

Title: Voice of the Martyrs and Immanuel Approach in Columbia

April 27, 2010,

Greetings all,

I have been working on a section for our upcoming book that includes a brief summary of testimonies regarding the work the Lord is doing through the Immanuel approach, and I thought it would be encouraging to send these pieces out to you. Pieces of some of these stories have gone out in earlier e-mails, but these are the most updated and complete accounts. This second installment is a story about Voice of the Martyrs and Immanuel Approach in Columbia.

Blessings,

Dr. Lehman/Karl

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Voice of the Martyrs and Immanuel Approach in Columbia:

We have heard more amazing stories of healing from Lee Ann Hess, one of the women on the Voice of the Martyrs team that has been working with persecuted/traumatized women and children in Columbia. In certain areas of Columbia Marxist guerillas and various other paramilitary groups have been attacking the church, and part of this attack has been to target pastors for assassination. There are now hundreds of women and children in Columbia who's husbands/fathers have been murdered because of their involvement in Christian ministry. An especially horrifying part of the story is that in their efforts to intimidate the church the assassins deliberately try to make the murders as traumatic as possible for the survivors, so they will routinely do things like going into the pastor's home and killing him in front of his wife and children. Not surprisingly, almost all of these women and children develop PTSD, most of them also develop associated problems such as bitterness and depression, and many of them withdraw from involvement in church and ministry.

However, the Lord's power to heal is even greater than the enemies power to destroy. As I write this (March 2010), it has been just two weeks since Charlotte and I had the privilege of spending an evening with Lee Ann, hearing first hand accounts of the redemptive healing the Lord has been providing for these women and children. In September of 2008, VOM sent Kim, Lee Ann, and two other women as a mission team to work with 50 of these widows. The mission team was able to lead the Columbian widows through Immanuel approach group exercises (footnote 1), and every single one of them appeared to receive profound healing. The team was able to go back for a second visit in August of 2009 and worked with 60 more

widows, once again leading them through Immanuel approach group exercises, and once again observing that every single participant appeared to receive profound healing. Initially, almost all of the women described persistent despair as one of their heaviest burdens; but their healing encounters with the Lord have resulted in such dramatic transformation from despair to joy that acquaintances have made spontaneous comments about the participants being “changed women.” The women participating in these Immanuel exercises have also consistently reported resolution of the various signs and symptoms of PTSD.

When we met with Lee Ann two weeks ago, she said that all of the women they have been able to follow have continued to do well, with continued freedom from PTSD, continued freedom from depression, and continued restoration of joy. Furthermore, *most of these women now report that they have been able to use the Immanuel approach to facilitate emotional healing for their children.*

The following story is just one example of the kind of trauma the Lord has been working with and the kind of redemption He has been providing. Pastor Enrico (not his real name) was abducted and murdered, and his wife, Elizabeth (not her real name), was brutally traumatized by the same men who killed her husband. Although she survived physically, Elizabeth developed PTSD, became depressed, and withdrew from ministry; and her children, in addition to developing PTSD and withdrawing from church, expressed intense and persistent hatred towards the perpetrators. Fortunately, Elizabeth was able to work with the VOM mission team during both of their visits, receiving healing for the trauma of her husband’s murder during the first visit and receiving healing for the trauma of the soldiers brutally assaulting her during the second visit. And not only has Elizabeth remained free of PTSD and depression since this healing work, but she has also been able to use the Immanuel approach with her children, all of whom have also experienced profound healing and are now free of PTSD and depression. In fact, the Lord’s healing work has been so complete that the children have been able to forgive the men who killed their father, Elizabeth has returned to ministry, starting a house church that is now bursting at the seams, and the children, on their own initiative, have started a youth group that is also now bursting at the seams. (Footnote 2)

Footnote 2: With both the house church and the youth group, participants must now bring their own chairs and sit in the street in front of the house.