

Title: Chris, Birth Ordeal, and Immanuel

June 27, 2013

Greetings all,

Just a quick note to send out another Immanuel story.

Blessings,

Dr. Lehman/Karl

Chris, Birth Ordeal, and Immanuel: After two days (43 hours) of waiting, praying, and agonizing labor pains, Chris and Jen were exhausted and at the point of desperation. Jen's dream of a natural birth was a foggy, distant memory, and they were both at the place of just wanting relief. They and the doctors decided to add pitocin, in an attempt to move things forward, and this quickly and dramatically dialed up the intensity. At this point one of the doctors also discovered that Matthew, Chris and Jen's unborn son, was misaligned, and Chris feared for the lives of his wife and child as the medical team scrambled to intervene.

Thankfully, by hour 47 Jen was holding their son as tears of joy rolled down their cheeks, but Chris had definitely been traumatized by the drama in the middle of the experience. During the two hours of maximum intensity, when the pitocin had been doing its' job and the medical team had been scrambling to get Matthew lined up correctly, Chris was fully aware that he had lost access to his relational circuits, that he had lost his shalom and joy, and that he had lost his awareness of God's Immanuel presence. He noticed himself thinking, "I don't want to go through that again," and suddenly realized that he no longer wanted more children. Losing access to his relational circuits, losing his shalom and joy, losing his awareness of God's presence, and the sudden appearance of new negative thoughts and emotions all indicated that he had not been able to successfully process the painful experience.¹

Fortunately, this inadequately processed pain only remained as trauma for a short time. As soon as he realized what had happened, Chris turned to Immanuel for help. He very deliberately thought about a previous experience of connecting with Jesus, and then focused on this positive memory until he felt gratitude and had reestablished a connection. As soon as Jesus' presence seemed real, living, and interactive in the present Chris began to engage directly with Him regarding his unprocessed pain: "Lord, I realize I have no idea where You were or what You were doing during the time Jen was in serious trouble. I was afraid for my wife and my son. I felt so helpless and alone. Where were You when I needed You?"

¹ Remembering from chapter two, "not being able to successfully process a painful experience" is our definition of trauma.

After sharing the pain that was in his heart, Chris perceived God's comforting presence, and the words, "Chris, that was scary for you. I was there providing and working through the team of nurses and doctors who were trained to do their job under extreme circumstances. Even though you did not know what to do, they did." The sense of God's presence and these reassuring words brought some peace, but Chris still felt tension and fear when he thought about the hours with the pitocin and the medical team scrambling to get Matthew lined up correctly. The lack of complete shalom indicated that more healing was still needed, so Chris continued with, "Lord, thank You for Your team of people. They were helpful. However, I still feel hurt, afraid, and angry about the whole ordeal. Why did it have to be so intense? That was so scary, Lord!"

At this point Chris noticed a remarkable image coming into his mind:

"The best way to describe the image is what happens if you face a mirror when there is another mirror behind you, and your reflection appears multiplied as far back as your eyes can see. With this image in mind, I felt Immanuel continue, 'Chris, when the team of nurses and doctors were born, I had Matthew in My mind. When the parents of your nurses and doctors were born, I had Matthew in My mind. When their grandparents were born, I had Matthew in My mind.'"

And this pattern continued until Chris felt overwhelmed by the depth and power of the truth that the Lord was revealing to him. Jesus was showing him that He had Matthew in His mind all the way back to the beginning of time, and that He had prepared this specific, special team of people to help Jen successfully deliver their son!

This profound, healing interaction fully restored Chris' shalom and joy. "I never want to go through that again" and the associated fearful resistance to the idea of having more kids was replaced by the return of his longing for more children, and the negative images, thoughts, and emotions from the pitocin hours were replaced with a vivid, peaceful picture of Jesus providing for his family. Furthermore, these positive changes have remained. His desire for more children has continued (Chris and Jen now have a second son), and as I write this three-and-one-half years later, his image of Jesus providing for his family remains vivid and his memories from the pitocin hours remain free of negative thoughts, painful emotions, or any other indicators of trauma.

Adapted from E. James Wilder, Edward M. Khouri, Chris M. Coursey, and Sheila D. Sutton, *Joy Starts Here: the Transformation Zone, Beta Version 1.0*, (Shepherd's House Inc.: Peoria, IL: Shepherd's House Inc., 2013), pages 175-177, with additional information from Chris and Jen per private communication. Used with permission.