

Title: "Beautiful IA Healing and Transformation for Single Mom"

November 4, 2021

Greetings all,

Just a quick note to share another beautiful Immanuel Approach testimony.

Blessings,

Dr. Lehman/Karl

### **Testimony from JD:**

*"Jesus, I'm afraid to come to you. I'm afraid you will tell me to give up these things I can't live without"*

These were the words I shared with Jesus in one of my first Immanuel sessions. I had several unhealthy coping mechanisms in mind that I felt afraid to let go of. I didn't think this "prayer thing" was going to work out so well.

I had grown up in church and truly enjoyed a sweet relationship with the Lord and His people. I had served in church leadership positions; I had taught Bible studies and was very respected in our church community.

### ***How did I end up here?***

I was now a thirty-year-old divorced single-mom sorting through excruciating situations (many of which included pain I experienced from church family). I was tired of hurting, and I was tired of carrying the burden of trying to look more "holy" on the outside than I felt on the inside.

It was in this place that I skeptically began my Immanuel prayer session where I told the Lord I wasn't going to give up certain things I felt I needed. I was done with behavior modification that looked good on the outside but left me so hungry on the inside. Yes, I had "quit" things in the past, but in reality, I had just switched to a more "acceptable" version of filling the void inside. I was hurting and unsatisfied. I had no idea how to interact with God from this place of honesty. I was bracing myself to be rejected by the God I had served, and I was terrified.

I would have never guessed what would take place in the following moments after I shared my candid feelings with the Lord. I was not prepared for the gentleness and sincerity I was about to experience in the Savior's response.

*"I won't make you give anything up that you don't want to give. We can still spend time together."*

And in those words, I experienced myself being washed in His love...I felt Him in the room with me, extending to me a love with no condition attached to it on my part. I didn't give up any of my hurtful choices right away; yet, God was meeting with me? I had no theology for what I was experiencing that day or in the period of time after.

Today, I experience life very differently than I did in that season even though most of my outward circumstances remain the same. Coping substances and eating disorders have lost their appeal because growing attachment with Jesus is replacing those things. Unhealthy relationships have lost their charm because I am finding love from the One who is so much more charming. The void inside my heart is truly being filled. I am continually meeting with Him, and I am being transformed.

As I have gained increasing freedom, I more recently began to find myself looking back to my previous season and experiencing immense shame flood over me when I thought of the lesser things I had turned to in the past. When I brought these feelings honestly before the Lord, once again He surprised me. As I shared with Him, I had a picture in my heart of how I used to be a starving beggar stubbornly eating scraps of food from a dumpster instead of feasting at the elaborate banquet table He invited me to. I was so angry at myself that I had been so foolish. I had expected the Lord to agree with me about my shame.

But the Lord did not chastise me or get angry with me like I had expected. What Jesus actually did next was quite surprising...

*In my heart, Immanuel climbed into the dumpster with me.*

The Lord began to teach me that it was back then "in the dumpster" when I honestly opened my heart to Him, I was able to begin to get my first taste of the true Bread of Life. Jesus himself came down to meet with me right where I was at even though it was a very unpleasant place. When I turned from these lesser things, it was then no longer because I was trying hard to deny myself. It was because I was turning towards something (Someone) truly satisfying.

I no longer experience shame when I think back on those memories. Every time I remember those days, I am just more and more mesmerized by Jesus' love.

Life is still really difficult most days. However, I now often find myself feasting at the banquet table of our Father's lavish love and life and grace and kindness in the middle of the hardships. In these moments of tasting His goodness, that same question that I had asked all those years ago frequently bubbles to the surface of my heart...

***How did I end up here?***

I will tell you how I ended up here at this elaborate banquet table.

*Because one day Immanuel joined me in a dumpster...*

*... and I am being changed by His love.*

"and by Him,(Immanuel) everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses"