



## **Rita #1: Advanced Immanuel Intervention**

### **Case Study from Live Ministry Series (LMS) Commentary**

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**Session summary:** The advanced Immanuel intervention troubleshooting presented in this DVD occurs in the context of a larger Theophostic-based<sup>1</sup> emotional healing session. The full session ends with the end of the portion presented here, but there are about forty minutes of session before this segment, and a short summary of this initial work is needed to provide context for the Immanuel intervention trouble shooting (and following) presented here. The first part of the session leads Rita to a memory in which she was extremely upset about certain aspects of her relationships with her mother and grandmother, and she had just gone upstairs to her bedroom, where she lay on her bed screaming and crying uncontrollably. As we try to work with this memory, it seems that there are internal child parts that will not let Rita connect with the painful emotions, and that will not allow Jesus to be tangibly present in the memory. My assessment is that, in her true heart, Rita does want Jesus to be present, and that she will let Him help her, but that something is causing her internal child parts to block this. So I therefore transition to the portion of the session presented on this DVD.

When I am working with a person and we discover that internal parts are deliberately preventing her from being able to perceive the Lord's presence or establish an interactive connection, I have found that I can almost always negotiate with the parts to eventually find conditions that are acceptable for allowing Jesus to be present. I work with them to clarify the underlying guardian lie fears that are causing them to block connection with Jesus, and then we work together to find a scenario in which it would feel safe to allow Jesus' tangible presence. Once they allow Jesus to be present, I simply coach them to get to know Him by engaging with Him directly. For example, "Just watch Him for a while if it doesn't feel safe to let Him speak or move. What does He look like? Is He angry? Does His face look mean or nice?" "Just tell Jesus about the things you are afraid of, and see how He responds. You can ask Him to answer, or just watch His face for a while, if that feels less scary," "If it feels safe to let Him talk, are there any questions you want to ask Him?" etc. As they get to know Jesus they increasingly trust Him and like Him, at some point they become willing to let the person establish an interactive connection, and she can then begin to engage directly with Jesus as the foundation for the rest of the session.<sup>2</sup>

This session with Rita provides an excellent example of this phenomena. First I help her internal parts identify and clarify their guardian lie fears: fears that Jesus would neglect and disappoint

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<sup>1</sup>This session took place before we had fully developed the Immanuel approach to emotional healing. Even with the inclusion of Immanuel interventions, at this time we were still referring to our work as Theophostic-based emotional healing. See below for additional discussion of Theophostic-based emotional healing and it's relationship to the Immanuel approach.

<sup>2</sup>This same approach also works for any other situations in which internal parts are deliberately blocking some aspect of the Immanuel approach, such as situations in which the person perceives Jesus, but internal parts are not allowing Him to come close enough to be able to provide the full measure of assistance that is needed.

them relationally (fears that were anchored in memories of what had happened with her mom and Grandma), and fears that Jesus would tell Rita she was bad and make her feel guilty (fears anchored in memories of what the nuns at her Catholic school had told her about Jesus). Once these fears have been identified, I then begin negotiating possible conditions that will help them to feel safe enough to allow Jesus to be present. For example, asking Jesus to stand on the other side of the room (more distance always feels more safe), asking Jesus to not do anything or say anything until they give Him permission (protecting against Jesus telling Rita she is bad, making her feel guilty, or trying to quickly build hopes that might lead to disappointment), and asking Jesus to face away from her (all social interactions feel less intense, and therefore less frightening, when you cannot see the person's face). Interestingly, in this session, during the negotiation process the parts express the fear that Jesus might be offended by our proposed conditions; and when I suggest that they ask Him about this, even though they can't yet perceive His presence, they do this and quickly received a gentle, reassuring answer. This brief interaction with Jesus is apparently quite reassuring, because the parts then quickly decide to invite Jesus to be with them. And once Rita's child self and the internal parts perceive Jesus' tangible presence in the memory, the internal parts that had previously been blocking the process choose to fully cooperate with Jesus and me for the rest of the session.

Not surprisingly, with Rita's child self and internal parts fully cooperating, the remainder of the session requires the use of only basic Immanuel approach techniques. Mostly, Rita engages directly with Jesus, and He initiates many beautiful interactions as well as leading the work to resolve unfinished processing tasks. At the few points at which questions or slight difficulties arise, I just coach Rita and/or her internal parts to focus on Jesus and ask Him for guidance and help. For example, at one point Jesus invites Rita to look into His eyes, but Rita was afraid to do this. I just coach her to ask Jesus for guidance and help, and when she does this she quickly goes to a memory in which she's slapped with more intensity because she's looking into her mother's face at the moment she is hit. I just coach her to invite Jesus to be with her in this memory, and when she does this she immediately experiences His comforting, healing presence: "I can feel Him lifting my chin up....and like holding my face [in His hands], saying...that's how my mother's hands should have been used, not the way they were." After this brief interaction her fear of looking in Jesus' face promptly resolves, and then she thoroughly enjoys responding to His invitation.

*Jesus initiates "face to face" interaction and eye contact:* As discussed at length in both "Brain Science, Psychological Trauma, and the God Who Is With Us, Part II" and "Immanuel, Emotional Healing, and Capacity, Part Two,"<sup>3</sup> face-to-face interactions, and especially eye contact, can be a powerful source of the joy strength that contributes to capacity. Being aware of this powerful positive resource, I have been fascinated to observe that Jesus will sometimes initiate these joy building interactions in the context of the Immanuel approach, and this recorded session provides an opportunity for the viewer to observe this phenomena for him/herself. For example, at one point in the session Rita spontaneously commented: "He's trying to get me to look in His eyes, or in His face...."<sup>4</sup>

**9-month and 10-month follow-up -- lasting positive changes:** At the follow up interviews (nine months and ten months after the original session), Rita reports that she can still perceive

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<sup>3</sup>Both of these essays are available as free downloads from [www.immanuelapproach.com](http://www.immanuelapproach.com).

<sup>4</sup>Time on tape: 17:57 and following.

God's presence in the memories we worked with during the session, and she describes positive changes that she perceives to be the results of the Lord's work in the session. Specifically, she reports being less triggered, she feels more able to allow the Lord to come close and more able to listen to him, and she describes being less guarded and more loving.

### **Discussion/commentary:**

**A. Going back to specific memories as part of the follow-up interview:** Especially for thematic issues that usually don't resolve with one session, going back to the same specific memory (or memories) is a good way to do follow up. Even if the whole issue isn't yet fully resolved, if the healing was genuine you can go back to the same specific memory and verify that there are lasting changes. The second follow-up interview with Rita provides an excellent example of this: when Rita goes back to the memory we worked with in the session, in place of the negative thoughts and emotions that had initially been present in the memory (and that continue to be completely absent), she now perceives the Lord's abiding presence in the memory, along with new, positive thoughts and emotions.

**B. Resolving lies that have not been explicitly identified:** As I have facilitated Immanuel approach sessions, I have noticed that distorted perceptions/lies are often resolved as the person engages with Jesus, even though the lies have *not* been explicitly identified or worked with directly. And this session with Rita provides an opportunity for the viewer to observe this phenomenon. For example, note what happened with Rita's lie: "It's not safe to be vulnerable – I have to be mean to protect myself." This lie was *not* identified explicitly or worked with directly in the session; and, in fact, I didn't realize that this lie had been present, or that Jesus had addressed it, until Rita described "fruit" from the session in the follow-up interview ten months later. When she reported "[Now] I can respond to the people in my life with love – I don't have to keep them [away]...."<sup>5</sup> then I remembered that in the session Jesus had spontaneously commented to Rita: "You don't have to be mean to keep hurt away. You can be vulnerable because it will be in My strength, and not your own."<sup>6</sup> Ten months later, as Rita described the changes she had observed since the session, I finally realized that this lie had been present.

Jesus had recognized this lie, and had resolved it in the context of His Immanuel interactions with Rita, *even though we had not explicitly identified it, worked with it directly, or even been aware of it's presence.*

**C. Simpler interventions may have been effective:** The advanced Immanuel intervention troubleshooting demonstrated in this session is elegant and very effective; however, simpler interventions may also have been effective. For example, if the session had started with a positive memory, deliberate appreciation, and an interactive connection with Jesus,<sup>7</sup> I could have helped the internal parts clarify their guardian lie fears, helped Rita go back to the initial connection with Jesus, and then helped Rita (and her internal parts) engage with Jesus in that context regarding

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<sup>5</sup>First follow-up interview, time on tape: 27:57 and following.

<sup>6</sup>Time on tape: 12:43 and following.

<sup>7</sup>Actually, this session took place before the Immanuel approach was fully developed, so we had not started the session with positive memory recall, deliberate appreciation, and establishing an interactive connection with Jesus. However, since bringing these initial steps into the Immanuel approach, I have had many opportunities to use the simple intervention of returning to the initial interactive connection in order to get help from Jesus in that context. And it has been amazingly effective.

the guardian lie fears. Another simpler intervention would have been to help the internal parts to clarify their guardian lie fears, and then coach them to simply express the guardian like fears directly to Jesus, *in faith* (since we knew He was present, in faith, even though Rita and her internal parts could not yet perceive His presence in any tangible way).

The advanced intervention demonstrated in this DVD teaching session can move more quickly, it is often dramatically effective, and there are rare situations in which it seems to be the only intervention that will work<sup>8</sup>; however, it requires more training, more understanding, and more skill with respect to internal parts. I mention possible simpler interventions because we are constantly trying to find ways to make the Immanuel approach as simple as possible, so that it can be accessible to lay people. In many situations there is an option that is more time efficient, but that also requires more training and skill; and then also a simpler option that will work, but that takes more time. I propose that mental health professionals/full time emotional healing ministers should have all the tools in their tool boxes, *and* that we should be deliberately teaching and modeling the simpler tools as an important part of training and encouraging lay people to use the Immanuel approach.

As I have been deliberately using the simplest possible interventions, to make this point in training demonstrations, I have been amazed by often one of the two simple intervention described above has been adequate, even for the complicated situation in which internal parts are deliberately blocking the process. *Even in situations in which the internal parts still preventing Jesus from being tangibly present*, just helping them to clarify their guardian lie fears, express them directly to Jesus (in faith), and then ask Him for help often results in some kind of progress. There have been many different ways in which the Lord has responded, but in most situations the session moves forward in some way after this simple intervention. Furthermore, this can often be done even when the facilitator doesn't recognize that internal parts are involved. If you identify the guardian lie fears and help the person express these fears directly to Jesus, the session often moves forward *even without any understanding or awareness that the fears are being carried by internal parts who are deliberately blocking the process*.

**D. Imagination Jesus:** Beginning at 3:20, the viewer will notice an interesting interchange between Rita and I. I ask her child parts if they would be willing to allow Jesus to be present, with the clear agenda being just to get to know Him (no healing work unless they agree and until they are ready). And the initial response from the leading part is, “Sure. If He wants to hang out, I don't care....He's gonna be there [anyway]. I can't prevent Him from being there, you know – there He is.” clearly implying that she already has some kind of mental image of Jesus with her in the memory. However, when I ask, “Is He in there already? He's already there?” to clarify the situation, her response is, “Well, I could imaging what He would be.” For teaching purposes, I wish I had taken the time to ask additional questions to make it easier for the viewer to recognize that Rita's internal parts had generated their own imagination mental image of Jesus; however, I think this point can still become clear with careful observation and thought.

First, this initial Jesus imagery came before the child parts were fully in agreement. Their attitude was clearly something along the lines of, “Sure, we might as well pretend that we have a choice – we might as well pretend that we are ‘allowing’ Him to be here, since He's already here and we

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<sup>8</sup>For example, sometimes internal parts will block every aspect of the Immanuel approach, including even the initial positive memory and interactive connection, until an intervention such as the one presented here has been used to help them resolve their guardian lie fears.

can't do anything about it.” I have never seen the true, living Jesus engage in this way – if a person and/or her internal parts are not yet comfortable with Jesus being tangibly present, He always allows them to block perception of His presence. Second, although her internal parts were clearly seeing some kind of image, they didn't describe this initial “Jesus” as doing anything that surprised them or anything that was life-giving. In contrast, when people experience the real, living presence of Jesus He always initiates interactions that are life giving, and He always does things that the person perceives as outside of her initiative – things that she is not predicting or controlling (just as when you interact with one of your friends, who is a separate, independent, thinking, free will being). Third, when I continue describing my proposal for them to allow Jesus to “just” be in the memory with them, they ask, “Just be there – kind of like a statue, you mean?” clearly implying that they still had no idea of what it would be like to experience the true living presence of Jesus. I have never seen anyone ask this kind of question after engaging with the real, living presence of Jesus. That is, they would not have asked this question if their earlier imagery had been an encounter with the real presence of Jesus. And finally, comparison with the genuine makes the counterfeit even easier to recognize. When they eventually do experience Jesus' tangible, living presence several minutes later, it looks and feels very different from their initial experience of their fabricated, imagination imagery.

To summarize, this segment of the session provides a good example of a surprisingly common phenomena. In certain situations and for a variety of reasons, the Immanuel approach recipient will sometimes generate an imagination mental image that is simply a product of her own mind. And it is very important to distinguish between this “counterfeit” imagery and the real thing. When people have a genuine experience of the Lord's living presence, they feel like they are simply perceiving and reporting imagery that comes spontaneously, as opposed to feeling like they are proactively generating the imagery on their own. And, as described above, when someone experiences the true, living presence of Jesus, He does things she does not expect and initiates life-giving interactions. One of the Immanuel approach facilitator's most important tasks is to recognize counterfeit imagination imagery, and then help the person upgrade to the spontaneous, interactive imagery that represents the living presence of Jesus.<sup>9</sup>

***E. There are many wonderful, godly nuns out there:*** I am concerned that some viewers may be troubled by Rita's negative comments regarding nuns, and therefore want to clarify that we do not believe all Catholics or nuns to be bad. Charlotte and I have wonderful friends who are Catholics, and who have living relationships with the Lord. I am also sure that there are many wonderful, godly, loving nuns who serve the Lord faithfully. Unfortunately, Rita's childhood experiences with Catholic schools included nuns who were clearly triggered and non-relational, and who presented a picture of Jesus that was non-relational.

***F. Child parts, dissociation, and DID (Dissociative Identity Disorder):*** The viewer will notice that Rita talks about “parts,” and that she sometimes talks as if she is *inside* the perspective of the child in the memory she is working on. It is important to understand that experiencing the perspective of the child in the memory, and/or having “internal parts,” does *not* automatically lead to the diagnosis of Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) – perceiving “internal child parts” does *not* mean that Rita therefore must have DID.

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<sup>9</sup>In our experience, this phenomena has been especially common with people who have grown up in the church, and therefore have many preconceived ideas and expectations regarding what should/might happen in a context such as an Immanuel approach session. I will discuss this phenomena in much greater detail in the material I am currently writing regarding advanced Immanuel intervention trouble-shooting (to be posted on [www.immanuelapproach.com](http://www.immanuelapproach.com) as soon as it is ready).

First, there are phenomena other than dissociation that can lead to the subjective experience of being “inside” a childhood memory and/or perceiving “internal 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 her voluntary, conscious recall, and the event will continue to be available to her voluntary, conscious recall after the session), and the different pieces of the memory, including the emotions, will all be present and connected.<sup>10</sup> 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, she 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*.

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<sup>10</sup>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.