



Doug: “Immanuel Intervention” (Intermediate) Case Study from Live Ministry Series (LMS) Commentary

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Session summary: In this 2006 session, Doug focuses on painful thoughts and emotions that got stirred up when he was unable to perceive the Lord’s presence in an earlier “Immanuel Intervention” exercise. Doug connected to childhood memories that matched the negative thoughts and feelings that had gotten stirred up, we were able to identify and resolve blockages associated with those memories, and Doug was then able to perceive the Lord’s presence.

1 month and 10 month follow-ups – lasting positive changes: The follow up interviews at one month and 10 months indicate lasting positive changes in Doug’s relationship with Jesus.

Discussion/commentary:

A. Strategy for the session: When Doug identified the target issue as “experiencing Jesus. Having Him be *real* to me,” my thought was to find a specific painful memory to work with, and then try an Immanuel intervention in the context of the specific memory. The reason I chose this strategy is I have observed that some people perceive the Lord’s presence more easily in the context of working with a specific traumatic memory. In light of Doug’s history regarding this issue, I figured he would probably not be able to perceive the Lord’s presence immediately, but my experience is that most people are eventually able to perceive the Lord’s presence if they have someone to help them identify and resolve any hindrances that are blocking the way. I expected that we would find a specific memory to work with, that Doug would start with the simple “Lord, help me to perceive Your presence” prayer, that he would *not* get immediate good results, but that we would then proceed with asking the Lord to help us identify and resolve blockages. And I expected that he would eventually be able to perceive the Lord’s presence in the context of whatever memory we were working with. The session was a bit complicated, and it took a while, but eventually things worked out as I hoped they would (it’s nice to be right once in a while).

A second possible strategy would have been to focus directly on Doug’s longing for more connection with the Lord, and his feelings of disappointment and discouragement regarding not being able to *feel* the Lord’s presence and love, and then we could have asked the Lord to show Doug anything He wanted Doug to know about this longing, disappointment, and discouragement.

A third possible strategy would have been to try an Immanuel exercise in the present: “Lord, help me to perceive Your presence, here, with me, right now.” This exercise probably would have resulted in disappointment and triggering, just as with the group exercise at our seminar. We could then have had Doug focus on the disappointment and triggering, and ask: “Lord, what do you want me to know about this disappointment I am feeling right now? What do You want me to know about _____ (any other triggering)?”

My guess is that each of these three strategies would have eventually taken us to the same memories, where he felt this same longing, disappointment, discouragement, etc. regarding

emotional connection with his parents, and would have eventually taken us to the same choices/vows that were hindering his ability to perceive the Lord’s presence.

B. Immanuel intervention success in the context of one particular memory: Even though the larger pattern is more complex, as discussed below, one section of this session provides an excellent example of an intermediate level Immanuel intervention. In the second half of the session, Doug goes to a memory where his Mom sent him to bed early. In the context of this memory, we then tried the most basic Immanuel intervention of praying: “Lord, help me to perceive Your presence here.” Doug was not immediately able to perceive the Lord’s presence, but rather connected to implicit memory thoughts and emotions that were promptly transferred onto Jesus – he felt discouraged, and expressed the expectation that he would not be able to see or connect with the Lord. In his own words: “I don’t think You will be with me for some reason,” “I’m afraid You won’t be with me,” and “I’m afraid You won’t answer.”

As we stayed with these triggered thoughts and emotions, we eventually uncovered distorted interpretations that Doug had internalized after repeated childhood disappointments: “Others can’t be depended on. If I rely on anybody else, I won’t get what I need. I will be better off taking care of myself.” These were also transferred onto Jesus. Finally, we uncovered choices/vows that Doug had embraced as a way of trying to protect himself: “I’ll take things into my own hands,” and “I’ll do whatever I need to do to take care of myself.” Even though these choices/vows were initiated in response to problems with his parents, they got applied to Jesus just like the implicit memory content that got transferred onto Jesus. When these blockages were addressed/resolved, Doug was then able to perceive and receive the Lord’s Immanuel presence.

C. Summary of Immanuel blockages: My summary of “stuff in the way” in this particular Immanuel intervention would be as follows:

1. “Anti-Immanuel” Lies: “He won’t come,” “Others [including Jesus] can’t be depended on,” “If I depend on anyone else [including Jesus] I will only be disappointed,” and “I won’t get what I need unless I do it myself.”
2. Idolatry “Anti-Immanuel” choice/vow: Doug chose to focus on his own solution, with “I’ll do it myself,” instead of turning to the Lord and asking for help. I think this choice to turn to himself instead of turning to Jesus is a form of idolatry.
3. Rebellion “anti-Immanuel” choice/vow: Doug chose to embrace a defiant attitude with his choice/vow: “I’ll do this ‘no matter what’ – I’ll do this whether or not it’s against the rules, whether or not it hurts others.” I think this vow also ultimately includes: “I’ll do this *Whether or not You like it, Jesus,*” which is obviously a form of rebellion.

Even though Doug wasn’t consciously aware of it when he made these vows, these vows included the choice to turn away from Jesus and the choice to push Jesus away.¹

¹ The fact that this vow actually includes the choice to push Jesus away/turn away from Jesus is made clear by Doug’s comment at 46:10: When I ask him whether or not he *wants* Jesus to be with him in the memory, Doug responds with “I don’t know if I want You to be there,” and then “I’m going to take things into my own hands. *I don’t need You.*” Furthermore, several minutes later when Doug asks “What’s in the way of me receiving You more fully?” he gets the sense that Jesus indicates his attitude: “that I want to take life into my own hands, that *I don’t want Him.*”

D. “Moved out of the way” vs “Resolved”: It is important to note that an Immanuel blockage can sometimes be moved out of the way sufficiently for the person to perceive the Lord’s presence *even though the blockage is not permanently resolved at its deepest roots*. For example, Doug’s lies along the lines of “Jesus won’t answer,” “Jesus won’t come,” “Jesus won’t be with me,” “Others can’t be depended on,” “If I rely on anybody else, I won’t get what I need,” and “I will be better off taking care of myself” were hindering his ability to perceive the Lord’s presence. We identified these lies, Doug acknowledged them, and Doug talked to Jesus about them, but he did *not* go to the earlier source memories² and resolve these lies at their roots. However, identifying, acknowledging, and talking to Jesus about them *did* move them out of the way enough to enable Doug to perceive the Lord’s presence.

I have observed that this is often the case, and I try to help the person perceive the Lord’s presence as quickly as possible, so I therefore start with this easy intervention. If identifying, acknowledging, and talking directly to Jesus does not move a blockage out of the way, I then try to find and work with the memory roots. It is always good to eventually find the underlying memories and permanently resolve the blockages at their roots, but working with the underlying memories will go much more easily if the person is first able to start with perceiving and connecting with the Lord.

E. Trying Immanuel interventions will expose blockages: Doug’s experiences with Immanuel interventions also provide good examples of how the very process of trying Immanuel interventions can trigger unresolved painful memories, and of how trying Immanuel interventions can also expose other blockages that are in the way of perceiving and connecting with the Lord.

The October 2005 seminar group exercise, and also trying Immanuel interventions in the March 2006 session both triggered unresolved painful memories that were understandably related to the process of trying to perceive and connect with Jesus. For example, when Doug participated in the group Immanuel intervention, he was not able to perceive the Lord’s presence, and then memories came forward where Doug *wanted* someone to be with him, and where Doug felt painful loneliness because he did not perceive anybody with him. In the March 2006 session, Doug was quickly able to see images of Jesus with him in several memories, but Doug was *not able to feel an emotional connection* with the Lord. As we stayed with this, memories came forward where Doug *did not feel adequate emotional connection* with his parents. Related unresolved painful memories, such as these, are often at least part of what is hindering the person from perceiving the Lord’s presence.

Trying Immanuel interventions can help find this material, and then working with the Lord to resolve these memories can be part of the larger process of removing anything that is between the person and Jesus.

When a person tries Immanuel interventions, he will also run into other blockages that are hindering him from perceiving the Lord’s presence, such as anti-Immanuel lies and anti-

² It is a common phenomena to be working in the context of one particular memory, but then encounter blockages that are actually rooted in other memories. After carefully studying the details of this session, and also thinking about additional information from other sessions with Doug, my assessment is that these lies were *already present* at the time of the “sent to bed early” memory. These lies got *activated* as Doug worked on the memory of being sent to bed early, but I do not think they *originated* in this memory.

Immanuel choices/vows. For example, in the March 2006 session, when we tried Immanuel interventions we ran into the anti-Immanuel lies just described above: “Others [including Jesus] can’t be depended on. If I rely on anybody else [including Jesus], I won’t get what I need. I will be better off taking care of myself.” And we ran into the anti-Immanuel choices/vows just described above: “I’ll take things into my own hands,” and “I’ll do whatever I need to do to take care of myself.”

Trying Immanuel interventions will expose these other blockages by running into them, and once they have been identified, working with the Lord to resolve them can be part of the larger process of removing any blockages that are hindering the person from perceiving and connecting with the Lord.

F. Value of understanding concepts ahead of time: Coming into ministry/therapy time with understanding of relevant concepts can dramatically increase the efficiency and the effectiveness of work during actual sessions. I encourage the people I work with to do homework reading, because then when we are in sessions we can simply refer to information they already know, instead of taking time to present the information as new material. Doug’s March 2006 session provides an excellent example of this value of coming into a session with relevant knowledge. By the time we identified the guardian lies and vows that were hindering Doug from perceiving the Lord’s presence we were almost at the end of his session time. There were only a few minutes remaining, and he was still inside an unresolved memory and still unable to perceive the Lord’s presence. Fortunately, things moved forward very quickly once we identified the blocking lies and vows. I think Doug’s familiarity with our teaching on Immanuel interventions helped him follow my suggestion that he simply talk directly to Jesus regarding his fears that Jesus would not come, and I think his familiarity with our material on vows helped him to cooperate more efficiently when I suggested that he renounce his vows to “take care of himself” and to “do whatever it takes.” He was able to quickly and efficiently cooperate with resolving the guardian lies and vows, and then was able to perceive the Lord’s presence in the last minutes of the session. *The necessary information was already present in his normal belief memory system, so that he could simply plug these packages of material in at the appropriate point in the session, and keep moving forward.* If he had not already been familiar with these concepts, we probably would have had to take more time to discuss them, we would have run out of time half way through my explanations, and he would have left the session still unable to perceive the Lord’s presence and still tangled in his triggered thoughts and emotions.

H. My own healing has enabled me to facilitate sessions like this one: There was a point in my life, not so many years ago, when trying to facilitate a session like this one would have triggered me so intensely that my brain would turn to peanut butter and leak out my ears. Well, maybe my brain did not really leak out my ears, but my discernment would certainly deteriorate to the point that I would not be able to trouble shoot through significant blockages. Sessions where the person had persistent difficulty perceiving the Lord’s presence would activate a variety of triggers, depending on the details, but these sessions would *consistently* activate one of my core traumas. When I was two years old I was separated from my parents for several weeks, and during this time I was looking and calling for them constantly. I wanted them, needed them, and called for them, but they never came. Not surprisingly, this painful experience resulted in a whole tangle of vows, lies, and negative emotions; and this tangle would get triggered forward whenever I worked with someone who wanted the Lord, needed the Lord, and was calling for the Lord, but was not able to perceive the Lord’s presence. It’s not surprising that my ability to work with complex blockages steadily deteriorated as my unresolved trauma got triggered forward

(increasingly pulling me into a confused, hopeless, and angry two year old implicit memory package).³

My faith, discernment, and capacity for working with Immanuel blockages has steadily increased as I have worked with the Lord to resolve my own wounds. I was not able to navigate sessions like this one until after getting substantial healing for my 2 year old separation trauma. If you have wounds that are triggered by someone having difficulty perceiving the Lord’s presence, then it is very important that you get healing for your wounds. Your faith, discernment, and capacity for working with Immanuel blockages will steadily increase as you resolve your own triggers.

I. Internal part producing distracting sexual images: As the viewer will notice, Doug experienced sexual images that came forward at a number of places during the session (time on tape: 9:25, 13:55, 15:23, 50:09). The viewer will also notice that this occurred in spite of the opening prayer specifically addressing demonic interference, and that this continued in spite of my “enforcement” prayer. Furthermore, Doug reports that since the session in March 2006, he has been able to see the same image of Jesus standing in front of him whenever he thinks about it, and similar distracting sexual images have come forward whenever he has tried to connect with Jesus in this image. And these images have also continued in spite of repeated prayers and commands to address any demonic interference.

My experience has been that demonic spirits cannot persist with producing distracting images unless some part of the person’s own mind is giving them permission. Occasionally a demonic spirit will try one round of disobedience, but the “enforcement” prayer consistently resolves this, unless some part of the person’s own mind is giving them permission. Or the images may be produced entirely by some part of the person’s own mind, in which case prayers and commands addressing demonic spirits have no effect whatsoever.

Therefore, at the time of the January 2007 follow-up session and second follow-up interview, Doug and I were guessing that these images were being produced entirely by Doug’s own mind, or by demonic spirits with permission from some part of Doug’s own mind. And we were assuming that these sexual images were being produced to interfere with Doug’s attempts to connect with Jesus.

To test these hypotheses, we tried the eye contact technique, and I asked to talk to any internal part(s) that knows about the sexual images. I was not at all surprised when a part came forward and acknowledged being the source of the images. This was totally consistent with my prior experience that demonic spirits, alone, are not able to persist with this kind of interference in the face of our opening prayer and enforcement prayer. I *was* surprised when it turned out that this part was from Doug’s six year old memory of accidentally seeing his parents having sex, and that this little part was *not* trying to interfere. This part was very confused about the whole business of sex, but had definitely made the connection between what he saw his parents doing (sex), and the emotional connection, wanting to be together, etc. that appeared to be associated with it. It turned out that this child part brought the sexual images forward whenever Doug tried to pursue emotional connection because he thought they were somehow supposed to go together.

³ See “Immanuel, An Especially Pernicious Blockage, and the Normal Belief Memory System,” available as a free download from www.immanuelapproach.com, for a much more detailed discussion of my two-year-old separation trauma and how it has affected my faith, discernment, and ability to perceived the Lord’s presence.

J. Pieces that don't make sense until later: Sometimes, when I examine the details of a person's healing journey, there will be some pieces that don't seem to fit. There will be some data points that are not consistent with my theories. When this happens, I often feel the temptation to look away from the disturbing data points that don't fit, and just try to pretend that the situation fits together in the way I think it ought to. However, I want to teach and model a better response:

- look directly at the disturbing data points,
- ask questions,
- and ask the Lord for more light.

Sometimes I discover that the pieces do fit together after all. When I look directly at the confusing pieces, I find some simple misunderstanding, and the situation quickly straightens out. However, in other situations closer inspection confirms that there are some data points that simply don't fit my initial attempt to explain or understand. In these situations, I've discovered that I can look directly at the puzzling, disturbing information, ask questions, and ask the Lord for more understanding. Over and over again, the Lord has provided additional information and understanding, and I eventually perceive a larger picture that makes sense out of the initially puzzling data points.

Doug's healing journey over the last year provides an excellent opportunity to model this “look right at it, ask questions, and ask the Lord for more light” response.

Doug attended our seminar in October of 2005, and participated in an exercise where we tried to lead the whole group through an Immanuel Intervention. Unfortunately, he had a negative experience. He could not perceive the Lord's presence, and instead of perceiving the Lord's presence, images from unpleasant memories came forward. Remembering unpleasant experiences instead of perceiving the Lord's presence also triggered him, and between the unhappy memories and the triggering, the whole experience was quite negative.

Doug and I had e-mail exchanges regarding this, and immediately before the March 2006 session presented in the video, Doug and I had talked briefly about his frustration and discouragement regarding perceiving the Lord's presence. From these exchanges, I thought Doug was saying that he had *never* been able to perceive the Lord's presence. At the beginning of the session, Doug clarifies that he has had meaningful experiences of perceiving the Lord's presence, but that these have been few and long ago. He is longing for this to be a much more regular occurrence.

Later in the session Doug described several *more recent* experiences where he was able to perceive the Lord's presence. He had been able to perceive the Lord's presence in several specific memories that had come forward in emotional healing sessions during the past couple years. Furthermore, he reported that he could *still* perceive the Lord's presence in these memories *any time he focused on the memory images*. I was a bit surprised and confused: “Wait a minute! I thought our target for today was you feeling painful disappointment about not being able to perceive the Lord's presence?” I thought things made sense again when Doug commented that he could *see* the Lord in these memories, but that he could not *feel* the Lord's presence or *feel* the Lord's love.

In December 2006, nine months after the initial session, Doug and I talked on the phone in preparation for filming a second follow-up interview. I realized that I had missed an important question in both the debriefing and in the one month follow-up interview – I had forgotten to ask

Doug to talk about whether he could *feel* the Lord’s presence and love in this new image of the Lord standing in front of him. “When you focus on this new image, where you can see the Lord standing right in front of you, can you *feel* His Love? Does He *feel real*?” I thought it would be valuable to get a second follow-up interview where Doug could address this point specifically. I was expecting him to describe a dramatic difference, which was the point I wanted to underline for the audience:

“See! When you systematically remove the hindrances, people are able to perceive the Lord’s presence and connect with Him in new ways. You can become able to perceive the Lord in memories where previously you were not able to perceive His presence; and in places where you could perceive His presence but not *feel* Him, you can become able to connect with Him more deeply.”

I was again surprised and confused when Doug said that he could easily go back to the image from the March 2006 session, and he could still see the Lord standing in front of him, but that he could not *feel* the Lord’s presence or the Lord’s love. In his normal belief memory system he believed that the Lord was standing in front of him, but he could not *feel* the Lord’s presence or love, and the Lord did not *feel real*. When I asked him about the original session, he was convinced that he had also not been able to *feel* the Lord’s presence or love, and that the Lord had not *felt real*, even at the time of the session.

After I hung up the phone, I thought:

“Something isn’t fitting together here! Where did that big smile come from? – at the moment he reported being able to see the Lord standing in front of him, where did that big smile come from? If he just had one more experience of seeing an image of the Lord, but without *feeling* the Lord’s presence or the Lord’s love, why was he encouraged and excited at the end of the session? I would think he would be discouraged and disappointed: ‘This is just what has happened before – nothing is different. I can *see* the Lord, but I don’t *feel* anything. See, it didn’t work – I *told* you it wouldn’t work, and that you were just wasting your time. This is just what I was afraid of!’”

I went back and reviewed the video again, and felt even more confused. I observed that in the middle of the session, when he was talking about the other memories where he could perceive the Lord’s presence, he was smiling – he was clearly having a positive emotional experience, right in the session, as he thought about those other memories and perceived the Lord’s presence in them. I also confirmed my memory regarding his smile at the end of the session – I could watch this big grin break out on his face at the end of the session, when he released the blocking vow, and then suddenly saw the Lord standing in front of him. And he was clearly happy and encouraged as he talked about perceiving the Lord’s presence, both in the debriefing immediately after the session and in the follow-up interview. His self-reports of seeing images of the Lord, but not being able to *feel* the Lord’s presence or love, did not fit with the emotions I could see on his face as I watched the video.

So I called him back the next day, and we discussed at length the inconsistencies I was observing. Eventually, Doug said something along the lines of:

“You know, this is really strange. As you’re asking all these questions, I’m realizing that I *did* have emotions when I first perceived the Lord’s presence in each of these memories, but that

the feelings have faded over time. At the time of each session, when I first saw the Lord in each of those memories, I *could* feel His presence, I *could* feel His love, and He *did* feel real. It’s like there’s a part of me that’s trying to talk me out of it – a part of my mind that’s trying to tell me those experiences weren’t real.”

We decided it would be good to have another session specifically focusing on the interfering sexual images and the “fading emotional memory” phenomena, and specifically examining the possibility that some part of his own mind might be trying to hinder more intimate connection with the Lord.⁴

As Doug and I discuss in the second follow-up interview, the follow-up session provided a lot of useful information. We identified several child parts, all of whom had memories that were transferred onto Jesus and that caused them to be afraid to let Jesus be with them. One set of memories contained the expectation that Jesus would not come at all, and when Doug was connected to the thoughts and feelings from these memories he didn’t want to ask Jesus to come because he was afraid of being disappointed. One set of memories contained pain from moments when his mother was angry, disgusted, or disinterested; and when Doug was connected to thoughts and feelings from these memories he didn’t want Jesus to come because he was afraid the Lord would be angry with him, disgusted with him, or simply not interested in him. And one set of memories contained pain from incidents where adults had not cared for his emotional boundaries. When Doug was connected to thoughts and feelings from these memories he didn’t want Jesus to come because he was afraid the Lord would “barge in and trample over me.” Furthermore, it became clear that Doug did have a pattern of talking himself out of intense emotional experiences. We did not have time to identify the specific source of this behavior, but it became clear that this unfortunate pattern was indeed present.

The previously puzzling data points made sense in the light of this additional information. The child parts who were afraid to ask Jesus to come, afraid to let Jesus come, and afraid to see Jesus’ face contributed⁵ to Doug’s difficulties with perceiving the Lord’s presence and to Doug’s difficulties *feeling* emotional connection in the memories where he could *see* Jesus. And the part that tries to talk Doug out of intense emotional experiences explains Doug’s confusing self-reports – the puzzling data points where Doug says he couldn’t feel anything, but the video shows him smiling and encouraged.

In summary, as I obtained follow-up information from Doug, I noticed pieces that did not fit with my initial understanding. But as I looked directly at the puzzling data points that didn’t fit, asked questions, and as we turned to the Lord for more light, we were able to put together a bigger picture that made sense.

K. Comments about parents: In a training video of an emotional healing session, we focus primarily on childhood experiences that were hurtful (you don’t go to the doctor and take time to talk about all the parts of your body that are *not* bothering you). Therefore, understandably, the people who give us permission to use their sessions are often concerned that others might get the

⁴ This was the follow-up session that took place January 2007, immediately before the second follow-up interview.

⁵ I use “contributed to” as opposed to “explained” because I think there are probably additional factors that also need to be included in order to have a full explanation.

wrong impression of their parents. Doug reports that one of the biggest wounds in his life was not receiving enough emotional connection from his parents, and we worked with a specific childhood memory where he felt like his mother wanted to get him “out of the way;” but this does not mean his parents were “bad,” or that they did not love him. His parents were not perfect. Their weaknesses, woundedness, and sins caused hurt to Doug, just like the weakness, woundedness, and sin of every parent causes harm to every child. It is important to remember that parents can have good hearts, love us, do many things well, and still hurt us.

In the second follow-up interview, Doug provides a perfect example of this reality. As already mentioned, one of the biggest wounds in his life was not receiving enough emotional connection from his parents. But Jesus has made it very clear to Doug that this was not because his parents did not love him. In fact, in one emotional healing ministry session Doug felt like the Lord let his father speak to him from heaven, and he felt like his father said: “I love you, [but] I just didn’t know how to do it....I didn’t know how to show it.”

Reviewing Charlotte’s essay, “Honoring One’s Parents and Healing the Wounds of Childhood,”⁶ may also be helpful for keeping the weakness, woundedness, sinfulness, and goodness of our parents in perspective.

L. Asking Jesus to turn away from the person: At one point in the second follow-up interview (time on tape 1:41:39), Doug and I talk about Jesus being “turned the other way,” so that Doug could see His back but not His face. These comments are referring to something that happened in the session Doug had immediately before the 12/10/07 follow-up interview. At one point in this session, Doug was inside a childhood memory and it became clear that he was afraid to let Jesus be with him because he was afraid to see Jesus’ face. Doug was afraid that Jesus would show up, look at him, and then display anger, disgust, or lack of interest on His face. And Doug felt that it would be unbearably painful to look at Jesus’ face and realize that Jesus was feeling anger, disgust, or lack of interest towards him. It was clear that this fear was coming from childhood memories, but the transferred implicit memory thoughts and emotions were still so strong that Doug’s fear of seeing Jesus’ face was blocking his ability to perceive the Lord’s presence.

I asked Doug if he would be willing to let Jesus be with him if Jesus turned away from him, so that Doug would not see His face, and I suggested that Doug might ask Jesus if He would be willing to be with Doug under the conditions that He face away from Doug. Doug tried this, and reported that he was then *immediately* able to perceive Jesus with him in the memory. Doug also reported that Jesus was facing away from him, that he could sense Jesus *wanting* to turn towards him, but that Jesus was waiting for Doug to give Him permission.

Interestingly, we found that this same fear was also blocking Doug’s ability to perceive the Lord’s presence in other memories, and Doug experienced the same positive results when he tried this simple Immanuel intervention technique in these other memories.

M. “Child parts,” dissociation, and DID: The viewer will notice that both Doug and I talk about “parts,” and that he sometimes talks as if he is *inside* the perspective of the child in the memory. It is important to understand that having “internal child parts” does *not* automatically lead to the diagnosis of Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) – perceiving “internal child parts” does *not*

⁶ This document can be obtained as a free download from www.kclehman.com; just enter “honoring” in the search box located on the Documents page or Home page, and you’ll find it.

mean that Doug therefore must have DID.

First, perceiving “internal child parts” does not even mean that Doug has dissociation – there are phenomena other than dissociation that can lead to the subjective experience of perceiving “internal child parts.” For example, one can carry an unresolved traumatic memory in a memory *package* that includes not just the autobiographical content of the memory, but also the overall subjective experience of being *inside the child ego-state present at the time of the memory*. When this memory package is open and activated, the person will not only “remember” the explicit, autobiographical story content of the memory, but will also have the subjective experience of being *inside* the ego-state of the child in the memory. And no other indicators of dissociative phenomena will be present. For example, there will be no amnesic barriers (the person will report that the event has always been available to his voluntary, conscious recall, and the event will continue to be available to his voluntary, conscious recall after the session), and the different pieces of the memory, including the emotions, will all be present and connected.⁷ The subjective experience of being inside the child in the memory *does also* occur when one has dissociated internal child parts, but the important point here is that dissociation is not the *only* phenomena that can cause this subjective experience of “internal child parts.”

Secondly, there is a wide range of dissociative phenomena. My perception, from my own clinical experience and from reviewing the literature, is that dissociation is actually quite common – many of us have mild to moderate dissociative phenomena associated with a few of our most intense traumatic memories. But full Dissociative Identity Disorder includes much more intense and pervasive dissociative phenomena, and is much less common. Even if someone *does* have *dissociated* internal child parts, he does *not* necessarily have Dissociative Identity Disorder.

It is important that lay ministers learn about dissociation, and there are many lay ministers that do good work with dissociative phenomena, but the terms “Dissociative Identity Disorder” and “DID” are often used inappropriately, resulting in unnecessary confusion and in loss of credibility for Christian emotional healing ministry. I therefore encourage lay-ministers to refrain from using these terms *unless the person in question has been diagnosed by a qualified professional who has carefully reviewed the diagnostic criteria*.

⁷ I am not aware of any research supporting these statements about non-dissociative “internal child parts,” but I have personally had this experience on a number of occasions, and I have observed many emotional healing sessions where non-dissociative internal child parts appeared to be present.