

## Title: **General Introductory Comments Regarding Ministry Aids**

Greetings all,

We just posted a new document, “General Introductory Comments Regarding Ministry Aids.” As many of you will realize, much of the material in this “new” document has been scattered across a number of the ministry aid essays. About half of the material is new. As we have time, we will be “retro-fitting” all the ministry aid essays, to include the most updated material where it seems good to include portions of this material in the separate ministry aid essays, and deleting material that is unnecessary to include in the separate essays.

Thanks and blessings,

Dr. Lehman/Karl

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### **General Introductory Comments Regarding Ministry Aids** (New 12/20/2001)

**The purpose of this document** is to gather together concepts and comments that apply to many or all of the ministry aids. Our hope is that putting this material all together in one place will make it easier for you to find, and easier for us to update as we continue to learn.

**“Sample” prayers and commands – where they come from, how to use them:** We are trying to provide practical ministry aids, especially to assist those who are getting started. We have thought very carefully about the ideas and principles included in our sample prayers, and have reviewed other authors addressing the same ministry concerns. We are also constantly experimenting, observing to see what is most effective. If we observe consistent benefit every time we include a certain component, then we add it to our “sample” prayers and commands. Explanations of the different components in each set of sample prayers and commands are available in this “general introductory comments” essay and/or in the explanatory essay included with each ministry aid. We try to discuss the principles, observations, and literature references leading us to include each component. If we perceive specific wording to be particularly important, we will also comment on any principles, observations, and literature references behind the words we have chosen. Note that we have chosen specific wording in an attempt to most clearly express certain underlying principles, but the exact words are NOT magic, like incantations where simply speaking the exact words produces some kind of magical effect. It is important for the person using the prayers<sup>1</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup>The therapist/minister is the one to speak some of the prayers and commands, like the opening and closing prayers and commands and the prayers and commands to deal with demonic

commands to understand what they are doing, and to be emotionally “present”/connected. We have repeatedly observed that nothing changes when the prayers and commands are simply parroted, in a rote/mechanical way without understanding or emotional connection.

If you wish to pray more spontaneously, we would at least encourage you to include the same basic ingredients that we discuss in the explanatory essay accompanying each set of “sample” prayers and commands.

**We can’t do it in our own strength:** As we have experimented with many variations of the sample prayers, we have found it important to acknowledge that we cannot repent (change our minds and hearts) by simply choosing to do so.<sup>2</sup> We ask the Lord to do what we cannot do – to give us His mind, His heart, and His truth regarding our defenses, vows, judgments, bitterness, self pity, and other sins. We have also found it important to acknowledge that we cannot free ourselves – we can only cooperate with the Lord’s desire to free us by asking Him to free us and by choosing to release and renounce the defenses, vows, judgments, etc.

My experience with praying to release judgments and bitterness most dramatically confirms this truth that we cannot free ourselves, but that the Lord will free us when we ask Him to do so. My experience is that it is easy to feel the subjective presence of judgments and bitterness as long as they are still there, and it is easy to tell that they are gone after they leave. The subjective sense of judgment, condemnation, self-righteousness, bitterness, and desire for revenge do not leave as I am reading the essay, discussing and acknowledging why I need to release these sins, confessing them, asking forgiveness for them, acknowledging my powerlessness, asking for repentance, or choosing to release and renounce them. I can feel the judgment and bitterness still present throughout the prayer, no matter how long it takes (even when I pause after releasing and renouncing to go back and include additional details). But the subjective sense of judgment and bitterness almost always resolves within seconds after I finish the final *request* for the Lord to wash me with His blood – to cleanse me and free me from judgments, condemnation, self-righteousness, bitterness, and desire for revenge. I don’t always feel it leaving, but when I check, it is gone – I can’t find it even if I try to stir it up.

**Renouncing sinful defenses, vows, judgments, bitterness, other sins:** Francis MacNutt contributes a helpful insight regarding the importance of explicitly renouncing our sinful defenses, vows, judgments, bitterness, self pity, and other sins: “Renouncing adds a deeper dimension. In addition to being sorry for what we have done in the past and resolving to change our life, we repudiate, cast off and take back our previous commitment by making an

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interference during the session. The person receiving ministry speaks the prayers and commands in other situations.

<sup>2</sup>See Smith, Ed. *Beyond Tolerable Recovery*. (Campbellsville, KY: Alathia Publishing, 2000), p. 227-228 for discussion of this “we can’t do it ourselves” perspective on repentance.

explicit declaration of abandonment.”<sup>3</sup> By renouncing our sinful defenses, vows, judgments, bitterness, self pity, and other sins, we are taking back the spiritual and psychological territory that we have previously surrendered to the enemy.

**Source of authority for commands to demonic spirits:** It is important to keep clearly in mind that we give commands to demonic spirits, not in our own strength, but in the authority of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Eph.1:19-23, see also “*Binding*,” below). Therefore, whenever a demonic spirit chooses to disobey us, it is choosing to disobey the authority of Jesus through us. If any demonic spirit contests our authority, we delegate “up” the chain of command by commanding them to go and deal with Jesus directly.

**“Binding:”** There is much scholarly debate about the meaning of “binding” and “loosing” found particularly in Matthew 16:19 and 18:18. While some believe it refers to the Christian’s authority over evil spiritual forces, many do not. Our usage of the word is not intended to invoke the authority referred to in these verses. Rather we are using the term as a simple way to express the idea of rendering harmless any evil which may be attached to some wound, deception or sin in a person’s mind. That we as Christians do have authority over evil spirits is attested elsewhere in Scripture (Mtw 10:1, Luke 9:1, Luke 10:17-20).

**Angelic assistance:** As many of you know, angels have become a popular topic, even for non-Christian authors and readers. Especially in this context, material is being published that is distorted and contrary to Biblical teaching. However, there *is* scriptural precedent for prayer releasing the assistance of angels. In Daniel 10:12, Gabriel says to Daniel: “Since the first day you began to pray for understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer.” In Acts 12, Peter is in prison awaiting trial and possible execution. “But while Peter was in prison, the church prayed very earnestly for him. The night before Peter was to be placed on trial, he was asleep, chained between two soldiers, with others standing guard at the prison gate. Suddenly, there was a bright light in the cell, and an angel of the Lord stood before Peter.” (Acts 12:5-7) The narrative then describes how this angel rescues Peter from prison (Acts 12:8-11). Scripture also indicates that our prayers release power and authority to accomplish the Lord’s will (see Dutch Sheet’s book [Intercessory Prayer](#) for a discussion of this perspective on prayer). Charles Kraft describes benefit with specifically asking the Lord for angelic assistance<sup>4</sup>, and I have also seen this in some of our Theophostic ministry sessions. Please do not include parts of the sample prayers that ask the Lord to release angelic assistance if you are not comfortable with this.

**Use good judgment regarding timing (don’t freak people out):** Many people receiving

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<sup>3</sup> Francis MacNutt, [Deliverance from Evil Spirits](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1995), p. 168.

<sup>4</sup>See Kraft, Charles. [Defeating Dark Angels](#), Ann Arbor, MI: Servant, 1992, p. 187.

Theophostic ministry will be familiar with vows, curses, judgments, internal dissociated parts, demonic harassment, satanic/demonic seals, soul ties, and angelic assistance. To others, these will be new, strange, and often frightening realities. Please use good judgment regarding timing. Ask the person receiving ministry if they are familiar with these concepts and phenomena. Explain/discuss them before using prayers and commands that include them. If you feel that the person receiving ministry is not ready even to discuss some of these concepts and/or phenomena, then wait until you have established more relationship and trust with the person. The person receiving ministry will often become more open to these concepts and phenomena if they become stuck in the healing work and/or if they start to experience these realities during their prayer for emotional healing sessions. If the thought of discussing this material makes you anxious, check for your own triggering. I am amazed at what clients are able to discuss, without getting upset, when I am truly non-triggered and non-anxious.

**“The *true* Lord Jesus Christ”:** (comments forthcoming)

**Prayers to the Lord, commands to demonic spirits:** In our explanatory essays, and in the titles of our ministry aids, we often use the expression “prayers and commands” instead of just “prayers.” This is because we think it is important to make a clear distinction between offering prayers to the Lord and issuing commands to demonic spirits. We pray to the Lord, but we do not pray to demonic spirits – we stand in the authority of Christ and tell them what to do.

**More than one location:** Any given psychological defense, a specific vow, judgments and bitterness towards a certain person, self pity, other sins, and any given type of demonic infection can each be carried in a number of different locations. A person can carry each of these things associated with several different memories and/or issues, and sometimes the person will deal with these different memories and/or issues separately. Each of these things can also be carried separately by different internal parts. The person receiving ministry will often need to deal with any given psychological defense, a specific vow, judgments and bitterness towards a certain person, self pity, other sins, and any given type of demonic infection in more than one location and on more than one occasion.

When evaluating whether prayers and commands have been effective, it is important to realize that resolving a given psychological defense, a specific vow, judgments and bitterness towards a certain person, self pity, other sins, and any given type of demonic infection *associated with a specific memory or issue, or carried by a specific dissociated part*, is different than resolving the specific defense/vow/judgment/etc. *in all locations*. When checking to see whether prayers and commands have been effective, it is important to check the *specific target* that has been addressed. Sometimes when the defense/vow/judgment/etc. associated with a specific memory and/or carried by a specific internal part has been successfully resolved, but the person receiving ministry still carries that particular defense/vow/judgment/etc. in other locations, the person will experience significant improvement but will have the sense that there is still more “somewhere else.” They will say something like “The judgment and bitterness towards the Lord for letting my mother die is gone, but I can feel that there is still judgment and

bitterness towards the Lord about \_\_\_\_\_ (some other issue).” At other times the person receiving ministry will feel completely free of the particular defense/vow/judgment/etc. at the end of the session, but then will later discover the particular defense/vow/judgment/etc. in other locations when these other memories, issues, or internal parts get triggered. An experience we had in the fall of 2001 provides an excellent example of a particular problem being carried in more than one location. One of our clients had worked and worked on certain childhood memories of being sexually abused, but in spite of many hours of Theophostic ministry, she did not experience complete healing. We identified bitterness towards the perpetrator as a problem in the way of healing, and addressed this on several occasions, but it kept coming back. This was confusing, because we had addressed the same, specific bitterness towards the same perpetrator regarding the same memories, and it seemed to resolve each time, but then it appeared to come back. We finally realized that she had a number of different parts each carrying this same bitterness. Each time the “same” bitterness appeared to come back it had actually been a new internal part coming forward. The Lord came with complete healing immediately after she systematically went through the bitterness prayer with each of the remaining internal parts that still carried bitterness towards the man who had sexually abused her.<sup>5</sup>

**Common problems:** There are a number of common problems that can get in the way of releasing defenses, vows, judgments, bitterness, self pity, or other sins.

1. Core lies getting triggered: Our experience is that negative reactions in the person receiving ministry often come from core lies that are triggered by the discussion of possible blocking problems. One of my own Theophostic sessions provides an excellent example. I was remembering and describing traumatic memories, and was wanting Charlotte to acknowledge how badly I had been wounded and to validate my negative emotions. This was during the time we were developing this material regarding the victim swamp, and Charlotte’s first thought was to wonder if self pity might be hindering my healing work. I felt profoundly blamed and invalidated, and was very angry: “How *dare* you imply that I am doing something wrong? Can’t you see that I am the one that got hurt?” We eventually figured out that her comment had triggered my memories of being a white kid in the 1960’s in a liberal, mixed-race grade-school. The general philosophy was that white people were responsible for all the problems in the world, and that oppressed minorities were always the innocent victims. On my playground, this translated into feeling chronically blamed and invalidated. These memories carried the core lie: “I will be/am being blamed, discredited, invalidated – the sins against me won’t be/aren’t being acknowledged.”

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<sup>5</sup>After being stuck for many hours working with me, this client actually figured this out and experienced her healing breakthrough while doing Theophostic ministry at home with a friend. Keeps me humble and demonstrates that not only can lay people use Theophostic ministry, they can make important discoveries.

Being blamed and/or invalidated are common childhood wounds, and these wounds are understandably triggered by the suggestion that the person receiving ministry might be carrying problems that hinder the healing work (“Oh, right! You think it’s *my* fault that I have this problem?!”). It is wise to watch specifically for blame and invalidation lies whenever the person receiving ministry experiences a negative reaction to reading the explanatory essays and/or discussing possible blocking problems.

Don’t be distracted by trying to address the faulty “either or” logic: My “How *dare* you imply that I am doing something wrong? Can’t you see that I am the one that got hurt?” reaction stands on faulty “either or” logic. **Either** you validate that I was wounded as an innocent victim **or** you say that my defenses/vows/judgments/etc. are hindering the healing process. In reality, **both** of these statements are usually true. I was wounded as an innocent victim, and that needs to be acknowledged and validated, **and** my current bitterness, self pity, etc. are hindering the healing process. This faulty “either or” logic is usually present when blame and/or invalidation lies are being triggered in the person receiving ministry. Recognizing the faulty “either or” logic will help you think more clearly as the therapist/minister, but don’t be distracted by trying to discuss this faulty logic with the person receiving ministry. In the Theophostic ministry session described above, we spent a lot of time trying to correct my faulty logic before realizing that I was being triggered, and then addressing the underlying memories and lies with Theophostic principles and process. It was somewhat helpful for my adult mind to see the faulty logic in my angry reaction, but it was much more valuable to identify and address the underlying traumatic memories and associated lies that were being triggered. As always, the Theophostic process and truth directly from Jesus was more effective than trying to address the problem with our own logic and insight. We would have moved forward more quickly if we had not gotten distracted by trying to correct my faulty logic.

We have found that triggering core lies is especially common when addressing self pity and other sins of the victim swamp, but triggering core lies can also occur when addressing other blocking problems. It is very helpful (and sometimes necessary) to identify and resolve the core lies that are being triggered before going through prayers and commands to address the blocking problem(s) in question.

2. Guardian lies: We often find guardian lies hindering the release of defenses, vows, judgments, bitterness, self pity, other sins, and demonic spirits. A common guardian lie hindering the release of vows is “It’s not safe to release this vow because I won’t be able to \_\_\_\_\_ without it.” A self pity guardian lie could be “It’s *not* okay to get healed (release my self pity, tragic hero position) because then they will never see or acknowledge how badly they hurt me.” A guardian lie hindering release of judgments might be “Not judging means there are no rules – if I let go of my judgments there will be no justice.” Probably the most common guardian lie hindering the release of bitterness is “It’s not safe to let go of this bitterness – it makes me strong so I can

protect myself.” A guardian lie hindering release of bitterness towards the Lord might be “I can’t let go of this, it’s the only way I can punish the Lord for what He has done to me.” Guardian lies such as “I will go crazy if I remember,” “I will die if I feel these emotions,” and “I can’t handle these memories” will hinder the release of defenses like dissociation, repression, and denial. Additional specific examples are included in the “Common problems, Guardian lies” portion of the explanatory essays associated with each ministry aid. Guardian lies can often be identified by watching for thoughts like these as the person receiving ministry goes through the sample prayers.

3. Vows: Defenses, judgments, bitterness, self pity, other sins, and demonic spirits can be protected by vows. Many of us have made self pity vows along the lines of “I’ll just sit out here in the rain until I die (I won’t do anything to fix the problem) – then they’ll be sorry.” A vow of judgment/self-righteousness might be “I may not be able to stop him from beating me, but I will be better than him.” A common vow hindering release of bitterness towards the Lord is “There is no excuse – I will never forgive Him for letting \_\_\_\_\_ (my mother die, my father leave, my brother molest me, etc.).” “I will not remember” and “I will not feel” will reinforce dissociation, repression, and denial. Additional specific examples are included in the “Common problems, Vows” portion of the explanatory essays associated with each ministry aid.
4. Demonic interference: Any demonic spirits associated with the defense/vow/judgment/etc. in question will understandably try to block the person, and/or internal parts, from participating in prayers and commands to release the defense/vow/judgment/etc. As discussed in “Dealing with Demonic Interference/Opposition during the session...,” it is helpful to “focus the target” when dealing with demonic interference. For example, if I am dealing with possible demonic interference hindering release of judgments, I will address my commands to “spirits of judgment, condemnation, self-righteousness, and any other demonic spirits associated with these judgments in any way.”
3. Avoidance of the whole truth: The person receiving ministry needs to truly “see” the wound before they can fully release any defenses, vows, judgments, bitterness, self pity, other sins, and demonic spirits associated with it. It will hinder release of the defenses, vows, judgments, bitterness, self pity, etc. if the person is still avoiding the whole truth about how badly they have been hurt.
  - Hiding part of the target memory: The person receiving ministry may be “hiding” (dissociation, denial, repression, avoidance, etc.) some aspect of the target traumatic memories.
  - Hiding connected and/or deeper traumatic memories: The person receiving ministry may be “hiding” (dissociation, denial, repression, avoidance, etc.) connected and/or deeper traumatic memories with the same theme. See “Incomplete Resolution, Deeper Wounds...” (forthcoming) on the “Case Studies”

page for a case study example of this principle.

6. Internal parts that do not participate: For complete resolution of the defense/vow/judgment/etc. associated with a given memory or issue, all internal parts carrying the defense/vow/judgment/etc. associated with the target memory or issue must be present, stay connected, and participate in the prayer. If these parts are not ready and/or able<sup>6</sup> to participate in the prayer, the prayer will not be effective in resolving whatever portion of the defense/vow/judgment/etc. that they are carrying (kind of like racing the engine with the gear shift in neutral – the engine spins but it is not connected to the wheels).

In some situations, 1) the person's adult core self chooses to confess and release the defense/vow/judgment/etc., 2) there is an internal part carrying some portion of the defense/vow/judgment/etc. associated with the memory/issue in question, 3) this internal part, with its defense/vow/judgment/etc., has been present and connected, 4) the internal part disconnects during the prayer, and 5) it then returns as soon as the prayer is finished.

When this happens, the person usually perceives immediate but *partial* release of her defense/vow/judgment/etc. associated with that particular target. "It has lost some of its power, but it feels like the defense/vow/judgment/etc. is still here." If the person is experienced with internal parts phenomena, she will usually quickly realize that the remaining defense/vow/judgment/etc. is being carried by an internal part, and that the internal part did not participate in the prayer.

It is ideal to identify and resolve these problems before going through the prayers and commands to address the defense/vow/judgment/etc. in question. Discuss the possible blocking problem(s) in question, ask the person receiving ministry if she is sure she is ready to release the defense/vow/judgment/etc, and then check for any anger, sense of uncertainty, or lack of internal unity. This usually picks up guardian lies and lies being triggered by discussion of the blocking problem(s), and often picks up internal parts that aren't ready to participate. It is *necessary* to resolve guardian lies carried by the adult core self before going through the prayer (nothing will be accomplished if the adult core self still carries guardian lies). It is ideal, but not necessary, to care for dissenting internal parts before going through the prayer. If there are dissenting internal parts that seem to have an endless tangle of guardian lies and/or demonic infection, I will sometimes go through the prayer with the adult core self and any internal parts that are ready. This usually produces some benefit, and can clear the way for

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<sup>6</sup>The same problems that can prevent the adult person from releasing the defense/vow/judgment/etc. in question can also cause internal parts to be unwilling and/or unable to participate (guardian lies, traumatic memories and emotions not fully connected, related memories not addressed, vows, spiritual opposition).



the next step forward.

Note: This whole process can be surprisingly quick and easy with people who are already familiar with our ministry aids. For example, a *very* short “discussion,” checking for anger, uncertainty, or lack of internal unity, and then finding and resolving a guardian lie might go as follows:

Person receiving ministry: “....My parents were so stupid and negligent – they didn’t even *try* to protect me from my siblings!”

Dr. Lehman: “It sounds like judgment and bitterness are still present in this wound. They are probably in the way – do you feel ready to release them?”

Person receiving ministry: “Yeah, you’re right – I really do have judgment and bitterness towards my parents. Am I ready to release them? Hmm. I know I need to release them, but I don’t feel like I am ready.”

Dr. Lehman: “Lord Jesus, what do you want \_\_\_\_\_ to know about this reluctance to release judgment and bitterness towards his parents?”

Person receiving ministry: Brief pause. “I can tell that I am afraid – I am afraid that if I release my judgment and bitterness, I will lose power to make other people protect me.”

Dr. Lehman: (*to the person receiving ministry*) “Focus on that thought, and stir up the fear of losing power to make others protect you.” (*Prayer*) “Lord Jesus, what do you want \_\_\_\_\_ to know about this?”

Person receiving ministry: Brief pause. “I feel like the Lord is showing me that my judgment and bitterness don’t really help – they are just keeping me stuck. He will show me how to get appropriate protection.” Pause. “I think I am ready to go through the prayers now.”

Guardian lies, dissenting internal parts, and spiritual opposition will sometimes surface while the person is going through the prayers. I usually go through the prayer the first time without special measures. If the defense/vow/judgment/etc. doesn’t resolve, I ask the person to describe any thoughts, images, emotions, etc. that came to him during the prayer. He will often describe words/thoughts/images/emotions that reveal guardian lies, dissenting internal parts, or spiritual opposition hindering the process. If the person receiving ministry has difficulty remembering what was going through his mind during the prayer, I sometimes go through the prayer again and ask the person to specifically observe for any dissenting, angry, or opposing words/thoughts/images/emotions that come as he goes through the prayer. At this point in the process I am also experimenting with the technique described in “Our job vs. Jesus’ job,” below: asking “Jesus, what do you want name to know about \_\_\_\_\_ (for example:

why this defense/vow/judgment/etc. hasn't resolved)?" and then asking the person receiving ministry to describe any words, thoughts, images, emotions, etc. coming into his mind. Address any problems that surface, and then return to the prayer to release the defense/vow/judgment/etc. in question.

**If it doesn't work:** Our experience is that we still sometimes miss something, especially quiet vows and deeper traumatic memories that are carefully protected. It is easy to tell when you miss something because the defense/vow/judgment/self pity/etc. will still be there when the person is done with the prayer. When this happens you can assume with a fairly high degree of confidence that one or more of the common problems just discussed is blocking the way. Ask the Lord "What do you want \_\_\_\_\_ (*name of the person receiving ministry*) to know about this defense/vow/judgment/etc.?" and then watch especially for the common problems discussed above. Return to the sample prayers and commands when the blocking problems have been addressed. The Lord will always free a person from defenses, vows, judgments, self pity, other sins, and demonic infestation when the relevant traumatic memories are fully connected and all interference has been resolved.

**Being *ready* versus *wanting* to release the defense/vow/judgment/etc. in question:** It is important to realize that being *ready* to release the defense/vow/judgment/etc. is not the same thing as feeling subjectively like you *want* to let go of the defense/vow/judgment/etc. Occasionally I feel subjectively like I truly *want* to release the blocking problem, but usually my immediate emotion is to want to hold onto the blocking problem. What I *do* experience when I am ready to release the blocking problem is a sense of internal unity, a sense of internal agreement: "I know this defense/vow/judgment/etc. is blocking my healing and hindering my relationship with You, Lord, and I *do* want that to change. I am truly *ready* to let go of this defense/vow/judgment/etc." I can truly be *ready* to let go of the defense/vow/judgment/etc., even though I do not feel like I *want* to release it. I have started prayer to release judgments and bitterness with "Lord, I don't want to forgive this person. I would really like him to burn in hell, and I want to watch. But I know this judgment and bitterness is blocking my healing and hindering my relationship with you...." I continued to *feel* the subjective judgment and desire for revenge throughout the entire prayer, and chose to keep going because I truly was *ready* to release them. I understood how they were hindering my healing and my relationship with the Lord, and even though my direct emotion regarding my judgment and bitterness was that I *wanted* to keep them, I *chose* to release them because I wanted to move forward with my healing and in my relationship with the Lord even more than I wanted to hold onto my judgment and bitterness. My immediate emotions were still aligned with the judgment and bitterness, but my larger desire, my mind, and my will were ready to release them. The Lord obviously honored my larger desire and the choice of my mind and my will over my immediate emotion, since the judgment, bitterness, and desire for revenge resolved within seconds of finishing the prayer, even though my immediate/direct emotion throughout the entire prayer was that I didn't *want* to release them. A subjectively odd part of the experience was that I was glad the judgment and bitterness were gone as soon as they left, even though my

subjective emotion during the prayer was desire to hold onto them.<sup>7</sup>

**Our job vs. Jesus' job:** As you read through the list of “common problems,” it is very important to understand what we need to know and what we do not need to know, what we need to do and what we do not need to do.

When we first began to do Theophostic, we thought that the therapist/minister had to be very active in figuring things out, especially in figuring out what was in the way when the process became stuck. I understood the idea of letting Jesus guide us to the root memories, but I approached the task of finding and moving blockages in much the same way I approach medical problems – I would carry in my head a “differential diagnosis” chart of all the possible problems, and would then ask questions and try ministry aids in order to test and clarify the different possibilities. As we gained experience, the list of “common problems” on my differential diagnosis chart and the number of ministry aids in my tool box both kept growing. This was good, in that we learned more and more about what could be blocking the way, and were able to find and move the blockages in more and more cases. This was better than just staying stuck and resigning ourselves to “I guess Jesus doesn’t want to heal this person today.” But at times we wondered whether lay people could really use these tools. The growing complexity felt challenging and tiring at times, and we are full time mental health professionals. How could we expect lay people to master this material at the level necessary to use it in the way we were using it?

Fortunately, we have also been gaining confidence in the Lord’s ability and desire to guide many of the details of the Theophostic work, and we have recently come to a clearer understanding about an important aspect of how He does this. Jesus is the commander in chief who can see the whole battle, and we are the soldiers in the field who can only see what is immediately in front of us. He’s the one who carries the “big picture” in His head, the one who knows where to find the memories where the core lies are anchored, the one who knows what’s in the way and the order in which the different pieces need to be removed. Our experience is that He does *not* require us to “figure out” these aspects of the big picture. Our experience is that He *does* require us to know enough to recognize what He shows us, and to know how to use the tools required to play our part in the Theophostic process.

In concrete and specific terms, this means that we ask “Jesus, what do you want \_\_\_\_\_ (the person receiving ministry) to know about this?” as the backbone of our Theophostic ministry prayer. We pray this simple question over and over and over in our Theophostic sessions. After praying this simple prayer we pay attention, observe carefully, and ask the person receiving ministry to describe any words, thoughts, images, emotions, etc. coming into her

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<sup>7</sup>C.S. Lewis vividly portrays this subjective experience in one of the scenes in *The Great Divorce*. The person “receiving ministry” asks to be delivered from lust, even though his immediate desire is clamoring to hold onto lust, and he is grateful as soon as it is gone. (Lewis, C.S. *The Great Divorce* (New York, NY: MacMillan, 1946) p. 98-105).

mind. We need to know enough about trauma and basic Theophostic theory to recognize the clues that Jesus brings forward and holds in front of us (for example, we need to recognize physical memories that are re-enacting the original trauma and we need to recognize core lies when the person receiving ministry speaks them). We need to understand the “common problems” well enough to *recognize*<sup>8</sup> what Jesus brings forward and holds in front of us (for example, we need to recognize guardian lies, vows, and judgments when the person receiving ministry speaks them). We need to know how to use the ministry tools required to remove the different problems (for example, we need to be able to help the person understand how their vows are blocking their healing, and then be able to guide them through the prayers to release their vows). We need to understand the basic Theophostic principles of making sure the three required ingredients are present (core lie, source memory, and emotions), stirring up the darkness, and asking Jesus to come with healing and truth. Finally, we need to get our own healing so that our core lies, sins, and demonic infection don’t interfere with our ability to perceive and follow the Lord’s guidance. This last piece is especially important. The more wounds, lies, sins, and demonic infections that remain in our minds, the less we are able to let Jesus lead and the more we have to figure things out for ourselves. Conversely, the more healing we get, the more we are able to let Jesus lead and the less we have to figure things out for ourselves.

In concrete and specific terms, this means we do *not* need to figure out the “big picture” and hold it in our minds. We do *not* need to direct the overall process. We do *not* need to find the root memories where the core lies are anchored. We do *not* need to master the “common problems” material at the level of being able to hold the “differential diagnosis” chart in our heads. We do *not* need to know how to search for/find all these possible problems. We do *not* need to be able to analyze the sometimes complex way in which the blocking problems are woven together. We do *not* need to direct the process of untangling and removing the blocking problems. These are all the Lord’s jobs.

**Be especially thorough the first time through:** The first time someone deals with a given psychological defense, a specific vow, or a specific sin (judgment, bitterness, self pity, etc.), we encourage including the prayers and commands to address corresponding strongholds, demonic spirits, and curses. We also look for others in the family tree with the same defenses/vows/sins, and go through the prayers for generational sins, strongholds, spirits, and curses as appropriate.

**Too little or too much? Give us feedback:** As we have integrated the “General Introductory Comments...” essay with each individual ministry aid, we have left varying amounts of material in the individual ministry aid essays. We would appreciate feedback. Do you prefer most of the material to be included in each essay, customized slightly for the particular ministry aid, so

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<sup>8</sup>Learning material to the point of being able to *recognize* it is MUCH easier than being able to hold it in your head with enough clarity and mastery to use it in analyzing a complex situation.

that each essay stands more independently? Or do you prefer we include less material in the individual essays, referring back to this essay whenever there is material relevant to individual ministry aids, but already covered as a general concept here? For the documents that include more of the material, which of the following better captures your response?

- 1) "I like having everything I need 'right there' for each ministry aid. I don't want to have to go referring to other documents," or
- 2) "You keep repeating yourself! This is all in the 'General introductory comments' document, why do you include it again in each ministry aid essay? I don't want to wade through all this redundant material in each ministry aid essay."