My dear friends,

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

Five years ago, in February 2021, I preached at a "Woman's World Day Of Prayer" service at Dunant Park Retirement Village.

It was a special day for the residents because it was the first day after covid lockdown that they could have a meeting – but **for me it was the beginning of the end** of Gj and I's ministry together as a couple**.**



Suddenly, Gj "went blank" and had no idea how to connect or operate the laptop, sound system and overhead projector.

This was something he had done for YEARS – and at this moment, he couldn't do it. Somebody else figured it out and helped him.

ALONE

This lovely "Friday Fellowship" have been waiting patiently for me to **be ready** to come minister there again after Gj's passing and **I thought I was ready.**

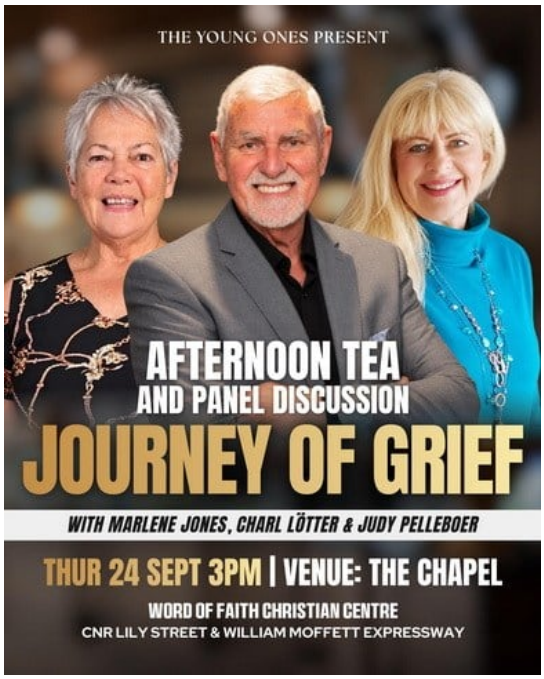


But as I sat there on Friday afternoon – waiting for "my turn" to minister from God's word, a wave of emotion swept over me.

It was the first time I have ministered "out" since Gj's passing and **I've never felt so completely alone in my life.**

Thankfully the folk were very understanding of my "condition" and I managed to hold it together and do what I came there to do. Their report back to me was very encouraging.

I will have to get used to this because **this is my life now** – I have a calling of God on my life to preach the gospel – and, **the calling didn't stop when Gertjan left for heaven.**



On Sunday morning I ministered the same word at Seaview Chapel, and

next Thursday 24th September at 3pm – (the public holiday), I will be part of a panel discussion at the **Word of Faith Chapel**.

I'm sure anybody is welcome if you'd like to come?

Most of us are at the age where we most likely have lost loved ones, or WILL lose loved ones – and it's good to hear the honest experiences of others on the same road.

I will never understand why so many try to stop someone from grieving??? "*Don't cry, be strong, they're in a better place*" etc.
For me, grief is not something that needs to be fixed – it is a process. Grieving is not a sin, not a shame, not negative – it is love exposed.

COMFORT

I have been ministering "one on one" to **a friend** who has dementia; to **people who have family members who have dementia** – and now I have "been sent" to **widows**.

I realized that this is not something I will be able to cope with if the numbers grow – it will drain me.

1 – I am still grieving myself.
2 – I still work and lead a very busy life.

I am a strong believer of when we go through any kind of trauma or tribulation – **it is not for nothing** –

God **will** comfort us and we are then in turn to comfort others with that same comfort that we have received from Him. 2Cor.1:4



MINISTRY



So, I am looking towards starting a **daytime grief share group** – maybe not by that same title – where people can be honest about what they are experiencing in a "safe" environment and also comfort one another by just listening to each other.

I also want to get back to ministering to those who have dementia in **the frail cares.** Friends Denzil and Angie have already been over to teach me how to use my sound system 😊
I still have much practice and preparation before I can venture there again – as well as a LOT OF PRAYING for my heart to be able to handle it.

HOSPITAL

My 88-year-old brother, John and I did several daily hospital visits for nearly 2 weeks attending to Patty's needs while she was there.

The Livingstone Hospital was amazing!



They left no stone unturned until they found out what the cause of her weakness was – and we were so grateful that we were allowed IN to do for her what the medical staff simply don't have enough time or manpower to do.

I'm sorry for all that Patty went through, but "being there" for her and John made something "come alive" in me again. I don't knit and bake and sew like most women can – but THIS is something I CAN do and **it felt so good to be useful**.

GOING AWAY 😊

From Monday 28th September to Saturday 3rd October I will be on the road with 6 other ladies on a round trip to Cape Town and back – sleeping over in George on route there, and in Plettenberg Bay on route back – with a train trip and a boat ride somewhere in between 😊 Grateful for this wonderful opportunity!

I mean how does a widow go on holiday by herself?

Thank you, my dear friends for "listening" to all my experiences, plans and intentions 😊

You are my best "audience" because you actually make time for me – and THAT means a whole lot – time is a precious commodity that people just don't have these days.

Until we chat again – I leave you with this "conclusion" and so much love and appreciation for all who you are to me.
Judy xx



A CONCLUSION

I got to love you …

Maybe it wasn't for as long as I wished it could have been.

But, I got to love you.

I got to know your sense of humour, your laugh, your smile ….
The little things that made you, you.

I got to love your kind and generous heart.
And even though I wish I had more time,



I'll always be grateful that I got to love you at all.

Because some people leave far too soon …
But the love they gave us stays forever.

By "Almost us"