will actually look like when it is printed. Elder Charlie Diamond was the one who recommended that a book be written about the history of Waskaganish to teach the young people about the traditional way of life. The people I showed the book to were very impressed and wanted to get a personal copy.

February 4–8

On February 4–8 I went to Oujé-Bougoumou by myself to meet with the Elders Council. The purpose of my visit was to meet with the Elders Council and get their input in developing a manual for the Elders Outreach Services. Before our meeting we had a meal together at the restaurant. I know all the members on the Elders Council and I always like to meet and talk with them because they are all Christians.

February 11–15

On February 11–15, I went to Constance Lake First Nation at the invitation of the Jane Mattinas Health Centre. This was the first time I ever went to Constance lake. I did a grief seminar for the three days I was there.

They bought a case of Sheila's grief book and gave them out to the participants. The people who hosted the event were surprised at the good turnout. The sessions were held at the Community Hall. I stayed at the Companion Hotel Motel in Hearst, Ontario, and had a ride back and forth every day.

February 26–28

During the last week in February Sheila and I flew to Regina and then drove to Caronport, Saskatchewan to visit Briercrest College and Seminary. The school was gracious enough to provide a car rental for us at the airport. I had been invited by the school president, Michael Pawelke, to be a guest lecturer for 3 hours in his course *Issues in Ministry Leadership*. He wanted me to speak on some issues facing Native leadership. I shared on Cree self-government and spent time talking about the Indigenous principles, which focuses on autonomous churches and self-government.

In the evening I gave a talk in Reimer Hall where I shared with the staff and students about "The Indigenous Church and Missions Principles." It was an honour to teach something that has been a great part of my ministry all these years. President Pawelke sent me a note just to let me know that we did a wonderful job in class. I was glad to hear to that.



March 18–22

Sheila and I were invited to Kashechewan for the third time in the past few months. We were busy counselling the whole time we were there. They bought a case of Sheila's book on grief, which we handed out to the counselees. While we were there, I spoke at the Faith Temple Pentecostal Church. Sheila was also given time to share her story. I sang a couple of songs and preached on "The Mind of Christ."

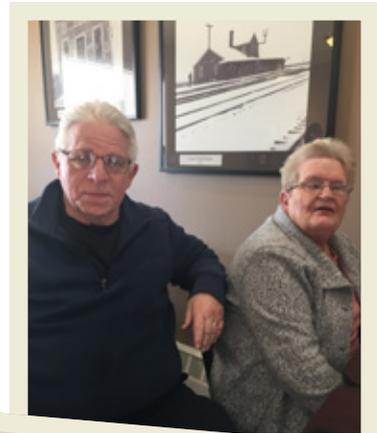
Bottom left: President Michael Pawelke invited me to be a guest lecturer in his course on *Issues in Ministry Leadership*. It was fun to be in a classroom setting where I was once a student.

Below: The students appreciated what I shared on Native ministries.

Right: NAIM (North America Indigenous Ministries) missionaries Ed and Diane Cooper drove from Saskatoon to spend some time with us in Caronport. It was nice to see them.

Right, centre: Midweek Bible study at the Faith Temple Pentecostal Church in Kashechewan.

Bottom: Pastor Elkanah Huey and his wife Margaret with Dr. Joseph and Sheila Jolly.



Sharon Bear

I was raised on the Muskoday First Nation in Saskatchewan. I grew up attending the Anglican Church but didn't have a relationship with God. To me, God was a distant force and couldn't really be known personally. I knew I was searching for something in my early teen years but didn't know what it was. I tried to fill that void with worldly things like drinking, partying, relationships, etc. Nothing seemed to satisfy the deep longing in my heart.



I was living in Buffalo Narrows, had a young family, and was living a very sinful life when I sensed the Lord working in my life. I used to go to bed at night and think about what life was really all about, as well as death, heaven, and hell. I used to wonder where I would go if I died during the night. I thought that I might have a chance to go to heaven should my good deeds outweigh my bad deeds. When I realized I had more bad deeds than good, I knew I was in trouble. I tried to think of ways I might be able to get into heaven but couldn't come up with any. I tried to change many of the sinful things I was doing but couldn't in my own strength. As I look back I realize I was under conviction by the Holy Spirit.

I started working with a godly woman who told me about Jesus and how He could forgive my sins and change my life. I worked with her for a month and that's all I needed for the Holy Spirit to convince me I was a sinner in need of a saviour. I realize it was my sin that brought me to Christ. I accepted Jesus as my saviour in 1979. I couldn't believe that I had found the way and that Jesus rescued me from myself and my sins, for Jesus said "I am the Way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

Once I accepted Christ as my saviour, God changed many of the things that I tried to change on my own for me. I had new interests and desires and no longer wanted to live the way I was living or do the things I used to do. The Bible came alive to me and I couldn't get enough of God's word. "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, old things have passed away; behold all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Finally, I had peace and joy and forgiveness of my sins.

I made the move to Prince Albert, as I was so excited about the Lord and what He had done for me that I wanted to share Jesus with my family. I met Joe and Sheila Jolly at a house church in Prince Albert right after my conversion, became friends with them, and I asked them if they would go to Muskoday and share the gospel with my family and relatives. My mom and my step-dad and some of my brothers and sisters accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Joe and Sheila led many of my relatives to the Lord, including my mom, step-dad, brothers and sisters, Uncle Donald and Auntie Shirley, Uncle Lloyd and Auntie Julia, and some cousins.

We had some wonderful times at Muskoday having Bible studies, prayer meetings, and meals in different people's homes. Donald Bear and Billy Bear (both now deceased) had a big part in building the Baptist Church at Muskoday, where some of the believers who were disciples by Joe and Sheila still attend. The church is small with a few regular believers attending, but God is doing His work at Muskoday.

My job with the provincial government of Saskatchewan brought me to Saskatoon in 1987. I've been living here ever since and am currently attending Westgate Alliance Church. I recently retired from the provincial government after serving the people of Saskatchewan in Housing and Social Services for 40 years.



The people on the couch from left to right are: Jason, Sean, Candace, myself, Candace's husband Zac Hensley. The ones on the floor are: Sean Jr., Gabrielle and Sophia Hensley.

I can't say my Christian life has been all faithfulness and obedience. I have failed God miserably at times and turned my back on Him, but God in His mercy forgave me. There have also been many challenges and trials in my life, but those were times that God has taught me to depend on Him and Him alone. My faith has been tested and tried, but it has only caused my faith in Christ to grow and mature.

I have a burden for my own people. My friend Dolores from Muskoday and I meet by phone once a week, when we can, to pray for our families and the people from our reserve. We also pray for the small Baptist church at Muskoday and pray for the believers there. I also meet

with some ladies in Saskatoon every Wednesday afternoon and we share our burdens and concerns. We pray for our families, people struggling with addictions, cancer, and other illnesses, the Native leaders and Native missionaries across Canada, etc. There is never any shortage of concerns or people to pray for, since the needs are so great amongst our people. There have been obstacles in our way but we are learning to wait on God.

God has blessed me with three wonderful children and three grandchildren and a son-in-law, who I pray for every day. Jason lives in Prince Albert, Sean and Sean Jr. live in Saskatoon, and Candace and her husband Zac and daughters Sophia and Gabrielle live in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Incredible Answers to Prayer:

We lived in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan for a few years after we graduated from Briercrest Bible College in 1980. We moved there because the headquarters for the Native Evangelical Fellowship of Canada was there. Prince Albert is the third largest city in Saskatchewan and it has a high Native population.

While we were living in Prince Albert, we got involved in a church planting ministry that was very fruitful. We saw many Native people come to a saving knowledge of Christ. At that time, we were in the prime of our lives and we were go-getters with a lot of energy — especially me. Sheila and I always worked as a team and I am sure there were times when she had a hard time keeping up with me. We were young and determined to serve the Lord.

When we first started having meetings, we had our Sunday services in one of the old hotels downtown. Sometimes the setting was not ideal for little children because some of the street people would come around. As the Native fellowship group grew, we held our services at the Parkland Community Centre. We had a good group of Native people coming to our regular meetings there.

When we would have potluck meals and special banquets, there was always a good attendance for these events. One time we had 133 people attend a banquet and afterwards we showed a Christian movie with a gospel message. As the movie was playing, I looked at the audience in the dark and I was so amazed to see so many people in attendance.

I played hockey with some Native guys from the Muskoday Reserve and one time a Native spectator from the stands wanted to know who I was. I told him my name and he said, “You are the guy that does the banquets.” I was a professional cook before going into the ministry so the word must have spread that we had really good potluck meals and banquets.

Sharon Bear, one of our church regulars, came to see us one time about a spiritual matter that was bothering her. Her uncle, Lloyd Bear, who lived on the Muskoday First Nation Reserve with his family, was quite sick. The Muskoday First Nation Reserve is approximately 19 kilometres from the outskirts of Prince Albert. Lloyd was feeling sick and had physical pain because of his kidney problems. He was thinking of going to see a medicine man for healing. As a Christian, Sharon did not want him to go see a medicine man. She preferred that a minister of the gospel talk to Lloyd and pray for him. This is why she came to see us. Sharon made the arrangements for our visit and she came with us when we went to see Lloyd at his home.

I had never met Lloyd before, but he was very kind and gracious in welcoming us into his home. During our visit I shared the gospel with him. I remember telling him afterwards that it would be wonderful if he committed his life to God before I prayed for him. I asked him if he was willing to yield his life to Christ. Without any hesitation he said that he was willing. After he prayed to receive Christ, we prayed for him to be healed of his kidney sickness. Before we left his house, I asked him if we could come to his house again on Sunday and have service. He said that would be okay.

Sharon shared with us that after we left his house he started to feel better. He went outside and started hammering nails. He was a carpenter by trade. Before that he had been in so much pain that he could not even pick up a hammer. We did have a service in his home on Sunday evening and I was amazed to see so many of his family members and relatives come out for it. We had a good service and they said it would be okay for us to come again the next Sunday.

Lloyd Bear's Kidneys Healed

When we went back the next Sunday, the same group of people was there again. I shared about the new birth and at the end of my message I gave an invitation for anyone who wanted to receive Christ. It was so nice to see a number of hands raised as an indication they wanted to receive Christ. We had good contact with the people on the Muskoday Reserve all the time we lived in Prince Albert. When the Lord healed Lloyd, I never heard anything about his health issues again.

I had the joy of praying with Lloyd's brother Donald to receive Christ into his life. I remember the first time the Prince Albert Native Christian Fellowship was going to celebrate the Lord's Supper in our home. I told the new believers during the Sunday morning service that the Lord's Supper should be taken only by those who are believers.

When Don and his wife Shirley arrived at our home, Shirley came over to see me right away and said, "Donald wants to see you before the service starts."

I took Donald into my study and asked him what he wanted to talk about. He said, "You know, I want to accept Jesus into my heart so I can take the Lord's supper." What a joy it was for me to pray with him the sinner's prayer!

Don went home to be with the Lord a few years ago and his wife Shirley passed away on August 19, 2018. She was 81 years and she loved reading her Bible. I often think about Don and Shirley and the many visits we had in their home. Shirley made good bannock and Donald loved playing pool. He had his own pool table so he was very good. Don had a great laugh and I remember he used to laugh at me out loud if some of the things I said sounded funny to him, or whenever I made a mistake pronouncing names.



Problems in Grieving and Recovery



Dr. Joseph Jolly

Sometimes the recovery from a loss is disturbed for one reason or other. This is usually referred to as unresolved grief. “Of the many causes of unsuccessful grief, the most basic is our lack of knowledge about experiencing and completing the mourning process. Unaware of how to grieve successfully, we

attempt to deny, delay, inhibit, or displace our feelings. Indirectly expressed or unexpressed grief is unhealthy.”¹

Tatelbaum points out that “unsuccessful grief is also the result of the misguided ideas of courage in our society. For example, courage is often seen as a capacity to be silent when in pain, to control tears at all costs, to function regardless of the depths of turmoil inside us, and to handle our wounds and sorrows privately and independently.”² Denying our pain and not expressing our grief feelings can have severe consequences on our health.

Denial or Repression of Grief

Absent grief occurs when feelings of grief and mourning over the loss cannot be found. Tatelbaum writes,

The most extreme form of unexpressed grief is *absent grief*. The death of a loved one is such a shock that initially we often go numb and have no reaction at all for a short time. However, to have no reaction to the death of a loved one weeks or months later can be symptomatic of pathological grief. To repress a major emotional onslaught, like grief, can wreak havoc with our emotional and physical health...

A word of caution about absent grief: Sometimes we truly have no grief. This may occur when we actually resolved the relationship with the deceased prior to the death, or when we had no great emotional investment in the person who died. Some deeply spiritual people

accept death immediately and positively and therefore do not grieve. And older people, who had more experience with death, may accept a loss more readily. When a long illness preceded the loved one’s death, grief may have been worked through in advance. And... private grieving is not to be confused with the absence of grief.³

Denial of grief is similar to absent grief. Overwhelmed by a loss, we try to postpone facing the fact of death. Denial of grief usually appears in the guise of pretending not to feel rather than in a true absence of feelings. For example, a child’s announcement that he feels nothing, when clearly he is moody, negative, or withdrawn indicates a denied reaction. Adults sometimes act the same way, or they may become very busy to cover up grief. Denial may be a fragile defense, which another can break through with openness and kindly encouragement.⁴

Inhibited grief involves the repression of some of the normal grief responses. Tatelbaum points out that “grief is inhibited when the bereaved, or someone close, shuts off the natural flow of feelings about the loss. Fear of the feelings or their intensity, discomfort with tears and false pride about silence and self-control are all things that inhibit grief. We are bound to be inhibited in our grief and unable to complete it if we cannot express our feelings.”⁵

Sometimes grief is *delayed*...

Delayed grief is the pushing aside of feelings at the critical early stages of mourning to be dealt with at some future time. Often we lack the courage to confront grief feelings at their strongest, and we imagine that delaying grief will make it easier later on...

There are many signs of unsuccessful or inhibited grief. Sudden personality changes and progressive social isolation after a loss may signify unresolved grief. The bereaved may become apathetic or unusually contained and careful. In controlling their feelings, especially unresolved hostility, the bereaved may become “wooden and formal.”⁶

Whether we are aware of it or not, we pay an enormous price for inhibiting grief. Sometimes the price is a loss of our zest for living that may continue for months or even years. After we suffer a loss that we have not fully mourned, we may withdraw from others or decide that



closeness is not worth the effort. We may simply get into a life pattern of overworking in order to maintain our avoidance.⁷

Some people experience conflicted grief in which there can be an exaggeration of some of the characteristics of normal grief while other aspects that should also be present are suppressed. Sometimes in grieving over a loved one, this reaction occurs because of having had either a dependent or ambivalent relationship with the person.⁸

Chronic grief is a response in which a person continues to show grief responses that were appropriate in the early stages of grief. The mourning continues and doesn't proceed to any sign of closure. Tatelbaum writes,

Exaggerated grief, or chronic bereavement—the opposite of unexpressed grief—is also unhealthy. This is grief that remains prominent in our lives beyond the loss. Significant here is how long the grief has persisted. Other symptoms are morbid brooding and continued striving for reunion with the deceased well after the death occurs. Similarly, being preoccupied too long with the dead loved one rather than redefining goals and reinvesting in our lives is pathological behavior. Some other clues to chronic grief are talking about the deceased in the present tense, as if he or she is alive, and overvaluing objects and ideas that belonged to the deceased.⁹

A recent classification is called **unanticipated grief**. This can be seen when there has been a sudden, unanticipated loss that, like a crushing blow, leaves a person devastated. It is such a shock that the person is unable to grasp the totality of what has happened.

He or she has difficulty accepting the loss because his capabilities for doing so have been damaged.¹⁰

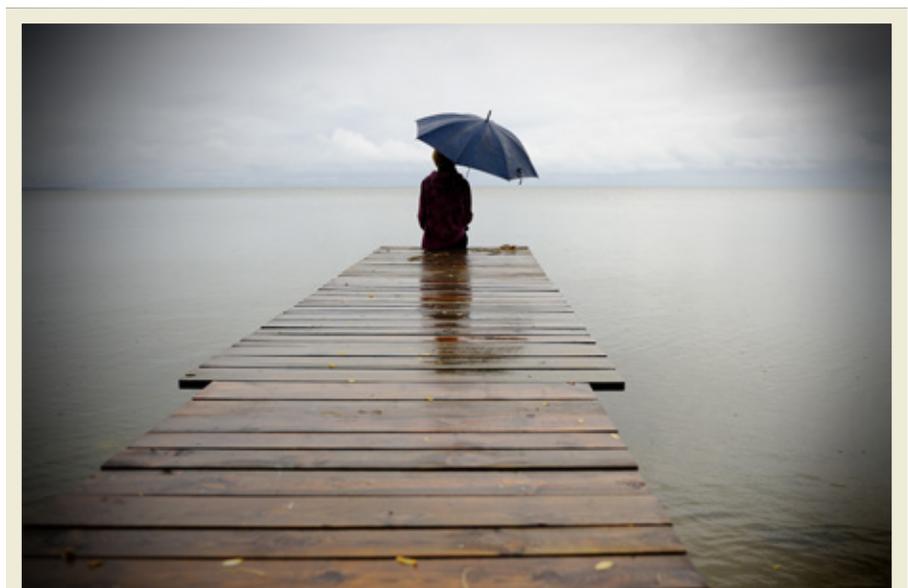
Indications of Unresolved Grief

There are three primary characteristics of unresolved grief: (1) absence of a normal grief reaction; (2) a reaction that lingers; (3) a distortion of a normal grief reaction.

When you have one or more of these symptoms, and they continue beyond six months or a year, you may have unresolved grief. The likelihood of unresolved grief increase as the number of symptoms increases. These are some of the symptoms.

1. A pattern of depression that lingers and often is accompanied by guilt and lowered self-esteem.
2. A history of extended or prolonged grief that reflects an already existing difficulty with grief.
3. A wide variety of symptoms such as guilt, self-blame, panic attacks, feeling of choking, and fears.
4. Physical symptoms similar to those of the deceased person's terminal illness due to over-identification with the individual.
5. A restless searching for what was lost with a lot of purposeless, random behaviour, and moving about.
6. Recurring depression that is triggered on specific dates such as anniversaries of the loss, birthday of the deceased person, holidays and even becoming the same age as the person who died.
7. Feelings that the loss occurred yesterday, even though months or years have passed.

Continued on page 26



Grieving and Recovery *continued*

8. Enshrinement or unwillingness to remove the belongings of a deceased person after a reasonable period of time.
9. Changes in personal relationships with other significant people following the death.
10. Withdrawal from normal religious activities and the avoidance of usual mourning activities that are part of the person's culture.
11. Inability to talk about the loss without breaking down, especially when it occurred over a year before.
12. Extensive thinking about and noticing themes of loss in life.¹¹

There are various indications of unresolved grief. One of the most obvious is remaining in mourning years after the event. Tatelbaum says,

We know we are unfinished when we are preoccupied with the deceased, or more involved with the deceased than with our own lives. Other symptoms that may indicate unfinished grief are anxiety, fearfulness (especially fear of death), depression, deadening of emotions, suicidal thoughts, sleep difficulties, and physical symptoms that have no obvious organic cause. Sometimes problems in our relationship indicate our unfinished grief, such as difficulty in forming new relationships, reluctance to trust or be close, lack of interest in others, or excessive need for other people. Difficulty in proceeding with life, long after a loss, is another major sign of probable unfinished grief.¹²

Reasons for Unresolved Grief

Some people go through grief well while others have many struggles. One reason for unresolved grief is that a person is unable to handle the emotional pain of grief, so he tends to resist the process. Other reasons for the recognizable unresolved grief include the following:

1. Guilt can block grief. If we begin to reflect on our relationship with the person who is gone, we may experience excessive guilt over behaviours, feelings, or even neglect that occurred in the relationship. If we have very high standards regarding our inter-personal relationships, it may not take much to activate our guilt. This in turn blocks the grieving, since we feel unable to confront our guilt...
2. Overload may be another reason for unresolved grief. There are occasions in our lives when we experience a number of losses in a short period of time, and it is just too much to bear at one time...

3. Another reason grief is unresolved is our failure to teach people how to handle the losses of life and to grieve properly. There is a denial mentality in our society toward loss and death, and this attitude breeds its own set of problems.¹³

Over-idealization of the deceased that persists after the first year or so of mourning is usually symptomatic of unsuccessful grief. In many cases, the one we loved becomes all the more wonderful once we are parted.¹⁴

What You Can Do When You Are Stuck in Grief

Wright gives the following suggestions to help you when you are stuck in your grief.

1. *Try to identify what it is that doesn't make sense to you about your loss.* Ask yourself, "What is it that is bothering me the most?"
2. *Identify the emotions you feel during each day...* identifying and labeling them will diminish their power over you.
3. *State the steps or actions you are taking to help you move ahead and overcome your loss.*
4. *Be sure you are sharing your loss and grief with others who can listen to you and support you during this time.* Don't seek out advice-givers but those who are empathetic and can handle your feelings.
5. *It may help to find a person who has experienced a similar loss.* Groups and organizations abound for losses of all types. Reading books or stories about those who have survived similar experiences can be helpful.
6. *Identify the positive characteristics and strengths of your life that have helped you before.*
7. *Spend time reading in the Psalms.* Many of them reflect the struggle of human loss but give the comfort and assurance that are from God's mercies.
8. *When you pray, share your confusion, your feelings and your hopes with God.* Be sure to be involved in the worship services of your church since worship is an important element in recovery and stabilization.
9. *Think about where you want to be in your life two years from now.* Just setting some goals may encourage you to realize you will recover.
10. *Become familiar with the stages of grief.* Then you will know what to expect and you won't be thrown down by what you are experiencing.

11. *Remember that understanding your grief intellectually is not sufficient.* It can't replace the emotional experience of living through this difficult time. You need to be patient and allow your feelings to catch up with your mind. Expect mood swings, and remind yourself of these through notes placed in obvious place. These mood swings are normal.¹⁵

Take Care of Your Health

Counselors say that the most stressful experience a person will endure is the loss of a loved one. Divorce is the next most stressful. Stress puts a demand on physical or mental energy and it is wise that we guard against other high stressful situations. A continuous high level of mental stress can cause sickness to our bodies. During a grief seminar in Moose Factory, a Native woman told this story.

Several years ago, I had reached a period in my life where I was struggling through many hardships both spiritually and emotionally. I began experiencing abdominal pain and spent the first year believing that

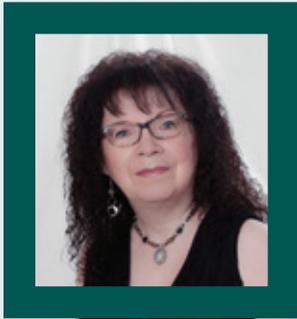
it would pass, but later on, each occurrence became unbearable and I finally went to see my doctor. He ran some tests and diagnosed me as having a reflux problem which could be fixed with medication. He told me that I would have to be on this medication for the rest of my life. Since I do not believe in taking medication for long periods of time I felt there must be something I could do so I could stop taking it.

After a while, I noticed a pattern had developed, that the times when the pain increased and the medication was not working were times when I was going through some kind of stress, whether it was financial, spiritual or emotional. Once I got through these hard times the pain subsided and I realized that it was the stress that was causing the pain. After realizing that the stress was causing the pain, I knew that I needed to work on healing myself in all those areas rather than using medication to numb the pain that was being caused by the stress.

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Sheila Jolly did not consult any books when she wrote her story about her grief journey. She did not want to follow someone else's model on how to deal with grief. Rather, she wanted to tell her story in her own words from a Native perspective. A good understanding about the grief process and the various stages of grief that she went through are central to her book. It is evident in her story that her grief through multiple losses affected her emotionally, mentally, physically, spiritually and socially.



When a person goes through a great loss like the death of a loved one, it is normal to grieve. Even spiritually minded people will grieve because it hurts when you lose a loved one. On

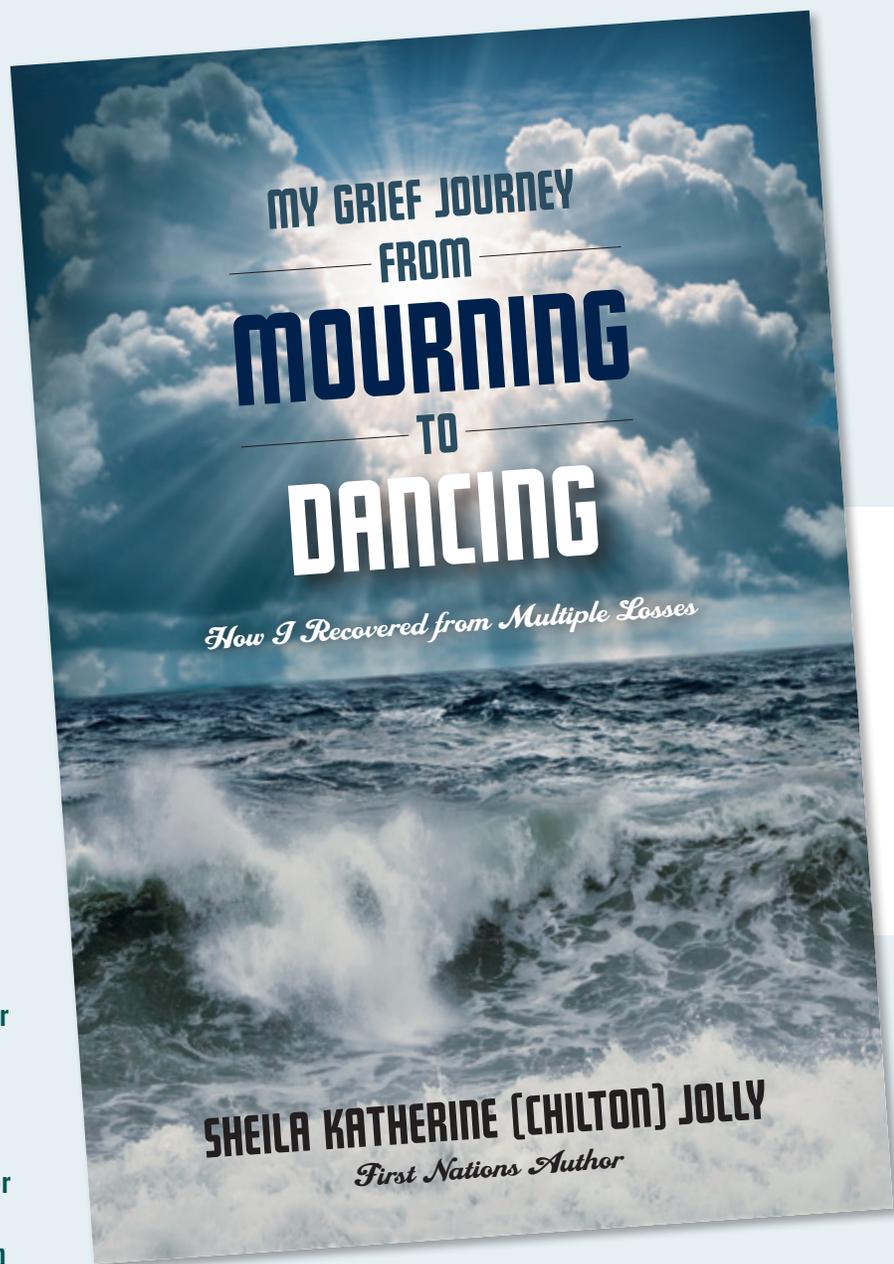
February 7, 2003, Sheila's younger sister, Daisy Mae Turcotte, died after a long battle with cancer. Two days later, her mother, Alice Chilton, passed away from ovarian cancer. She had also suffered with Alzheimer's disease for a number of years prior to her death. Ten months later, on December 19, 2003, Sheila's father, Samuel Chilton, died after suffering a massive heart attack.

The loss of three family members so close together had a profound effect on Sheila. Multiple losses fall under the category of complicated grief, which is more difficult to cope with than normal grief.

Studies show that it can take about two years for a person to recover from normal grief and to move on with their life in a healthy way. Evidence that a person has recovered from their loss is that they are able to move on with their life without the physical presence of their deceased loved one. On the other hand, it can take much longer for a person to recover from multiple losses. In Sheila's case, it took her six years to finish her grief journey.

As a grief counselor, I have always felt that there was a need for this kind of book to be written. Most of the books I have read deal with normal grief but very few deal specifically with multiple losses. There are many people in the Cree communities who go through multiple losses and do not know how to deal with their grief and sorrow. Some social workers are not adequately trained to counsel those who go through complicated grief. This book will be a valuable tool and resource material to share with their counselees.

Sheila has always had a strong faith in God and she says that this relationship was her greatest source of comfort and strength. The techniques of psychology are evident in her book but her personal views lean more toward a biblical perspective. Sheila has worked among her own people since April 1980 and she shares her philosophy on the application of the indigenous principles which helped her in her grief work. Her book is unique because it includes the principles necessary for the grief process, the indigenous principles and the biblical principles. —Dr. Joseph Jolly



Sheila Katherine (Chilton) Jolly was born in Moose Factory, Ontario. She married Joseph Jolly on June 4, 1971. They have one son, Joseph Seth, who was born on October 26, 1995. A year after their marriage, they moved to Ottawa so Joseph could go back to school at Algonquin College. While they were living in Ottawa, Sheila and her husband accepted Jesus Christ as their Personal Saviour at the Metropolitan Bible Church on October 13, 1974. Their conversion to Christ brought a dramatic change to their lives.

In the fall of 1976, Sheila and her husband went to Caronport, Saskatchewan to attend Briercrest Bible College. Sheila graduated with a Bible Diploma in 1978 and a Bachelor of Biblical Studies in 1986. After her son started school in 2001, she decided to pursue further studies and began work towards a Master of Arts degree majoring in Leadership and Management. It was a dream that came true for her when she graduated with an MA in April 2009.

You can order your personal copy of Sheila's book through our NGM office. The cost per book is \$25, plus postage and handling. Make your cheque payable to:

**Native Gospel Ministries
Box 41006, Ottawa, Ontario
K1G 5K9**

Sheila and her husband have been married for 47 years and since April 1980 they have worked together as a team in Native ministries. She worked as Office Secretary for the Native Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, Inc. from 1980–94, also serving a three-year term as Board Secretary/Treasurer for the organization. In addition, Sheila sat as a Board Member for Prison Fellowship

Canada. Since 1995, she has worked as Office Secretary of the Native Gospel Ministries of Canada, Inc. Sheila's 35 years in Native Ministries have given her a wide range of practical experience which is evident in this, her first book, *My Grief Journey from Mourning to Dancing*.



Grand Chief Jonathan Solomon of the Mushkegowuk Council of Cree First Nations in the James Bay region of northern Ontario.

Grieving and Recovery *continued*

I went back to my doctor and asked him, "Could I stop taking the medication?" He told me I could if I wanted, but if the pain returned I should continue taking it.

I stopped taking the medication, and have never had to take any more. I know now that if and when the pain returns, it will be an indication that something needs to be worked on within myself.

In your grief work it is important to take proper care of your physical and mental health. Innes gives these helpful suggestions:

1. Watch your diet;
2. Exercise regularly;
3. Get sufficient rest;
4. Deal creatively with your emotions.

As the writer of Proverbs said, "A cheerful heart does good like medicine, but a broken spirit makes one sick."

To keep as cheerful a heart as possible, be sure to take good care of your physical health and don't bottle up your emotions.¹⁶

In his sermon "Overcoming Discouragement" John Yates says:

Dr. Karl Menninger, the famous psychiatrist, once gave a lecture on mental health and was answering questions from the audience. Someone said, "What would you advise a person to do if that person felt a nervous breakdown coming on?"

Most people thought he would say, "Go see a psychiatrist immediately," but he didn't. To their astonishment, Dr. Menninger replied, "Lock up your house, go across the railroad tracks, find somebody in need, and help that person."

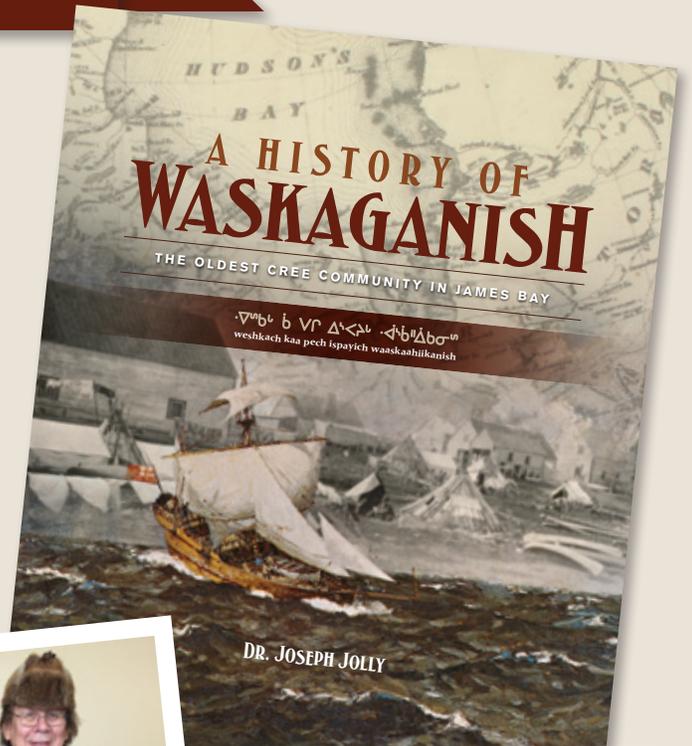
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A gift to the people of Waskaganish on its 350th anniversary!

Back in December 2008 I did a workshop on cross-cultural communications for the Elders Council in Waskaganish. During one of the sessions, Charlie Diamond suggested that a book should be written that talks about the history and traditional lifestyle of the Crees in James Bay. He pointed out that there is a contrast between how the Native people lived in the past in comparison with today. He said this book would benefit and educate the young people about life skills, parenting and moral values that have been passed on to us by our ancestors.

I thought about Charlie's suggestion over the holidays and realized that I was qualified to write that book. Early in the new year of 2009 I submitted a proposal to the Cree Nation of Waskaganish to write a book on a part-time basis about the history and traditional lifestyle of the Cree people of James Bay. I started doing research for the book on my own in 2009 but I officially started to write the book in December 2012. I finished the book on December 22, 2017. The final manuscript was finished on February 8, 2018 and the book was ready to be printed.

Before I went to Waskaganish on January 28 to February 1, 2019, I told Aerographics Creative Services to send a high-resolution digital copy of the book to Gilmore Printing Services. I asked Gilmore Printing Services to do a printout of the history book. I wanted to show the people in Waskaganish their book. I wanted them to see how the actual finished book will look. The people who saw the book were very happy and impressed with their book. They wanted to know when it will be printed and where they can get a copy.



Grieving and Recovery *continued*

To overcome discouragement, “Don’t focus on yourself,” concluded Yates. “Get involved in the lives of other people.”¹⁷

Ask for Help When Needed

When you are hurting, don’t be afraid to ask for help. Find someone you can trust and will listen to you as you share your deepest pain. If your pain is too great and you feel overwhelmed, don’t hesitate to seek professional help. “If you find yourself turning to alcohol or drugs to deaden your pain and especially if you are dwelling on thoughts of suicide, seek professional help immediately.”¹⁸



Call on God for Help

When you feel weighed down with all your sorrows and grief... call on God for help. God loves you and he cares deeply about sorrow. He is able to heal and mend your broken heart.

Jesus himself said: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has appointed me to preach the good news to the poor; he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted and to announce that... God is ready to give blessings to all who come to him.”¹⁹

Jesus also said, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

If you give your life to God and genuinely want him to make you whole, he will not only mend your broken heart, but will help you grow, and in his time make something beautiful out of your life.

Finishing

Something important is missing in the grieving process of a person who cannot come to some resolution of a

death after many years. It is unhealthy for a survivor to cling to a loss; eventually he or she must let go.

Tatelbaum says that healthy grief recovery is a three-stage process. “First, it is fully experiencing and expressing all the emotions and reactions to the loss. Second, it is completing and letting go of your attachment both to the deceased and to sorrow. Third, it is recovering and reinvesting anew in one’s own life. Missing any of the steps in the grieving process may result in unhealthy or unsuccessful grief.”²⁰

In summary, the best solution for unsuccessful grief, whenever and however it is discovered, is to resolve the grief as fully as possible. It is encouraging to know that whenever grief is uncovered it can be resolved successfully. “Whenever grief is discovered as unresolved, it is time to deal with it, for it is never too late to express the grief and complete the grieving process. Usually the problem arises because the survivor had to face the feelings of grief alone in the first place, so, clearly the bereaved now should not try to go it alone. A professional counselor or therapist who can help us come to terms with the loss and whatever feelings are unresolved should be sought out.”²¹

Ideally, when we love someone who has died, we must thoroughly experience all the feelings evoked by our loss and then say good-bye to our loved one and resume our lives. To recover fully from a loss means to finish or completely let go. Finishing with a dead loved one does not erase the love or the memories, but it does mean that we have accepted the death, that the pain and sorrow have lessened, and we feel free to reinvest in our lives.²²

Excerpts from Dr. Joseph Jolly’s book “Going and Growing through Grief.”

1. Tatelbaum, *The Courage to Grieve*, 49.
2. *Ibid.*, 49.
3. Tatelbaum, *The Courage to Grieve*, 50.
4. *Ibid.*, 51.
5. *Ibid.*, 51.
6. *Ibid.*, 51-52.
7. *Ibid.*, 52.
8. Wright, *Recovering from the Losses of Life*, 66.
9. Tatelbaum, *The Courage to Grieve*, 53.
10. Wright, *Recovering from the Losses of Life*, 68.
11. Therese A. Rando, *Grief, Dying, and Death: Clinical Interventions for Caregivers* (Champaign, Ill.: Research Press, 1984), 63, 64, quoted in Wright, *Recovering from the Losses of Life*, 71-72.
12. Tatelbaum, *The Courage to Grieve*, 108-9.
13. Wright, *Recovering from the Losses of Life*, 72-75.
14. Tatelbaum, *The Courage to Grieve*, 55.
15. Wright, *Recovering from the Losses of Life*, 76-77.
16. Innes, *How to Mend a Broken Heart*, 97-100.
17. Craig Brian Larson, ed., *Contemporary Illustrations for Preachers, Teachers, and Writers* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 36.
18. Innes, *How to Mend a Broken Heart*, 109.
19. *Ibid.*, 117.
20. Tatelbaum, *The Courage to Grieve*, 48.
21. *Ibid.*, 53.
22. *Ibid.*, 107.

