



Bruce Condensed #3: Daughter's Illness (Immanuel Approach, Basic)

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The main purpose of *Bruce Condensed #3: Daughter's Illness (Immanuel Approach, Basic)*, is to provide live ministry session examples of the principles, techniques, and process described in our essays and presentations about the Immanuel approach. This DVD will be encouraging and educational for any viewer, but it will be much more valuable if you have first read the essays on the "Getting Started" page of our Immanuel approach website (www.immanuelapproach.com). If time constraints preclude reading all of the essays, I would encourage you to at least read the two introductory essays. This session demonstrates basic principles, techniques, and process.

Original session, debriefing immediately following the session, and two year follow-up interview: This DVD presents portions of the original session (May 2010), the debriefing discussion immediately following the session, and the follow-up interview that took place almost two years later (April 2012).

Session summary: In the full-length version of this 2010 session, Bruce starts with recalling/reentering memories for recent positive experiences with Jesus during the week after his parents' deaths, and deliberately stirs up appreciation for the Lord's care in these experiences. Bruce moves smoothly from positive memory recall and deliberate appreciation to reestablishing an interactive connection with Jesus, and once this is in place we ask the Lord for guidance regarding where to go with the session. The Lord helps Bruce connect with pain and anger around his daughters recent bout with a particularly nasty flu bug, and Bruce experiences beautiful resolution of his pain and anger when the Lord reveals His own love and concern for Bruce's daughter. The Lord then directs Bruce to focus on recent tensions with his siblings, and this leads to a series of childhood memories in which Bruce and his siblings experienced painful tensions with their mother. Bruce receives more beautiful healing as he engages with Jesus' living presence in the context of these memories, and then Jesus shows Bruce how He was with he and his mother at her death bed. During the two years following the session Bruce observes a number of lasting changes, including continued peace regarding his daughter's suffering, persistently increased compassion and decreased anxiety in relating to his siblings, and lasting resolution of pain and bitterness with respect to his mother. Bruce also reports that the Lord's work in the session strongly contributed to healthy grieving regarding the loss of his parents.

In *Bruce Condensed #3: Daughter's Illness*, I include only the session work, debriefing discussion, and follow-up interview pertaining to Bruce's struggle with "Why is God allowing my daughter to suffer like this?"

Deleted material: To put the condensed version in perspective: In order to make this 17 minute condensed version, 82 minutes of material have been deleted from the 99 minute complete version. The condensed version is valuable for providing an *overview* of what an Immanuel approach session looks like, and it's great for inspiration and faith building; but if you are actually trying to learn how to facilitate Immanuel approach sessions, you will definitely want to

view the complete version.

Opening and closing prayers: Many people have asked about the opening and closing prayers I routinely use at the beginning and end of our emotional healing sessions (and that are hard to get from the DVDs because I go through them so quickly). The essays, “Opening Prayers and Commands: Prayer for the Facilitator, Dealing with the Demonic, and General Introductory Prayer,” and “Closing Prayer and Commands”¹ provide explanations regarding a number of specific points, and then also provide both a longer and an abbreviated “sample” opening and closing prayers. If you look at the condensed versions of the sample prayers you will notice that they are very close to the opening and closing prayers I actually use in most of our live ministry sessions.²

Why is God allowing my daughter to suffer like this?: This session provides an example of a powerful, beautiful phenomena I have observed repeatedly with Immanuel approach sessions. When Bruce thinks about caring for his five year old daughter as she suffers for many days with a particularly nasty flu bug, he struggles with a common, understandable question – something along the lines of, “Why is God letting her suffer like this? Why doesn’t He just heal her?” My observation is that as suffering becomes increasingly intense and prolonged, we struggle to hold onto the truth that God both loves us and is with us. “How can this be true? How can God be with me and love me, and still allow this suffering to continue even as I ask and ask and ask for healing/deliverance/relief?” As we all know, this is one of the toughest questions in this history of Christianity. My experience with this question is that the books and sermons, with explanations regarding free will, building our faith, sharing in the suffering of Christ, etc, are satisfying when we are talking about *someone else’s suffering*, or when we are talking about our own suffering that is *long past and fully resolved*. But when we are in the middle of our own suffering, or thinking about past suffering that is not yet resolved, we have a hard time holding onto the truth about God’s presence and goodness.

However, I have experienced and observed one exception. When we let Jesus be *with* us in the place of suffering, and engage with Him directly regarding our suffering (and any tough questions associated with it), we consistently end up actually feeling satisfied with His answer. Sometimes the person has needed to yell at the Lord for 30 minutes, expressing intense rage and confusion before being able to receive His answer. And many times the Lord’s answer has been something along the lines of, “Your brain is not able to understand why the Father and I allow this, but I am with you, and because of who I am, that is enough.” But when the Immanuel approach recipients have been able to let Jesus be *with* them, and have truly been able to engage with Him directly regarding their struggle, they have always been satisfied with His response. For example, when Bruce invited the Lord to be with him in a recent memory of caring for his daughter while she suffered miserably with the flu, he perceived an image of the Lord holding his daughter, it felt true that the Lord loves his daughter even more than he does, and he came to a place of peace where he was able to trust his daughter to the Lord’s care. And Bruce insisted that he felt satisfied with this response from the Lord.

¹Available as free download from our website, www.kclehman.com. Using the “search” box can be helpful if you have difficulty locating this essay amongst the many other articles.

²Pastor Patti Velotta’s book, *Immanuel: A Practicum*, also presents discussion of the opening and closing prayers, along with sample prayers.

This has been the only intervention that has ever felt truly satisfying to me when I have been suffering intensely and struggling to hold onto the truth about God's presence and love, and this has been the only intervention that I have ever observed to be truly satisfying to others in response to this tough question. Furthermore, every person who has been able to perceive the Lord's presence and who has been willing to cooperate with this intervention has been satisfied with the Lord's response and come to a place of peace.

Poor sound quality for follow-up interview: I am so frustrated and disappointed with myself regarding the sound quality for the follow-up interview. I spent five years and went through eight different sound systems to get good sound quality for our demonstration sessions and the corresponding follow-up interviews; and all of this equipment was set up for the follow-up interview. Unfortunately, I had changed the wiring for a different situation and forgot to change it back, with the result that our special sound system sat uselessly offline and the recording went through the small microphones on the camera. Therefore, the sound quality is poor. I tried to compensate for this problem by providing subtitles at the places where it is difficult to understand what we are saying.

The fruit remains: As Bruce demonstrates and describes at length in the follow-up interview, he can still perceive Jesus in the memories we worked with during the session, he has observed positive changes that seem to be results of the Lord's work in this session, and these positive changes have remained. Specifically, he has continued to feel peace in the memories of his daughter being sick, and he continues to feel satisfied with the Lord's response to his question.

The Immanuel approach to emotional healing: One way to define our current version of the Immanuel approach to emotional healing would be to first identify the contributing components:

- Deliberate appreciation, in the context of remembering previous positive experiences with the Lord, to prepare for an interactive connection with Jesus;
- Refreshed perception of the Lord's living presence, and establishment of an interactive connection with the Lord, *in the present*, as the starting foundation;
- Engage directly with Jesus at every point in the session;³
- Immanuel approach troubleshooting (1. Ongoing coaching to engage directly with Jesus for connection, guidance, and assistance at every point in the session; 2. Monitor the person's interactive connection, and apply Immanuel interventions at any point she loses adequate interactive connection with the Lord);
- The safety net of returning to initial positive memory and interactive connection;
- Formulate and share the Immanuel story;
- Describe whatever comes into your awareness (your brain works better in community)
- Facilitator establish an interactive connection for herself, and then constantly engage directly with the Lord with respect to guidance;
- Faith (in the Lord's presence, in the Lord's goodness, in the Lord's guidance, and in the effectiveness of the Immanuel approach and Immanuel interventions);
- Understanding regarding capacity, understanding regarding attunement and relational connection circuits, and understanding regarding processing tasks at each of the brain levels.
- Our modified version of Theophostic® theory, tools, and techniques;

³In the language of Wilder and Coursey's *Share Immanuel* booklet, this simple, foundational intervention is "helping the person stay in the interactive seat."

Then, if you take all of these components, organize them around the living presence of Jesus as the central focus, and clearly identify connecting more intimately with Jesus as the primary objective (with resolution of trauma as a secondary objective), you have the Immanuel Approach to emotional healing. Each of these components are thoroughly discussed in parts II through V of the “Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and the God Who is With Us” essay series, but for the purposes of this commentary I would like to include a brief summary of the basic process components:

- *Deliberate appreciation, in the context of remembering previous positive experiences with the Lord, to prepare for an interactive connection with Jesus:* Recalling past positive experiences and deliberately appreciating them prepares your brain–mind–spirit system for positive relational connection. At the beginning of each Immanuel approach session, we therefore include reconnecting with memories for previous positive experiences with the Lord, and deliberate appreciation, to prepare the person’s brain-mind-spirit system for refreshing/re-establishing a living, interactive connection with Him. This session provides a good example of these first steps of recalling previous experiences of positive connection with the Lord and then deliberately appreciating Him in the context of these memories.

- *Refreshed perception of the Lord’s living presence, and establishment of an interactive connection with Him, in the present, as the starting foundation:* First I will present the ideal training session, where each of the steps are nicely separated and easy to observe. In one of these ideal training sessions, after the person has identified one or more memories of past positive connection with the Lord, has reconnected with the memory/memories, and *feels* appreciation in these past experiences, I coach the person to spend several more minutes reconnecting with/reentering one of the memories. As she does this, I ask the Lord to help her perceive His presence and establish an interactive connection,⁴ so that these are real and living in the present, and then I coach the person to describe whatever comes into her awareness. The person is usually able to transition smoothly and easily from positive memory recall and appreciation to a living, interactive connection with the Lord in the present (and if this doesn’t happen, we trouble-shoot regarding what’s in the way). This living, interactive connection is then the foundation for everything else in the session.

In the real world there is a fair amount of variability. Some sessions actually do unfold much like the ideal training session just described, and the person does not perceive the Lord’s presence or establish a living, interactive connection with Him until we specifically, explicitly ask for this. However, in some sessions the person begins to perceive the Lord’s presence, and re-establishes a living, interactive connection with Him, *spontaneously*, during the initial round of focusing on positive memories and deliberate appreciation, before we even make our explicit request). Furthermore, as people become increasingly familiar and practiced with this process, the different steps can all flow together quickly and smoothly; and with many people we skip

⁴In most cases, the person perceives the Lord’s living presence and establishes an interactive connection in the context of the memory imagery. That is, they perceive that the Lord’s presence in the memory imagery comes alive, and that (still in the context of the memory imagery), His presence begins to engage with them interactively. However, some people will perceive the Lord’s living, interactive presence in the room where they are receiving ministry; some people will perceive the Lord’s living, interactive presence in the context of a different memory that comes forward spontaneously; some people will perceive the Lord’s living, interactive presence in the context of imagery that does not seem to be coming from any specific memories, and some will experience two or more of these simultaneously.

the step (following deliberate appreciation) where the person takes several minutes to reenter/reconnect with one of the memories, because it seems to become unnecessary. In fact, people who are very familiar with the process often go to a positive memory, stir up appreciation, and reestablish an interactive connection by the time I finish the opening prayer.

This session provides a good example of perceiving the Lord's presence and establishing an interactive connection at the beginning of the session.

•*Engage directly with Jesus at every point in the session:* Once the person has established an adequate interactive connection with Jesus in the present, the therapist/ministry facilitator coaches her to turn to Jesus, focus on Jesus, and engage with Him directly at every point in the session. As discussed both above and below, the primary objective of the Immanuel approach is to enhance our personal, relational, heart connection with the Lord. Coaching the person to turn to Jesus, focus on Jesus, and engage with Him directly at every point in the session is the “bread and butter” Immanuel approach intervention for helping the person build her personal, friendship connection with the Lord.

Furthermore, the simple intervention of repeatedly coaching the person to turn to Jesus, focus on Jesus, and engage with Him directly is sometimes all that is needed to keep the session moving forward with respect to emotional healing, maturity mentoring, or anything else the Lord wants to accomplish. The person might engage with Jesus for guidance in choosing an initial target, for help with finding underlying traumatic memories, for assistance with resolving unfinished processing tasks, for capacity augmentation when dealing with inadequate capacity, or for help with any other questions, needs, or challenges that come up. If the person immediately turns to Jesus and engages with Him directly, *as soon as these questions, needs, or challenges come up*, the session often just keeps moving forward without the perception of being stuck or the need for troubleshooting.

For example, as soon as Bruce has established an interactive connection I coach him to ask Jesus for guidance with respect to His agenda for the session. At points in the session where we're not sure what to do, I coach Bruce to focus on Jesus and ask Him for guidance. At points where Bruce raises a specific question, I coach him to focus on Jesus and present the question directly to Jesus. And at points where Bruce encounters unfinished processing tasks, I coach him to focus on Jesus and engage directly with Jesus regarding the memory content that needs to be processed. And at each of these points, the Lord provides the guidance and/or help we need, and the session keeps moving smoothly forward without any perception of being “stuck.”

•*Immanuel approach troubleshooting and Immanuel interventions:* Many people are quickly able to establish an adequate interactive connection at the beginning of the session, they easily maintain this connection, and they receive a variety of beautiful, life-giving results, all with only the minimal Immanuel approach interventions just described. However, others initially experience confusing, disappointing, or frustrating results; but then eventually receive enhanced friendship with the Lord, transformative emotional healing, and other beautiful, life-giving results if the facilitator can help them identify and resolve blockages. I have become totally convinced that the Lord is *always* present, that the Lord *always* wants to bless us with life-giving gifts, that the Lord is *always* able to accomplish this, and that the Immanuel

approach will almost⁵ always (eventually) release these gifts and blessings if adequate troubleshooting is included.

1. Ongoing coaching to engage directly with Jesus for connection, guidance, and assistance at every point in the session: Coaching the person to turn to Jesus, focus on Jesus, and engage directly with Jesus is also the simplest, the most common, and the most important form of troubleshooting in the Immanuel approach. For example, if the person does *not* immediately turn to Jesus when she encounters the questions, needs, or challenges mentioned above, but instead tries to figure them out/resolve them herself (and then eventually perceives herself to be stuck), the first, most basic troubleshooting intervention is to coach her to turn to Jesus, focus on Jesus, and engage with Him directly regarding the problem. This simple intervention is often all that is needed to get the process moving again. This session with Bruce does not provide examples of this kind of troubleshooting because the session keeps flowing forward so smoothly that there aren't really any points where we have the perception of being stuck. However, if we had gotten temporarily stuck at any of the points from the examples above, this most simple form of troubleshooting would have looked just like the coaching to engage with Jesus that kept the session flowing forward.

2. Monitor the person's interactive connection, and apply Immanuel interventions at any point the person loses adequate interactive connection with the Lord: An important responsibility of the facilitator is to monitor the person's interactive connection, and to apply Immanuel interventions at any point the person loses adequate interactive connection with the Lord. People often lose their connection with the Lord when they connect with traumatic memories, so it is especially important to ask whether the person still perceives an interactive connection (and then apply Immanuel interventions when necessary) whenever the recipient enters a traumatic memory. However, the person will also occasionally lose her connection at other points in the session, so it is also important to keep your eye on her connection with Jesus throughout the session.

As described at more length in the "Brain Science, Emotional Trauma, and The God Who is With Us" essays (Parts I and V), Immanuel interventions are *specific, focused, systematic interventions* with the goal of helping the person receiving ministry to perceive the Lord's presence, connect with Him, receive from Him, and be *with* Him. For those of you who have not yet had a chance to review the more detailed discussion, here is a very brief summary:

- Specific, explicit invitation and request: The most basic, simple component is the specific, explicit prayer: "Lord, I make a heart invitation for You to be *with me*, here in this place. I also ask You to help me perceive Your presence, to help me connect with You, to help me receive from You, and to help me be *with* You." Bruce's session provides good examples of this most basic Immanuel intervention request.

- Trouble-shooting: If the person is *not* able to perceive the Lord's presence (or connect with the Lord, receive from the Lord, or be with the Lord), you "trouble-shoot." Start with praying "Lord, what's in the way of my being able to perceive Your presence? (or connect with You/ receive from You/ be with You)" and then follow-up on whatever the Lord

⁵On very rare occasions, a person will persistently choose to indulge in bitterness and/or self-pity and/or rebellion. This will block the Immanuel approach process, and cannot be resolved with any of the usual troubleshooting tools.

brings forward. Unfortunately, this session does not provide examples of Immanuel trouble-shooting because Bruce is able to perceive the Lord's presence and connect with Him quickly and easily at each point that we ask the Lord to help him do this.